CHAPTER 7

LITTLE DID I KNOW

Myer Taub

One: remapping the catastrophe or retrieving performance as research as difference (2023)

1.1 In this reflective chapter there are a series of interventions that assist in translating the evocation of ideas made by the author, Myer Taub. These interventions include a conversational commentary made by the editor, Alex Halligey. Along with this are a set of stylistic choices inset in the text that include various fonts and sizes that inform various signifiers. To assist with these meanings a key is provided below:

1.2 *Key to Fonts:*

Alex commentary text: Tahoma, size 10, prefaced with ALEX:

Myer main body of consistent ideas text: Arial, size 9.

Myer seriousness text: Times New Roman, sizes 9-12.

Myer extended thought text: Calibri, size 9-12.

1.3 In the reflection of PaR along with my own thematic alignments to ideas on such events as crisis and catastrophe, I have assembled a series of written chronological & non chronological fragments (like this section as *One: remapping*, currently 2023). The written fragments point to the organisation of my own research as a mediation between crisis and catastrophe through the mechanism of making that I like to call remapping. This is a point of rewriting and immersing-in reflection, also reflexive … that might also include a series of stylistic interventions in order to provide further meaning. Like font choices, footnotes, or the interventions of commentary made by Alex as below:

1.4 ALEX: In 2002 Myer Taub started a MA at the then Drama Department at UCT. This initiated what is now a more than 20 year arc of PaR. In this chapter Taub offers a sense of the methodological paradigm through which he understands his PaR journey, in other words the ideology or conceptual logic through which he makes sense of the ever-evolving, frequently chaotic PaR process. Along the way he offers glimpses in words and photographs

of the methods he has used over the years and how they have served specific research explorations, but also how they have been part of his bigger framing of his PaR as remapping in an attempt to negotiate between crisis and catastrophe. The chapter is performative in the sense that it does not always explicitly unpack its meaning or the references it alludes to, but rather 'performs' its meaning through the writing, much like a play text where the subtext is not stated. I interject in several moments, like this, to request clarification or offer my own senses of Taub's work in order to make explicit some of the subtext in this chapter around how PaR might build conceptual theory and conceptual theory might generate PaR.

1.5 These forms of remapping all allude to a palimpsest-like engineering as an outcome that exposes process and absence (a signalling to irresolution as a fissure or ignition to making) and finding ways to express reflection-in retrieval and in-recovery.

> What are phenomena rescued from? Not only, and not in the main, from the discredit and neglect into which they have fallen, but from the catastrophe represented very often by a certain strain in their dissemination, their "enshrinement as heritage". They are saved through their exhibition of the fissure within them. There is a tradition that is catastrophe. (Benjamin, 1999:474)

And so, to begin with the above deliberation, is to frame catastrophe as an intent in making, and it would then also mean "to have missed an opportunity" (1999:474), because, in both of these allusions (discredit and neglect) referred to by Walter Benjamin, there is a possibility of the prescription of reflecting upon the missed opportunity along with the mechanisms of time and action that afford making from within the crisis.

1.6 ALEX: In this section above Taub introduces the terms 'crisis' and 'catastrophe', framing how his PaR works with both. In our everyday conversational use, crisis and catastrophe are often conflated: we might say that an earthquake is a crisis or a catastrophe, treating the two words as synonyms. In drama, drawing on Aristotle's definition of the well-made play, crisis and catastrophe are two separate things in the arc of a play. A play starts with an exposition, a complication is introduced (the inciting incident), there is development towards a crisis (or climax) and then there is the catastrophe (dénouement). The catastrophe in dramatic terms is then what happens *after* the crisis, the unravelling, the fallout. If we translate this to everyday events, the earthquake is the crisis and the catastrophe is the broken buildings and roads, the casualties, people piecing their lives together in the wake of the crisis.

When Taub started his MA in 2002, as he discusses in more detail below, he was creating theatrical performance work in response to the plane that was crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City on 11 September 2001 (part of four, coordinated suicide attacks on the USA that day) and all that unfolded in New York City and globally after that crisis. In the second year of his MA, his final major MA task was the making of a play called *Lekker Faith*, which responded to his father's terminal diagnosis with cancer and Taub's and his family's journey as his father was dying. In his PhD, which immediately followed his MA, Taub ran a participatory theatre-making process with Camps Bay High School drama students exploring the Holocaust and its impacts and also ran a participatory integrated-arts process with women from Monkey Biz, a women's beading collective NGO, exploring the women's stories of living with HIV. The focus on crisis and subsequent catastrophe is clear in this progression of work, as are the subjects of Taub's PaR since his PhD, such as the post-colonial, post-apartheid city and the climate crisis.

Taub has used many methods along his PaR journey: bricolage, playwriting, play devising, scenography, treasure hunts, photography, video, performance art interventions and walking – to name a few. Fragmentary descriptions of these methods and more will emerge as this chapter progresses. My understanding is that what Taub is describing in his opening passage above is how his methods have been processes to try to make sense of crises and the catastrophes that follow. They have been methods to "retrieve" with self-awareness memory, feelings and experiences catalysed by crisis and emergent through catastrophe. This process of retrieval is, synonymously, a recovery of the memory, feelings and experiences but is also an attempt to facilitate recovery in a different sense: in the sense of healing from the trauma of the crisis and the unfolding catastrophe.

The Benjamin reference Taub cites is dense and complex in its implications and in particular here in terms of Taub's work. However I think a useful summarising interpretation is that Benjamin is pointing to how part of the catastrophe unfolding after a crisis is the "strain in … dissemination" of the experiences, memories, feelings (what we might understand as "phenomena") from the crisis. Benjamin's problematising of a human drive for "enshrinement as heritage", suggests that in our attempts to memorialise, we fix memory and experience, where they are essentially unfixable, not fully knowable (Benjamin, 1999:473). So Benjamin proposes that these phenomena are rescued through a self-aware, public acknowledgement of "the fissure within them" (473). In acknowledging the fragmented nature of how we might remember and process the phenomena emergent from a crisis, we almost rescue these phenomena that cannot be wholly rescued. In the quote Taub cites, Benjamin concludes by offering "catastrophe", the unfolding after a crisis, as a tradition. Taub then draws in Tiedmann, the translator of this text

from Benjamin, to qualify that what is part of catastrophe is "to have missed an opportunity" (trans. Tiedmann, 1999:473). So there is the fissure in the phenomena that might be recovered from the crisis and unfolding catastrophe (the phenomena can be most closely recovered in their 'cracked' or broken form) and, related to this fragmentary nature of recovering phenomena from crisis and unfolding catastrophe, there is inevitably "missed … opportunity". Phenomena cannot be recovered whole and opportunities are lost in the aftermath of the crisis.

My understanding is that Taub is taking on Benjamin's notion of catastrophe as tradition and engaging fragmented feelings, experience and memories with self-awareness as a way of responding both to crises and within crises and their following catastrophes. Taub is in a sense using his artistic processes as catastrophes to engage with real world catastrophes. In mapping and remapping the fragmented, 'catastrophic' nature of his art making within and in response to real world crises and catastrophes, personal and global, Taub is researching the complexity of crisis and catastrophe and how we might attempt to account for and recover from them, from a point of understanding that these processes are ongoing and necessarily irresolvable.

In the text that follows Taub speaks of "presences" and "absences", as well as "fissures" and "fragments", all relating to what he establishes above through Benjamin of the incompleteness of the memories, experiences and feelings that emerge through crises and the catastrophes that follow. You will also see him speak substantially of "failure", which relates to the "missed… opportunity" (Tiedmann, 1999:473) in crisis and the catastrophe that follows. Taub proposes through his reflection on his PaR how to investigate or process the sense that to have missed opportunities, through, within and because of crises and ensuing catastrophes, is to have failed.

1.7 (But failure can also induce a sense of the positive through redemption.)

1.8 Juan Manuel Aldape Muñoz has ascertained how PaR encourages:

> A corporeal acumen of exploring information in the process of addressing research that does not fit within conventions … and therefore … PaR is a practice which actively defies structure and, thus, distorts the spaces that it inhabits … . (2014:2-3)

In the first drafted version of his paper based upon the Occupy Movement and PaR, Aldape Muñoz described my own activation during the PaR workshops at IFTR (the International Federation for Theatre Research) in Barcelona in 2013, where, at a chosen public space of crisis, the spectator was invited to choose between

emotional valences that signalled either heritage, catastrophe or identity [ALEX: Here Benjamin's concern with the "enshrinement of heritage" as opposed to catastrophe (Benjamin, 1999: 473) is put into practice with identity as a third option. Taub's intentions for what identity might potentially signify are not articulated in this paper, but his use of an art intervention informed by theory as a mode of PaR is clear]. Aldape Muñoz's response describes a catastrophic encounter [ALEX: Myer, Aldape Muñoz's response? MYER: What? ALEX: Are you referring to Aldape Muñoz's response here? MYER: Yes. ALEX: And is Aldape Muñoz describing a spectator who chose the emotional valence of catastrophe as opposed to heritage or identity? MYER: Yes]. Encounters with catastrophe, in particular paying attention to the emotional valences that accompany encounters with catastrophe, are part of my research strategy that express how narrative constructed from such encounters will be affected in part by their context. For Aldape Muñoz, each of the objects represented in the performance referred to "different catastrophic encounters … and how Taub would enact their respective lineage when selected" (2014:1), as to engender the idea of the effect of context. My argument for retrieving the description by Aldape Muñoz[18] [ALEX: This is a great footnote for getting a sense of how Taub is working with crisis, catastrophe and remapping.] is to provide an example of remapping the catastrophe to point to the peculiarity of PaR in its relationship to convention and to the embodiment of practice situated in the research outcome usually as text. In rewriting this particular paper – if rewriting is accepted to be part of the writing process – (then) what was required along with its assembled fragmented reflections (that included several past activations at PaR working group meetings and workshops, 2015-2019) is to suggest how remapping of the catastrophe is an idea of how to **reflect within** crisis, **that informs partly** a performance praxis engaged with **resilience and** recovery. One such crisis is to indicate a performance-based methodology situated in – and from – these themes of crisis.[19] Part of the intent here, in this constant activation of remapping (rewriting) is to cohere a narrative in the practice of this kind of research. There is a

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18   Retrieving Aldape Muñoz is indicative somewhat of suggested phases in the relationship between catastrophe, crisis, and remapping the catastrophe as in: i) crisis as theme or underpinning or the paradigm; ii) catastrophe as the act of retrieving the fragment, thus is action, with indication of the potential loss of value. See Note1/N1 below as an example; and iii) remapping the catastrophe is the complex interplay of reflection and reflexive mechanisms that afford redemption iv) by noting this interplay of Aldape Muñoz and using his description as an example. N1: " Elements of that [Aldape Muñoz] paper went on to be included in the PAR anthology that Annette, Ben, Melanie, and Bruce edited (Arlander, Barton, Dreyer, Lude-Spatz, 2018) [see Munoz 2018]. The quote you selected is modified in the final publication. My comments about your work did not make it to the final version as project's scope changed in developing the paper" (email correspondence: Munoz 2023).

19   The time of crisis is contemporary (2001-2022) and also in this crisis I want to suggest ways of re-making and remembering through tracing redemptive technologies from knowing in the unknowing or unlearning as intersectional mechanisms along with glitches, fissures, failure and dislocations made in crisis.

chaotic difficulty with self-analysis, experimentation in making one's own research from one's practice along with the slippages of the themes of failure. So, the representation of this paper has been reworked in various forms of concept and stylistic activation as collaboration, dialogue with the self and others, commentary of translation and enabling cohesion, occurring in responses to the moment of reflection. This emits a subjective discourse and wants to suggest how remapping the catastrophe embodies its own failure; as a performance strategy that extends beyond the catastrophe towards remapping on towards recovery. This paper has failed in its previous attempts to affect this. Now, in rewriting the argument again **and again** – is to be clearer in what can affect difference, making its reworking apparent as the objective interweaves ideas of performance towards the yield of measurement, through reflection.

Part of an argument made from the paper's preference for the outcomes of failure has meant new ideas consolidate with old ones. This again refers to the building of subterranean, supportive and secondary networks of the ideas that are reflective of the ideas at the surface. It indicates not only interpolation of ideas about a generative archive that is also about absence and erasure in the embarkation of working with catastrophe, but furthermore, there are stylistic choices embedded in the reflective text itself that engage performatively with intercutting through descriptions of experience by simultaneously engaging with stylistic mechanisms inserted in the text itself that prompt performance modes through re-reading and retracing as an example of such modes; others include footnotes, headers, font difference, italics and font size; "whereby the written text is made to function in a more expressively performative manner" (Magan, 2007:xix). Thus the text performs the research through remapping.

But as chaotic and messy as remapping might become, PaR assists the process because the engagement of performance as the research occurs by re-performing in some form as a measuring of the effect and articulating an experience towards dimensional thinking [ALEX: As in multi-dimensional thinking? MYER: Yes, as Myer thinking in different directions and through different modes of writing: the footnote to the reader, the note to self, poetic writing, stream-of-consciousness prose, scholarly writing etc.]. In this case it is about failure as an overall theme and praxis. In particular here is a yield from the archive because of the exercise in reflecting and writing as explained below.

The figure below is from an ongoing work called "Xuetas"[20] an unfinished work that coincidently began with my attendance at PaR working group meetings, at the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) conference in Barcelona in 2013, that were alluded to by Aldape Muñoz. This work began to publicly explore by performing the allegory of crisis as a module in another inter modular provocation to an ongoing work-still undecided-still in process. My current melancholy is spurned away while excavating the below image, and retrieving it, as to provide an archival example to thought and image inscribed and encoded in the frame.

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20 *Xuetas* means pork chop in Spanish, a derogatory word for Jewish converts etc.

Figure 7.1: Pig in Image: Performing Image as Allegory & Archive in "Trasher Hunt" Maboneng, Johannesburg, 2014. Photograph created by Myer Taub.

I am provoked by re-collection and excavation on how to measure this time of crisis as also a decade span incurring variations in the enquiry of performance and research ... Variations made over time might determine a difference (also to consider repetition and patterning), but produce fraught enquiry into what has changed and what remains as a kind of haunting and mourning to this effect; that, as Mark Payne has suggested, in the paradigm of depressive anthropology can induce a sense of shame, as a haunting not only haunted by the past as affect but by what also has been erased – "the idea that shame is the route by which we access the capabilities of living that are abrogated in modernity" (Payne, 2017:1). This is valuable for this reflection: that is also melancholic for variance reframed as dramaturgical variance, in making and reflecting presents how shame itself is a pre-existence to making-in the time of crisis and informing overt failure through slight gesture, fragmentary writing, irresolution and exposition of meta-text, and in doing so affords resilience.

TWO: CONTEXT: PaR AS CONTEXT & CONTEXT AS PIRACY.

2.1 *(A)Context: an overview*

On September 11, 2001, I was living and writing in New York City. I say living and writing because after the events of 9/11, the essence of the one and the schemata of the other broke into fragments. I became what Trinh Minh-ha might call a "sleepwalker".

> One can say that disaster times, such as the events of September 11 in the
> US or the events lived by people in war situations around the world have the

power to wipe away everything that one narrowly holds on to – the small measurements devised to keep one's life on track. People who have come out of the disaster speak of "waking up" from sleepwalking and the first thing they realise is that time cannot be bought. (Minh-ha, 2005:76)

When I returned to Cape Town, South Africa, to embark on several years of postgraduate studies in theatre-making and dramatic arts, I set out upon a journey of experimentation that I hoped would challenge the inherited sleep, in order to activate a strategy that might promote opportunities for recovery.

… Little did I know for as I engaged with a doctoral project in narrative that responded to the aftermath and remaking this as abstraction that evoked inter connected modalities that could enshrine as well as investigate drama as a philosophical and practical form of action making and remaking from the notion of "aftermath"; [21] *for my own recovery as a sleepwalker, perhaps from sleepwalking in trauma after 9-11, I created a series of performances engaged with questions rather than presence or iteration, I need to repeat how unaware of performance overtly informing research, it was rather research as enquiry that led the way to meaning of what emerges from the aftermath; it is a question that led to performances projects and these imaginings of performance as a qualifier to research; that performance could be the measure, that were mostly inherent or tacit that lay under the surface in the enquiry, rather considering performance as a connection to the other comparative theories of themes forming modalities as transmissions of value measured through comparativeness.*

2.2 ALEX: Taub's "little do I know" here echoes what so many of the authors in this book reflect on, that as artists they had intuitively been working with their artistic practice to work out something they were curious about in the world, to understand the thing better, to articulate and express through their artistic practice a thought-feeling-argument about the thing. Yet it was only in retrospect that they could see how their artistic practice was research and could be explicitly used as such. So perhaps Taub thought the performances he was creating were a measure of his research in the sense of this is my research outcome: a play or an installation. Or he thought the performances might be some kind of qualifier to the research: performances that happened

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21   Aftermath is also regenerative and performative. There is an ambling for resolution that is uncanny because it has a codex with unfinished time as a resource, an entanglement, yearning and mourning and redeeming and rebuilding... I had intended that this thought lies unfinished.

alongside his reading and thinking and personal internal journeying with questions about the aftermath. Only in retrospect did he start to understand how his performance practice was entwined with the reading, thinking and feeling he was doing about the aftermath. All of these "modalities" reading, thinking, "investigating drama as a philosophical and practical form of action making and remaking from the notion of 'aftermath'" and performance practice were connected and working together as practice as research. Coming to know the PaR he was doing intuitively, he could then start working with it more consciously and explicitly.

2.3 The modalities made were structural and architectural, informing a comprehension of what already seems visible, "the image understood as dialectic at a standstill is transformed into writing…" (Weigel, 1996:52). The relationship between the modalities has varied in chronological time. Now image and thought together, also serve as meditative practices, more resolved for thinking in images and deriving thought from images, suggesting how thought and image stimulate each other and assist in solving problems. For ideas can be constructed into images and images can operate as ideas.[22] As I reflect, I think that there is still a difficulty with static and how then performance emerges perhaps through the scrutiny with the self. [ALEX: This footnote is so helpful for understanding the denkbilder concept Taub was experimenting with.]

2.4 Benjamin recurs in the translations of this/ this static as a profane transmission, an effect of history on the self with imaginary dialogue recurring translations of thoughts and images, informed by use of technologies such as Denkbilder; translated as a "'double sense' of seeing and things or 'denkbilder'" (Weigel, 1996:51). I want to suggest how this double sense is also a double narrative of space where images are translated into words, and words into images. And as such a process I have placed in my research and practice as easily captured by an iPhone governed by the concept of "the translation of the language of things into that of words" (Weigel, 1996:51). Often, I have used images entangled within the idea that the visual provides examples or even direction in my reading and composition of theory.

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22   Weigel helps to explain the difference between image and thought-images through these two observations – this is in relation to Benjamin:

i.) "Image as likeness, similitude, or resemblance" (1996:23);

ii.) the combination between thought and images provides "a double sense: as images in relation to which his thoughts and theoretical reflections unfold, and also as images whose representations are translated into figures of thought…" (1996:51).

Figure 7.2: "Pretty Woman: Venus on the Landfill" Maputo, 2015. Photograph created by Myer Taub along with SLOW (social life of waste art).

2.5 I had wanted to write more about the iPhone as a stimulus not only in referring to thought and image but also as an object setting off direction for emerging work in regard to the wild zone. In 2018 I had my iPhone stolen. I traced it to a contraband cell phone market in Noord Street, Johannesburg. My experience in that market foreshadowed the idea of the wild zone as a demarcated space of informality and kinetic overflows, and progressive ideas of linking Piracy and performance as research.

The example of Piracy is discussed by Sundaram in *Pirate Modernity* (2010), first as a form of delinquency because it is produced as "an illicit form" (2010:12) provided by postcolonial media urbanism, and it is also a transmissive form for it can renegotiate spatial dynamics. This is explained through how modern piracy not only works through digital and mechanical reproduction [ALEX: Taub is referring here to Benjamin's key essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction". Writing on the effects of the industrial revolution in mechanically reproducing art, Benjamin discusses how this takes away something of the 'aura' of artworks. Taub is of course adding digital reproduction, the technological means for reproduction that has come after the mechanical.] but becomes a life of its own (2010:12), thus creating a living inverted spatiality of transmissions. Its routes of transmission have the complexity of "innervation" (2010:8), instantiating technology that is the study of located dysfunction and appropriation.

THREE: FOCUS; PAR AS FOCUS… and waste as a metaphor and project

3.1 In the image above there is an entanglement of the above. There is a slight digression because of the kind of chronology (A chronology of making that is itinerant and unresolved). This is sudden as it is reflective but also mournful, haunted…. By collaboration. I think the tensions between the self and the collective over the decades have also varied and what this exchange has produced is both interesting but mournful because the collaboration is ephemeral, and in current reflection the crisis has extended this tension prompting reconsidering stoicism and hermeneutics [ALEX: Taub raises here affectual responses which are strategies for coping in a crisis and unfolding catastrophe and can be marked as phenomena for investigation through his broader research project] because of periods of enforced isolation, in regards to the pandemic. But in the digression the work above beyond its entanglement expresses a particular period whereby the subject of research was waste and extended beyond working with other waste artists from Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa through the practice of waste art (2015-2019). Why did this collaboration end? Mostly because of institutional failure, partly something that thereon too has become a subject of research interest in relation to systems and the failed state and current evolution of ecologies and theatre practice; and crisis. Performing the art of waste is something that as a period consolidated the interaction between performance and research – but I need to refer back earlier than the rendering of the image above taken from the action, rather than question.

The action or performance itself occurred in December 2014. I am standing semi naked on a landfill in Hulene, in Mozambique's capital, of Maputo, a city of more than a million people. Hulene is its local landfill and has approximately 900 tons of waste dumped daily in an area the size of 17 football fields, layer upon layer of garbage is piled as high as a three-story building and in places, it spills over into the surrounding densely populated mostly poor residential neighbourhood 10 km from the city centre. I scavenge on the dumpsite and find an authentic celluloid of the Julia Robert's film *Pretty Woman* – and with this detritus that in its original form presented the transformation of prostitution through the genre of the Hollywood screwball comedy, I playfully began to transform, my body engaging intimately with the plastic as my umbilical cord as it unrolls from the surface of waste… immersing my exchange as an experience, that engages with an idea taken from Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Horror* who in writing about disturbance and waste says:

> No, as in true theatre, without makeup or masks, refuse and corpses *show*
> *me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These bodily fluids, this
> defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on
> the part of death. There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being
> (1982:3).

The very vastness of the contemporary metaphor and materiality of waste, as a social-cultural and political schema of the human condition is invested as bodily assemblages that on Kristeva's terms "disturbs identity, systems and order…" (1982:4). Waste evoked in the embodiment of practice is as much an inversion as it is a disturbance, occurring in the making and reflection of intersubjective practice. The intersection between making and reflection are corollaries of agitation undertaken and experienced as a system of performative corollaries that include inversion, disturbance, exchange, loss, also reaction, resistance and protest. Corollaries of agitation are that which life withstands at the border of being. So, by enabling these corollaries of agitations as reflexive mechanisms to operate within the research, the research performs the very inversions, and disturbances that evoke waste. In this case by agitating not only social and cultural parameters but also, as Kristeva suggests in relation to the abject, by enabling and disobeying borders. The celluloid found and used on the Hulene Landfill in December of 2014 was like a corollary of agitation similar in the making to an ecosystem of performance guided by Kershaw's indication of the interpolation of the visible made invisible in performance to "expose the paradoxes involved in using tools – in this case dramaturgical and performance tools – in order to dismantle what the tools have made" (2007:259). Kershaw, as I understand it, is specifying how in the performance both integration and disintegration are ecological forms, systemised forms that can cut across the very thing the performance makes suggesting the potential traversable nature in the interrelation of making performance.

3.2 The conversation is staged, but also spontaneous, reflective as it is reflexive. It is as Monica Szewczyk suggests a demand "to suspend, boggle or otherwise challenge available discourses and we turn to develop a discourse to elaborate evasions, deferrals, or misunderstandings of its available notions" (2010:1). In order to begin to watch what we say - because in the presentation of the form there is a rendering of praxis. There is an expression of how returning the gaze is the implication of a radical technology. Conversation as a technology was explored collaboratively with PaR, at the PaR working group meetings in Belgrade and Shanghai in 2018 and 2019. PaR is the current rendering made from the actions of practice-led research and its entanglements with performance studies in particular. The radical technology as part of PaR extends its concepts into more anti-authoritarian lines along with its emplacement within kinetic overflows, informalities and delinquency. In Sundaram's *Pirate Modernity* (2010) (which on its own is an important wainscot of my current ideas and work of the wild zone) there is the first signalling to the dysfunctional transmission: "The Optical unconsciousness was not only a radical expression of the encounter with technology, but also held out the 'capability of returning the gaze'" (Sundaram, 2010:8; citing Benjamin, 1988). How this Benjamin like characteristic

of technologically looking back along with Benjamin's other principle of tracing the aura are in favour of production: "When a person, an animal or something inanimate returns our glance with its own, we are drawn initially into the distance; its glance is dreaming, draws after its dream" (Benjamin, 2015:188). The complexities of the gaze are not new: The Glance that is nomadic, itinerant and even dreaming provides a consciousness of forwarding transformations of space to place, and vice versa dispelling diverse transmissions of time and place; replicating radical technologies and thus creating creative economies. … as point of making. An extension of expressing ideas thus occurs through the radical - of intersections and interactions; that include the examples already made in this fragmentary reflection like the dialectic of commentary, witnessing, the making of modalities, remapping and conversation.

3.3 ALEX: In this concluding section, Taub gives a sense of where his PaR has taken him in recent years. The theoretical influence of Benjamin is clear here, but also newer influences like Sunduram's "piracy" (2010) introduced in section 2 and key performance/ practice as research and theatre studies scholar, Baz Kershaw's work (2007) on theatre and ecology and the role theatre might play in environmental activism. These theoretical influencesare newer in Taub's work, but are also 'new' in the sense of having been written and published since Taub first started his PaR journey in 2002. In focusing on waste through the SLOW project, Taub also draws on older, well-established critical theory from Julia Kristeva on waste and the abject.

Taub ties these theoretical influences to his methods, the things he did. He and his colleagues rummaged in the Hulene landfill to see what they could find. Taub made a performance proposition out of what he found that could be a "denkbild", a thought-image for engaging with notions of waste in our time of critical environmental distress. Taub's methods here were both live performance and photography. As I understand the final paragraph of 3.1, Taub uses the "Pretty Woman: Venus on the Landfill" image to reflect on the use of artistic performance as way of making visible the invisibilised negative outcomes of globalised capitalism.

Taub's discussion in 3.2 is dense in the many threads it draws together, but perhaps what is most useful to draw out is his championing of conversation and creativity. Engaging with theorists through reading and writing and collaborating with fellow artist researchers is foundational to how Taub continues to extend his research concerns in the realm of crisis and catastrophe through conversation. The creative processes of Taub's research (artistic practice, reading, writing, talking, walking) are the means through which the conversation, "the intersections and interactions" are facilitated. These

conversations through creative modalities are generative in valuable ways: they produce new insights into crises and catastrophes ("remapping") and they create processes and products for sharing experiences ("witnessing"). Where Taub's sense of his PaR process in his MA and PhD work was, "little did I know...", in terms of how conscious he was of using his practice as research, here in the third section we see how he has come to consciously work with all elements of his artistic work, scholarship and even daily life (walking a key example) as part of an evolving practice as research process in conversation with others.

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