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Lest we forget (matter) posthumanism, memory, and exclusion

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Lest we Forget (Matter): Post-humanism, Memory, and Exclusion

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Abstract

Anzac Day commemoration centres on the Anzac Legend, that volunteer Australian soldiers gave a sense of Australian nationhood a global presence. As such, it is considered an important institution in Australia. Largely absent, or at least uncomfortably present for some Australians, are the voices of aboriginal Australians. This exclusion needs to be fully understood if the Australian polity is to be considered an unrestrictive and representative democracy.

In this article, I consider a manner in which the uncovering of the means of exclusion of aboriginal voices from Anzac Day can be achieved. This depends on a radical democratisation of research. As such, I present Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and new materialism as methodological perspectives that fulfil this imperative. Ultimately, this article urges a democratic research process that considers how many disparate entities participate in a commemorative network in order to contribute to broader questions of exclusion, citizenship, identity, and recognition.

Keywords

Introduction

Bruno Latour's "Socratic dialogue" in *Reassembling the Social* (2005) is a useful means of orienting one's self and one's work. This is where the clearest articulation of the purpose of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) is made: "it's a theory, and a strong one . . . but about *how* to study things, or rather how *not* to study them—or rather, how to let the actors have some room

to express themselves" (Latour 2005: 142). The equivalence made between things and actors is core to ANT; things are considered actors, and should thus be respected as having a constitutive role in the enactment of situations. With this in mind, this article acts as an ethical manifesto that appeals to the radically democratic notion of a "parliament of things" (Latour 1993).

Such a methodology is introduced to explore an already substantially developed investigation into identity boundaries and the politics of exclusion. In this article, I will argue that the conditions surrounding the exclusion of an aboriginal presence from the commemorative temporality of Anzac Day need to be fully uncovered as an ethical step towards the decolonisation of Australia's political realm. I will implicate Anzac Day as an active component of such an exclusionary ordering of identity and political boundaries.

The tools by which this is made possible are offered in the shared, or similar, vocabularies of ANT and new materialism, themselves concerned with identifying matter, and other non-discursive factors, bound up in the construction of structures and eschewing presumed theoretical frameworks or pre-direction. In the first section of this article, I will consider the work of Judith Butler and Giorgio Agamben to frame a discussion of commemorative practices as actors within a political assemblage, situating it as an investigation of post-colonial political exclusion. The relevance of a post-humanist vocabulary is considered in the following section and identified as a way of reimagining the theorisation of exclusion from a political community.

The third section of this article considers Anzac Day, specifically. It does so on a twofold basis. First, it concerns itself with identifying how Anzac Day is situated as an actor in the political exclusion of aboriginal Australians. Here, this article engages with a body of literature that considers the link between collective memory and politics in order to identify the significance of commemorative practices. Second, this section considers how Anzac Day,

itself, can be considered an association made up of various heterogeneous relations. This allows an examination of *how* collective memories come to "be". The concluding section of this article offers a note that considers why this disposition to political and legal theory is important, addressing this as a key ethical consideration for the political researcher.

Memory and political exclusion

The reason that both Butler and Agamben are considered in this article is for their focus on exclusion in political communities. Agamben (1998), in *Homo Sacer*, states that juridical power is exercised on the basis on deciding between what life is included and what is excluded from legal and political spheres and, thus, from full presence as life. What this may mean for the drawing of socio-cultural lines of belonging within a polis is important in the context of a settled Australia and how it treats—or relates with—indigenous populations. Similarly, Agamben considers that:

> "law is made of nothing but what it manages to capture inside itself through the inclusive exclusion of the exception: it nourishes itself on this exception and is a dead letter without it. In this sense, the law truly 'has no existence in itself, but rather has its being in the life of men'" (Agamben 1998: 27).

This means that a juridico-political community finds its meaning in the ability to except certain life from its realm. As such, sovereignty is imbued in a mediation of what is normative and, equally, what is excluded. Furthermore, Susan Dianne Brophy's (2009) suggestion that "the validity of any given state's authority can therefore be measured in terms of whether or not its citizens act in accordance with a 'general obligation to obey' those duties bestowed upon them

by the juridical order of the state" (2009: 201) is grounded in a sense that a community is sustained on the basis of the obligations it imposes on itself through a mediated normativity.

Such a thesis can provide a useful basis for questioning *how* the produced/effected obedience is ordered. For instance, the following may be asked in the context of Anzac Day: can the narrative power of collective memory be considered an actor in the establishment of an exception—through the production of a sense of what is normative? Indeed, in the context of colonialism, Brophy states that "the most effective strategy of maintaining order in the colonies is by means of inclusive exclusion, where the force of sovereignty lay in the acts of suspension that it performs with respect to norm, law, and most important, life" (2009: 204). This echoes what Jan Assmann (1995) says about the normative and societal effect of what he calls cultural memory "to stabilise and convey that society's self-image" (1995: 132), with obligations arising from it that engender "a clear system of values and differentiations in importance" (1995: 131).

Here, we can return to Agamben, and the notion that the differentiations between some life as important enough to be commemorated—or even thought of as life worth living—and some as not[1] feeds a political community. Any sense of not belonging within a mnemonic framework can be considered an ascription that one cannot enjoy life within a political or, in Assmann's terms, cultural community.

Returning to the colonial context, a consideration of the colonized as exceptions, "insofar as they are humans who cannot claim the same stature as [the colonizers]" (Brophy

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[1] Agamben considers "sacred" life (*homo sacer*) to be life which the sovereign is "permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice" (1998: 83). In these terms, it is life that cannot be conceptualised as life because its death is made devoid of meaning.

2009: 206) typifies the mechanism for understanding how a mnemonic framework that offers a normative unity could generate a sense of exceptionality and exclusion. In my mind, questioning the form on which the decision on exceptionality takes places is key; why is some life valued above others?

Judith Butler (2004) offers a consideration of how differential allocations of grievability (analogous in many respects to sacred life) "operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human" (2004: xv). Though Butler conceptualises grievable life within the frames of US political rhetoric after the World Trade Centre attacks, the frame of grievability offers an interesting ethic about the meaning of particular apprehensions of life.

For instance, when Butler states that "our fear of understanding belies a deeper fear that we shall be taken up by it, find it is contagious, become infected in a morally perilous way by thinking of the presumed enemy" (Butler 2004: 8), it brings to bear her thesis on the example of Anzac Day commemoration. Both Assmann's conceptualisation of the consequences of a coherent cultural memory and a pervasive paranoia about Australia's position as a "European nation" in the South Pacific are both compelling reasons to consider Anzac Day commemoration in light of Butler's theorisation.

The question of lines are drawn between the enemy and the friend, or the excluded and the included need to be attended to. When Butler states that "we cannot easily recognize life outside the frames in which it is given, and those frames not only structure how we come to know and identify life but constitute sustaining conditions for those very lives" (Butler 2009: 23–24), the requirement is to acknowledge everything that works to construct the frame. Here, the contribution a post-humanist methodology might make to such a theoretical position will be considered. The intention of such methodologies is to refuse distinctions between analytical categories such as matter, language, artificial, and natural "things" in acknowledging what is

active in effective conditions that enact a distinction between life that is deemed valuable and included within a political community and life that is not.

Collective memory is certainly one of those conditions that has been identified as having fundamental political consequences and impacts. Aleida Assmann and Linda Shortt (2012) have sought to exemplify the link between memory, identity, and politics in their edited collection on memory and political change. Their suggestion that memories are malleable enough to be shaped for various political purposes is attested by what Lisa Kirschenbaum (2004) has said about the work needed to be done to co-opt, contain, embellish, and reveal the meaning of—and the emotional power in—memory. As such, the affinity between work that links memory and identity with the theorisation of exclusion, difference, and recognition seems apt.

Indeed, the link can be made quite apparent. However, the prospect of introducing collective memory studies to a methodological repositioning—discussed in the following section—means it is possible to open up the theorisation of Agamben and Butler to this, too. As such, the remainder of this article seeks to identify and exemplify the contribution ANT and new materialism can make to the study of collective memory and, thus, the theorisation of legal and political exclusion.

The democratisation of collective memory studies

A dichotomy underpins collective memory studies. It is a dichotomy that can be traced back to Maurice Halbwachs' (1992) foundational notion of collective memory. The idea that social contexts can frame and shape an individual's memory has prompted two conceptions of collective memory to emerge through a controversy surrounding whether memory can be truly collective, or whether it is the preserve of the individual where "collective memory" is more accurately considered as *collected memories* (Olick 1999).

Some worry that collective memory can be presumed to be "curiously disconnected from actual thought processes of any particular person" (Fentress and Wickham 1992: 1), a response to a disciplinary move towards seeing memory as an *inherently* social and collective process rather than an individual process *facilitated by* social context. Similarly, when the treatment of collective memory as analogous to individual memory is rendered problematic (Gray and Oliver 2004), it engages an understanding of memory as a process that has *an* essence, and one that is extant only within the minds of individuals. Ultimately, such a difficulty would seem to rest on the difficulty of applying the language of psychoanalysis—of healing, recovery, satiation, and remembering—to the collective, especially the "transgenerational [and trans-ideological/economic/political] imagined community of the 'nation'" (Gray 2004: 48).

However, one can circumvent such difficulties through post-humanist vocabularies, which offer an ameliorative suggestion for how the study of collective memory can be confronted. A recognition that objects are actants as capable of shifting or effecting determinations of memory (Radley 1990: 50) as a human allows memories to be appreciated as products of fragmented encounters with the material world, moving beyond Halbwachs' Durkheimian (see e.g. Erll 2011) distinction between the social and the individual that lies at the heart of the tension within collective memory studies.

Alan Radley's (1990) insistence on attention being paid to materials in the construction of memories beyond instrumentalising them, means objects must not be considered mere repositories or facilitators of memory. Given that each one of us responds differently to objects or artefacts in a museum, for instance, one can consider objects to play an active part in a deeply *relational* establishment of memory.

This does not mean, however, that the materiality that is engaged in the enactment of memories is more important than the notion of either the individual or society. Rather, it is vital

to intertwine them in the discussion of what enacts a collective memory. In this respect, Ken Inglis' (1998) questioning of what the *meaning* of a shrine is, and what work it does, establishes that objects are as active, and therefore malleable and changeable, as people. In the context of Australia, Inglis identifies that shrines are imbued with reflective and mournful overtones on Armistice Day and with birth, of a nation, on Anzac Day.

This speaks to the core of post-humanism that there is no ultimate rationality or meaning to a particular thing beyond, or prior to, its situatedness within complex networks of interaction and negotiation. The chance to dispel the reliance on simple and mutually exclusive distinctions from sociological analyses that comes with the acknowledgment of this complexity is pivotal to Latour's (1993) exposition of modernity, where he demonstrates the inescapable blending required in the formulation of "things" subsequently taken for granted as singular entities.

This notion that the composition of recognisable forms depends on many elements means, for example, that ANT and new materialism work against an illusion of autonomous human actions, with agency instead being articulated as arising in and from collections of heterogeneous relations (Rammert 2012). This "inter-agency" becomes the pivotal point of enquiry in understanding the attribution of responsibility or agency in a particular situation with a focus on "an *open* and empirical question whether the distributed agency observed is then attributed to a single human actor or to a collective of human actors . . . or to some mixed constellation of inter-agency that is made up of human and material agencies" (Rammert 2012: 91).[2]

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[2] See also, Karen Barad's discussion of the diffuse character of various agencies, whether that is in the advancement of agencies arising in *intra-actions* (2008), or a more general articulation of agency as enactment (2007). Barad's general concern is that materialism appeals, on its

A criticism of this approach is that it removes the agentic power from humans, thus underdetermining the level of responsibility one can attribute to a human. This is, unequivocally, not the case. Rather, the disruption of the notion of agency as a discretely human property forms a pivotal part of the new materialist political declaration, where "no adequate political theory can ignore the importance of bodies in situating empirical actors within a material environment of nature, other bodies, and the socioeconomic structures that dictate where and how they find sustenance, satisfy their desires, or obtain the resources necessary for participating in political life" (Coole and Frost 2010: 19).

The notion, then, that the human is a master of its surrounding conditions is replaced by an acknowledgment that the body is actually *limited* by such conditions (Orlie 2010), or contingent on them. Clearly, then, this ethic of intra-agency advanced by new materialists is an ecological one, with Jane Bennett suggesting that contemporary materialisms "affirm a vitality or creative power of bodies and forces at all range or scales . . . cut against the hubris of human exceptionalism" (2012: 230).

The inclusion of matter and the establishment of the precarity, contingency, and tenuousness of our human *being* when describing the conditions in which particular forms and identities can be enacted is an important tool. Such a positioning offers a radical democratisation of the study of collective memory that includes matter in the description of how memories are enacted and sustained. As such, it also offers the potential for recommitting

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behalf, that matter is not cheated out of the fullness of its capacity by denying it is an active factor in further materialisations (2008). For Barad, representationalism is given more power than it deserves and she considers the obscuring of differential boundaries, ie between the human and the non-human, to be an integral basis for challenging liberalism and the notion of a world "composed of individuals with separately attributable properties" (Barad 2008: 131).

the theorisation of exclusion to such democratisation. In the context of this article, we can interrogate how a memory is enacted, and how it participates in particular identity boundaries and exclusions.

Making Anzac Matter

For instance, one can identify in Anzac Day commemoration the role it has in articulating a particular sense of identity, whether along the lines of Assmann's conclusion that collective memory possesses normative and formative power (see Erll 2011: 34) or on the basis of orienting an imagined political community (Anderson 2006) around a commemorative event or monument—particularly one that can offer a continuity to a past that can be used to justify present social organisation (Hobsbawm 1983). One only need to consider the commemoration of Anzac Day in Canberra to appreciate the role, in these terms, a commemoration can have in effecting a political exclusion—namely, that of aboriginal Australians from a sense of full political and cultural recognition and acceptance.

In Canberra, the official Anzac Day dawn service is held at the Australian War Memorial (AWM), which can be critiqued unfavourably for its unwavering denial of the frontier wars as an event to commemorate those in the military history of Australia, considered by aboriginal Australians to be a key chapter in the origin story of modern Australia. This immediately defines the Australian nation as a European one, seeking to stress that Australia did not exist before European settlement.[3] As such, the focal point of the Anzac Day

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[3] This brings to mind Stan Grant's recent, prominent speech on the inherent racism of Australia when he identifies the opening of the national anthem—"Australians all let us rejoice for we are young and free"—highlighting the disregard of pre-European populations in favour of manufacturing the Australian origin as a recent story and, thus, youthful.

commemoration in the Australian capital is, itself, complicit in a recurring exclusion of the aboriginal experience from Australian national culture, politics, and history. In other words, the AWM can be implicated as an active component—an actor—in such exclusionary politics. The ANT-laden language does not preclude understanding how such decisions and policies surrounding the AWM's remit and form take, but still allows us to identify such an institution as an important element in the story of Australian identity politics.

The very notion of a *dawn* service can also be identified as a significant element of an exclusionary commemorative network. As such, both a time and a place are considerable actors around which a commemorative narrative revolves. The lack of ontological distinction between ideas, representations, objects, and materials at the heart of both ANT and new materialism makes their shared outlook a fitting frame through which to view—offering also a valuable vocabulary to describe—the Anzac story in relation to the theorisation of exclusion.

The origin of the dawn service can be traced back to the Australian involvement in World War One (WWI). Officially, aboriginal Australians were not allowed to volunteer for the Anzacs in WWI—unapologetically on the basis of race—so they were kept out of representations and accounts of soldiers in Europe. The fact that thousands did manage to deceive enlisters and signed up is somewhat hidden from history. Prompted by a sense that their contributions should be recognised, and anger lack of recognition—or bans from participating—in official commemorative events, many separate commemorations of aboriginal Anzacs have been established throughout Australia.

Rather than eventually being subsumed into official commemorative narratives, in recognition of the contribution of aboriginal volunteers, their self-organised commemorations remain an adjunct to the official services. Such a relegation of aboriginal services to after dawn represents an important exclusion from the Anzac legend—a denial of the notion that *these* volunteers should also be venerated as contributors to the dawning of Australia.

Materialist methodologies, in their description of an object of study, enable the identification of areas of outstanding importance for their political effects. The temporal and spatial coordinates of a post-dawn service at a smaller commemorative site on Mount Ainslie each enact an exclusion from the Anzac legend. They are as significant in giving form to the meaning of Anzac Day as much as the discussions—considered below—about how, and what, to commemorate provided, in part, the impetus for Anzac commemoration in the interwar years.

In the context of Anzac commemoration, the exclusion of aboriginal voices from an important element of the Anzac legend is a juridico-political deprivation, the overcoming of which is an integral element of the decolonisation of the political realm in Australia. Here, the Agambenian characterisation of law and politics, and how exceptionality comes to constitute the legal and political rule can be made prominent. The idea that, for instance, law is wrought by the "mediation that grounds knowledge" (Agamben 1998: 33), assesses the sovereign power to effect legal and political canon as a matter of mediated normativity. The ANT notion of mediation makes it possible to address, as above, the manner in which Anzac commemoration can mediate this normativity.

Moreover, the language Agamben uses in formulating his idea of sovereign power, exclusion, and exceptionality resonates quite plainly with the Anzac example. He considers the "banishment of sacred life [to be] the sovereign *nomos* that conditions every rule, the originary spatialization that governs and makes possible every localization and territorialisation" (Agamben 1998: 111). The banishment of the aboriginal commemoration to Mount Ainslie and after-dawn is, in these terms, pivotal to the structure of political relations and public spaces in which Australians live.

As such, the AWM, Mount Ainslie, the time of day, space available and number of people permitted to—and actually—attending each service have a significant impact on the

Anzac Day commemorative narrative and how the line between inclusion and exclusion (or grievable life and not, perhaps). Of course, the focus of Anzac Day—and its associated exclusions—attests to the idea that mnemonic processes cannot simply be considered a matter of "truth-telling". Rather, they are a matter of performing a convincing and coherent memory that, consequentially, can have political effects. Recognising the role materials, situations, and tangibles can have on a mnemonic process on the same level as, for instance, language and ideologies allows for an identification of how memories are situated and can be made to shelter certain things (either purposefully or not) rather than being "true".

The remainder of this section seeks to exemplify that mnemonic processes are contingent and, therefore, fluctuating entities. In this way, one can say that memories are capricious and the participatory role of a milieu of various actors in the establishment of Anzac Day typifies this. It explores the diffuse nature of the construction of a commemorative programme taken for granted as "settled". This follows from the central appeal of ANT to open up the object of study to myriad contributory elements rather than a few analytical spectres or material presuppositions (see e.g. Callon 1988; Johnson 1988; Latour 1988, 1999).

Despite the purpose of ANT, in this respect, as an ethnographic research method, I think it—and the philosophical positioning about the "nature" and importance of materials for thinking about how things come to exist at the heart of the new materialist enquiry—lends itself well to making historical enquiries. To this end, this article proceeds on the basis of examining newspaper archives in the early years of Anzac Day, which themselves document the tricky establishment of Anzac Day that had to take into account a variety of heterogeneous actors.

Notwithstanding a waning association—since revived—with Anzac Day in substantial parts of the 20th century, a commemorative pattern began to be "settled on" in the late 1940s. However, in the lead up to the end of the 1940s, there was a great deal of discussion, unsureness, and obscurity surrounding the commemoration of Anzac Day.

In the interwar years, a lot was considered to be at stake in the establishment of Anzac Day commemoration. The Gallipoli campaign itself offered equivocal material around which a commemorative narrative could be built and, although Anzac involvement in WWI did not end at Gallipoli, it provided the foundation for commemorating Anzac Day. The extensive campaign was disastrous for the Allies; an indisputable defeat that resulted in many deaths and casualties. Furthermore, the campaign itself had little strategic bearing on the outcome of the war; lives were lost, in the context of war, for no real purpose at all.

On the other hand, the Anzacs were popularly considered to have acquitted themselves well during their involvement at Gallipoli—and, indeed, the rest of the war; the men who fought were thought of as "the only figures in the canvas of the campaign who never failed" (North 1936: 354). These contrasting points came to be integral parts of a debate over the best way to commemorate and it is with reference to the temporal and material situatedness of discussions surrounding Anzac commemorations that make working out how these positions were reconciled, or overcome, possible.

The disastrous maiden engagement for the Australian Commonwealth was attested to in 1936, in a speech made by Governor-General Lord Gowrie at the 21st anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli. Juxtaposing the "inspiring and romantic" heroism, self-sacrifice, and devotion to duty with "the barbarity, the cruelty . . . and utter futility of war" (Anon 1936a, 2), Gowrie neatly summed up the problem with determining the purpose of and "correct way" to mark Anzac Day in a way that would inspire much tension in the consequent years. Reconciling the desire to bask in the confidence that could be taken from the commitment of the men, despite having their expectations of conflict shattered, and the sense of collective grief and antipathy towards the Gallipoli campaign in its aftermath was a principal sticking point. As such, the ideological underpinning of Anzac Day can be identified as a controversial and contestable one.

That the narrative coherence of the commemoration was such a problematic area of friction exemplifies the malleability of memory that provides the crux of Assmann and Shortt's (2012) thesis about the link between memory and identity. It is also attested by what Lisa Kirschenbaum (2004) has said about the work needed to be done construct and give meaning memory. Notwithstanding the focus Kirschenbaum places on state direction and sponsorship of particular mnemonic narratives—ultimately appealing to collective memory as an effect of clear hierarchies of power—she highlights the impurity of memory. The blurring of the distinction between myth and memory, and with the distinction between the public and personal that also forms the crux of her argument about a collective memory's verity, ensures Kirschenbaum advances an understanding of memory that emphasises that it is pliable.

The ANT and new materialist insistence on giving weight to linguistic and ideological tools as well as materials allows such a contest to be front and centre of the story of the Anzac Day programme but without reducing materials to mere instruments. Indeed, controversies are often settled, or their pliability tested, by the interplay of a number of distinct and wide-ranging actors. Similarly, this pliability of memory can precipitate a change in narratives and meaning that is extracted from, and enacted in, a particular memory, which demonstrates the intricate interplay between the historicity and ahistoricity of memory.

Indeed, there were marked shifts in the Anzac commemorative programme from a prevalent call for solemnity in the inter-war years, rooted in grief and craving for quiet contemplation (*CT* 1938: 26 April, 2), to a focus on the fact that Gallipoli was a matter of great national pride. The notion that Anzac Day should be celebrated in a much more fitting fashion and observed as "the day on which [they] first became fully conscious of their nationhood" (Anon 1940b, 4) not only had to overcome a focus on personal grief but austere reverence towards the sacrifice made by young men in awful conditions for the birth of the nation (Anon 1939a, 2).

The onset of World War Two (WWII), and the involvement of Australian forces, did not relieve the tensions inherent in the commemoration of the Gallipoli landings. The epic of Anzac focussed on the way Australian soldiers endured the environments in WWI and imbued future Australians—soldiers of WWII—with the spirit of the original Anzacs. The discomforting juxtaposition of celebrating sacrifice in the name of Australia became its raison d'être. As such, competing ideological parameters had to be mediated WWII and the effect it wrought on discussions about Anzac Day. In this sense, the ANT insistence that knowledge— i.e. the settling on a "right" way or rationale to commemorate—is not generated through a privileged network but a social product and embodied in a variety of forms (Law 1992) would happily include the contribution WWII made to the negotiations about Anzac Day commemorations.

Moreover, the consideration of actor-networks implicated in the commemorative network does not stop at implicating actor-networks like WWII. The ability not to distinguish between such a vast and seemingly complex interacting network like a war; a smaller, more "simplistic" network like a day in a calendar; and more ethereal networks like, for instance, the spirit of Easter is also an important tool for ANT—as all entities are relational, one cannot necessarily presuppose more activity and influence in one actor over another (Law 1991).

As such, the fact that the stark religious equivalences that can be drawn from seeing the Anzac legend as a matter of sacrifice for the good of the people was lucidly expressed in 1943, when Anzac Day and Easter Sunday fell on the same day. The *West Australian* (1943, 4) wrote that "the atmosphere surrounding the commemoration of Anzac Day . . . was in harmony with the spirit of Easter" and, in doing so, implicated Easter in the Anzac Day commemorative network; it was no more or less significant in developing the commemoration than WWII.

The contradiction in Anzac Day as a quasi-religious holiday that amalgamates grief, anger, and joy exemplifies the difficulty in addressing the commemoration coherently, meaning

the memory becomes a rich conceptual territory over which a dispute of the real normative and formative effect of the memory is staged. The involvement of Australian soldiers in WWII resulted in a composite of conflicting sentiments. Such a conflict, treated as an equal alongside material and situational elements of Anzac Day commemorative discussions, can also be included in the problematisation of the individual–collective dichotomy as there is no certainty in either of the "two cultures"—i.e. collected or collective—of memory studies that Olick (1999) refers to. Here, too, the levelling out of analytical categories that lies at the heart of ANT and new materialism can contribute to an understanding of memory as more obscured and entangled than a choice between "individual" or "social" creation.

In many respects, it is apt to say that "commemorations are concerned less with what actually happened than with what people believe or *desired* to have happened" (Burke 2010: 107; emphasis added). Far from contradicting the methodological position adopted in this article, such a statement is attested by the conflict surrounding the meaning of Anzac which, itself, has created analytical space to engage the manner by which various meanings are enacted and solidified. Many veterans, for example, expressed contempt for the decision to close hotels and restrain access to alcohol on Anzac Day, which serves to exemplify the difficulty in settling on the best way to "package" Anzac commemoration. The veterans argued that Australian soldiers did not, and would not, ask peers to spend time in mourning for one another. Sport, leisure activities, and alcohol should be consumed on Anzac Day as the volunteer-soldiers "were not killjoys" (Anon 1939b, 9).

The friction between several justifiable commemorative obligations—each with tangible elements to buttress their overall power and ability to enrol other actors—itself prompted the inclusion of many actors in the remarkable enactment of the Anzac commemorative narrative. For instance, the above entanglement of social sites in the fight for meaning in Anzac was, in part, prompted by a realisation that a commemorative programme

could engage particular shifts in meaning and memory. The struggle to have these sites included in the Anzac story was, therefore, considered important.

It is apparent from above that the negotiation and settlement of an enduring commemorative pattern that was borne out of the multiple impetuses both effected and affected an ongoing and public controversy that featured at the heart of Anzac Day commemoration. This, however, does not preclude a later shift in perceptions towards a belief that Anzac Day commemorations remained fairly consistent and settled (Thomson 2013). Indeed, the notion that the inherent complexity of something—in this instance, the "way" to commemorate—can become obscured by a period of relative fixity is a premise on which ANT investigations are based. To be sure, there should be no reliance on particular groups, individuals, or "prevailing social conditions in explaining how such a period of fixity has come about in relation to Anzac. It is, rather, important that understanding the relationality of how a pattern was arrived at is not foregone in favour of such straightforward explanatory devices.

For instance, it can be acknowledged that the temporal remoteness of Australians today to the experience of returning soldiers meant that the imperative to consider the living returnees rather than the dead became replaceable, in favour of a sombre reflection on the conditions that were endured. In other words, the benchmark for assessing the worth of the war and the social indebtedness to those that fought is no longer laden with a proximity to the notion that "the dead need nothing [but] the living require a lot" (Anon 1936b, 14). Memory, then, is not simply tied to human actants within political, institutional, or social frames (Assmann and Shortt 2012) but temporal and situational frames, too. The existence of such frames are, themselves, dependent on material transformation. For example, epochal shifts are a matter of situational change. That is, the aftermath of war was identifiable by specific material imperatives of looking after the wounded and having to reintroduce people into the workforce; later commemorative generations are identifiable by markedly different situations.

What has changed, however, and what the inclusion of ANT and new materialism in this article seeks to challenge, is the appreciation that a commemoration is situationally contingent. The denial of material impacts and imperatives on a commemoration in favour of addressing the commemoration in broad terms of narrative coherence makes it more difficult to engage Anzac Day commemoration as a current political actor.

By way of example, the desire to have a "spirit of Anzac" captured in some material commemorative form in the interwar years was necessitated by the keenly felt obligation to maintain the memory of the war and the men who had fought. The praise heaped on the Australian soldiers is rooted in both the romantic ideal of soldiery and the widely perceived social imperative to appear supportive of Australians who had gone to war. Indeed, the commemoration of soldiers began during the campaign, as they were considered custodians of the spirit of Australian nationhood. Despite this, it has already been noted that there was no fluency to the Anzac narrative and the 1920s encapsulated these disparities.

The emergence of a more uniform observance did, however, begin to arise in the 1930s. This decade was significant as it contained the 20th Anzac Day and laid the foundations for the 25th anniversary in 1940. It was hoped that, by the time of the 20th anniversary of the landing in 1935, a standard form of remembrance would be adopted throughout Australia (*CT* 1935: 19 January, 1). The call for this uniformity was approached in earnest in the Australian Capital Territory by a highly detailed programme of events. It commenced at 9.30am with a service held at the graveside of Major-General Bridges, which had been customarily used as a site around which to convene. The ability for public and private memories of war to be brought together strengthens collective memory (Wagner-Pacifici 1996: 312); as such, a graveyard can be considered a site that acts as a suitable mnemonic buttress.

However, despite the detailed programme for the observance in ACT—and despite elevated numbers of observants at services and parades throughout Australia—real diversity of

commemoration remained for the 20th anniversary and beyond. This is not to say that certain things were not customarily observed on the day. It was usual, for instance, for a dawn service to be held in Western Australia (Anon 1936c, 16), reflecting the dawn landing at Gallipoli. The material significance of the sunrise is much more than a neat representation. It is an accessory to the imagination affording an ability to reflect on the conditions experienced by those who landed at Gallipoli in 1915. Indeed, many Australians today still consider it to be the crux of sombre commemoration and imagination of conditions endured at Gallipoli.

It would, however, be years until a dawn service became a regular element of the Anzac commemoration across Australia. Instead, its commemoration had a much more provincial feel to its organisation. The variety reflected the fragmented attitude towards the purpose of commemoration and such an approach to the memorialisation of Anzac was a prevailing feature of Anzac in the 1930s. The dawning of the sun, of course, offers observers an object around which to orient their impressions of a collectivity. In other words, the sun acts within the Anzac Day commemoration to adhere a community to its past and to its contemporary imagined political community.

As such, when the dawn service became an ever increasingly fixed point across the country in Anzac Day commemorations in the 1940s, it was not without consequence. Alongside the increasing fixity of the dawn service element of Anzac Day was the commencement and continuation of WWII. The 25th anniversary of Anzac Day was endowed with great poignancy because of the war (Anon 1940a, 4). Thus, the dawn service was given impetus as a moment of sorrow on Anzac and became much more important as a symbol of the fixity of Australian nationhood. Consequently, the regularity of the spectacle of the dawning sun coalescing with the core of the Anzac legend that gives rise to the birth of the Australian nation is inherently problematic for anyone who is excluded from a presence at dawn.

However, orienting Anzac Day and a sense of Australian nationhood around the dawn service was not, and is not, without obstacle. No matter how emphatic the desire is for such an integral and binding element of a politicised memory, it can remain at the whim of material circumstances. The risk, for instance, associated with WWII operations cut right across Anzac Day, with parades and services being cancelled (Anon 1942b, 4)—meaning sentiments associated with these were not able to be made public. This exemplifies the problem with considering collective memory to be nothing more than that which can be extant within the minds of individuals (Gray and Oliver 2004). It also demonstrates that circumstance can alter, or at least soften, political meanings that are enacted in memories.

For instance, when bad weather threatened (or can threaten) services (Anon 1936c, 13)—or when dawn services were cancelled due to worries about the potential for airstrikes during WWII (Anon 1942a, 2)—the specific temporality of dawn enacted as it was by the participation of both the sun rising and congregations viewing was disrupted, meaning the enactment of a mnemonic programme was, too. Considering the impact materials, events, and situations can have on times and locations—thus effecting a shift in the mnemonic narrative— allows us to become more attuned to the notion that minutiae, or seeming trivialities, can impact the meaning of something. This, in turn, allows us to consider how the meaning of a post-dawn, and dislocated, commemoration might *effect* radically different political messages from the official and "normal" services.

Concluding remarks

Butler's work on the grievability and precarity of life served as an important frame for this article "because, in its surface and its depth, the body is a social phenomenon: it is exposed to others, vulnerable by definition" (Butler 2009: 33). In this sense, the conditions within which the human can *be* are of real importance, and the notion that human agency needs to be rejected

in favour of a situated agency is made in this article. In the context of Anzac Day, the identification of the commemorative process as an integral actor in the enactment of a political exclusion is made on the basis of identifying the contingency of memory and the situatedness of mnemonic practices. As such, I suggest that the exclusionary practices are as precarious, albeit powerful, as the human is vulnerable.

The notion that the political rationality of the Australian national community can be, in part, traced to a continuing colonial exclusion that relies on certain institutions and objects is an ongoing research concern. It is, however, vital that attempts to articulate how this is effected are inclusive of all actors implicated in the Anzac commemorative programme. The example I give, then, contributes to this foundation of future research as it serves to exemplify that an inclusion of detail beyond the human can effect a particular understanding of the situatedness, and precarity, of memory and its ability to change as a condition of human political existence.

I want to conclude with a note on research ethics, on the basis of Shaunnagh Dorsett and Shaun McVeigh's (2012) appeal to the link between office (or authority), conduct, and responsibility. In the context of exploring the jurisprudence of jurisdiction, Dorsett and McVeigh establish the Roman use of *jurisdictio* to denote the authority to act an office, role or position. Jurisdiction can, thus, be "understood in terms of the conditions under which an authority to act exists", with "office" being "defined as an institutional ordering of duties, relationships and responsibilities" (2012: 17-18). In the context of academia, the office of academic could, and I think should, be understood as the authorisation to act dutifully and responsibly to the subject of one's research. Here, it is an ethical imperative to explore the frames that pervade and engender the relations between unequal populations of people with a view to engaging the possibility for change without, of course, forgetting the role matter plays in both exclusive and inclusive political, social, and cultural agencies like memory.

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