Introduction

Cinema/Chimera?
The Re-presencing of Africa
in Twenty-First-Century Film

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Introduction

In November 2004 I attended the annual meeting of the African
Studies Association in New Orleans. A flier inserted into the confer-
ence programme invited participants to a screening of a new film,
Hotel Rwanda, at a small arts cinema nearby. After the showing
Terry George, the director, explained that this was a 'low budget'
film (U.S.$17 million) that might only get a limited release (at that
point there was no U.K. distributor), saying that with a minimal pub-
licity budget, 'We depend on word of mouth to spread the word on
this movie'. Three months later the billboard next to my local train
station in south London displayed a six-metre-long machete announc-
ing the general release of the film and its three Oscar nominations.
The film appeared to have come a long way by word of mouth.

  Hotel Rwanda is just one of a series of mainstream North
American/European, English-language films set in Africa that were

released in the first decade of the new century.[1] In the second half of the previous century one can discern three dominant phases in mainstream, English-speaking, North American/European cinematic portrayals of Africa. First, Africa provided the context for narratives of heroic ascendancy over self (*The African Queen* 1951; *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* 1952), military odds (*Zulu* 1964; *Khartoum* 1966) and nature (*Mogambo* 1953; *Hatari!* 1962; *Born Free* 1966; *The Last Safari* 1967). Attention then turned to retrospective consideration of colonial life, with an emphasis on decay, decadence and race (*Out of Africa* 1985; *White Mischief* 1987). *Cry Freedom* (1987) appeared to herald a different engagement with the continent as the amorphous 'Africa' of recurring exotic caricatures (landscape and wildlife) gave way to the brutal specifics of Apartheid South Africa.[2]

The films considered in this volume can be seen as a new phase, but one in which the cinematic Africa of the 1980s is reversed. Where *Cry Freedom* was an impassioned attempt to educate the world about apartheid, South Africa's story of redemption is now extracted from 'Africa' (*Red Dust* 2004; *Invictus* 2009) while the rest of the continent is no longer a place of romance between Danish baronesses and British big-game hunters (*Out of Africa* 1985), but is blighted by transnational corruption (*The Constant Gardener* 2005), genocide (*Hotel Rwanda* 2004; *Shooting Dogs* 2006), 'failed states' (*Black Hawk Down* 2001), illicit transnational commerce (*Blood Diamond* 2006) and the unfulfilled promises of decolonization (*The Last King of Scotland* 2006). Whereas once Apartheid South Africa (*Cry Freedom* 1987; *A Dry White Season* 1989) was the foil for the romance of East Africa, a redeemed South Africa has now become the foil for violence in the rest of the continent and it is for this reason that *Red Dust* (2004) and *Invictus* (2009) are included in this volume. The same relationship applies to other films that could have been included that promote a redeemed South Africa (*Goodbye Bafana* 2007; *In My Country* 2006) in contrast to rampant violence elsewhere (*Tears of the Sun* 2003; *Sometimes in April* 2005; *Lord of War* 2005; *Darfur* 2009). It is, perhaps, the dominance of the latter theme of violence that explains why no North American/

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European, mainstream English-language film released since 2000 has been exclusively set in comparatively stable North Africa (pre-Arab Spring and with the exception of Algeria), although segments of films have been set, for example, in Morocco (*Babel* (2006), *The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007), *Hanna* (2011). As regards mainstream Francophone films, only *Des Hommes et des Dieux* (2010) has considered the contemporary situation in Algeria while the most celebrated films, *Indigènes* (2006) and its follow-up *Hors-la-loi* (2010), are historical (set during and in the aftermath of the Second World War) and the action takes place mostly in France.

One of the questions that propels this volume is whether this post-2000 group of films has been able to move away from what Mark Leopold (this volume) describes as the sub-Conradian cliché of Africa as a canvas against which European heroism is enacted. In other words, to what extent do these films continue to engage in the 'distortion of geographical, cultural, human and environmental facts' in order to create a predominantly hostile environment in which a white hero can triumph (Ukadike 1994: 42)? Attention to this reminds us of African cinema and its goal of 'portraying Africa from an African perspective' (Ukadike 1994: 304) through the three broad themes of: 'social realist narratives' that consider current socio-cultural issues; 'colonial confrontation', that puts into conflict Africans and their European colonisers; and 'return to the source', that re-examines pre-colonial African traditions (Diawara 1992: 140–66). Through these different genres, African cinema has been 'struggling to reverse the demeaning portrayals presented by the dominant colonial and commercial cinemas which blatantly distorted African life and culture' (Ukadike 1994: 2; see also Barlet 2000; Gugler 2003; Thackway 2003; Ukadike 2002). Do the films considered here participate in that struggle or do they perpetuate the distortion?

This volume evaluates eight recent films set in Africa by drawing together the views of authors who occupy a particular location. On one hand, they are members of the primary, intended (non-African) audience for these films. But, they are also scholars (historians and

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anthropologists) with extensive, specialist knowledge of the contexts, events and people portrayed. In the chapters that follow, therefore, the contributors are able to draw on their long-term engagement with specific African contexts to explore the relationship between the film, historical or anthropological knowledge of the context and local perspectives. Further, the contributors reflect on the relation of these films to other contemporary forms of 'Western' knowledge about Africa (news media, documentary, academic commentary and fiction literature) to consider continuities and discontinuities with other portrayals of Africa and Africa's place in the North American/European imagination.

Africa in the European Imagination

As the contributors note, the writers and directors of the films considered here often express moral motivations. John le Carré considers *The Constant Gardener* as a 'semi-documentary' to expose the activities of pharmaceutical companies in developing countries (Lenzer 2005; see Branch, this volume), while Terry George, director of *Hotel Rwanda*, has stated: 'This story needs to be chronicled, it's one of the greatest acts of heroism of the twentieth century' (Thompson 2005: 52; see Eltringham, this volume). The question remains, however, whether these films (re)produce and perpetuate metaphors and imagined landscapes at odds with the stated intentions of those who write, direct, produce and act in them (Dalby 2008: 443). In other words, do the film scripts reproduce, rather than challenge, a *single* script for 'Africa' which audiences encounter elsewhere in the 'discourse of our times' in which the African experience 'can only be understood through a *negative interpretation*' (Mbembe 2001: 1)? Mark Leopold (this volume) quotes a Ugandan advertising executive commenting on the making of *The Last King of Scotland*: 'You might click your tongue at the perpetuation of the African stereotype of psychotic but disarmingly charming brutes, hopelessly gullible African masses and their obsequiousness towards foreigners, but for now all publicity, any publicity is good'.

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Whether or not 'any publicity is good publicity', the question is whether Leopold's suggestion regarding *The Last King of Scotland* that 'this is not primarily a film about Ugandan history at all, but a film about Western ideas, or myths, about Africa' could be applied to all eight films?

Over the last fifteen years or so political geographers have recognized that film is a form of mapping (or 'cinemato-graphing') in which 'geopolitics is made intelligible and meaningful in the popular realm and through the "everyday"' by (re)producing political and 'moral geographies' and making clear 'the lines of division between "us" and "them"' (Power and Crampton 2005: 195, 198; see Shapiro 1997: 16; Lukinbeal 2004: 247). Alongside other forms of Western media, film produces 'geo-graphs of world politics' which divide the world into 'easy to manage chunks' to make it simple, meaningful and manageable to Western audiences (Sharp 1993: 494; see Dalby 2008: 443).

'Africa' is one such 'easy to manage chunk', not really a place but 'a category through which a "world" is structured' (Ferguson 2006: 5). Neither is 'Africa' as category (rather than place) new. Scholars have detailed the place that 'Africa' (as category) has played in the European/North American imagination (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1991: 86–125; Mudimbe 1988: 16–23; Asad 1973). Described as a 'paradigm of difference' by V.Y. Mudimbe (1994: xii) the alterity ('otherness') of Africa enabled the 'colonial dialectic' (Hardt and Negri 2000: 127) by which Europeans constructed a civilized Self. As Achille Mbembe (2001: 2) writes, 'Africa as an idea, a concept, has historically served, and continues to serve, as a polemical argument for the West's desperate desire to assert its difference from the rest of the world', a sentiment echoed by Chinua Achebe's (1988: 17) observation that 'the West seems to suffer deep anxieties about the precariousness of its civilization and to have a need for a constant reassurance by comparison with Africa'.

Any discussion of cinematic portrayals of 'Africa' (as category) cannot avoid drawing on Edward Said's (2003[1978]) discussion of 'orientalism'. As indicated, 'Africa', like 'the Orient', has 'helped

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to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience' thereby enabling European culture to gain 'in strength and identity'. Ultimately, there is no 'Western civilization' without images of other places including 'Africa' (Said 2003[1978]: 2–3). By describing and representing 'Africa' (including in film) the 'West', it is argued, dominates, restructures and has authority over 'Africa'. Furthermore, as with the image of 'the Orient', Europeans and North Americans enjoy a 'flexible *positioned* superiority' with Africa 'which puts the Westerner in a whole series of relationships … without ever losing him the relative upper hand' (Said 2003[1978]: 7). Whether it is the romantic Africa of wide savannahs and safari; the compassion-inducing Africa of poverty, disease and famine; or the violent Africa of genocide and torture, the 'Westerner' never loses this 'relative upper hand' of civility because Africa can only be 'pitied, worshipped or dominated' (Wainaina 2005). If this 'flexible *positioned* superiority' is integral to representations of 'Africa', the question remains of whether it can be overcome in films which, on the surface, denounce relationships of superiority/exploitation, whether by pharmaceutical companies (*The Constant Gardener*); dealers in illicit diamonds (*Blood Diamond*); or distant, disinterested politicians (*Hotel Rwanda; Shooting Dogs*)?

What unites the films considered here is that they are all concerned with subjects of which a European/North American audience will already possess some awareness through 'factual' news media. The realist illusion, that films are 'no more than a window onto unmediated "reality"' (Rosenstone 1992: 507) is, therefore, accentuated, drawing upon an audience's (deceptive) sense of familiarity and recognition. As many scholars have demonstrated, news media coverage of 'Africa' in North American and Europe is overwhelmingly negative (Ebo 1992; Brookes 1995; Hachten and Beil 1985; Hickey and Wylie 1993; McCarthy 1983; Schraeder and Endless 1998; Zein and Cooper 1992). As Beverley Hawk (1992: 6) states in the introduction to her seminal edited volume, the common theme of media coverage of 'Africa' is that 'Africa is a failure and needs our help'. It has been noted that a distinct language/script is employed

to describe 'Africa'. For example, while the English-speaking press described the Bosnian conflict as political and ethnic and employed the 'language of civil war' (involving 'strategies' and 'leaders'), the concurrent 1994 Rwandan genocide was described as 'timeless' and 'tribal' and employed the 'language of savagery' (such as 'bloodthirsty' and 'orgy') (Myers, Klak, and Koehl 1996: 29; see Allen and Seaton 1999; Alozie 2007; Eltringham 2004: 63–8; Livingston 2007; Wall 1997a, 1997b). In other words, African conflicts were described using a 'different vocabulary' from those in Europe because, it has been argued, 'African events do not follow any pattern recognisable to Western reason' (see Hawk 1992: 7). In so doing, the news media perpetuates the 'moral epistemology of imperialism' (Said 1993: 18) because 'without such encounters, the West would not know its own civility' (Razack 2003: 208).

Scholars have also noted a tendency of 'geo-conflation' in news media coverage of Africa in which the latest crisis in one part of the continent is 'extrapolated to an undifferentiated continental ruin' (Myers, Klak, and Koehl 1996: 38; see Wainaina 2005). While Africans in films made in the first half of the twentieth century all spoke Swahili and lived in one landscape (East Africa) (Cameron 1994: 12), today, South Africa stands in for Rwanda (*Hotel Rwanda*); Morocco for Somalia (*Black Hawk Down*); and Mozambique and South Africa for Sierra Leone (*Blood Diamond*). This results in 'a composite Africa [which] does little to disrupt or challenge most of the films' audience, for whom Africa is a singular and largely un-nuanced unit' (Hoffman, this volume). The transformation of particular episodes into placeless archetypes finds another expression in the way 'Africans' are invariably represented as an anonymized 'frantic mass' rather than specific persons with 'a name, opinions, relatives, and histories' (Malkki 1996: 387–89; see Wainaina 2005 Eltringham and Kapteijns this volume).[3] Such portrayals of 'Africa', Beverly Hawk (1992: 13) has argued, means that European and North American audiences 'do not really get any news from Africa', only repetitive images that 'correspond to notions about Africa already existent in the

minds of Westerners'. Just as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century African travelogues simply brought 'new proofs' of 'African inferiority' already established in the European imagination (Mudimbe 1988: 13), so contemporary news media reports are simply reiterations of well-established themes.

Although research suggests that media coverage of Africa may be moving away from being predominantly negative (see Scott 2009; Kothari 2010), when the films considered here allude to news media it is to the *negative* media coverage of 'Africa'. In *Hotel Rwanda*, for example, the TV journalist David excitedly tells his editor on the phone: 'I've got incredible footage. It's a massacre, dead bodies, machetes. If I get this through right away can you make the evening news?' In *Shooting Dogs* Joe Conner asks Christopher if he can bring a BBC TV crew to the school in which they are besieged, arguing that 'Nowadays, nothing exists if it's not on TV'. In *Black Hawk Down*, when a colleague asks Staff Sergeant Matt Eversmann whether he likes Somalis, he replies, 'We have two things that we can do. We can either help or we can sit back and watch the country destroy itself on CNN'. And in *Blood Diamond* the magazine journalist, Maddy, takes a series of archetypal, Sebastião Salgadoesque, black and white photos of refugees and later declares, 'It's like one of those infomercials with little black babies with swollen bellies and flies in their eyes. Except here I've got dead mothers; I've got severed limbs, but it's nothing new … I'm sick of writing about victims, but it's all I fucking do'. The paradox is, of course, that these moments in which the news media is challenged for stereotyping Africa as a place of violence is done within films that take violence in Africa as their subject with the dramatic opportunities that entails.

The influence of the news media on these films, however, goes beyond these explicit allusions. One of Said's insights is how portrayals of 'the Orient' acquire 'mass and density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large' (Said 2003[1978]: 20). For Said, *all* representations of 'the Orient' are his subject of study, whether written by scholars, fiction authors,

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travel writers or journalists. They possess this unity because 'they frequently refer to each other' (Said 2003[1978]: 23). The same can be said of cinematic and news media portrayals of 'Africa'. In the films considered here there are explicit instances of such self-reference between news media and cinematic portrayal. A number of films use VOA or BBC world service radio broadcasts to provide 'context' (*Hotel Rwanda*; *Blood Diamond*) and *Shooting Dogs* ends with the footage of the infamous State Department press conference on 28 April 1994 at which the official refused to call events in Rwanda 'genocide'. What is more striking, however, is that a number of the films restage news media footage: footage of Rwandan Tutsi being killed (*Hotel Rwanda*); Nelson Mandela's release (*Invictus*); Somalis fighting over a food delivery at a Red Cross Food Distribution Centre (*Black Hawk Down*); an exhumation carried out by investigators for the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*Red Dust*); or, in the case of *The Last King of Scotland*, scenes 'copied frame for frame' from a documentary (see Leopold, this volume). As Danny Hoffman (this volume) observes of the restaging of the 1999 attack on Freetown by the Revolutionary United Front in *Blood Diamond*:

> Much of this sequence is shot with hand held, mobile cameras. Zwick [the director] describes his desire in this scene in particular to capture the aesthetic of documentary films from the period, many of which were shot on small cameras from hidden positions … To enhance the newsreel effect, in at least some of these scenes the camera operators were not told how the action would unfold, leaving them to shoot as though they were photojournalists documenting unscripted news.

The use or restaging of news media images in these films suggest that anyone who represents 'Africa' assumes some precedent, some previous knowledge 'to which he refers and on which he relies' so that the representation '*affiliates* itself with other works' (Said 2003[1978]: 20). In other words, fictional(ized) stories about Africa 'pick up on other media, either resonating with or amplifying the already known' (Sharp 1996: 158). Such restaging and the evident self-reference between the news media and films raises the question

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of how far these films can move from the negative *scripts* of news media coverage of 'Africa' (see Sharp 1996: 159).

The anonymous, 'frantic mass' (Malkki 1996: 387–89) so often portrayed in news media coverage of Africa remains evident in these films. As Lidwien Kapteijns (this volume) observes of *Black Hawk Down*, 'The film's rendering of the Somalis as an undifferentiated, generically Black, violent mob is a strategy that creates enormous moral distance between them and the film's audience'. On the other hand, a number of the films self-consciously comment on empathy, perhaps in an attempt to counter news media portrayal and bring individual Africans within the audience's 'universe of moral obligation' (Fein 1993: 43). Challenges to the audience's assumed inability to empathize with Africans are made in *Shooting Dogs* when Rachel, a BBC journalist confesses, 'Anytime I saw a dead Bosnian woman, a white woman, I thought … that could be my mum. Over here they're just dead Africans', and in *Hotel Rwanda* when Jack, a TV cameraman says, 'I think if people see this footage they'll say, "Oh my God that's horrible," and then go on eating their dinners'. In *Blood Diamond*, when asked to help the Sierra Leonean Solomon, the magazine journalist Maddy responds, 'Why? This whole country is at war. Why should I just help one person? [pause] I can't believe I just said that'. The attempt to personalize the 'frantic mass' and challenge the limits of audience empathy is also found in *The Constant Gardener* in the following exchange between Justin, a British diplomat, and Jonah, a UN pilot as they flee a Sudanese refugee camp under attack by 'tribesmen':

Jonah: I'm sorry. I can't take the girl.
Justin: I'm not leaving her.
Jonah: We're only allowed to evacuate aid workers.
Justin: Well, to hell with what's allowed. I'll … How much do you want for her? Look, there's $800.
Jonah: Look, don't embarrass me. You can't buy this. The rules are made for good reason.
Justin: This is a child's life! There are no rules to cover that!
Jonah: Look, there are thousands of them out there. I can't make an exception for this one child.

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> Justin: But this is one we can help, here!
> Jonah: Listen, that's the way it is here. Keep your money. Strap yourself in, and let's go.

These self-conscious reflections on moral responsibility also draw attention to the fact that in a number of films the key characters are non-African: Joe Conner in *Shooting Dogs*, Nicholas Garrigan in *The Last King of Scotland* and Justin Quayle in *The Constant Gardener*. On one hand, this is an example of Achille Mbembe's (Mbembe 2001: 3) observation that 'narrative about Africa is always a pretext for a comment about something else, some other place, some other people'. Africa becomes simply a backdrop for exemplars of the naïve gap year student (*Shooting Dogs; The Last King of Scotland*); the alienated diplomat (*The Constant Gardener*); the reformed mercenary (*Blood Diamond*). And yet, when directors argue that their films are designed to 'educate' a non-African audience, these 'outsiders' are a pedagogical device who, as audience surrogates, can engage in 'informative dialogues' (Duage-Roth 2010: 196) and revelatory journeys that enlighten the equally 'outsider' audience. As Michael Caton-Jones, director of *Shooting Dogs*, has argued, 'It's told through the eyes of westerners because there is no point telling the Rwandans. They know what happened. My job is to tell the story to the west so that they will understand' (Walker 2004). Although persuasive, employing the 'innocent abroad' device risks reproducing the impressionistic, sensationalist spectatorship of the colonial travelogue (see Basaninyenzi 2006) or the 'heroic figure of the white man rescuing the African' (Duage-Roth 2010: 183). As Mark Leopold (this volume) observes of *The Last King of Scotland*, 'placing a white character at the centre of the narrative tends to reduce the film to the standard sub-Conradian cliché of Africa as a blank contrast to European heroism' (see also Hoffman, this volume). Then again, to assume that African lead characters would be intrinsically more 'authentic' reproduces the illusion of the realist film which obscures the fact that nothing within its frame(s) is actually 'authentic' or 'true'.

Veracity and Invention

The question of 'truth' is pertinent given that, with the exception of *The Constant Gardener*, all of the films considered in this volume are realist portrayals of 'historical' events.[4] For many in the audience these films will be their sole history lesson on a particular event/context. As Derek Catsam (this volume) states in relation to *Invictus* (2009), 'as with most films depicting historical events, people probably should not learn their history from *Invictus*, but huge numbers of people will'. There is a need, therefore, to consider their historical veracity. It is argued that the ideological power of cinema derives from 'creating an illusion that what happens on screen is a neutral recording of objective events, rather than a construct operating from a certain point of view' (Ryan and Kellner 1988: 1). The insinuation here is that other representations (including those produced by the historian or anthropologist) are, somehow, not constructed from a 'certain point of view'. It is instructive that Catherine Njeri Ngugi (2003: 58) begins her critical comparison of Ousame Sembène's *Camp de Tharoye* (1988) and Richard Attenborough's *Cry Freedom* (1987) with the historian E.H. Carr's (1987: 11) observation; 'It used to be said that facts speak for themselves. This is, of course, untrue. The facts speak only when the historian calls on them: it is he who decides to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context'. For the historian, anthropologist or filmmaker, therefore, 'there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a *re-presence*, or a representation' (Said 2003[1978]: 21).

To argue that unlike written history (and by extension anthropology), a realist historical film is arbitrary and selective, and thus deceptive, is to misconstrue written history. Written history is not simply 'an organised compilation of facts', for '"facts" never stand alone but are always called forth (or constituted) by the work in which they then become embedded' (Rosenstone 1992: 506). Just as a film is not a simple transference of scholarly history to the screen, so written history is not a simple transference of the past into written form (see Browning 1992; White 1987). We must be alert to the fact

that while cinematic history is not written history, neither is written history unmediated facts but a 'construction' (Worden 2007: 87; see Eltringham 2004: 147–60). These films are also constructions and, as a consequence, we should not judge them according to a 'literalist mimetic mode' (Dalby 2008: 450).

The recognition that neither history nor film employs a 'literalist mimetic mode' must influence the ways these films are assessed. Derek Catsam (this volume), for example, discussing the attempt in *Invictus* to bring the complexities of post-apartheid South Africa to an audience that knows little about the country's history, concedes: 'It would be easy to dismiss such efforts from the perch of academia but in this case surely half a loaf is better than none at all'. In fact, it can be argued that by deviating from a 'literalist mimetic mode' realist films (including those considered here) may deliver greater 'veracity'. Regarding *The Last King of Scotland,* Mark Leopold (this volume) suggests that in the case of Idi Amin 'myths or legends may be truer to the realities of life than a pure recitation of fully confirmed facts' and that to assess the film 'solely on matters of fact would be to miss the film's ability to capture the metaphorical reality of his rule that continues to haunt contemporary Uganda and inform Western imageries of Africa'. Robert Rosentsone (2000: 62) makes related observations, that 'film will always include images that are at once invented and true; true in that they symbolize, condense, or summarize larger amounts of data; true in that they impart an overall meaning of the past that can be verified, documented or reasonably argued'. Such abbreviation is required for a plausible dramatic structure and necessary if the film is to communicate with a diverse audience (Toplin 1996: 5). It is not, therefore, 'invention' per se which is the problem (compression, condensation, alteration or metaphor which still remains true to a wider knowledge of the contexts portrayed), but 'false' invention, which chooses to ignore that wider knowledge (Rosenstone 2000: 62–4). We need to ask, therefore, whether the films considered here 'ignore the findings and assertions and arguments of what we already know from other sources' (Rosenstone 2000: 62) or do they contain 'impressively imaginative

efforts to speak the truth through mythic images' (Toplin 1996: 13)? An example of a 'true invention' would be the fact that although there has not been a pharmaceutical scandal in Kenya of the kind portrayed in *The Constant Gardener*, Daniel Branch (this volume) indicates that there have been analogous events in West Africa.

One of the 'true inventions' that realist films engage in, but which is rarely acknowledged, is to make the audience into eye-witnesses to what is attested to in other sources but of which there is no footage. In our hyper-mediatized world it is easy to forget that we do not have footage of the South African police or Idi Amin torturing people (*Red Dust; Last King of Scotland*). And yet, because the realist film 'abhors a vacuum; it converts the absence of the past into a visible presence' (Hirsch 2004: 21). This is, perhaps, most clear in *Red Dust*. Annelies Verdoolaege (this volume) discusses how South African special branch policeman Jeffrey Benzien re-enacted the 'wet bag' torture method in front of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In *Red Dust* the 'tools' of torture are also brought to the hearing for the Commissioner's to inspect, but Benzien's 'safe' re-enactment with an unharmed volunteer is replaced with a flashback exposing the audience to the true horror.

Ultimately, the 'meanings, messages and connotations' of the films considered here are 'constructed differently depending on who is viewing and where they are viewing from' (Lisle and Pepper 2005: 169). Each of the contributors responds to their film from their own particular location. Underpinning their assessments is a tension: the desire for greater knowledge and understanding of Africa, but recognition of the great obstacles that lie in the way. As Kenneth Cameron (1994: 13) observes:

> When the filmic 'Africa' and the Africa are compared, a disjunction can always be found. Some of this disjunction is the result of ignorance, some of indifference, some of willful blindness, some of governmental or industrial interference or even censorship; but some of it is inevitable – the impossibility of ever capturing an almost infinite complexity with the camera.

Notes

1. For reflection on pre-2000 films see Bickford-Smith and Mendelsohn (2007).
2. For a more detailed discussion of cinematic 'Africa' in the twentieth century see Cameron (1994).
3. Liisa Malkki (1996: 388) notes the prevalence of women and children in depictions of refugees, denoting a 'certain kind of helplessness' (see also Burman 1994).
4. Although portraying historical events, *Red Dust* is an adaptation of a novel (Slovo 2000).

Filmography

Attenborough, R. (Dir.) 1987. *Cry Freedom* (Universal Pictures, Marble Arch Productions).

August, B. (Dir.) 2007. *Goodbye Bafana* (Banana Films, Arsam International, Film Afrika Worldwide, Future Films, Thema Production, X-Filme Creative Pool).

Beauvois, X. (Dir.) 2010. *Des Hommes et des Dieux* (Why Not Productions, Armada Films, France 3 Cinéma).

Boll, U. (Dir.) 2009. *Darfur* (Event Film Distribution, Pitchblack Pictures Inc., ZenHQ Films).

Boorman, J. (Dir.) 2006. *In My Country* (Chartoff Productions, Film Afrika Worldwide, Film Consortium, Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa, Merlin Films, Phoenix Pictures, Studio Eight Productions, U.K. Film Council).

Bouchareb, R. (Dir.) 2006. *Indigènes* (Tessalit Productions).

—— . (Dir.) 2010. *Hors-la-loi* (Tessalit Productions).

Caton-Jones, M. (Dir.) 2005. *Shooting Dogs* (CrossDay Productions Ltd., ARTE, BBC Films, Egoli Tossell Film, Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Invicta Capital, U.K. Film Council, Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF)).

Dearden, B. (Dir.) 1966. *Khartoum* (Julian Blaustein Productions Ltd.).

Eastwood, C. (Dir.) 2009. *Invictus* (Warner Bros. Pictures, Spyglass Entertainment, Revelations Entertainment, Mace Neufeld Productions, Malpaso Productions).

Endfield, C. (Dir.) 1964. *Zulu* (Diamond Films).

Ford, J. (Dir.) 1953. *Mogambo* (Loew's).

Fuqua, A. (Dir.) 2003. *Tears of the Sun* (Cheyenne Enterprises, Michael Lobell Productions, Revolution Studios).

George, T. (Dir.) 2004. *Hotel Rwanda* (United Artists).

Greengrass, P. (Dir.) 2007 *The Bourne Ultimatum* (Universal Pictures, Kennedy/Marshall Company, Kanzaman, Angel Studios, Ludlum Entertainment, Motion Picture BETA Produktionsgesellschaft).

Hathaway, H. (Dir.) 1967. *The Last Safari* (Paramount Pictures).

Hawks, H. (Dir.) 1962. *Hatari!* (Malabar).

Hill, J. (Dir.) 1966. *Born Free* (Columbia Pictures Corporation, Open Road Films, Atlas Films Ltd.).

Hooper, T. (Dir.) 2004. *Red Dust* (British Broadcasting Corporation, Distant Horizon, Videovision Entertainment, Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa, BBC Films).

Huston, J. (Dir.) 1951. *The African Queen* (Romulus Films, Horizon Pictures).

Iñárritu, A. G. (Dir.), 2006 *Babel* (Zeta Film, Anonymous Content, Paramount Pictures,

Central Films, Paramount Vantage, Media Rights Capital).

King, H. (Dir.) 1952. *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation).

Macdonald, K. (Dir.) 2006. *The Last King of Scotland* (Fox Searchlight Pictures, DNA Films, FilmFour, U.K. Film Council, Scottish Screen, Cowboy Films, Slate Films, Tatfilm).

Meirelles, F. (Dir.) 2005. *The Constant Gardener* (Focus Features, Potboiler Productions).

Niccol, A. (Dir.) 2005. *Lord of War* (Entertainment Manufacturing Company, VIP 3 Medienfonds, Ascendant Pictures, Saturn Films, Rising Star, Copag V, Endgame Entertainment).

Palcy, E. (Dir.) 1989. *A Dry White Season* (Davros Films Star Partners II Ltd., Sundance Productions).

Peck, R. (Dir.) 2005. *Sometimes in April* (CINEFACTO, HBO Films, Velvet Film).

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