Art, Aid, and Negotiated Identity

The Family Pictures of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda*

By Kristin Ørjasæter

Imagine one hundred large photographic portraits of black people posing with their new identity cards as if they were prisoners identified only by an ID number. In the autumn of 2006, the Danish artist Kristian von Hornsleth displayed these portraits in Pressen's Gallery in central Copenhagen.[1] Even before the exhibition, the Collaborative Art Project between Hornsleth and villagers of Buteyongera was well known in Denmark because of the project's information leaks. But at the exhibition the media coverage was massive; Hornsleth was accused of colonial exploitation.[2] Professor of philosophy and art science Boris Groys, however, looked at the project through a different lens in Hornsleth's book documenting the project and accompanying the exhibition. Groys comments on a certain willingness in Danish art to address the European attitude towards the non-European in provoking ways. The examples Groys mentions are film director Lars von Trier, author Peter Høeg, and Hornsleth himself. 'I am just interested why [sic] Danish artists and intellectuals get involved in these intellectual discussions. They do not have this experience of the feeling of accumulated guilt that almost all nations have,' Groys says. It is 'a different guilt,' Hornsleth responds: 'We are so well off that we are ashamed when looking at other cultures. Everything is charity now in Denmark' (Scheller 2007: 87). The intensity of these cultural feelings, guilt and shame, loads *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* with a powerful provocative dimension.

The book in question is called *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda 2007. We want to help you, but we want to own you*. It was written mainly by members of Hornsleth's project crew and edited by Hornsleth himself. It contains the exhibited portraits and documents the entire project leading up to the exhibition. In the introduction, Hornsleth describes *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* as an art work consisting of several disparate elements:

100 people from a small village in Uganda made a free trade deal with Kristian von Hornsleth.

The deal was that the villagers all change thier [sic] name to 'Hornsleth' in exchange for household animals.

Each person went through the official legal name change process.

A national Uganda ID card was issued to each person to show their new 'Hornsleth' name.

Each person was photographed holding their new Hornsleth ID.

The 100 photographed people are the 100 first to take the name 'Hornsleth' and they are representing the whole community.

The portraits are defined as an original art work.

The total art work is a series of 100 photos of 120 x 100 cm to be presented in selected international galleries and museums.

A professional documentary film crew is filming the process for Danish National TV DR2.

International art critics, philosophers and local partners has [sic] contributed with texts for this book about the project.

A community based organization, a CBO, called 'The Hornsleth Village Project' was formed according to local legal practice, and according to agreement with the village opinion leaders.

A total of 300 animals, pigs and goats, were traded with 300 families.

A locally well known animal redistribution system was implemented.

When these animals breed, half of the outcome can be kept by the family, and half is redistributed to other families.

Thousands of people will in five years have traded names for animals from this project if it runs as planned.

Stop donations, start free trade!

Don't worry, this is art! (Hornsleth 2007: 9)

The last sentence has the character of a manifesto. However, throughout the book, one gets an impression that the crew did worry about the combination of art, charity, and free trade. Art critic Staffan Boije af Gennäs discusses the project's neocolonial aspects. It has a white provider, who is also the art director. And it has black receivers of animals and new names, who are the models for the art work. The subtitle, *We want to help you, but we want to own you,* underlines the ambiguity in the white position. It also presents the character

of negotiation that governs the relationship between The North and The South, white people vs. black people, artist vs. villagers. On the other hand, local representative Richard Mulondo refers to the name shift as a gift trade, negotiated brotherhood, and democracy by which the villagers benefited. In his article, he underlines how art and aid have both taken on the shape of economic negotiations in this project:

> It all started when Mr. Kristian made his first visit to Uganda. I came to know Kristian through my brother DAVID who works for MR. BIRGER, a Danish investor here, who is Kristian's friend and mine, too. When we met David, Birger, Michael [Germany] and me, Mr. Kristian shared with us his vision of what he wanted to do for his art project. In the beginning, to me it sounded weird for the entire village to add his name to theirs. It was really going to be impossible in my sense. But Mr. Kristian went ahead to explain that it was trade between the villagers and him. They give him something by taking up his name and in return, he gives them something [money or animals]. There were also other benefits of taking up HORNSLETH's NAME. These included
> – villagers will be able to trade with outside world under the HORNSLETH name.
> – villagers were passports bearing Hornsleth name to theirs for free.
> – the name given to the villagers was to bring us together under one family regardless of your tribal, religious, political background and ideologies.
> – villagers were to get money in form of animals to boost their income and many other benefits.
>
> The task was left to explain it to the villagers, and David and I organised a village meeting for Christian to meet the villagers. Kristian himself explained to the villagers about his art project and what he requires of them and what they get from him. They agreed to trade with him by taking up his name. Later that day, he talked to the opinion leaders and all agreed on what was to be done with the money Kristian was giving, that they should have them in form of pigs, goats and sheep. And each villager will take one of his choice. (Mulondo 2007: 43)

Local representative David Kateregga makes an effort to convince the reader that the village's participation is a political stance: 'One of the ideas of the art project is for people around the world to understand that aid is given to poor countries with one hand and demands are given with the other hand. In other

words: the aid is conditional, it is pure business and not really something that will benefit the poor countries in the long run' (Kateregga 2007: 37).

The international mass media condemned the project without taking the villagers' voices into consideration. The name shift seemed to be the most provocative element of the project as it was not temporarily staged, but a real change, proven by the documented identity cards. A year later, harsh comments on the project's ethical attitude were still being repeated in Nordic mass media. On September 19, 2007 the Swedish art critic Stefan Jonsson, a writer for the leading Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, pointed to Hornsleth as a key example of contemporary art projects that 1) cross ethical borders, and 2) invite the press to write about them. Jonsson argued that even though Hornsleth's project focuses on the white exploitation of blacks, the articulation of the project is an exploitation in itself.[3]

A central point in the ethical art criticism articulated by critics who, like Stefan Jonsson, are disgusted by the project, is that Hornsleth directed the discussion: he had the idea and directed the project. In Uganda he hired local helpers; in Denmark he hired photographers who went with him to Buteyongera; he hired writers and cameramen to document the project and a PR agency to create and manage media attention; he communicated with art critics who would praise the project and art critics who would criticise it.[4] According to Jonsson, Hornsleth treats his African collaborators and project staff like dogs and pigs.[5]

My own interest in *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* 2006 and its reception stems from an urge to understand more about how the colonial discourse on Africa that is staged by the project functions. It is a transnational collaborative art project that, in my interpretation, focuses on the ambivalent European attitude towards Africans, the European shame or guilt, and the current neocolonial exploitation of Africa. It is loaded with provocation towards the colonial attitude present in the aid system. Still, the mass media is provoked by the artist's colonial methods, and neglects to listen to the voices of the villagers involved in the project. How does the project involuntarily (?) succeed in turning the media aggression towards itself instead of towards the system it criticises? Is there perhaps a deep gap between the inside perspective of the project (the way the collaborators look upon the entire event) and the outside (the way a lot of people not involved in the project interpret it)? In my opinion, the colonial discourse is at stake here, but not only in the project. Our knowledge about Africa and Africans was constructed during the period of colonialism; this colonial knowledge still rules the western perspective on

African villages like Buteyongera. *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* stages this arrogant attitude in a most visible way, but it looks like the project's audiences transform the shame thus activated into aggression towards the artist. My question would be if the audience represented by the reception in the press as a consequence of this, are missing their own implication in the photographs presented to them?[6]

This article will focus on only two aspects of the entire project: 1) the final product, i.e. the photographic portraits that have been exposed in art galleries, and 2) the colonial discourse that is embedded in these portraits. In both cases I will endeavour to deepen the understanding of the complex relationship between the inside and the outside of the project in order to explore what it is exactly that the project does, and how it invokes artistic, theoretical, and neocolonial conceptions on shame and guilt.

Photographic portrait and cultural identity

The portrait of Hornsleth Janet Namono presents her as an Other. The presentation of the subject's identity is a crucial question in all portraits; the subjects of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* are presented according to the representation of the colonial discourse. All the portraits are '*enface*', that is, they only show the heads and shoulders of the subject, and each subject holds up his or her identity card displaying their new full name, date of birth, and an *enface* photograph. The serious manner of the photograph on the identity card is replicated in the photograph taken for the project. One could say that the two portraits mirror each other, creating a sense of '*Verfremdung*'. But the estrangement of the pose also reflects the iconographic convention of the photographic identification of prisoners, in which the prisoner holds his or her identification number in the same way that Hornsleth Janet Namono is holding her new identification card. Another comparison can be made here: before abolition, slaves were identified by their masters' names. The Hornsleth name is her new identity, but it is not only a sign of her imprisonment; it also signals the artist Hornsleth's empowerment as white man and Master.

From the perspective of those involved in the project, these portraits articulate the colonial power structure of ongoing identity negotiations. The power structure is acted out in the shape of a global family album that consists of one hundred large portraits. From the inside perspective, family is the central identity category. As Mulondo points out: '-the name given to the villagers was

© Kristian von Hornsleth: Portrait of Hornsleth Janet Namono. *The Hornsleth Village Project* (2006). Printed by permission of the artist.

to bring us together under one family regardless of [our] tribal, religious, political background and ideologies' (Mulondo 2007: 43). It is worth noticing that family was often used as a metaphor for the social connection between white Masters and black hired crews in colonial literature, such as Livingstone's and Stanley's notes and diaries. *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* restages colonialism's power structure of a white provider as head of the social group, providing for black subalterns. The project stages this familial relationship in a way that both repeats the power structure that governed transnational cultural meetings during colonialism and reveals today's neocolonialism in the aid system: *We want to help you, but we want to own you.*

From the inside of the project, the political statement made is quite clear. However, it is more difficult to make these conclusions from the outside. The staging of the villagers' identity as Other provokes a cultural memory that Groys called guilt and Hornsleth called shame, and the audience, including Stefan Jonsson, responded to with anger.

In *La Chambre Claire. Note sur la photographie* (1980), Roland Barthes describes photography as an agglutinated medium (Barthes 2001: 14-15), meaning that it 'sticks' to the object. Looking at a photograph, one notices the thing or the person in the picture, not the medium. The one hundred large portraits dominated by serious faces, inscrutable eyes, and hands holding up identity cards showing the subjects' new name make a thorough impression on the audience because they imitate the typology of the prisoner and reflect colonial abuse. The medium itself attracts no attention. The spectator who observes a photographic portrait identifies with the photographer's position. As the photographer in this case is presented as a colonial master, the audiences who find themselves in his position have no choice but to partake in the project's repetition of the colonial power structure. The spectator is thus staged in an abusive neocolonial role.

According to Barthes, the spectator who meets the gaze of the photographed subject may feel a sense of contact (Barthes 2001: 99; 104). The portrait may be seen as a metonymic representation of the subject, and a metonymic meeting consequently takes place. The audience might even 'recognise' a speaking voice from the photographed gaze, as if the portrait is delivering a message to the audience's conscience; the spectator might therefore feel obliged to speak on behalf of the portrayed subject. In this case, the serious manner in the gazes of the one hundred portraits can be interpreted as a testimony to the villagers' anger at being enslaved. In *Testimony. Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoa-*

233

nalysis, and History, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub make the point that as the witness is a medium for the experience of someone else, they cannot fully understand the significance of the testimony (Felman & Laub 1992: 24). In the case of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* one might conclude that the audience is seduced into occupying a witness position without investigating whether the testimony is necessary. A witness speaks on behalf of someone who does not possess a voice of their own to speak about a traumatic experience. The witness gives significance to the experience of the voiceless. But why does the audience think that Hornsleth Janet Namono and the ninety-nine other villagers have no voices of their own?

'The [photographic] portrait is […] a sign whose purpose is both the description of an individual and the inscription of social identity', John Tagg argues in *The Burden of Representation. Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Tagg 1988: 37). Celia Lury states this even more definitively in *Prosthetic culture. Photography, memory, and identity*, where she writes that photography has a history of serving the characterisation of man (Lury 1998: 43). Tagg and Lury agree that portrait photography has played an important part in the definition of mankind and its social identity. As the portrait genre dominated the early years of photography, it was defined as the medium through which the individual's self-understanding was made visible. But in the early years of anthropology, photography was also used for phrenological purposes; anatomic features made man's inner character visible. 'Photography can thus be seen as both the instrument and the object of a comparative taxonomy that seeks to encompass the entire range of human variations,' Lury argues, and goes on to explain that photography served the mapping of human difference (Lury 1998: 51). In 1955, The Museum of Modern Art in New York showed an exposition called *The Family of Man* (curated by Edward Steichen), consisting of 503 photos chosen to represent humanity. Most objects were staged within a cultural context, some without. Together they demonstrated the diversity of mankind. The one hundred portraits of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* must be viewed in the same perspective. But as the subjects of this exhibition were staged to demonstrate one kind of identity, the project does not signal diversity. In *Kampen om ansigtet. Fotografi og identifikation* (2006), Mette Mortensen argues that family portraits present likeness and tell the story of the family's myth. A family album stages the collective identity of the family, the family character traits, and the family story, as well as the individuality of each family member. A family album represents each individual's role in the family's chronicle (Mortensen

2006: 93). The identity of the transnational Hornsleth family is present in the one hundred portraits, which insist on individual difference but most of all on a collective Hornsleth identity. The provocative element of the Hornsleth family photographs is that the collective colonially structured identity overrules the individual. At the heart of the photographic portrait there is a negotiated contract between the photographer and the subject about self-presentation, according to Lury (Lury 1998: 45). *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* is highly provocative because of the contract's colonial attitude towards the subjects. Thus, what the audience tends to see is the photographer's attempt to steal the sitter from him- or herself, to borrow a phrase from Lury (Lury 1998: 46).[7] The audience reacts to the crime they are witnessing and neglect the artistic theme of the portraits, signaled in the accompanying book's ambiguous subtitle, *We want to help you, but we want to own you.*

However contested, a cultural memory analysis might give an even more specific explanation of the audience's immediate reaction to the stolen identity of the portrayed subjects. In "Projected Memory. Holocaust Photographs in Personal and Public Fantasy" (1999), Marianne Hirsch argues that cultural memory is transmitted through storytelling and culture. The presence of a coded object invokes a cultural projection, i.e. cultural memories can be transformed into personal ones. The projection is brought forward by the gaze of the audience when it meets the gaze of a coded photographed object; when the audience observes the photographs they might decipher the codes attributed to the subject and translate them into transmitted cultural memory (Hirsch 1999: 8). In other words, the spectators might identify with the object. By meeting the gaze of the Other in the photograph, they are led to project the cultural narrative (in this case the colonial history of white people making black people into slaves) as if it were their own personal memory experience, and consequently they may feel that they are witnessing the portrayed subaltern's emotions. The audience might even become angry on their behalf and feel obliged to act as witness to their supposed anger. Thus the act of watching the gaze of Hornsleth Janet Namono might raise a cultural memory of slavery and colonialism. The audience cannot fully identify with Janet; but they might project their own feelings into her gaze and feel obliged to testify on her behalf. The spectators' outside perspective on the art project and the photographs may lead them to testify to something they believe has happened on the inside. In fact, what they are doing is testifying to something that they only know from the production of Otherness in their own cultural memory.

235

In postcolonial theory, representation of the Other has been regarded as an ethical question ever since Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak asked "Can the Subaltern speak?" in 1983.[8] The answer was 'No'. Not: no, the subaltern cannot speak, but: no, her voice is not heard, she is not regarded as an agent in history, rather she is represented by someone else (Spivak 1999: 272). In the 1988 edition of her book, Spivak focused on the coloniser, only to conclude that he did not listen to the colonised subaltern. In 1999, when she asked the question once again, she directed her attention to the female subaltern of the post-colony. The answer remained the same. The subaltern is not even heard in her own culture because her references are still not regarded as relevant. Therefore no one listens – not even her own relatives (Spivak 1999: 274). Even though the references to colonialism and postcolonial theory are frequent, ethnocentrism is not dead, not even in the postcolonial era, Spivak concludes (Spivak 1999: 311). From the inside perspective of the *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda*, it is easy to agree. When the audience testifies to a cultural memory they overrule the villagers' voices in the portraits. The audience neglect to ask whether its testimony is asked for and act accordingly, as if the villagers have no voices of their own. Thus the audiences fulfill the colonial message of the subtitle: *We want to help you, but we want to own you*.

Artistic investigations into the colonial discourse

From the inside, *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* stages a repetition of the colonial power structure between white and black people and thus reveals their mutual importance with respect to each other's social identity, together with their identity's affinity to the power structure. From the outside perspective, the project has led its audience into repeating the colonial white man's attitude towards the Africans so far as to neglect to listen to the villagers' own voices. The artist is caught on the threshold, having arranged both perspectives and coded the colonial discourse on Africa into the portraits. He thus gives new insight into the way colonial knowledge about Africa and the Africans is still vivid in western attitudes towards an African village.

The Othering process that is made visible from both perspectives is known as the colonial mapping process, which was developed by explorers, missionaries, and journalists in pre-colonial times, such as the British Mungo Park (1771-1805), James Kingston Tuckey (1776-1816) and David Livingstone (1813-1873), and the British-American Henry Stanley (1841-1904). All of

them wrote about their experiences in travel accounts that were structured as mapping-processes.[9] But they did not limit themselves to describing topography. Mungo Park's story focuses on one anthropological question at a time, such as etiquette, eating habits, family structures, and so on (Park 1799/1800). Tuckey was instructed to collect all kinds of arts and crafts including plants, minerals, cooking utensils, and objects used for ritual séances. Climatic conditions, topography, mountains, waterways, wildlife, as well as the tribes' ways of living, morals, habits, and mentality were also some of the things he was supposed to explore in order to widen the European knowledge of Africa and the Africans (Tuckey 1818: xxxvif). In his instructions there was even a list of which words he was expected collect from all the different languages he would meet on his journey. All these explorers described their experiences of the foreign by comparing them with familiar examples from home, addressing their reading public with metaphors it would be able to recognise.[10] These travel accounts were regarded as trustworthy because they documented first-hand experience in the service of The Royal Geographic Society, and they had an immense impact because they were widely read. In this manner, African culture was identified from the outside. The mapping process that was meant to develop knowledge about the foreign continent and its culture resulted in a consolidation of the superiority of the familiar culture of home.[11]

Hornsleth Village Project Uganda uses the codes of this colonial knowledge discourse for its own artistic purpose, which is to highlight how humanist aid prolongs the cultural definition of Africans as the Other with no voices of their own. Thus, this project focuses on the way the prolonged life of the western knowledge of the African Others functions as a hindrance to authentic transcultural meetings.

In contemporary anthropology, several studies have touched on the way art can represent cultural difference in a more enlightening way than anthropology itself is capable of.[12] For instance, the Uruguayan anthropologist Fernando Coronil expresses an optimistic point of view not on the science he practices but on the capacity of art to question the dichotomy between the west and the rest. In "Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories" (1996), his line of argument follows the established critique of the colonial discourse. Like Edward Said, on whose shoulders Coronil stands, he claims that Western knowledge is far from neutral. Underlying this postulation is the insight that all knowledge is dichotomic and all dichotomic knowledge is imperial. Even the so-called neutral sciences, such as geography, are closely connected to

237

the economical invasion of the colonies (Coronil 1996: 52-53). Coronil demonstrates that Western knowledge about the rest of the world is a question of power and definition. However, his ambition is not only to reveal the imperial methods of science but also to establish non-imperial methods and form new identity categories. As such, his attention is drawn to literature. In order to create room for his own vision of non-imperial geohistorical categories, he looks for 'a decentered poetics' (Coronil 1996: 52). I will suggest that if one has to go outside scholarly knowledge to create new categories, photography might be an even better choice than literature because it is regarded as the medium of identity, whereas literature is known for its ability to create fictive characters.

Hornsleth's portraits are filled with colonial poetics and do not create new identity categories. What they can do, though, is reveal that art's capacity to create new understandings of cultural difference does not solely depend on the quality of the artist and the models, their work together, and their will to partake in and create a transnational community like the photographed Hornsleth family.[13] The colonial discourse is too deeply rooted to be easily transcended. *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* offers a painful insight into the complex identification structure of the white position as provider and oppressor both from the inside of the project, i.e. the portraits, and from the outside, i.e the aggravated audience. It is not a coincidence that the message about family is not listened to. The contemporary mapping process dilutes the audience's ability to listen to the voices of the subalterns.

Hornsleth Village Project Uganda unveils an ambiguity with respect to the speaking voice and raises the central question that Coronil neglected to articulate thoroughly: What does it take to decode the perspective of the colonial discourse? The experience of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* highlights to what extent the dynamics of a cultural meeting depend on the insight into the personal impact of the knowledge discourse that is revealed.

Conditioned transcultural meetings

In the aftermath of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* one has to ask whether it blurred any insight into the continued life of colonial knowledge, or rather shed new light on it. The important question that *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* asks is whether cultural meetings can be arranged on equal terms for both parties. Can the different prejudices and the unequal power structure that were the result of colonialism be overcome?

238

In the huge body of writing on globalization theory, there is not a single answer to this question. However, this volume has been inspired by a more optimistic point of view on cultural globalization theory. Roland Robertson offers a dialogic perspective to the ongoing interconnection between cultures with the term *glocalization* (Robertson 1995: 40); from the perspective of glocalization it ought to be possible to create a multicultural Hornsleth family identity. What *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* underlines, though, is the audience's reluctance to accept the change in the power structure inherent in the knowledge of the Other stemming from colonialism.

In *Globalization and Culture*, John Tomlinson characterises the conditions of social life in the globalized world as a 'complex connectivity', which is 'the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences' (Tomlinson 1999: 2; 9). People from all over the world are brought together by a high degree of mediated accessibility and travel. But even though physical distance is easily overcome, cultural distance remains to be dealt with. 'Local life occupies the majority of time and space', as Tomlinson simply puts it. Thus, the measure of the degree of globalization is connected with the 'displacement' brought upon the locality by globalization (Tomlinson 1999: 9). In my understanding of connectivity, the globalized world is a network society with a potential to destabilise and change local communities. As a collaboration between a Danish artist and one hundred African villagers, *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* might be seen as a transnational cultural encounter which has changed the village of Buteyongera. But the lack of respect towards the villagers' participation in the project is still vivid in its Nordic reception.

I sympathise with Robertson's and Tomlinson's will to see the old dichotomies of cultural difference in new perspectives. Still, I want to argue that cultural globalization theory presents maybe too optimistic a point of view on cultural meetings. The possibility of establishing a sense of 'we' across borders has increased, but it is not necessarily guaranteed to be successful. Even though the connection between Denmark and Buteyongera involves a collaborative investment in an art project, the *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* demonstrates that the repeated cultural division between 'we' and 'them' is not easy to dispel. At the heart of this project is a family name; despite the fact that one hundred portraits document the Ugandans as members of the Hornsleth family, the reception of these portraits interprets the black Hornsleths as 'them' and the white one as 'us'. Thus, it is tempting to conclude that the art project demonstrates how deeply rooted the division is, and how hard it is to establish a transnational 'we'.

239

However, *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* does demonstrate a perspective *on* western knowledge discourse and cultural memory: the 'dis-placement' of Buteyongera into Hornsleth Village is a result of the collaborative art project. In the prolongation of the colonial power structure that seems to govern the mind of the reception, this cultural encounter is not regarded as an interpenetrative exchange. Rather, the local community that is staged as a colonial cliché in the project is transformed in the reception into the same cliché on the basis of the old, scholarly knowledge of what Africans are, i.e. they are not 'us'. The value of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* is that it reveals that colonial discourse is not dead at all, but continues to structure our inability to listen to the cultural Other.

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Notes

1   Pressens Gallery is cituated in the building of the newspaper *Politiken.* Kristian von Hornsleth, born 1963, was educated at the Royal Art Academy's Architectural school in Copenhagen 1988-94. He works in a postmodern and conceptual tradition. Latest projects: *Deep Storage Project* (2010), *The Hornsleth Arms Investment Corporation* (2008), *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* (2006).

2   See http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/konstrecensioner/kristian-von-hornsleth-hornsleth-village-project-uganda-1.529560, acessed October 19 2009, http://klassekampen.no/48151/article/item/null, accessed October 19 2009, http://www.hornsleth.com/Hornsleth/Home/Media/Articles/

Articles, accessed March 28 2011, and http://www.hornslethvillageproject.com/Uganda-Village-Project/Media, accessed March 28 2011.

3   'Men provokationen och olusten bottnar förstås inte i att Hornsleth visar att människor exploaterar varandra, och att vita exploiterar svarta. Den verkliga provokationen är outtalad och följer i nästa led: vi exploiterar varandra, och vita exploaterer svarta, och låt oss fortsätta med det.' (Jonsson 2007, http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/konstrecensioner/kristian-von-hornsleth-hornsleth-village-project-uganda-1.529560, accessed October 19 2009).

4   'Kristian von Hornsleth står för idé och samordning. I Uganda har han anställt lokala medhjälpare. I Danmark har han städslat fotografer som rest ned och fotograferat. Han har anlitat författare och filmare som dokumenterat projektet, en pr-firma som ser till att det skapas uppmärksamhet. Han har knutit upp konstkritiker som ska prisa projektet och andra konstkritiker som ska såga det.' (Jonsson 2007, http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/konstrecensioner/kristian-von-hornsleth-hornsleth-village-project-uganda-1.529560, accessed October 19 2009).

5   'Huruvida Hornsleth undanröjer fattigdomen eller förvärrar den spelar ingen roll. Saken gäller något enklare, som är svårare. Man kan skänka någon sin gris. Men kan man begära hans eller hennes namn i utbyte? Måste europén behandla afrikanen som människa? När kan konsten behandla andra som hundar och svin?' (Jonsson 2007, http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/konstrecensioner/kristian-von-hornsleth-hornsleth-village-project-uganda-1.529560, accessed October 19 2009).

6   The phrase is borrowed from Shoshana Felman (Felman 1993: 19), who uses it to indicate that the reason a certain topic is of so much interest to her that she has written a book about it is that it touches on a part of her own story that she was not previously conscious of.

7   Mette Mortensen (2006) also focuses on the connection between photography and characterisation. An identity-portrait asks: Who is that person? What does he represent? Mortensen argues that any identity photograph involves a dual perspective: the subject is portrayed from the outside by the photographer, but still presents the subject's presentation of him- or herself because even though the photographer takes the picture, the subject will still stick to his or her own version of self-presentation in order to make their own identity recognisable (Mortensen 2006: 16).

8   The term 'subaltern' is Antonio Gramsci's, who used it to define the underclass of the colonies. 'Subaltern Studies' was the title of a scholarly field that studied the agency of low status groups in history. Spivak gave the lecture "Can the Subaltern speak?" in 1983. It was published in 1988 and rewritten in 1999.

9   In 1587, Gerard Mercator presented the first map of the world, *Orbis Terrae Compendiosa Descriptivo*, which was dominated by depictions of coastlines. The inner parts of Africa, Australia, Asia and America were not yet known but the desire to fill in the empty sections of the map became a quest for exploration projects in the centuries to come, Richard Phillips argues in *Mapping Men and Empire* (Phillips 1997: 6).

10   The Swedish professor of comparative literature Arne Melberg make the same point in *Å reise og skrive* (2005) referring to Francois Hartog's presentation of Herodot: Herodot wanted to translate what seemed to be different (*l'alterité*) into the known (Melberg 2005: 26/Francois Hartog: *Le miroir d' Hérodote*, 1980: 225).

11   The scientific purpose of exploring also left room for heroic self-presentation. The adventurous survival and immense self-control testified to by the travelers is akin to that of adventure story heroes. Their travel accounts are filled with breathtaking stories about near fatal attacks from both wildlife and people. These accounts have inspired adventure stories such as those written by H. Rider Haggard and Richard Burroughs. Both authors structure their novels around the heroes' journeys. The stories are narrated in first person, and the mapping-quest is transformed into a quest for ivory, or a lost white man, or treasure. The adventure stories are not historically reliable, but they are built on reliable sources. In *Imagining Africa. Landscape in H. Rider Haggard's African*

242

Romances (2001), Lindy Stiebel makes a similar point when she discusses the influence of Mungo Park, David Livingstone, Richard Burton, and John Speke on Haggard's romances. The explorers' travel accounts constructed an image of Africa which met with the Victorian public's desire to be entertained, she argues. Haggard knew Africa only from reading (Stiebel 2001: 16ff). The same argument has been made about Burroughs by, for instance, Frits Andersen (Andersen 2010: 592). Even modernist novels such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) have contributed to the prolongation of the image of Africa as the place where white men either die or demonstrate their heroic qualities. Despite the fact that *Heart of Darkness* also marks the beginning of a critique of the testimonial value of the travellers' accounts of their encounters with the local habitants, as Andersen (2010) argues, the colonial attitude of the travel accounts made room for a continued 'orientalist' description of Africa and Africans throughout the first half of the twentieth century (Andersen 2010: 376).

12   In *Contemporary Art and Anthropology* (2006), Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright explore the anthropological and artistic modes of representation and argue that in anthropology, the Other is represented by the scientist's appropriation, but the objective representation that used to be the ideal has now been questioned. In representational art, on the other hand, the subjective experience of the Other is searched for and acknowledged through the artist's subjectivity, thus the audience gets to know the other through their appropriation of the work (see Schneider and Wright 2006: 26).

13   Another interesting example is *Miss Landmine,* by the Norwegian actor and director Morten Traavik. In 2007 he arranged a Beauty Contest in Luanda, Angola. As the title implies, the contestants were all wounded by landmines; they were provided with prosthesis from a Norwegian factory and received money to start a small business or get an education as a reward. In 2009, he attempted to arrange a similar contest in Cambodia. It was cancelled by the authorities, so the Cambodian contest was held in Kristiansand, a small town in Norway, where exiled Cambodians elected a Miss Landmine from full scale photographic portraits. In both the Angolan and the Cambodian cases similar contests were arranged on the internet (see http://www.miss-landmine.org/misslandmine_news.html, accessed March 28 2011). The photographs are accompanied by information about the dress, the jewels, and the designer, which is listed sided by side with information about the mine that blew the contestant's leg away; the weight and kind of explosives, manufacturer and nationality of origin are also listed. Thus, *Miss Landmine* focuses on how the life and identity of these women is controlled by the international war and development aid industries, as well as by the beauty ideals of their culture. The connection that is made between daily life (dresses and jewelry) and war (explosives) reveal a sense of random connection between their lives and the spectators' lives. The spectator can identify with some parts of their lives, but not others. More than Otherness, these portraits underline the familiar and ordinary elements of the women's lives which makes it possible to identify with the photographed subjects in ways *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* does not allow. Thus, Traavik touches on the decentred poetics that Coronil asks for. However, Traavik has also met with harsh critique and the two projects have some similarities. Both have resulted in photographic portraits as well as development aid, and both are collaborative art projects in which the artist takes up a central position on the threshold between art and real life, where they are accused of unethical behavior by the art audience. A comparison of *Hornsleth Village Project Uganda* and *Miss Landmine* and their media coverage might perhaps deepen the understanding of the effect of coded photography as well as the continued life of colonial discourse.