ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Enthymemes Of Relation And National Legitimation: Argument And Tombs Of The Unknown

1. Introduction

Rhetorical practice has been retheorized in recent years to include not only linguistic and visual signs, but also material places and objects. Rhetorical studies of places and/or objects, such as quilts, gravestones, coffee houses, markets, parks, cityscapes, museums, and monuments, have made the claim repeatedly that objects and built environments may be just as rhetorical as words (Biesecker, 2002; Blair, 1999; Blair, 2001; Blair & Michel, 2000; Blair & Michel, 2007; Dickinson, 1997; Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2005; Dickinson, Ott & Aoki, 2006; Gallagher, 1999; Gallagher, 2004; Zagacki & Gallagher, 2009). These claims have prompted Ott and Dickinson (2009), in an important recent synthesis, to take the position that "visual rhetoric in everyday life is not *merely* visual; it is not only an effect of the eye or a consequence of cognition" (p. 397). Simply put, visual images, and even more importantly objects and places, cannot be reduced to the ocular.

Claims about the *argumentative* character of place have been less plentiful, but the parallel seems to us reasonable. Indeed, we argued at the last ISSA conference that places have argumentative "potency" and, as Dickinson and Ott also suggest, that their character cannot be contained "merely," within the visual (Blair, Balthrop, & Michel, 2007, p. 146). Still, what remains unclear is *how* objects or places take on argumentative force, *how* they accrete to themselves the capacity to argue a case to those who encounter or traverse them. We have proposed more recently that to treat "commemorative places as themselves rhetorical" is not to deny the "significance of the supplementary rhetoric that a place may give rise to, and that in turn reinterprets or reperforms the place." We maintained, furthermore, that "juxtapositions of the material (physical place) and its circulations," such as speech, ritual, journalistic accounts, and so forth, allow us to better understand the rhetorical dimensions of commemoration (Balthrop,

Blair, & Michel, 2010, p. 172). Here we take up this suggestion more directly in analyzing the articulations of national Tombs of the Unknown Soldier (or Unknown Warrior) with public, press, and government discourses; ceremonial events; symbolic geographies; and cultural allusions and *mythoi*. Our reason for doing so is to show specifically how an argument is forged, in a particular historical moment, by a commemorative place in its articulations with these other cultural practices (e.g., Grossberg, 1992; Grossberg, 1997).**[i]** That is, while it may seem clear that places "speak," we try to establish how they may speak *argumentatively*. Importantly, of course, the mediating rituals, speech, media accounts, and interpretations do not remain stable, so the argument made by a place certainly will change with its different circulations and articulations historically.

Many scholars have argued that both the political eddies and commemorative practices set off by World War I (WWI) have been deeply influential of international politics and commemorative works in later decades of the twentieth century and in our own time (e.g., Capdevila & Voldman, 2006; Laqueur, 1996). With respect to commemoration in particular, at least three claims can be made for WWI as foundational for later practice. The first and most obvious was the nearly ubiquitous effort to remember the missing, those whose bodies were never found after the war and thus were unavailable for burial. The standard material strategy of commemorating them involved massive walls of the missing, inscribed with the names of all those who did not have graves. The British, for example, inscribed names at their massive Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, at Thiepval in France, and at the Menin Gate, in Ypres, Belgium (Stamp, 2006). Similarly, lists of American missing were inscribed on the walls of chapels in U.S. military cemeteries. In more recent years, walls of the missing have morphed into walls listing all the dead of a tragic or violent event. Although the U.S. Vietnam Veterans Memorial is usually taken to be the harbinger of contemporary memorials that name the dead, its designer, Maya Lin, has pointed to the direct influence on her work of Lutyens' Thiepval memorial (Lin, 2000, 4:09).

Second, some nation-states following WWI chose to commemorate the dead with what they called utilitarian or "living" memorials designed to enhance life for those who remained. Sometimes they would take the form of scholarships or endowments, but usually they were useful structures, like parks, bridges, hospitals, meeting halls, or schools. The utilitarian memorial concept was highly

contested in a number of Western nations in the interwar period, but it became the order of the day following the Second World War (Shanken, 2002). It remains a popular, if usually reticent, commemorative strategy.

The Tombs of the Unknown constituted the third influential innovation of the interwar period; like the other commemorative novelties of WWI, this was an international phenomenon, but one that focused in each case upon a national "hero."**[ii]** The first national Tomb of the Unknown memorials appeared in France and Britain in 1920; Portugal, Italy, and the U.S. followed suit in 1921, as did Belgium in 1922.**[iii]** Many of the other participant nations, empires, and/or former client states of empires would create such memorials in the interwar years, including Austria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Hungary, India, Poland, Romania, and Serbia. Australia and Canada added their offerings in 1993 and 2000 respectively, and the most recent World War I Tomb of the Unknown was unveiled in New Zealand in 2004.

There is no mystery about the conditions that gave rise to this new mode of commemoration. The mechanized killing, trench warfare, and long stalemated battles that characterized WWI resulted in massive numbers of unidentified dead – the unknowns (see, e.g., Kramer, 2007). Bodies were buried hastily in "no man's land" between the trenches. But as battle lines shifted, individual graves, sometimes even whole temporary cemeteries, were obliterated during massive bombardments. As a result, hundreds of thousands of soldiers from WWI are listed as "missing," with more than 700,000 from the British Empire, France, and the United States (Duffy, 2008-2009). Many of the missing do have graves, of course, some in mass burial locations, others in individual graves marked "unknown." Laqueur (1996) puts the count of individual, unknown graves at 180,861 for the British Empire alone (p. 124).

The national Tomb of the Unknown memorials have often been remarked as new to the early twentieth century, but they have been little studied. For example, such eminent thinkers as Benedict Anderson (2006, p. 10) and Hannah Arendt (1959, p. 161) have commented on the Tombs in thoughtful ways. And there have been helpful scholarly observations about individual cases, for example, Moffett's (2007) insightful claim that Great Britain's Tomb of the Unknown Warrior "completes" London's other well-known WWI monument, the Cenotaph (p. 234). Still, given the scope and significance of the international and interdisciplinary literatures on the history of commemorative practice, this research "gap" is not

only surprising but quite problematic, given the echoes of interwar commemorative practices and issues up to and in our own time.

Moreover, while it certainly is the case that WWI set a tone for subsequent twentieth and twenty-first century commemoration, issues regarding the unknowns and the missing from WWI itself are far from resolved. In 2009 a British historian located a long forgotten archive at Red Cross headquarters in Geneva, with information about deaths, burials, and captures of some 20 million soldiers from WWI. According to Williams (2009), this archive contains information that may aid in identifying many of those whose graves in battlefield cemeteries have been marked "unknown" for almost a century. Likewise, in the spring of 2008, a mass grave was discovered in northern France, containing the remains of 250 British and Australian soldiers killed in the battle of Fromelles, on July 19, 1916 (Samuel, 2008). At this writing 96 of the dead have been identified by DNA and other means (Australian Fromelles 2010). The first new Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery built in almost fifty years was dedicated on July 19, 2010, in Fromelles, in a ceremony that included the final, 250th, interment, a soldier who remains unknown. These "finds" are compelling reminders that WWI continues to haunt our present moment, perhaps especially so in its prominent marking of the categories of the "missing" and the "unknown."

Our paper begins to address the national Tomb of the Unknown memorials by piecing together two, sometimes fragmentary arguments that may help to account for the broad appeal of this practice across so many variegated national, imperial and post-imperial states in the interwar years. Both arguments arose as a result of the interaction in each case of the Tomb, its ritual of establishment, its location, as well as government, public, and press statements about it. The two arguments share a minor premise that we will establish initially. We then reconstruct the first argument, which we label provisionally a "hypothetical enthymeme of relation," and which was addressed most directly to surviving relatives of the missing. Here, we focus most upon the cases of the U.K., France, and the U.S., for their Tombs of the Unknown were among the first (pertinently, during a time when next-of-kin were close relations) and because materials about their establishment are most easily accessible. The second argument that we name, equally provisionally, an "enthymeme of national legitimation," was addressed to larger national and international as well as citizen groups. Here we examine a more robust set of cases, including the earliest exemplars, but also the three

former dominions of the British Empire that established their tombs only in the past two decades.

2. Establishing the Enthymemes' Minor Premise

Well publicized accounts of how a country's Unknown was chosen from among thousands of unknowns in cemeteries on the battlefront and delivered to his final burial place in the capital city accomplished two objectives: The methods of choosing established the Unknown as truly anonymous, unidentifiable by any marker except nationality. And the rituals of the choice and transport of the body, in each case, were fitting to a head of state, rendering the body as a heroic one; this was reinforced by the prominent, national location of each of the tombs.

Selection of the Unknown was a serious issue; officials in each country wanted to ensure that the selected soldier could not be identified by any marker except nationality, and that there was insufficient information from the soldier's remains and location to ever lead to an identification. In most cases during the interwar period, the remains of four to eight unknowns were exhumed and brought to a ceremonial location for the ritual choice. Every effort was made to ensure that the designated choice maker could not distinguish among them, even by reference to the cemeteries from which they had been exhumed. For example, the caskets were sometimes rearranged multiple times, and all markers except for identical national flags removed. Indeed, in the case of the U.S. choice, the burial records representing all four of the possible choices were destroyed, leaving no trace of the cemetery origins of the bodies (Poole, 2009, p. 150). Belgium ensured anonymity by having a blind veteran as the selector (Belgium Honors, 1922, p. 2), and some accounts hold that Britain blindfolded theirs (Lloyd, 1998, p. 66).

Whether the destination for the chosen Unknown was London, Paris, Washington, or another national capital, each traced a ceremonial path of remarkable, well publicized symbolism. The splendor and dignity of the ceremonial rites, from exhumation to burial service, were extraordinary, often compared to state funerals of presidents, prime ministers, or even royalty. These rites granted the Unknown the status of national hero. Every feature of the ritual was planned for its symbolic significance. For example, even the battlegrounds from which the candidates had been disinterred were carefully chosen, as were the locations of the selection ceremonies. The British selections had come from cemeteries in Ypres, Arras, the Somme, and the Aisne. The four U.S. choices had come from the Aisne-Marne, Meuse-Argonne, San Mihiel and Somme American cemeteries. The

French Soldat Inconnu was chosen at a ceremony in the Citadelle Souterraine in Verdun, which had served as the French logistical base for the ten-month Battle of Verdun, in 1916 (Le Champ, 2008).**[iv]**

Speeches, bands, red poppies, military parades, flags, bugle calls, gun salutes, hymns, and large crowds accompanied each of the chosen Unknowns on their routes from the selection sites to their destinations. Even the choices of transportation were heralded. The U.S. ship that carried the American Unknown from LeHavre to Washington, D.C., was the *USS Olympia*, the flagship of Admiral George Dewey, a well-known hero of the Spanish-American War (Mossman & Stark, 1991, p. 9). The British chose to transport their Unknown Warrior on board the destroyer *Verdun*, as a tribute to the French (Lloyd, 1998, p. 68). The ship's bell decorates one of the walls near the Unknown Warrior's grave in Westminster Abbey. Before departures from France, French honor guards would join the home country's honor guard to accompany the Unknowns to the debarkation port. Once on home territory, the Unknowns were honored with solemn parades that passed by or lingered at important destinations. The British Unknown Warrior's funeral march was halted so that King George could unveil the Cenotaph, before moving on to Westminster Abbey. The French Soldat Inconnu was taken to the Panthéon in Paris enroute to his final destination at the base of the Arc de Triomphe. The American Unknown joined the ranks of former presidents, vice presidents, senators and representatives in being chosen to lie in state in the U.S. Capitol prior to being moved to Arlington. The funerals were grand affairs, presided over by kings and presidents and attended by military giants of the war, for example Marshal Ferdinand Foch and General John J. Pershing. Both British and American Unknowns were buried with soil transported from the European battlefields.

As a result of the careful selections and massive, grand ceremonies, the Tombs of the Unknown would offer a minor, demonstrative premise serving each of the two major arguments: *Here is a hero of the Great War with no known identity except nationality.* Their inscriptions variously announce the premise. The casket of the British Unknown Warrior was inscribed: "A BRITISH WARRIOR WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1918 FOR KING AND COUNTRY" (Unknown Warrior, 2009). The main inscription on the stone slab that covers the graves is more elaborate but equally relevant: "BENEATH THIS STONE RESTS THE BODY OF A BRITISH WARRIOR UNKNOWN BY NAME OR RANK, BROUGHT FROM FRANCE TO LIE AMONG THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF THE LAND, AND BURIED HERE

ON ARMISTICE DAY 11 NOV. 1920, IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V, HIS MINISTERS OF STATE, THE CHIEFS OF HIS FORCES, AND A VAST CONCOURSE OF THE NATION. THUS ARE COMMEMORATED THE MANY MULTITUDES WHO DURING THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-1918 GAVE THE MOST THAT MAN CAN GIVE, LIFE ITSELF, FOR GOD; FOR KING AND COUNTRY; FOR LOVED ONES, HOME, AND EMPIRE; FOR THE SACRED CAUSE OF JUSTICE, AND THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD. THEY BURIED HIM AMONG THE KINGS BECAUSE HE HAD DONE GOOD TOWARD GOD AND TOWARD HIS HOUSE."**[v]** Less elaborate and more secular, but a parallel, is the inscription on the French Tomb of the Unknown: "ICI REPOSE UN SOLDAT FRANÇAIS MORT POUR LA PATRIE, 1914-1918." The American inscription also is simply a variation on the premise's articulation: "HERE RESTS IN HONORED GLORY AN AMERICAN SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO GOD." The only substantial difference from the British and French inscriptions is that these words, identical to those on all of the headstones for U.S. unknowns in WWI military cemeteries abroad, link the soldier in Arlington explicitly to all of the U.S. unknowns.

3. The Hypothetical Enthymeme of Relation

In a frequently quoted line, Gillis (1994) suggests that "all the major combatant nations eventually resorted to erecting the so-called tombs of unknown soldiers, thereby remembering everyone by remembering no one in particular" (p. 11). But this seems to miss precisely the point, given the first argument that we label the hypothetical enthymeme of relation. In it, the demonstrative minor premise is accompanied by a major premise, occasionally articulated by government officials or the press: *This could be your husband, your father, your brother, your son . . . .*

A poignant story about a *living* unknown French soldier after the war offers an instructive context for understanding the articulations that construct this major premise. Like other combatant nations, France had suffered great wartime losses: "The number of soldiers who were never to return, either dead or alive, was enormous: in November 1915, after the carnage of the first months of the war (the most casualty-heavy), they were already estimated at 300,000" (Le Naour, 2002, p. 39). The result, writes Le Naour, is that families "were . . . deprived of the certainty and closure that a body provides. After the armistice and the repatriation of prisoners, among whom these families hoped to find their missing relatives . . . the most rational resolved to accept the deaths. But the appearance of Anthelme Mangin, this unbelievable resurrection of a vanished soldier, revived

hope, and it came to embody the misery of all those who refused to mourn" (2002, pp. 2-3). Mangin was one of a number of veterans returning from German prisoner of war camps in February 1918, when he was found wandering along the platform of the Lyon-Brotteaux railway station. He had no sense of who he was and no signs of identification. He was sent to an asylum for recuperation and was given the name Anthelme Mangin by French authorities. Mangin was not the only unidentified, amnesiac veteran; Le Naour reports that ten were alive in the early months of 1919, and he notes the "alacrity with which they were reported" in the press (2002, p. 85).

The desire among the mourning to explore all possibilities to find missing relatives became starkly apparent after the publication of a small story about some of the "living unknowns" in the newspaper *Le Petit Parisien*. The paper received dozens of requests to publish photographs and subsequently did so. A more extensive effort was later undertaken by the Ministry of Prisons, when the photographs were published in every major national and regional newspaper. Veterans' organizations printed posters and distributed them to city halls throughout France. According to Le Naour, "Within a few weeks, dozens of citizens had claimed to recognize . . . [Mangin] as a son, a husband, or a brother missing in action but never officially declared dead. Nearly three hundred people asked for more information, and while most of them recognized their error as soon as they saw a better photograph or met with him . . . twenty families would press their claims in court. The litigation continued . . . until the unknown man's death [in 1942]" (Le Naour, p. 2). Mangin, according to Le Naour, "was thus a symbol: in his anonymity and his madman's remove from the world of the living, he was like a twin to the Unknown Soldier buried beneath the Arc de Triomphe. He stood for both the suffering of the families of the missing, who sought to identify him as their own, and for France's difficulty in coming to terms with grief between the two world wars" (2002, pp. 2-3).

For those families and relatives who had accepted the deaths of their loved ones, however, the desire for closure and for acknowledgment of their loss led them to seek solace in the burial of the Soldat Inconnu. As Le Naour (2002) observes, the burial of the Soldat Inconnu "sought to deal with the suffering families of the missing, by giving them a body they could imagine belonged to them" (p. 72). Indeed, he quotes André Maginot's instructions regarding the choice of the French Unknown. The chosen body, Maginot ordered, must be anonymous, so

that “families who suffered the misfortune of losing one of their own in the war . . . can always imagine that their dearly beloved is the very object of this supreme tribute” (p. 73). Another general was heard to remark after the selection had been made and a mourning woman had kissed the wood coffin: “All mothers who do not know where their children lie can believe, like this one, that their own has received the highest honors” (LeNaour, 2002, pp. 73-74).

James’ (1920) report of the French ceremonies for the Soldat Inconnu suggests that the logic was shared among more than generals. He wrote: “‘Perhaps it is he.’ It was the accompaniment of that thought in the minds of thousands and thousands of fathers, mothers, wives and children that the unknown French soldier today was carried through the streets of Paris to his burial place below the Arc de Triomphe.” He continued: “Beside the writer in the crowd was an old woman, who told to her neighbor how of her . . . three sons who fell the graves of two were never known. She was one of those thousands who thought but did not utter the words, ‘Perhaps it is he,’ but she did not weep” (p. 3). Although the reporter offers no evidence for his attribution, the logic had been made clear in poetry, popular prose, and news reporting. The logic is perhaps most explicit in an inscription in the Faubourg Pavé Cemetery in Verdun: “Here rests perhaps your father, your son, your brother, your friend.” This inscription appears at the front of the burial site of those seven French unknowns who might have been but were not selected for the Tomb in Paris.

Although the French were often more explicit than others in articulating this important premise, the frequently unarticulated, hypothetical relationship seemed to be lost on no one at the time. Lloyd (1998) observes that, “When the [British] Unknown Warrior was buried . . . many of the newspapers printed stories about women who were coming to [Westminster] Abbey because they were confident that their son or husband was buried there” (p. 81). Wilkinson (2006) mentions a witness to the burial of the Unknown Warrior, who “remembered wondering if the body could be that of his elder brother, Stanley” (p. 15). *The New York Times*, reporting on the burial of the U.S. Unknown, remarked on a group in attendance: “To them the services over the body of the Unknown [Soldier] had a peculiar significance, for they were the fathers, mothers, wives and sisters of the unidentified dead. Some one among them may have been the nearest kin to the boy who was this day honored by all of America” (Solemn, 1921). This kind of observation was not limited simply to the family members. Poole (2009) reports

the words of Sgt. Edward F. Younger, the veteran who was honored to select the U.S. Unknown Soldier by laying roses on one of four identical caskets: "I passed the first one . . . the second . . . . Then something made me stop. And a voice seemed to say, 'This is a pal of yours.' I don't know how long I stood there. But finally I put the roses on the second casket and went back into the sunlight" (p. 150).

In each case, the Unknown was hardly, contra Gillis, "no one in particular." His anonymity allowed the Unknown to be *a very particular someone to* a friend or family member, at least hypothetically. Le Naour (2002) summarizes the report of a journalist about visits of mourning relatives to the grave of the Soldat Inconnu in Paris: "A man or woman whose son did not return from the war would go to place flowers and pay homage
. . . and without knowing one another, other fathers and mothers of missing soldiers could exchange greetings and say: 'Maybe he's *your* son!' 'Maybe he's *yours*!'" (pp. 78-79). The argument's addressivity cannot be ignored. Its addressees are friends and family members of the WWI missing. Since this *could be* their loved one, it allowed them to imagine that he *was* their loved one. It allowed them to take solace in the presence of his grave and in the knowledge that he had been honored as a hero by his country and by other nations as well. It allowed them, in other words, to complete the argument:
Here is a hero of the Great War with no known identity except nationality.
He might be your husband, your father, your brother, your son . . . .
Therefore, take solace in the knowledge that he has a grave and has been honored
as a hero.

The argument's conclusion, which accommodated the conversion from the hypothetical to the actual, could bring a kind of closure to families and friends of unidentified, lost soldiers. For others, the enthymeme could have resonance as an argument about the sacrifices of the mythic "national family."**[vi]**

4. The Enthymeme of National Legitimation
The second argument, the enthymeme of national legitimation, worked from the same demonstrative minor premise as the first argument: *Here is a hero of the Great War with no known identity except nationality.* Its major premise and conclusion varied slightly, depending on the status of the country both during and after the War. Some, like the U.S. were independent republics before the war.

Some were and remained empires, like the United Kingdom. France and Belgium were a bit of both. Others, which had been part of large empires, were declared at Versailles to be independent nation-states.**[vii]** Still others, such as Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, remained dominions of empire. Both major premise and conclusion thus varied as follows:
Major Premise: The WWI dead sacrificed their lives to sustain [or establish] autonomous, national [or imperial] sovereignty.
Conclusion: The honor bestowed on this hero of the War legitimates the sustenance [or establishment] of this nation [or empire].

The major premise would have required little articulation for citizens of any of the combatant states. As exemplified by Britain's naming of its casualties as "the Glorious Dead" or France's articulation throughout the war of "*l'Union sacrée*" (a prowar coalition of church and state), most if not all the combatant nations in Europe understood the war as a "purification" and death as the sacrificial agency of purification (Kramer, 2007, p. 162). In France, as Becker (1998) argues, the names of the dead had "become a metonymy of sacrifice" for the nation (p. 123). One can hardly underestimate the image of war as a "proving ground" not only of young men but also of nations (or empires) that prevailed through much of the developed *and* developing world, in the latter sometimes implanted by imperial colonization (e.g., Inglis, 1999, p. 16).

Thus, while the major premise of the sacrifice for the nation (or empire) could go *unarticulated* because widely assumed, it certainly was never *invisible or intangible*, with respect to a Tomb of the Unknown. The politics of location rearticulated the premise; the choices for the tombs were sites of mythic, national status, often having to do with the birth or rebirth of the state in wartime. The Unknowns of France, the U.K., and the U.S. were entombed respectively under the Arc de Triomphe, in Paris; in Westminster Abbey, in London; and in Arlington National Cemetery, in a location from which one could clearly see a number of material symbols of the U.S. nation-state, including the U.S. Capitol and Washington Monument. In all three of these cases, there were conflicts over where the Tomb should be located. Some advocated that the U.K.'s Unknown Warrior be buried under the Cenotaph. French leftists argued for the Panthéon for the Soldat Inconnu. And some in Washington argued for the U.S. Capitol. But as exemplified by these conflicts, no one seemed to seriously entertain the idea of anything but a location of major national (or imperial) significance. The politics of

mythologized location also characterized other countries' chosen sites for their Tombs of the Unknown. Italy's Unknown was interred at Rome's Monument to Victor Emmanuel, II, who was credited with the unification of Italy with Rome as its capital in the nineteenth century (Chastain, 2004). Belgium's Tomb was situated at the foot of the Colonnade of the Congress, in Brussels, built in the 1850s as a symbol of Belgian independence.

The ritualizing of the burials of each of the Unknowns, of course, magnified the significance of the message of sacrifice on behalf of the nation (or empire), partly in the pageantry of the cemeteries, but also in the fact that the Unknown of each country was honored with the highest military decorations of *other* nations. The American Unknown from WWI, for example, was decorated with the U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross, but also the Victoria Cross (U.K.), the French *Croix de Guerre*, Poland's *Virtuti Militari*, and many others (Tomb, 1963; Piehler, 1995, p. 121).**[viii]** Many of these medals had never before been conferred upon any but the citizens of their originating nations. Such honors were bestowed on most if not all, of the other countries' Unknowns, constituting an international recognition of sacrifice of each Unknown and pertinently thus underscoring the legitimacy of his nation (or empire). As Daniel Sherman (1999) suggests of the French Soldat Inconnu, "the unknown affirmed the continuing legitimacy of the nation-state in whose name he had died, and validated all narratives of the war that took the national polity as their basis . . ." (p. 102).

In no cases, however, has this national legitimation been so clear as in more recent establishments of Unknown Soldier or Unknown Warrior tombs. With the Unknowns from WWI ritualized in the past twenty years, location was equally important, but the legitimation was more starkly limned by differentiation of the national states from their prior status as dominions of Great Britain. Australia was the first, in 1993, followed by Canada in 2000, both of which gave "impetus" to New Zealand join in, in 2004 (Returned, 2002-2010). Australia's Unknown was disinterred from Adelaide Cemetery in France, and transported to Canberra to be reinterred in the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial (Walsh, 2006; Australian War Memorial, 2010). In parallel fashion, the Canadian Unknown was selected from the Cabaret-Rouge Cemetery, near Vimy Ridge. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is located at the front of the Canadian National War Memorial, in Ottawa (Munroe, 2010). New Zealand's Unknown Warrior was exhumed form

the Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, at Longueval, France, and interred in the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the National War Memorial, in Wellington, during a ceremony surmised to be "the largest commemorative programme ever undertaken in New Zealand" (Returned, 2002-2010; Ministry).

Although the pageantry may have been equivalent, these former dominials' stories obviously were different from those accompanying national or imperial tombs established immediately after the war. The Unknown British Warrior entombed in Westminster had been intended to represent the entire British Empire. Still, as numerous dominial monuments and cemeteries on the Western Front attest, there had been at least some discomfort with accepting the metonymic reference to the Empire, or later the Commonwealth, as completely satisfactory. There were, after all widespread *mythoi* that linked national identities to WWI, for example the famous observation by a survivor of Vimy Ridge, that "the troops went up the ridge as British soldiers and came down Canadian" (Bull & Panton, 2000, p. 5).

These nationalist identity myths evolved, hardened, and ultimately legitimated the former dominials' claims to their own national tombs, as illustrated by the case of Australia. Inglis suggests that "men from the colonies had proved to be at least as valourous and proficient on [WWI] battlefields as men from the imperial heartland. Australians shared this reassuring discovery with New Zealanders and Canadians, but the squalid peculiarity of their own nation's origin made the performance of the AIF especially precious" (p. 461). Prior to WWI, Australia was seen as nationally deficient, not only because of its early British penal colonies, but also because it had not, as Inglis points out, been able to distinguish itself in war. He quotes poet Bernard O'Dowd in 1912: "'For Great Australia is not yet . . . She is a prophesy to be fulfilled.' Again and again the future was pressed to serve the tremulous nationalism of patriots apologetic for their country's lack of an inspiring past" (p. 72). The burial of Australia's Unknown "confirms," Becker (1998) claims, that the Unknown Warrior "in Westminster Abbey had never, since 1920, represented the entire British Empire" (p. 171n.). While that claim certainly cannot be maintained seriously, the establishment of these three new national tombs at least seemed to confirm that the Unknown Warrior *no longer* represented adequately the dominions of the United Kingdom. The stories of national origin, whether the Vimy Ridge or ANZAC mythologies, rendered the Tombs of the Unknown in Canberra, Ottawa, and Wellington articulate

declarations of national identity, independence, and legitimacy.

5. Conclusion

There are now many more Tombs of the Unknown, some the products of the Second World War, others the result of smaller, regional confrontations. They are located in such diverse places as Iraq and Argentina, Indonesia and Syria. Some of the WWI Tombs of the Unknown have changed over time, whether simply designated by proclamation to represent the dead from all of a nation's wars, or augmented by additional burials that represent later military conflicts. Most of them, regardless of whether there have been more recent augmentations, remain highly visible and heavily visited sites.

Certainly the arguments mustered by the Tombs of the Unknown now are different from those they enunciated in the 1920s. The closest kin of the WWI unknowns are no longer so close as those who may have been intimately affected by the hypothetical enthymeme of relation in the early years following the War. And most of the countries that dedicated Tomb of the Unknown memorials during the interwar period are hardly now in need of the same kind of national legitimation that was deemed important in the wake of WWI, which had destabilized a number of empires and states. Surely Australia, Canada, and New Zealand are limit cases with respect to the enthymeme of national legitimation. But all of the Tombs as well as other WWI commemorative forms and conflicts and issues about them continue to resonate well beyond the sites themselves and beyond the arguments they harbored at the time of their inception.

The Tombs still carry traces of their own significance into the present in harboring those who may "become known." For example, the identification and subsequent return to his hometown of the remains of the U.S. Vietnam unknown, buried at the Tomb of the Unknowns, led to many a pronouncement that there would never be another "unknown soldier," because of the availability of DNA testing (Blair, 2001, p. 278). The newer Tombs of the Unknown call that conclusion into question; more recent conflicts still have resulted in soldier remains in excess of those identified. Although not "soldier"-related, the conflicted and frustrating attempts to identify the remains of those killed in the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 also suggest that the judgment may have been a bit premature. As reported by Reuters (Two, 2010) this past January, fifty-nine per cent of the dead from the World Trade Center have been identified, and almost 9,000 sets of remains are still being tested. Public commemoration is

imbricated with all manner of historical conditions, social customs, and cultural resources, not the least of which are scientific means of *making known*, but also perpetually more lethal ways of *making unknown*.

NOTES

[i] Despite injunctions by Grossberg and others, "articulation" (or a newer, convenient equivalent, "suture") is all too often *asserted* as a stand-in for relationality, rather than *established* by the sometimes difficult work of locating the dense, cultural relations and circulations that cultural studies calls its practitioners to engage. Although this paper is much too brief to attempt to follow and document all the trails and relationships, we have attempted to be as comprehensive as possible in mapping the most important ones that gave rise to the arguments posed by the national tombs of the unknown, especially in the early years of this commemorative practice.

[ii] The origin of this practice is occasionally, though rarely, disputed. Regardless of its origin, the practice certainly did not gain any real traction internationally until after WWI. Indeed, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker (2002) claim that it was "the Great War's commemorative invention *par excellence* and a gift to posterity bestowed by war's brutalisation" (p. 196).

[iii] Although Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker (2002) as well as Winter (1995) date Belgium's establishment of its Tomb of the Unknown to 1921, it was in 1922. (Belgium Entombs, 1922).

[iv] The *Meuse tourisme* website labels Verdun the "Capitale de la Grande Guerre."

[v] We have taken the liberty of adding punctuation to this inscription; the grammar of the inscription on the stone slab is marked by spacing rather than grammatical markings. The same is true of the inscription on the Tomb of the Soldat Inconnu in Paris.

[vi] We are grateful to our reviewers, Robert C. Rowland and Angela G. Ray, for their respective proffers of these concluding insights about the first enthymeme.

[vii] As Benedict Anderson (2006) observes, "As late as 1914, dynastic states made up the majority of the membership of the world political system" (p. 22), but "The First World War brought the age of high dynasticism to an end. By 1922, Habsburgs, Hohenzollerns, Romanovs, and Ottomans were gone . . . . From this time on, the legitimate international norm was the nation-state . . ." (p. 113).

[viii] The exact dating of the essay about the Tomb of the Unknown from the *Quartermaster Review* is unclear; it is posted as 1963, but a head note to the

essay says that it was published in 1958.

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