

○ VOLUME 8 NUMBER 3, 2009

## Apostrophe of Empire

Guantánamo Bay, Disneyland

**Joseph Pugliese**

Department of Media, Music and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University

*In this essay, I am concerned with fleshing out the complex mesh of politico-cultural significations that inscribe Banksy's installation of an inflatable doll dressed as a Guantánamo Bay detainee in Disneyland. In particular, I want to bring into focus the systems of relation that hold between subjects and sites that might otherwise appear to stand in absolutely incommensurable positions: Guantánamo Bay detainees and inflatable dolls, Guantánamo Bay military prison, Cuba and Disneyland, California. Driving this analysis of seemingly untenable systems of relations between graphically dichotomous subjects (real prisoners and inflatable dolls, an entertainment theme park and a military prison) is a desire to address what I think is magnetised and brought to the surface through Banksy's provocative guerrilla gesture of installing the simulacrum of a Guantánamo detainee within a site that is charged with an iconic cultural status. In the course of my analysis, I proceed to read Banksy's tactical intervention in terms of the rhetorical figure of the apostrophe. As an apostrophic gesture, Banksy's Guantánamo detainee in Disneyland disrupts the narrative fabric of the site in order to broach a number of critical questions. In the latter part of this essay, I proceed to examine these questions by focusing on the ongoing incarceration of a juvenile, Omar Khadr, in Guantánamo. Khadr, I argue, at once embodies the violent effects of Banksy's apostrophic intervention, precisely as he dramatises the unsettling figure of the Muslim prisoner as contemporary Muselmann.*

On the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006, the guerrilla artist Banksy staged another of his politico-artistic interventions, installing an inflatable doll dressed as a Guantánamo Bay detainee in the grounds of Disneyland, Anaheim, California (figure 1). Banksy has achieved international fame as both a street and guerrilla artist. His graffiti projects have commented on everything from the Iraq war to the wall built by Israel

on Palestinian land. He has also, as guerrilla artist, made significant interventions that have called into question the cultural politics of museums and art galleries by clandestinely installing 'fake' paintings and pseudo-archaeological artefacts that have often remained on the gallery walls for days before being discovered by museum staff (Banksy, 2005). Banksy's work consistently brings into focus the often effaced or naturalised relations of power and violence that underpin 'legitimate' social sites and established cultural practices.



Figure 1: Banksy's Guantánamo Bay doll, Disneyland, Anaheim, California, at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkZoC6dwRqE>. Accessed 4 September 2009.

In the course of this essay, I want to flesh out the complex mesh of politico-cultural significations that inscribe Banksy's installation of an inflatable doll dressed as a Guantánamo Bay detainee in Disneyland. In particular, I want to bring into focus the systems of relations that hold between subjects and sites that might otherwise appear to stand in absolutely dichotomous positions: Guantánamo Bay detainees and inflatable dolls, Guantánamo Bay military prison, Cuba and Disneyland theme park, California. Driving this analysis of seemingly untenable systems of relations between graphically incommensurable subjects (real prisoners and inflatable dolls, an entertainment theme park and a military prison) is a desire to address what I think is magnetised and brought to the surface through Banksy's provocative guerrilla gesture of installing the simulacrum of a Guantánamo detainee within a site that is charged with 'the inflammatory power of Disneyland as cultural metaphor' (Olsberg, 2006: 9).

In the course of my analysis, I will proceed to read Banksy's tactical intervention in terms of the rhetorical figure of the *apostrophe*. In rhetorical terms, an apostrophe instantiates a break in either a

narrative or a discourse in order to address the reader or spectator. It marks, in other words, a rupture of the narrative or discursive flow in order to bring into sharp focus a particular issue. The abrupt nature of the apostrophe ensures that the speaker/writer grabs the reader's/spectator's attention. In this essay, I proceed to read the specific site in which Banksy installed his Guantánamo detainee, Big Thunder Mountain Railroad in the Frontierland section of Disneyland, in social semiotic terms; as such, Big Thunder Mountain Railroad, Frontierland, will be construed in both narratological and discursive terms. As a narratological construct, Disneyland's Frontierland bespeaks to its visitors a story of heroic pioneers carving civilisation out of a wild and savage wilderness. This narrative, embedded within the spatio-temporal coordinates of the site and its multiple historical reconstructions, is, in turn, discursively inscribed and structured. The discourses of colonialism and empire, embodied in the ideology of Manifest Destiny (as discussed below), enable the teleological narrative of the heroic clearing of the land, and its uncivilised indigenous inhabitants, precisely as they mark the labour of establishing the foundations for the future-oriented imperial visions of Tomorrowland, with its promise of the conquest of other alien lands and uncivilised spaces.

Situated within this narratological and discursive configuration, Banksy's startling insertion of the simulacrum of a contemporary figure, that iconically signifies the violent prerogatives of empire and its attendant impunities, rends the seamless flow of the historical scene in question. As an apostrophic gesture, Banksy's Guantánamo detainee in Disneyland disrupts the narrative fabric of the site in order to enunciate to its audience/spectators two critical questions: What historico-political genealogies are at once ruptured and sutured through this figure? What occlusions can only be brought to light by the rhetorical force of this apostrophe? In the latter part of this essay, I proceed to examine these questions by focusing on the ongoing incarceration of a juvenile, Omar Khadr, in Guantánamo. Khadr, I argue, at once embodies the violent effects of Banksy's apostrophic intervention, precisely as he dramatises the unsettling figure of the Muslim prisoner as a qualified, contemporary reincarnation of the *Muselmann*.

### **Guantánamo Bay Penalogical Theme Park**

Soon after Banksy's act of guerrilla intervention at Disneyland, he released a short video on YouTube that tracked in detail the process of making and installing his Guantánamo Bay inflatable doll. Banksy's video begins with a line of real Guantánamo prisoners, dressed in their now iconic orange jumpsuits and black hoods, being marched by U.S. soldiers. Superimposed on this image is the text: 'Disneyland 2006.' The video then cuts to a non-descript room in which Banksy, his face pixelated, is shown dressing his inflatable doll with the orange jumpsuit and hood. Once the doll has been dressed, he stashes it in his backpack. The viewer is then taken on the car journey to

Disneyland. Banksy is seen negotiating the security check at Disneyland's entrance, with a guard rummaging through his backpack and then giving him the all-clear to enter. Banksy's walk through the grounds of the amusement park is set, satirically, to the soundtrack of the Disneyland classic 'It's a small world after all.' He is then shown sitting on a bench, where he removes the doll and proceeds to inflate it. Once the doll is inflated, he places it over the stockade-like fence that surrounds the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad in the Frontierland section of the park. The Big Thunder Mountain train is shown careering into shot, with the visitors abruptly confronted by the incongruous site of a Guantánamo Bay prisoner in a diagonal relation to a Christian cross staked in the river. The doll remains in place for ninety minutes before the voice of a Disneyland official is heard to say: 'Sorry folks, due to some security reasons, we have to stop our ride.' The ride is closed to the public whilst the figure is removed. The last shot of the video is of the entrance plaque to Disneyland: 'Here you leave today and enter the world of yesterday, tomorrow and fantasy.'

If nothing else, in his positioning of a simulacrum of a Guantánamo prisoner in the grounds of Disneyland, Banksy brings into focus the possibility that an entertainment theme park, Disneyland, is politically and culturally connected to its absolute other, Guantánamo Bay military prison, and that, furthermore, both sites can be viewed through the *spectalist* lens of the theme park (Debord, 2006: 10). If Disneyland is a theme park oriented both by the practices of leisure and consumption and by its moralising narratives of imperial U.S. history, then Guantánamo Bay military prison must be viewed as another type of theme park altogether. Even as Guantánamo stands as the obverse of Disneyland, it still can be seen to be coextensive with Disneyland's theme park logic of spectacle, control and moralising didactics.

The logic of both sites is predicated on the construction of absolutely quarantined space: in radically different ways, both sites function as types of camps, in which the points of ingress and egress are tightly controlled, the disposition of space is carefully mapped, and the movement of subjects is regulated. Guantánamo Bay camp is surrounded by razor wire fences that isolate it from the outside world and imprison its detainees. In Disneyland, a massive berm surrounds the theme park, enclosing its visitors and blocking any views to the outside world (Marling, 2006: 29). Furthermore, if the disposition of space and the governing principles of Disneyland's architecture are fundamentally informed by principles of 'security [and] restraint' (Doss, 2006: 180), then precisely the same spatial and architectonic principles are operative at Guantánamo.

In Guantánamo Bay carceral 'theme park,' the detainees are transformed, through costume, into instantly identifiable characters of 'evil': they are the absolute other of Mickey Mouse. Between Guantánamo and Disneyland there is a line of connection that pivots

on categorical representations of good and evil. Remarking on how California's Disneyland was built and opened in the context of the Cold War and McCarthyist America, Erika Doss underscores the labour expended in order to establish 'clear demarcations between the forces of good and evil (Snow White vs. the Wicked Queen, Peter Pan vs. Captain Hook, etc.), thereby heightening, perhaps, American desires for (or expectations of) moralistic simplicity in an age of increasing sociocultural and political complexity' (Doss, 2006: 182). In its Disneyland landscape, Banksy's Guantánamo detainee brings into focus an unsettling symmetry between these categorical representations of good and evil. With prosthetically augmented ears ( earmuffs), enlarged unblinking eyes (blackened goggles), a snout (surgical mask) instead of a mouth, and with oversized padded paws (thick synthetic gloves) instead of hands, the Guantánamo Bay doll-prisoner emerges as a grotesque mirror-image of Mickey Mouse. Whereas in Disneyland the animal characters (mice, dogs, ducks) are stripped of the alterity of their animality and are domesticated and anthropomorphised so as to create a magical affinity between humans and animals, in Guantánamo Bay the human prisoners are animalised in order to mark their preclusion from the legal category of (human) rights-bearing person. The Guantánamo guards clinically record in their entry for 20 December 2002: 'Began teaching the detainee lessons such as stay, come, and bark to elevate his social status up to that of a dog. Detainee became very agitated' (cited in McCoy, 2006a: 24).

Whereas in Disneyland the anthropomorphised animals have free run of the theme park, in Guantánamo Bay the animalised sub-humans are, in Suvendrini Perera's words, imprisoned in 'exposed chain-link pens more reminiscent of cages than cells' (2002: 2). Murat Kurnaz, imprisoned for five years in Guantánamo, only to be found innocent and eventually released, writes: 'An animal has more space in its cage in a zoo and is given more to eat. I can hardly put into words what that actually means' (2007: 99). This series of politico-judicial inversions is perhaps most graphically evidenced by the fact that whilst the detainees at Guantánamo Bay are denied basic legal rights, the iguanas that inhabit the camp are protected by U.S. law under the Endangered Species Act. As Mahvish Rukhsana Khan, a lawyer who volunteered to translate for the prisoners, remarks: 'The prisoners at Guantánamo are entitled to fewer protections than the iguanas' (2008: 40).

In his harrowing account of his time as a prisoner in Guantánamo Bay military prison, Moazzam Begg documents the manner in which the prison guards viewed their prisoners: 'I convince myself each day,' says one guard, 'that you guys are all subhuman' (cited in Begg, 2006: 165). Reflecting on the logic of representation that is engendered within the space of camps of imprisonment, Jean-Luc Nancy argues that what unfolds in such spaces is 'the devastation of representation and/or the reduction of representation to mockery' (2005: 49). The penalogically prostheticised theme park figure that is the Guantánamo Bay detainee attests to the perverse effects of this

representational logic, and Banksy's guerrilla intervention tactically amplifies this reduction of representation to a queer mockery. In her discussion of Guantánamo Bay prisoners as exempla of what she terms 'terrorist assemblages,' Jaspar Puar asks: 'are these bodies queer?' As 'ungendered, un-raced, un-sexed, [and] un-nationalised' entities, they constitute, Puar concludes, 'the subject formation of *homo sacer*,' that is, queer forms of bare life that can be tortured and sacrificed with impunity (2007: 158).

The conceptualisation of Guantánamo Bay military prison in terms of a penalogical theme park—what Mahvish Khan aptly terms 'an eerie Neverland' (2008: 60)—can be elaborated by bringing into focus the various 'themed' sections that characterise the toponomy of the prison. The themed sections of Disneyland—Frontierland, Tomorrowland, Main Street U.S.A. and so on—have their perverse equivalent in Guantánamo Bay prison: Camp Delta, Camp Iguana, Camp X-Ray, Camp Eskimo, Camp Echo (the maximum security isolation block), the Secret Squirrel (in which prisoners are secretly 'squirreled' into an isolation room without the other prisoners being aware of their whereabouts), and so on. 'Guantánamo Bay,' Begg sardonically observes, 'is effectively a large, working American town,' with its own Starbucks, KFC and McDonalds (2006: 286). Prisoners who agree to 'confess' their terrorist connections and crimes are, furthermore, rewarded with a 'McDonald's Happy Meal or a Twinkie' (Ratner and Ray, 2004: 43). The practice of penalogical entertainment is documented by the ex-detainee Begg in his description of the guards, and their attack dogs, as hunters playing with their prey: 'Hey, do you want to chase some orange meat?' (2006: 200).

As with any self-respecting theme park, Guantánamo Bay penalogical theme park has its own souvenir shop (Rose, 2004: 89). The penalogical souvenirs on offer are inscribed by the specialist commodification of the prisoners and their suffering. 'In Guantánamo,' writes Begg, 'there was a rodent nicknamed the Banana Rat, the size of a domestic cat, with long rat-like tail. Some of the soldiers and interrogators would wear orange T-shirts depicting these animals as detainees [...]. I had it confirmed because other people were talking about buying these T-shirts and taking them home as souvenirs' (2006: 243). Banksy's Guantánamo figure in the Disneyland landscape materialises that long-standing American tradition of intermixing festivity with cruelty, torture and violence, and of interlacing public executions with theatre, whilst selling souvenirs of the event. I refer here to the 'festivals of violence' that accompanied public lynchings of African Americans, the trade in souvenir body parts, including shards of bone, teeth and the genitals of the tortured, burnt and/or lynched victims, and the traffic in postcards and photographs depicting the lynchings (see Tolnay and Beck, 1992; Dray, 2003; Allen et al, 2005). As I have documented in detail elsewhere, this 'festival of violence' has found its contemporary reincarnation in places like Abu Ghraib, where torture, sexual assault and murder were intertwined with entertainment, visual spectacle and the trade in souvenir photographs and screen savers depicting the

tortured and executed prisoners (Pugliese, 2007a). Banksy's Guantánamo Bay figure in Disneyland channels this cultural history and gives it yet another contemporary guise.

### **American Gulags: Colonial and Imperial Palimpsests**

Banksy's Guantánamo Bay figure in Disneyland generates a politico-cultural charge that accrues from the fact that like 'the Grand Canyon or Chicago or the Golden Gate Bridge, Disneyland is a key American place-marker, an icon' (Marling, 2006: 29). Precisely as the Guantánamo prisoner functions as an icon of 'the terrorist,' or iconic figure of 'bare life'—disenfranchised of due legal process and fundamental human rights—Guantánamo Bay is also another (in)famous American place-marker: the military camp situated beyond the purview of the rule of law, the off-shore prison imprisoning mere sub-human detritus (Perera, 2002: 2; Ortíz, 2008: 18). Through his tactical superimposition or, more accurately, collision of two seemingly polarised icons and place-markers, Banksy draws attention to the relations that hold between seemingly dichotomous sites and subjects.

Banksy's Guantánamo prisoner stands, in the context of Disney's Frontierland, as a mute figure in the landscape, destitute of speech and denied any right of reply. Yet this totemic figure silently embodies the form of an accusation, precisely as it sets in train a polemical transvaluation of received values: this site of leisure, it accuses, is a site of effaced and disavowed violence. Couched in rhetorical terms, Banksy's Guantánamo Bay doll in Disneyland functions as an *apostrophe* in the landscape. As *apostrophe*, this figure instantiates a *coup de théâtre* which generates a series of unsettling rhetorical effects, including the disruption of the *mise-en-scène*, the rupturing of the narrative fabric and the enunciation of what Giorgio Agamben terms 'a call that cannot be avoided' (2002: 54). The apostrophic effects of Banksy's figure come into being because of the charged semiotics of place that accrue from the signs 'Disneyland,' in general, and 'Frontierland,' in particular.

In her cultural history of Disneyland, Anaheim, California, Karal Ann Marling explains how the theme park was specifically designed 'to provide comfort and refuge from that world of woes [...]. His [Disney's] park was built behind a berm to protect it from the evils that daily beset humankind on all sides. It aimed to soothe and reassure [...]. Disneyland is about ... the overarching reassurance that there is order governing the disposition of things' (2006: 83). In the context of Disneyland's landscape of reassurance, with its ordered disposition of things, Banksy's Guantánamo figure instantiates a breach that imports the evils of the outside world into the quarantined space of the entertainment theme park, disrupting the seamless narrative fabric of reassurance; simultaneously, this apostrophic figure demands that points of connection be established between this quarantined and controlled space, the internal and effaced world upon which the park

was built and now stands, and the external world quarantined by the park's berms.

Banksy's installation of his Guantánamo figure in the context of Frontierland, 'one of the icons of Disney's world' (Marling, 2006: 74), brings into focus a number of effaced genealogies of colonial and imperial violence that mark the site even as they have been invisibilised by the power of the hegemonic narratives that organise the theme park. Walt Disney's decision to build his theme park in Anaheim, California is inscribed with the mythic resonances of the West in white America's history. In his detailed analysis of tourism in the twentieth-century American West, Hal Rothman draws attention to the manner in which the burgeoning industry of recreational tourism in the West was marked by the 'power of conquest embodied in Manifest Destiny' (1998: 44). The West emerges, Rothman argues, as a space at once marked by the violence of colonial conquest of Native Americans and their lands and by the concomitant erasure of this violence through the scripting of the West as a place of 'mythic purpose' and 'expiation': 'To Americans the West is their refuge, the home of the "last best place"... home to the mythic landscapes where Americans become whole again in the aftermath of personal or national cataclysm' (Rothman, 1998: 14, 15, 43). In the schema of American providential teleology and eschatology, the figure of the Guantánamo prisoner signifies a type of absolute sub-human detritus that cannot be teleologically dialecticised or eschatologically redeemed. Marked by the fusion of charged triple indices—Arab-Muslim-terrorist—that collectively spell 'un-American,' this figure embodies the unfreedom constitutive of the racially inflected liberal democratic state. 'White supremacy, colonialism, and economic exploitation,' writes Andrea Smith, 'are inextricably linked to U.S. democratic ideals rather than aberrations from it. The "freedom" guaranteed to some individuals in society has always been premised upon the radical unfreedom of others' (2005: 184).

Banksy's Guantánamo figure, as a form of visual apostrophe, disrupts this narrative of historicidal forgetting and expiation. As a figure embodying stories of torture, violence and sexual assault, its location in Frontierland generates points of connection with California's violent colonial history. In the work of Antonia Castañeda, the West (and, coextensively, Frontierland, as geopolitical concept metaphor for the West) is mapped as the site of double empires, Spanish and white American, and as the colonised space within which the colonisers exercised their imperial prerogatives on the colonised subjects: 'Amerindian women and men were both regarded as inferior social beings, whose inferiority justified the original conquest and continued to make them justifiably exploitable and expendable in the eyes of the conqueror' (1993: 26). The relations of sexual violence, abuse and torture that were operative in the colonial conquest of the West can be seen to resonate with what has unfolded at Guantánamo Bay. 'Thus Guantánamo is a location,' writes Amy Kaplan, 'where many narratives about the Americas intersect, about shackled slaves brought from Africa, the important role of Cuba in U.S. history, and

U.S. intervention in the Caribbean and Latin America' (2004: 13-14). Both geopolitical sites have borne witness to the transmutation of the captive subject into sub-human object that can be violated, sexually assaulted or killed with impunity. Banksy's Guantánamo doll instantiates a type of visual chiasmus in which past imperial histories cross through this totemic figure of contemporary imperial subjection. The symbolic lexicon of the Wild West folds over into the contemporary war on terror and its cowboy language of 'smoking out' the 'bad guys': '[T]here's an old poster out West,' former President Bush declared soon after the 9/11 attacks, 'that said, "Wanted, Dead or Alive"' (cited in Worthington, 2007: 1).

Writing of his experience in Kandahar prison before he was transferred to Guantánamo Bay, Moazzam Begg brings into focus this point of intersection between colonialism and the contemporary war on terror:

One of the MPs I often spoke to was Cody, an Irish American who had been brought up on a Cherokee reservation in North Carolina [...]. [H]e identified more with them than with white America. He said to me once, 'When I see you people here, it reminds of me *my* people. They were treated the same way. Their lands were invaded, they were slaughtered and imprisoned, their language and religion were not understood, and they were depicted, until recently, as savages and murderous heathens.' (2006: 124-5)

Banksy's act of placing a mannequin in Frontierland, with its Big Thunder Mountain train ride, works to resignify the *mise-en-scene* of the tourist park into a type of contemporary diorama, thereby accentuating its effaced colonial genealogies and significations. In the nineteenth century, visitors to the colonial exhibitions and world fairs would take train rides that, through live exhibits and dioramas, 'brought far-flung territories and exotic peoples near,' transmuting them into objects of colonial fixity and visual consumption (Maxwell, 1999: 36). The colonial logic of the diorama was predicated on objectifying Europe's others and marking their status as 'proto-humans,' 'silent specimens in a frozen zoo' (Russell, 2001: 46). Banksy's carceral mannequin in Frontierland brings far-flung Guantánamo Bay and its exotic inhabitants home, suturing past imperial histories to the contemporary U.S. colony in Cuba. For the brief duration of ninety minutes, every circuit of the Big Thunder Mountain train will bring its passengers face-to-face with an apostrophic 'security breach' that disrupts the Disneyfied tourist narrative. The colonial frontier-as-post is jarringly compelled to assume the dimensions of a 'live' imperial present every time the shackled and hooded Guantánamo prisoner careens into view.

Big Thunder Mountain train, as the fabled 'machine in the garden' that rends the reassuring spectacle of a pastoral America, 'changes the texture' of the scene: 'Now tension replaces repose ... arous[ing] a sense of dislocation, conflict and anxiety' (Marx, 2000: 16). As the train speeds past the Frontierland stockade with its Guantánamo

detainee, the Disneyland spectator is confronted with the sight of a fluorescent orange apostrophe in the landscape that generates a momentary derangement of the field of vision and its visual cues. Banksy's apostrophic gash in the landscape flies in the face of the 'Disney Realism' outlined by Disneyland's planners: 'we program out all the negative, unwanted elements and program in the positive elements' (cited in Findlay, 1993: 69-70). The temporality of nostalgia for a simpler and better time past, symbolised by this train journey through the Wild West, is disrupted by this dissonant shackled figure.

This figure generates a type of relational rupture and dis/continuity as it emblematises a genealogy of tortured and imprisoned subjects—the native, the slave, the anti-colonial insurgent—whilst also bringing into focus a palimpsest of colonial camps of imprisonment, beginning with the same 'Caribbean island [Cuba] that gave birth to the institution of the concentration camps in the late nineteenth century' (Gilroy, 2005: 22). For the duration of the time it remains in place in Frontierland, Banksy's Guantánamo detainee magnetises a series of temporal retentions and protentions: the past (the colonial project of the Wild West), the present (the camp at Guantánamo Bay) and the future (the imperial war on terror that unfolds without end in sight) all collide, overlap and disjoin. Simultaneously as this figure brings into focus this palimpsestic matrix, it resignifies it with the irruptive force of its own unique historicity, a historicity gathered under the imprimatur of the contemporary war on terror.

As apostrophic figure, Banksy's doll enunciates a seemingly impossible address: Guantánamo Bay, Disneyland. This uncanny coupling of two apparently opposed geopolitical sites—Guantánamo Bay/Disneyland—and of two seemingly irreconcilable 'spaces of exception'—prison/theme park—is underpinned by the fact that the space of exception is, in Giorgio Agamben's terms, structurally imbricated with the actual rule of law in the civil spaces and practices of everyday life, so that the state of exception and the exercise of 'juridical rule enter into a threshold of indistinction' (1998: 174). Agamben's work underscores the seamless manner in which the space of leisure and recreation (a football stadium, cycle-racing track or hotel) can be transmuted into a camp of imprisonment and torture (1998: 174). Indeed, in radically different ways, both Guantánamo Bay and Disneyland self-represent as spaces of exception, with Disneyland designating itself as an 'exceptional place,' a 'magic kingdom' protected and isolated from the outside world by its berm (Findlay, 1993: 267). If 'Disneyland is symbolic that all is right with the world,' so that 'the guest walks through an atmosphere of order and cleanliness and comes away feeling that things must be right, after all' (Findlay, 1993: 78), then, situated in this context, Banksy's tactical installation of his Guantánamo detainee inside this iconic theme park breaches the berm that quarantines Disneyland from the outside world: the excluded and disavowed exteriority of America's absolute other is thereby brought home to roost in this most identifiably American of all landscapes. Banksy's Guantánamo prisoner in Frontierland graphically embodies Alexander

Solzhenitsyn's unforgettable words: 'there is where the Gulag country begins, right next to us, two yards away from us' (cited in Dow, 2004: 12).

If the perverse representational logic that inscribes the space of the camp is, as Nancy argues, generative of devastation and/or mockery (2005: 49), then Banksy's Guantánamo doll pushes this logic to its limits. Banksy's Guantánamo doll can be seized but not arrested; it can be stripped but it cannot be rendered naked; it can be detained but not interrogated; it can be deflated but not tortured. In a fragile and ephemeral way, Banksy's tactical intervention in Disneyland discloses the constitutive, if limited, impotencies of authoritarian regimes, their irreflective blindspots, their vulnerability to ethical gestures of evasion, silence, mockery and symbolic contestation. And the 'authoritarian regimes' that I invoke here include both the U.S. government (as a regime that has 'legally' sanctioned torture (Pugliese, 2007b)) and the corporate governance of Disneyland. The corporate governance of Disneyland is distinguished by its quasi-fascistic control over all aspects of the park (in the words of one of Disneyland's executives, 'Any ad libs [by park workers] must be approved before use' (cited in Findlay, 1993: 77)) and by its exercise of the 'iron hand of dictatorship, repression masked in smiles and mouse ears' (Marling, 2006: 85). Precisely what Banksy's guerrilla tactic infracts is Disneyland's policy on what it terms 'undesirables'[1]: 'To "restrict undesirables" and generally intimidate troublemakers, Disney recruited a special type of security guard' and deployed a screening process at the gates 'to scrutinize visitors to make sure, like the hosts and hostesses onstage and backstage, they conformed to Disney's "good grooming code," as well as to ensure that nobody gained entrance who might cause problems for the park and its other customers' (Findlay, 1993: 82).

Haunting Banksy's detainee in Disneyland, and his parody of the genre of amateur 'terrorist' videos, is yet another spectre of exclusion, detention and travesty of justice: the indictment of 'five Muslim men of Middle Eastern origin in Detroit on charges of conspiring to support terrorist attacks in the United States' (Globalsecurity.org, 2002). Evidence used to prosecute the so-called 'Detroit terror cell' included 'recovered video and audio tapes in which those charged appear to be surveilling key American landmarks for possible attack, including Disneyland in California' (Globalsecurity.org, 2002). The recovered video, screened on global television, looked like nothing more than a conventional tourist video of one's travels in Disneyland. A federal judge later dismissed the terrorism charges, admitting 'widespread prosecutorial misconduct in the case' ('Judge throws out terror convictions', 2004). The case illustrates the endemic racialisation of space and technologies in the current war on terror, as it begs the question as to who can traverse spaces of leisure and recreation and simultaneously record their experiences without fear of being branded a terrorist.

Banksy's apostrophic tactic stands both as a form of literal and symbolic travesty. It literally travesties the logic of the theme park—specifically, Disneyland and its “sanitized” vision of America’ (Harris, 2006: 27)—by importing a figure of carceral violence and terror into its space of fun and leisure. Simultaneously, it symbolically draws attention to the travesty of juridical justice that this Guantánamo Bay figure embodies in his militarised space of exception.

### **Childhood's End and the Spectres of the *Muselmann***

On the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008, a Guantánamo Bay interrogation video was released. The video shows a sixteen-year-old boy, Omar Khadr, being questioned by a Canadian Security Intelligence agent.[2] Released by Khadr's Canadian lawyers, the video was made by U.S. government agents using a camera hidden in a vent and was originally classified as secret. In the closing section of this essay, I want to discuss this video by situating it in relation to Banksy's Guantánamo Bay doll in Disneyland.

Unbeknownst to the general public, Guantánamo Bay holds children detainees, in direct violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the U.S. is a signatory (Ratner, 2005: 42; Ratner and Ray, 2004: 68-9). At various stages, Guantánamo has imprisoned children as young as twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen and sixteen years old (Worthington, 2007: 252-3). ‘[I]n early 2004 three minors between 13 and 15 years old were freed,’ writes Michael Ratner, president of the Centre for Constitutional Rights. ‘In response to pressure from human rights groups, the United States now imprisons most children at a separate detention facility called Camp Iguana, but children 16 years and older continue to be held captive with the adult detainees at Camp Delta’ (2005: 42-3). Khadr is one of the children imprisoned in Camp Delta. In his detailed documentation of the case histories of all the Guantánamo prisoners, Andy Worthington writes of Khadr:

One dubious example of a ‘fighter’ captured as this time was Omar Khadr, who was shot three times by US soldiers during a firefight near Khost on July 27, 2002, and is nearly blind in one eye as a result of his injuries. According to the US military, he killed a US soldier during the fight, and as a result, even though he was seriously injured, his interrogation began as soon as he was taken into custody. His case was later mentioned by a US official, who claimed that prisoners were so scared of abuse by US soldiers that they would talk without prompting [...]. According to Khadr, the abuse was all too real. During his detention in Afghanistan, he ‘asked for pain medication for his wounds but was refused,’ and was ‘not allowed to use the bathroom and was forced to urinate on himself.’ Like many other prisoners, he was also hung from his wrists, and he explained that ‘his hands were tied above a door frame and he was forced to stand in this position for hours.’ (2007: 185-6)

Worthington cites further testimony from Khadr on the torture and ritualised humiliation and degradation he has had to endure in Guantánamo:

Short-shackled and left in a room for six hours, he [Khadr] said that 'occasionally a US officer would enter the room to laugh at him.' Once, the guards left him until he urinated on himself, and then 'poured a pine scented cleaning fluid over him and used him as a "human mop" to clean up the mess.' As if further humiliation was required, he added that he was 'not provided with clean clothes for several days after his degradation.' (2007: 196)

The practices of torture and ritualised humiliation that Khadr has been forced to endure operate to transmute him into the embodiment of 'waste'; as such, as I will elaborate below, he is precluded from occupying the sentient and rights-bearing category of the 'human.'

For many reasons, Khadr's interrogation video is harrowing to watch. The secret video was filmed through the opened slats of a Venetian blind. Khadr's body is segmented by the out-of-focus slats. The grid of the blind materialises a number of critical visual relations and effects. On one level, the grid of the blind functions as a metonym for the embedded series of cages, bars and prisons that constitute Khadr's everyday conditions of existence. On another level, the slats mark a symbolic bar that separates the free spectator from the imprisoned Khadr. The persistence of this bar in the field of vision forecloses the possibility for the filmic lens/spectator's eye to be transparent and invisibilised. It materialises the voyeuristic relation of this 'peephole' looking into the anguish of the target subject, thereby bringing into scopic focus the asymmetries of power that mark this relation; in this asymmetrical scopic relation, Khadr has no visual right of reply to his unknown and invisibilised spectator.

As the video of Khadr's interrogation unfolds, it becomes evident that the interrogating agent is clinically detached from Khadr's plight. In the course of his interrogation and of his unsuccessful pleas for help, Khadr abruptly lifts the top of his orange jump suit and points to the scars that mark his body, scars from wounds he received in the battlefield as a child soldier, and says that he has requested medical help but has received none. Khadr's corporeal gesture marks the limits of his speech act and also its failure. In the penal colony of Guantánamo Bay, Khadr's body attests to the dermographic inscription of a violent history that would otherwise remain unspeakable and that can only be evidenced by the thick materiality of his scars. This gesture, however, only serves to mark a rift between speech and body, specifically between a subject that is being verbally compelled to confessional speech by his interrogator and a body that remains mutely traumatised, signifying unintelligible ciphers/scars that fail to be interpreted as they are beyond the hermeneutic purview of the uninterested interrogating agent.

This rift between speech and body becomes even more graphic as the interrogation continues. The disjunctive nature of the two speech acts, of interrogator and interrogated, becomes unbridgeable in the moment that Omar Khadr, whilst crying, exclaims: 'I lost my eyes, my feet, everything...' and the interrogator coolly replies: 'No, you still have your feet and your eyes ... [they] are still at the end of your legs, you know. Look, I want you to take a few minutes ... I want you to get yourself together ... relax a bit, have a bite to eat and we'll start again.' Enunciated in Khadr's cry is the psychic toll of torture, isolation and indefinite detention. Enmeshed within the psychic and physical violence of torture, Khadr's body is fragmented, dispersed and 'lost.' Khadr's cry bespeaks a suffering so intense that it causes the dissolution of the borders that encompass his sense of a corporeal self that is whole and integrated. The impact of past and ongoing trauma violently truncates Khadr's sensorium so that it no longer works to connect all the parts of his body to his sense of self as unified embodied subject in the world. In her acute analysis of the 'structure of torture,' Elaine Scarry traces the destructive dimensions of this feedback loop: 'as the prisoner's sentience destroys his world, so now his absence of world ... destroys his claims of sentience' (1987: 38). The disabling of his sensorium, and the loss of his sensate knowledge of the contours and limits of his body, reproduces the chronic deprivation of sensory input—sound, sight and touch—effected by the Guantánamo Bay prisoners being forced to wear sound-blocking earmuffs, surgical masks, padded gloves and blackened goggles.[3]

Khadr attests through his cry of loss to a psychic amputation that is at once also symbolically corporeal. In the face of Khadr's attestation of his trauma of fragmentation and loss, the interrogator replies with a clinical observation that fails to register the psychic reality of Khadr's suffering: 'No, you still have your feet and your eyes ... they are still at the end of your legs, you know.' Inscribing this moment are multiple levels of disjunction: perceptual, psychic and temporal. Precisely as Khadr marks the trauma of fragmentation and dissolution of his sense of embodied reality, the interrogator replies with a sense of disciplinary normativity ('get yourself together'), instrumentalising hospitality ('have a bite to eat') and recursive inquisition ('we'll start again') that effectively negate Khadr's testimony through their neutralising violence. A fault line opens between the two discourses: I have lost my body/no, you're body is there. The bar that separates the two speakers marks the violent rupture between irreconcilable levels of perceptual and experiential reality.

As the video unfolds, the interrogator temporarily leaves the room and Khan, unaware that he is being filmed, begins to cry in Arabic for his mother: 'Ya ummi.' He buries his head in his hands, sobs and pulls at his hair. Khan's somatic cries are not mere supplements to his oral testimony. Rather, they emerge as enunciative gaps that rupture the disciplinary order of inquisitorial language and underscore its violence. In this schema, Khadr's cries are for the interrogator so much non-sense and non-knowledge. Excess to the functionalist demands of

the interrogator, they mark the superfluous status of Khadr's body, of his somatic testimony as useless waste. The video is left filming after the interrogator has left the room, in the hope that something 'meaningful' will be confessed or captured, but Khadr offers nothing more than the articulation of his pain. Khadr's spoken and somatic testimony evidence a temporality of incessant suffering, what Maurice Blanchot calls 'a time without respite that he [the subject] endures as the perpetuity of an indifferent present' (2003: 131). Caught in the vice of an incessant suffering that must be endured as the perpetuity of an indifferent present, Khadr is transmuted into a 'no body' ('I have lost my eyes, my feet, everything') that becomes utterly coextensive with the experience of unrelieved trauma. Blanchot captures this acutely paradoxical logic in his discussion of the victims of the Nazi concentration camps: 'The one afflicted no longer has any identity other than the situation with which he merges and that never allows himself to be himself; for as a situation of affliction, it tends incessantly to de-situate itself, to dissolve in the void of a nowhere without foundation' (2003: 131-2). Khadr emerges as a subject transfixed in the event horizon of incessant suffering; his organs and limbs, as the coordinated sensorial ensemble that would allow him to establish a perceptual foundation in the world, have been absorbed into what one scholar of jurisprudence has termed a 'legal black hole' of unrelieved trauma and affliction (Fletcher, 2004).

The harrowing temporality of this event horizon of suffering without future is evidenced by many of the testimonies of the inmates of Guantánamo, where the sense of a present without future emerges as a key burden of their suffering. Jumah al-Dossary, imprisoned for over five years, and having attempted suicide twelve times, writes: 'Oh, those days and nights. I felt that time had ended at that time and did not want to move forward. I felt that the whole world with its mountains and all its gravity was bearing down on my chest' (cited in Khan, 2008: 226-7). The temporal structure that al-Dossary articulates here is marked by the torsions of paradox: time ceases yet persists to endure without movement or progress or future; a time without time that crushes the subject in its immovability. Al-Dossary relates how 'he has lived for years alone in cells ... and has been told by the military that he will live like that forever. All he can see is darkness' (cited in Khan, 2008: 221). Blanchot delineates this present of infinite suffering without future:

Time is as though arrested [...]. [T]he present is without end, separated from every other present by an inexhaustible and empty finite, the very infinite of suffering, and thus dispossessed of any future: a present without end and yet impossible as a present. The present of suffering is the abyss of the present, indefinitely hollowed out and in this hollowing indefinitely distended, radically alien to the possibility that one might be present to it through the mastery of presence ... time that can no longer redeem us, that constitutes no recourse. A time without event, without project, without possibility ... an unstable perpetuity in which we are arrested and incapable of permanence, a time neither abiding nor granting the simplicity of a dwelling place. (2003: 44)

The simplicity of a dwelling place is what is foreclosed in the psychic withdrawal of the body's limbs and perceptual organs: there is no place in the world left to inhabit; rather, there is only a perpetuity of suffering, without locus or ground, to endure. In one of his suicide notes, al-Dossary writes: 'The purpose of Guantánamo is to destroy people, and I have been destroyed' (cited in Khan, 2008: 212).

I have drawn on Blanchot's writing on suffering in the Nazi concentration camps because it effectively illuminates the lived experience of many of the inmates of Guantánamo. Mahavish Khan, who worked as translator for many of the prisoners in Guantánamo, has also documented the parallels between the two camps, including the cataloguing and referral of all the prisoners by serial numbers instead of names, and manner in which 'soldiers at Gitmo shaved the beards of the Muslim prisoners to punish them for minor infractions. What stronger image does this evoke than that of the Third Reich and the Nazi shaving of the beard and heads of the Jews?' (2008: 24). Other scholars have drawn attention to the structural parallels between Guantánamo and the Nazi concentration camps (see Agamben, 2002: 133; Rose, 2004: 71; Comaroff, 2007: 83) without, however, reflexively marking the significant differences between the two. I want to pursue these structural parallels between Guantánamo Bay and the Nazi concentration camps by focusing, in particular, on the figure of the *Muselmann*. Before I proceed, however, I want to underscore that the relations that hold between the two camps are marked by both similarities and fundamental differences; precisely what I do not want to argue is that one, Guantánamo, is simply the same as the other, Auschwitz for example, and that there is a simple homology between the two camps. This move would effectively reproduce its own form of epistemic violence, flattening and erasing the enormity of historical, geopolitical and racial differences that mark the two camps. Guantánamo is not Auschwitz. Rather, I want to focus on the structurality of the camp, specifically on those features of the camp that appear to be constitutive of its operating logic and that, across different spatio-temporal configurations, continue to be reproduced (Agamben, 1998; Perera, 2002). Situated in this context, I want specifically to examine the figure of the *Muselmann* and its relational status across two historically different sites and geopolitical embodiments.

In his *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Giorgio Agamben spends some time tracking the figure of *der Muselmann*, 'literally, "the Muslim,"' in the Nazi death camps (2002: 41). The *Muselmann*, according to the testimonies of the camps' survivors, referred to those prisoners who had completely given up on hope and life. As Primo Levi explains, 'the term *Muselmann*, "Muslim," [was] given to the irreversibly exhausted, worn-out prisoner closer to death. Two explanations for it have been advanced, neither very convincing: fatalism, and the head bandages that could resemble a turban' (1998: 77). Catatonic, indifferent to pain and suffering, no longer interested in food or drink, the *Muselmann* embodied the figure of the living dead. As such, the *Muselmann* was viewed with revulsion and even ostracised by the other prisoners of

the Nazi camps; in the words of one of the survivors: 'No one felt compassion for the Muslim, and no one felt sympathy for him either. The other inmates ... did not even judge him worthy of being looked at [...]. [F]or the SS, they were merely useless garbage. Every group thought only about eliminating them, each in its own way' (cited in Agamben, 2002: 43).

In his attempt to elucidate the emergence of the term in the camps, Agamben suggests that the 'most likely explanation of the term can be found in the literal meaning of the Arabic word muslim [sic]: the one who submits unconditionally to the will of God' (2002: 45). Regardless of the term's origins, Agamben concludes, 'it is certain that, with a kind of ferocious irony, the Jews knew that they would not die at Auschwitz as Jews' (2002: 45). The 'ferocious irony' that Agamben draws attention to is, however, inscribed by yet another level of ferocity that remains unspeakable throughout his book. Despite the fact that Agamben devotes a substantial chapter to his analysis of the *Muselmann*, at no point does he name the racism that inscribes this term, specifically the Islamophobia and Arabophobia that constitute its very conditions of enunciation and signification. Rather, he only refers to the 'deprecatory sense of the term in European languages,' 'concerning Islam's supposed fatalism' (2002: 45). In the glossary of terms that the translator, Catherine Leach, includes in Anna Pawelczynska's text on Auschwitz, the word *Muselmann* is defined in the following manner: 'German for "Moslem." In the camps the word carried no religious connotation whatsoever. Used by the prisoners and the SS alike, it signified a prisoner who showed symptoms of the advanced stages of starvation' (1979: 146).

Purged of any 'religious connotation whatsoever,' the question remains as to why the term Muslim was, in the end, deployed to describe the camp's living-dead. Levi's explanation, which he suggests is unconvincing, that it was due to 'the head bandages [of the camp prisoners] that could resemble a turban' resonates on both racialogical and historical levels and, indeed, opens up other, non-European histories of this term. In his analysis of the term 'Musalman' in the context of both pre- and post-unification India, Shahid Amin maps the way in which the word has insistently been used in order to mark 'the resident-Indian Muslims as "the other"' (2000: 76). Invested with the burden of signifying the unassimilable alterity of the Muslim within the body of the Indian nation, Amin analyses the manner in which, in the Indian context, the Turkish cap 'is made to stand for an essential marker of the otherness of things "Muslim"' (2000: 79). Tracking the historical permutations of the Musalman across a wide range of Indian texts, Amin concludes: 'It is the belief in the Musalman as someone recognizably different that counts and endures variedly' (2000: 820). I draw upon this doubly other history of the *Muselmann* in order to bring into focus what remains constant across radically different historical and geopolitical uses of the term: that, whoever is designated as a *Muselmann*/*Musalman*/Muslim is compelled to wear the burden of absolute alterity. Despite irreconcilable spatio-historical differences, this semantic kernel appears to continue to signify.

The significant lacuna that I have drawn attention to haunted me as I read Agamben's text, and the complex dimensions of this denegation were finally crystallised in my reading of Parvez Manzoor's essay 'Turning Jews into Muslims: The Untold Saga of the *Muselmänner*':

There can be little doubt, then, that the contemptible image of the fatalist Muslim predates the arrival of the pitiable figure of the *Muselmann* at Auschwitz. And even if at the camp it surfaces from the netherworld of Jewish consciousness, it was the Islamophobic European imagination that gave birth to it in the first place. Be that as it may, it is disconcerting to learn that even for the inmates of the camp, the Muslim was the *Untermensch*, the lowest of the low. This is certainly what Agamben has in mind when he, in a moment of brutal encounter with the truth, seeks refuge in 'the postmodern irony' and belittles the import of this realization: 'In any case, it is certain that, with a kind of ferocious irony, the Jews knew that they would not die at Auschwitz as Jews' (45). For others, there's no escaping the perverse logic of the Holocaust: While the Nazis killed the Jews, the Jews in turn sacrificed the 'Muslims' (*die Muselmänner*)! (2001: 4)

Manzoor meditates on the symptomatic repetition of this lacuna across Holocaust studies, suggesting that the 'disregard of any Muslim stake at Auschwitz is part of the awesome silence that the victims of the Holocaust [are] always entitled to exercise' (2001: 5). 'Nevertheless,' Manzoor contends, the Jewish "christening" of the "damned of the camp" as *Muselmänner* does implicate the Muslim in the Holocaust. And it does so brutally and scornfully, neither in the name of the executioners, nor in that of the victims, but as the victims of the victims; it implicates them in the name of the living-dead, the non-men whose death cannot be called death' (2001: 6).

In the wake of Manzoor's critical work on the *Muselmann*, I want to transpose this figure onto the Muslim inmates of Guantánamo Bay in order to bring into focus certain genealogical relations and discursive cross-hatchings that emerge from the locus of the camp. As contemporary reincarnations of *Muselmänner*, the Muslim inmates in Guantánamo are compelled to live, in a critically qualified way, the *ontotautology* of the Muslim *Muselmann*. In the context of Guantánamo, the Muslim prisoner literally lives and dies as 'the Muslim,' simultaneously as he is transmuted into the haunting figure of the *Muselmann*. In the context of Guantánamo, the Muslim inmate does not, I underscore, incarnate the Nazi spectre of the 'living dead'—the two figures are caught in radically different biopolitical regimes; critically, the Nazi regime had the end-goal of the attempted genocide of an entire people; no such genocidal biopolitical program underpins Guantánamo. Rather, in the context of the operational logics of the camp one can discern the symbolic reproduction of the term through the literal effects that this biopolitical figure exacts from its target subjects. In the case of Guantánamo, the Muslim inmates resonate with their Jewish counterparts along the limited lines of reproducing, amongst other things, the shuffling gait of the *Muselmann* because of their shackled feet, legs and arms; they also

effectively embody subjects who can be tortured with impunity. Traversing historical divides and politically unique trajectories, the one, the *Muselmanner*, through the instrumentalising and serialising logic of the camp, inflects the symbolic production of that other figure: Guantánamo's Muslim prisoner. In keeping with the operational logic of the camp, a logic underpinned by an anomic violence that respects no categorical borders or limits, the Jew-become-*Muselman* is spectrally interwoven into the Muslim-become-Jew-become-*Muselman*.

Yet the irreconcilable outlines that haunt this moment of superimposition mark the specificity of historical determinations that cannot be assimilated: the one is also *not* the other, even as the assimilative forces of the camp labour to erase difference through the production of the serial figure of the *Muselmann*. In the context of the serialising and assimilative forces constitutive of the violent operations of the camp, I want to emphasise the fundamental difference between the Jewish *Muselmann* of the Nazi camps and the Muslim *Muselmann* of Guantánamo. Unlike the selective imprisoning of Muslim subjects at Guantánamo in the waging of the war on terror, the serial production of the Jewish *Muselmann* in the Nazi camps was driven by the totality of the apparatuses, both repressive and ideological, of the German state, a totality predicated on achieving the complete liquidation of Europe's Jews. As Anna Pawelczynska, an Auschwitz survivor, writes: 'The objective of a [Nazi] concentration camp was the biological destruction of prisoners' (1979: 44). Through the systematic deployment of 'assembly-line-style death,' the Nazi's put in place 'the operation of industrial genocide' (Pawelczynska, 1979: 53, 79).

The convoluted structure of the paleonymic formation—*Muselmann* as Muslim-become-Jew-become-Muslim—that I have attempted to trace is marked by a complex weave of categorical oppositions and racist sedimentations that collide, affiliate and cleave, precisely as they (re)constitute their target subject and attempt to erase the traces of these unspeakable contradictions through an historicidal serialising logic in which the other is serially assimilated into the same. Like the Jews in the Nazi camps, the Guantánamo prisoners are 'catalogued and referred to by a serial number as a way of dehumanising them' (Khan, 2008: 264). The literal and symbolic violence of the Muslim *Muselmann* ramifies across a number of levels at Guantánamo Bay. As the contemporary embodiment of *homo sacer*, the Muslim prisoner of Guantánamo marks the *Muselmann* 'threshold in which man passe[s] into non-man' (Agamben, 2002: 47). 'I convince myself each day,' says one Guantánamo guard to the prisoners, 'that you guys are all subhuman' (cited in Begg, 2006: 165). One of the ex-detainees, Murat Kurnz, terms Guantánamo 'a fully constructed project of dehumanisation' (2007: 245).

In the process of crossing the threshold from human to non-human, the *Muselmann*, Agamben writes, was also compelled to be known by

a number of other de-humanising appellations: 'the thing itself,' 'donkeys,' 'cretins,' 'camels,' 'tired sheiks' and 'trinkets' (2002: 44). At once animalised (donkeys), disabled (cretin) and repeatedly branded by other Arabophobic slurs (camels, tired sheiks), the *Muselmann* can be effectively left to die without any sense of guilt or remorse. Within the schemas of anthropocentric/speciesist, ableist and racist taxonomies, the linguistic transmutation of a Jew into a Muslim/Arab-cretin-animal enables the recalibration of her or his position down the different hierarchies to, in every instance, the very bottom rung, the 'lowest of the low.'<sup>[4]</sup> The bottom rung of these hierarchies becomes coextensive with the 'space of the camp, where,' in Perera's words, 'the category of the "citizen" is no longer operative'; it is also 'the space where the claims and limits of the "human", what remains of the residue of the "citizen," are tested and revealed in lethal form' (2002: 2). The bottom rung marks the site from which an 'ontological hygiene' (Graham, 2002: 35) can be implacably exercised in order to dispatch target victims beyond the purview of the due process of law and justice.

In closing this essay, I want to focus on one more constitutive aspect of the *Muselmänner* that both enabled and facilitated their torture and extermination with impunity: 'we know from other witnesses,' writes Agamben in a parenthetical aside, 'that under no circumstances were they to be called "corpses" or "cadavers," but rather simply *Figuren*, figures, dolls' (2002: 54). The naming of the *Muselmann* inmate as 'doll' compels a return to the opening concerns of this essay, specifically, the ramifications of Banksy's installation of a Guantánamo detainee doll in Disneyland. The *Muselmänner* of the camps, writes Agamben, were said to be characterised by 'faces rigid as masks,' they embodied a 'faceless presence' (Levi, 1985: 90), an 'anti-face' (2002: 45, 53). Figurally, Banksy's Guantánamo doll and the prosthetically defaced Guantánamo detainees are transmogrified into one spectre: *Muselmann figuren/dolls*. Forced to wear blackened goggles, earmuffs and a surgical mask, the face of the Muslim detainee becomes the rigid mask of a doll that precludes the face-to-face relation because it is faceless, gazeless and speechless. In my invocation of the relation of the face-to-face, I draw upon the work of Emmanuel Levinas. In formulating the ethical relation between humans as principally founded in proximity with the other's face, Levinas draws attention to the irreplaceable alterity of the other: every face is unique, and to proceed to deface the face of the other instantiates the possibility to murder the other by stripping them of their personhood (Pugliese, forthcoming). 'The facelessness of the men at Guantánamo makes their abuse palatable,' writes Sabin Willet, a lawyer working at the camp (cited in Khan, 2008: 265).

For Levinas, the face incarnates more than the unique alterity of the other. 'The absolute nakedness of a face, the absolutely defenceless face' articulates 'the possibility of encountering a being through an interdiction. The face is the fact that a being affects us not in the indicative, but in the imperative'; this imperative invokes the command 'Thou shalt not kill': 'it is the impossibility of killing him [or her] who

presents that face' (1987: 21). Yet, as Levinas makes clear, the power of the face in enunciating the interdiction not to kill is not one based on its own disavowed violence. Rather, the power of this interdiction rests on something else altogether: 'The opposition of the face is not the opposition of a force, is not a hostility. It is a pacific opposition, but one where peace is not a suspended war or a violence simply contained. On the contrary, violence consists in ignoring this opposition, ignoring the face of a being, avoiding the gaze, and catching sight of an angle whereby the *no* inscribed on a face becomes a hostile or submissive force' (1987: 19).

Stripped of his faciality, and prosthetically transmuted into an anti-face, the Muslim prisoner of Guantánamo becomes the contemporary, yet critically qualified, embodiment of 'the *Muselmann*, the "core of the camp", 'the being whose death cannot be called death, but only the production of a corpse' (Agamben, 2002: 81). At Guantánamo Bay, the production of corpses is driven both by murder (Mahvish Khan, 2002: 153-65, has documented the unresolved forensic anomalies that haunt particular 'suicide' cases) and suicide through penalogical forces that are, in truth, forms of 'letting die.' As the 'insignia of biopower' (Agamben, 2002: 155), letting die evidences the reach of state biopolitical power into the very fibres of life. Guantánamo's penal apparatus pivots on the exercise of a virtually unfettered state power that can produce murder and corpses with impunity. The ontotautological transmutation and reduction of the Muslim inmates into *Muselmänner*, *Figuren*, and dolls facilitates the murderous operation of this penalogical system. As so many non-human dolls, the Muslim inmates of Guantánamo emerge as a 'kind of absolute biopolitical substance' that can be dispatched beyond the legal purview of the person and her/his attendant human rights (Agamben, 2002: 156).

For the brief duration of ninety minutes, a Guantánamo Bay doll is installed in the recreational surrounds of Disneyland. Instantiating a dissonant and scandalous rupture in the fantasy landscape of the theme park, Banksy's doll magnetises the disavowed violent histories that stratify that place. As an apostrophe of empire, this Guantánamo doll testifies to regimes of biopolitical violence that suture the past to the present. As contemporary conjuration of the *Muselmann*, Banksy's Guantánamo doll stands as apostrophic figure that rends the consoling fables of empire, exposing economies of violence that breach the prophylactic berms of the theme-park nation through the articulation of a seemingly impossible address: Guantámamo Bay, Disneyland.

### **Postscriptum**

As this essay goes to press, the recently elected U.S. President, Barack Obama, has ordered the closure of the Guantánamo Bay prison. Yet, in the wake of this impending closure, 'A freed Guantánamo prisoner has said that conditions at the US detention

camp have worsened since President Barack Obama was elected, claiming guards wanted to “take their last revenge” (‘Guantanamo gets worse’, 2009: 9).

**Associate Professor Joseph Pugliese teaches in the Department of Media, Music and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University. He is currently completing a manuscript titled ‘Biometrics: Bodies, Technologies, Biopolitics’ (New York: Routledge, forthcoming). He is also researching transnational relations of biopolitical violence, border control and penalty.**

### **Acknowledgement**

I’m grateful to Banksy for his generosity in allowing me to reproduce the image of his Guantánamo doll installation in Disneyland.

### **Notes**

1. Historically, this screening of ‘undesirables’ was also premised on white supremacist criteria that ‘mainly employed attractive, white young men and women who could be easily assimilated into the company’s design’ (Findlay, 1993: 74).

2. The video is available at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQHFFbD\\_-Pg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQHFFbD_-Pg). Accessed 21 July 2008.

3. See McCoy (2006: 35-6) for a detailed discussion of the historical precedents of this form of sensory deprivation torture; and Cranny-Francis (2008) for a discussion of the use of ‘sonic assault’ as torture on the Guantanamo inmates.

4. For a detailed discussion of the racial hierarchies that structured the inmates of the Nazi concentration camps, see Pawelczinska (1979: 54-5); and White (2000: 61-109).

### **Bibliography**

Agamben, G. (1998), *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. D. Heller-Roazen, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

---. (2002), *Remnants of Auschwitz*, trans. D. Heller-Roazen, New York: Zone Books.

Allen, J., Hilton, A., Lewis, J. & Litwack, L.F. (2005), *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*, Santa Fe: Twin Palms.

Amin, S. (2000), ‘Remembering the Muselman’, in K. Hiroyuki, F. Takeshi & O. Fumiko (eds), *Fussing Modernity: Appropriations of*

*History and Political Mobilization in South Asia*, Osaka, Japan: The Japan Center for Area Studies & the National Museum of Ethnology.

Banksy. (2005), *Wall and Piece*, London: Century.

Blanchot, M. (2003), *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Castañeda, A.I. (1993), 'Sexual violence in the politics and policies of conquest: Amerindian women and the Spanish conquest of Alta California', in A. de la Torre & B.M. Pesquera (eds), *Building With Our Hands: New Directions in Chicana Studies*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Comaroff, J. (2007), 'Terror and territory: Guantánamo and the space of contradiction', *Public Culture*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 381-405.

Cranny-Francis, A. (2008), 'Sonic assault to massive attack: touch, sound and embodiment', *SCAN: Journal of Media, Arts, Culture*, vol. 5, no. 3, [http://scan.net.au/scan/journal/display.php?journal\\_id=124](http://scan.net.au/scan/journal/display.php?journal_id=124)

Debord, G. (2006), *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Ken Knabb, London: Rebel Press.

Doss, E. (2006), 'Making the imagination safe in the 1950s: Disneyland's fantasy art and architecture', in K.A. Marling (ed.), *Designing Disney's Theme Parks*, Paris & New York: Flammarion.

Dow, M. (2004), *American Gulag: Inside U.S. Immigration Prisons*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dray, P. (2003), *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America*, New York: The Modern Library.

Findlay, J.M. (1993), *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fletcher, G.F. (2004), 'Black hole in Guantánamo Bay', *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, no. 2, pp. 121-32.

Gilroy, P. (2005), *Postcolonial Melancholia*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Globalsecurity.org (2002), 'Terror/indictment', accessed 21 October 2008, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/news/2002/sec-020828-2f5d9e89.htm>

Graham, E.L. (2002), *Representations of the Post/Human*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Harris, N. (2006), 'Expository expositions: preparing for the theme parks', in K.A. Marling (ed.), *Designing Disney's Theme Parks*. Paris & New York: Flammarion.

Levi, P. (1985), *Survival in Auschwitz*, trans. S. Wolfe, New York: Summit Books.

---. (1998), *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. R. Rosenthal, London: Abacus.

Kaplan, A. (2004), 'Violent belongings and the question of empire today: presidential address to the American Studies Association, October 17, 2003', *American Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 1, pp. 1-18.

---. (2005), 'Where is Guantánamo?', *American Quarterly*, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 831-58.

Khan, M.R. (2008), *My Guantánamo Diary*, Carlton North, Vic.: Scribe.

Kurnaz, M. (2007), *Five Years of My Life: An Innocent Man in Guantánamo Bay*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Levinas, E. (1987), *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhof.

Manzoor, P.S. (2001), 'Turning Jews into Muslims: the untold saga of the *Muselmänner*', *islam21*, no. 28, pp. 1-7.

Marling, K.A. (2006), 'Imagineering the Disney theme parks', in K.A. Marling (ed.), *Designing Disney's Theme Parks*, Paris & New York: Flammarion.

Marx, L. (2000), *The Machine in the Garden*, Oxford: University of Oxford Press.

Maxwell, A. (1999), *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions*, London: Leicester University Press.

McCoy, A.W. (2006), *A Question of Torture*, New York: Metropolitan Books.

---. (2006a), 'The punishment of David Hicks', *The Monthly*, June, pp. 20-29.

Begg, M. (2006), *Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey to Guantánamo and Back*, London: Free Press.

Nancy, J.-L. (2005), *The Ground of the Image*, trans. J. Fort, New York: Fordham University Press.

Olsberg, N. (2006), 'Foreword', in K.A. Marling (ed.), *Designing Disney's Theme Parks*, Paris & New York: Flammarion.

Ortíz, L.R. (2008), 'On (our) American ground: Caribbean-Latino-diasporic production and the postnational "Guantanamo"', *Social Text* 94, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 3-28.

Pawelczynska, A. (1979), *Values and Violence in Auschwitz*, trans. C.S. Leach, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Perera, S. (2002), 'What is a camp...?', *borderlands*, vol. 1, no. 1, [http://www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au/vol1no1\\_2002/perera\\_camp.html](http://www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au/vol1no1_2002/perera_camp.html)

Puar, J.K. (2007), *Terrorist Assemblages*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Pugliese, J. (2007a), 'Abu Ghraib's shadow archives', *Law and Literature*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 247-76.

---. (2007b), 'Geocorpographies of torture', *Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association Journal*, vol. 3, no. 1, <http://www.acrawsa.org.au/>

---. (Forthcoming), 'Necroethics of terrorism', *Public Culture*.

Ratner, M. (2005), 'The Guantánamo prisoners', in R. Meeropol (ed.), *America's Disappeared*, New York: Seven Stories Press.

Ratner, M. & Ray, E. (2004), *Guantánamo: What the World Should Know*, White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing.

Rose, D. (2004), *Guantánamo: The War on Human Rights*, New York: The New Press.

Rothman, H.K. (1998), *Devil's Bargain: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West*, Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press.

Russell, L. (2001), *Savage Imaginings*, Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing.

Scarry, E. (1987), *The Body in Pain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, A. (2005), *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

'Guantanamo gets worse' (2009), *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 March, p. 9.

Tolnay, S.E. & Beck, E.M. (1992), *A Festival of Violence*, Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

'Judge throws out terror convictions' (2004), USA Today, accessed 22 September 2008, [http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-09-01-terror-doj\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-09-01-terror-doj_x.htm).

White, R.J. (2000), 'IG Auschwitz: The Primacy of Racial Politics', Dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Worthington, A. (2007), *The Guantánamo Files: The Stories of the 774 Detainees in America's Illegal Prison*, London: Pluto Press.

© borderlands ejournal 2009