Capital, Carcerality, Borders: Documentary Spatiality

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Abstract

Capital, Carcerality, Borders: Documentary Spatiality

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Capital, Carcerality, Borders: Documentary Spatiality examines the political potential of representations of space, place and landscape in experimental documentary film. The driving question for this project is: how do nonfiction engagements with spatiality serve to expose various forms of political and economic violence? More specifically, this thesis traces a connection between a geographically disparate set of experimental nonfiction works that have a shared concern with visualising the spatial machinations of contemporary power relations. This thesis argues that over the past two decades we have seen an increasing number of experimental nonfiction works that are structured around political interrogations of the spatial. It is the contention of this thesis that the adoption of such a critical spatial perspective within contemporary documentary practice still needs to be effectively surveyed and theorised, and it is this crucial work that *Documentary Spatiality* aims to undertake.

The thesis has three main chapters, each with a different spatial and political focus. "Visualising Late Capitalism's Landscapes" examines works that aimed to confront the various impacts of late-capitalist economic exploitation, including the exploitative practices of natural resource extraction and transport logistics. "Carceral Geographies: Spaces of Exception and Internment" focuses on works that explore the impacts of the prison industrial complex on material, economic and social space. "Border Regimes: Labour, Ports and the Sea" focuses on works that examine the contemporary reconstitution of borders as heterogeneous, shifting and proliferating regimes of spatial control. By forging connections between these works, the thesis not only highlights the presence of such a spatio-political tendency, but also examines the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. It is the contention of this thesis that moving image practices must become radical tools to fight against the spatial operations of contemporary power relations. This thesis is a crucial intervention into documentary, new media and spatial studies scholarship. By bringing these spatio-political works together, the thesis argues for the establishment of a whole new genre of political nonfiction media practice. Moreover, by mapping out the presence of a spatio-political tendency in experimental nonfiction practice, this thesis highlights the importance of continuing its development by finding new and radical forms of praxis.

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Introduction

Two Images/Two Spaces

We are presented with a close-up shot of a rippling body of water. Constantly shifting and undulating, the grey liquid mass is visually overwhelming—resembling, perhaps, the static noise of a CRT monitor. Next, an intertitle: "THE END of the First EXPEDITION." From here, we transition to a wide fixed-frame shot of a river. A five-span steel arch bridge cuts through the centre of the frame. The top half of the image is dominated by a city skyline. Above, a grey cloud-covered sky. Within the bottom half of the image, a small trawler moves across the river—from the right to the left of the frame—carrying several bright yellow intermodal shipping containers. A voiceover states, "Robinson believed that, if he looked at it hard enough, he could cause the surface of the city to reveal to him the molecular basis of historical events, and in this way he hoped to see into the future."

Figure 1 Still from London, directed by Patrick Keiller, 1994, UK.

Another space, a different film. Here, we are presented with a shot of a flat metallic structure, nestled in amongst some shrubland. Two small antennae extend vertically from the centre of the metal block. The camera moves and shakes slightly; occasionally panning left and right to reveal more of the structure's surroundings. Over this image, a voiceover explains that we are looking at a seismological measuring station, which sits atop the Maastricht geological formation in the Netherlands. This site is the proposed location for the Einstein Telescope, which, as the narrator tells us, "is not a machine for looking out, or for looking up, or even for

looking at light, it's a machine for looking back." This is a device that seeks to better comprehend the nature of gravitational waves and gain further insights into the origins of the universe. The narrator suggests that gravitational waves can be used to "echo-locate" and "perceive the motion of the universe itself." A moment's pause, then the narrator states "in Patrick Keiller's *London*, there's this line where Robinson is staring at the river and he says that Robinson believed that if he could only look deep enough into the surface, we would be able to perceive the molecular basis of historical events, and thus also he would be able to perceive the future."

Figure 2. Still from Se ti sabir, directed by James Bridle, 2019, UK.

Patrick Keiller's *London* (1995), focused on the changing nature of urban and ex-urban environments under the interrelated conditions of neoliberalism and late capitalism, and James Bridle's *Se ti sabir* (2019), which explores themes of artificial intelligence, surveillance, and the techno-industrial complex, are documentary works that focus intensely on—and are structured around an engagement with—landscape and space. Throughout both, a consistent focus on urban/rural landscapes and spaces—typically presented through protracted, deep focus shots—becomes the central and structuring focus through which to deploy critiques of wider socio-political power relations. Across both works, the camera engages in measured, and often protracted, studies of specific landscapes and spaces. The aim of such visual examinations is to forge connections between the particularities of these localised sites and broader political, economic, social, and, crucially, *spatial* formations of power. For example, in Keiller's *London*, the static shots of the city are juxtaposed with meditations on the wider re-composition of the country—geopolitically, economically and socially—under Thatcherite

to Blairite neoliberal politics. In Bridle's *Se ti sabir*, the measuring station becomes a nodal point within a wider consideration of how new modes of technological surveillance and artificial intelligence have rearticulated our relationship to material space.

The passage from *London*, which is quoted by Bridle in *Se ti sabir*, is emblematic of this form of spatial interrogation. For these filmmakers, an intense focus on, and engagement with, specific spaces and landscapes serves as an entry point into unearthing connections to wider global dynamics and power relations. These are perhaps strategies of audio-visual deep-mapping,[1] which can help "represent the contested meanings of space and place, as well as the dynamics that produce them."[2] More precisely, within both these works, a form of visual and spatial interrogation of the material environment becomes an entry point into a wider examination of the machinations of larger socio-political forces and events. The aim of this thesis, titled *Capital, Carcerality, Borders: Documentary Spatiality*, is to argue that such a spatio-political focus has become a prevalent trend within contemporary documentary practice. This thesis aims to examine a geographically disparate group of contemporary nonfiction works, all of which operate in manner akin to Keiller and Bridle's films; focusing on particular spaces, sites and landscapes as a way to open onto an examination of larger formations of contemporary political and economic power and violence. Through a combination of discursive, aesthetic and textual analysis and geopolitical contextualisation, the thesis aims to interrogate the origins, practices, politics and potential future directions of this contemporary trend within nonfiction media culture. The driving question behind this project is: how do nonfiction engagements with the spatial serve to expose various forms of political and economic power and violence? Consequently, it is the contention of this thesis that such a spatial focus—what we could term a "spatio-political aesthetic"—has become prevalent trend within contemporary documentary practice. This thesis will argue that over the past two decades we have seen an increasing number of experimental nonfiction works that are structured around political interrogations of the spatial. It is my contention that the adoption of such a critical spatial perspective within contemporary documentary practice still needs to be effectively surveyed and theorised, and it is this crucial work that *Documentary Spatiality* aims to undertake. These works emerge from, and engage with, a geographically diverse set of sites

[1] The notion of deep mapping is intertwined with the origins of the spatial humanities in the 1970s, which will be unpacked in the following pages. Deep mapping is generally understood as a broad set of methodological and aesthetic techniques for visualising and critiquing particular spatial structures and their intertwined formations of power.

[2] David J. Bodenhamer, "Narrating Space and Place," in *Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives*, ed. David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 21.

and spaces: First Nations lands in Canada and the Philippines; oil pipeline infrastructure running through Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey; logistical sea ports in Rotterdam, Los Angeles, Hong Kong and Athens; a mine-turned-concentration camp in the village of Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina; infrastructures of migrant detention and removal in the UK; military "resettlement" villages in northern Argentina; and the unstable and deadly corridors of migrant movement across the Mediterranean Sea. This group of moving-image works were all created within ten-years of each other, from 2005 to 2015. Although diverse in terms of their geographies, aesthetics, methodologies and politics, they all share a desire to take up their chosen spaces, sites and infrastructures as catalysts to interrogate broader formations of political, economic, social and *spatial* power. Through an examination of these works, this thesis aims to delineate the various aesthetic and political strategies embraced by such a critical spatial praxis.

Michael Pattison has suggested that within such spatially-attuned documentary works, "considered framing" and an attention to the "arrangement of existing features, emphasises landscape and/or architecture as a thing to be looked at, investigated, studied."[3] For him, the aim of such a spatialised moving image praxis is to "unearth some of the material strata and spectral traces still present in the manufactured landscapes and architectures of the recent past."[4] To date, Pattison's short essay "Steady-stare surveillance, or the spatial turn in nonfiction films," is the only sustained examination of this contemporary trend in documentary practice. *Documentary Spatiality* aims to build on this crucial intervention, providing a more comprehensive survey and theorisation of this contemporary turn; helping to build a rich portrait of its theoretical, methodological and political concerns. By examining the different strategies and techniques taken up by these works, I aim to answer several interrelated questions. How can contemporary nonfiction moving image practices represent—and concomitantly critique—the spatial operations of contemporary power relations? What are the different aesthetic, discursive and political approaches that are utilised to conduct such spatialised work? How do these works interconnect with broader theoretical and political concerns with the spatial? What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped? Thus, by forging connections between these works, the thesis not only highlights the presence of such a spatio-political tendency, it also

[3] Michael Pattison, "Steady-Stare Surveillance, or the Spatial Turn in Nonfiction Films," *Sight and Sound* (blog), 9 September 2018, https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/comment/unfiction/steady-stare-surveillance-documentaries-spatial-turn-nonfiction-cinema-uppland-home-resistance.
[4] Ibid.

aims to examine the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. As a result, through this broad delineation of documentary's contemporary spatio-political turn, I also wish to map out some lines of flight for its continued critical development. I also want to think through how such spatio-political works force us to reflect on wider social, economic and political power formations that have restructured our contemporary world in profound and fundamental ways. Thus, this thesis aims to do more than just provide a taxonomy of the different forms and techniques of spatial analysis (aesthetic, political, discursive) undertaken by these works, it also aims to utilise these works as crucial points of entry into a broader examination of the different spatio-political forces that structure our contemporary world.

Approaching the Spatial

Across this body of documentary works, the spatial is perceived as a site of increasing contestation and conflict under contemporary social, economic and political conditions and their interrelated power relations. However, it is important to note that the notion of the "spatial turn" has a much wider theoretical history that extends well beyond the boundaries of documentary practice and theory. Examinations of how the spatial and geographical intersect with the social, political and economic have developed within and across different disciplinary formations from the 1970s onwards. I would like to begin this introduction by mapping out some of this theoretical history, situating the spatial within a wider set of debates. Undertaking this theoretical groundwork is crucial, as this thesis' focus on the spatio-political in documentary practice extends from (and builds upon) these earlier conceptualisations. This theoretical framing will also enable me to more specifically delineate how this thesis approaches the notion of the spatial, both in a broad conceptual sense, and more specifically in relation to nonfiction moving image practice. Alongside mapping out the theoretical and conceptual development of the spatial turn, I will also consider the wider social, economic and political factors that prompted this theoretical shift to the spatial in the first place. Contemporary constellations of socio-political power—neoliberalism, late capitalism, neo-colonialism etc.—have radically rearticulated the politics of the spatial, and are perhaps the primary factors that have driven this more specifically theoretical turn. Therefore, we must understand how these formations of power potentially structure such a theoretical and conceptual shift.

After mapping out this historical and theoretical trajectory of the spatial turn, I would then like to examine previous intersections between spatial theory and the moving image. Here,

my aim is to focus on previous theorisations and practices that have read the moving image as a medium with inherently spatial dimensions. This groundwork will also allow me to layout my own theoretical approach to the contemporary spatio-political trend in contemporary documentary practice. How does it develop or extend from these previous moments of theoretical and conceptual convergence around the spatial and the moving image? Where does it diverge and differ? Consequently, I do not see the spatial turn within moving practice as something that has developed in isolation; it is heavily influenced by a wider theoretical and conceptual turn to the spatial. My aim across this project is to add to this more expansive theoretical history, placing this nonfiction turn within its broader interdisciplinary context. At the same time, it is also important to consider how this nonfiction turn to the spatio-political potentially enriches or reorients these broader theoretical and methodological approaches to the spatial. In what ways does the development of such a spatio-political praxis potentially supplement the wider theories and methodologies generated by the spatial turn? Historically, the spatial turn has predominantly been articulated and investigated exclusively through the written word; scholarly and academic journal essays, monographs etc. It is only very recently that we have seen this embrace of the visual and aesthetic within various modes of theory and practice that investigate similar theoretical questions, themes and ideas. These contemporary visual and aesthetic practices have a dynamic role in shaping and progressing the politics and methodologies of spatial theory more broadly. Thus, by bringing together a geographically disparate collection of nonfiction practices that are working in this spatio-political mode, I aim to examine what new theoretical perspectives and forms of praxis they can bring to this expanded theoretical and conceptual realm. The spatial turn in documentary practice is a crucial part of a wider constellation of contemporary spatial thinking. Thus, by mapping out the origins of this turn to the spatial in social and cultural theory, I also hope to set up the crucial role that such a spatio-political trend within documentary practice can play in the development of such theoretical thinking.

A Spatial Turn

From the 1970s onwards, we have witnessed a "spatial turn" in social and cultural theory. Mark Sheil suggests that such a turn has involved "a growing recognition of the usefulness of space as an organising category, and of the concept of 'spatialisation' as a term for the analysis and

description of modern, and (even more so) of postmodern, society and culture."[5] As Edward Soja has suggested, this spatial thinking has aimed to understand "how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology."[6] Similarly, Doreen Massey has suggested "not just that the spatial is political… but rather that thinking the spatial in a particular way can… contribute to political arguments already under way."[7] Thus, within these broad summations of the spatial turn, we can see a desire to politicise the study of spatiality and geography. Soja and Massey are both key scholars within the realms of contemporary urban theory and human geography. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, these areas of geographical inquiry became concerned not only with the ways in which political, economic and human activity reshaped material space and landscapes, but also how particular formations of the spatial and geographic impact and restructure human existence. For human geographers like Massey and Soja, geographical enquiry had been politically ambivalent for too long; not sufficiently invested in trying to understand how multifarious social, cultural and economic forces rearticulate spatial and geographical relations. Ultimately, geographical and spatial studies had sidelined a spatio-political perspective, privileging instead the study of broader physical geosystems or physiographies. For a range of these contemporary human geographers (Massey, Soja, alongside the likes of David Harvey, Neil Smith and Deborah Cowen, to name but a few), there was a need to reassert a critical and political spatial perspective within geographical theory and practice. Ultimately, these spatial theorists aimed to expose how contemporary power relations operated in increasingly spatialised and geographical ways. Space could no longer be read as a neutral or empty container, rather it was increasingly reshaped by human, economic and social activity, and often with specific formations of power dictating the ways in which such dynamics played out. For example, as Barney Warf and Santa Arias suggest in the introduction to their edited volume *The Spatial Turn*, "social theory repositioned the understanding of space from given to produced, calling attention to its role in the construction and transformation of social life and its deeply power-laden nature."[8] Thus, within this period, understandings of spatiality and geography shifted considerably; space was

[5] Mark Shiel, "Cinema and the City in History and Theory," in *Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in a Global Context*, ed. Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), 1.
[6] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 2011), 6.
[7] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005), 9.
[8] Barney Warf and Santa Arias, "Introduction," in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1.

now something being actively reshaped, contested and exploited by different social, political and economic actors and formations of power.

Particularly influential for such contemporary reconceptualisations of the spatial was the Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre and his seminal work *The Production of Space*. For example, Soja suggests that "the most persistent, insistent, and consistent of these spatializing voices belonged to the French Marxist philosopher, Henri Lefebvre… [and] his critical theorization of the social production of space."[9] Lefebvre, in his essay "Space: Social Product and Use Value," defines this conceptualisation of space as a social product, suggesting that the spatial "is social: it involves assigning more or less appropriated places to social relations... social space has thus always been a social product."[10] Marion Roberts, suggests that at the base of Lefebvre's thinking was the idea "that space is socially produced: that it is not a given but produced socially. Every social formation… produces a spatiality: physical space itself and a way of organising it and a way of thinking about it. A discussion of spatiality therefore encompasses the physical world, the mental world and a social construction of space."[11] In many ways then, Lefebvre was at the forefront of reasserting a critical and theoretical spatial perspective, and his work in this area had a significant influence on range of other disciplinary formations. For him, spatiality was not simply an empty vessel, a zone within which social relations and activities took place. Rather, it was a zone of constant contestation and reconstruction, where spatial relations were actively produced by myriad social, economic and cultural forces. Space then, for Lefebvre, was not a neutral zone of activity, rather it was an *actively produced* social product, a complex amalgamation of social, political and economic forces that must be thought of as always in flux and movement. Indeed, as Christian Fuchs has suggested, one of the key ideas of Lefebvre's social theory is that "humans not only produce social relations and use-values, but in doing so also produce social space."[12] Thus, we can see here the influence that Lefebvre's theorisation of spatial production had on human geographers like Massey and Soja, who wished to put forward a similarly critical spatial perspective that could confront the myriad rearticulations of space and geography in the contemporary world.

As we can tell from these initial summations of such theorisations, such spatially-attuned thinking was certainly not produced within a theoretical or academic vacuum. It is

[9] Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 16.
[10] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), 186-7.
[11] Marion Roberts, "Lefebvre and the History of Space," accessed 15 October 2016, http://www.rudi.net/books/12219.
[12] Christian Fuchs, "Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space and the Critical Theory of Communication," *Communication Theory* 29, no. 2 (2019): 135.

important to understand how the spatial turn within these theoretical realms was the result of tangible shifts in political, economic and social realities on both global and local scales. Fundamentally, the embrace of such a critical spatial perspective aimed to respond to broad shifts and transformations in global power relations from the 1970s onwards: neoliberal governance, late capitalist economic rationality, neocolonial forms of state power and the global fragmentation of labour, to name but a few. As the previously delineated spatial theories point out, these upheavals had specifically spatial and geographical articulations and impacts. Thus, shifting social, political and economic realities were forcing a reconsideration of how to approach the study of space and geography. Ultimately, in a world increasingly shaped around significant transformations of geopolitical relations, there was a need to come up with new spatial theories and methodologies to examine and expose these new formations of power. For many theorists, these various shifts in the shape and operations of global power dynamics can be bracketed under the notion of globalisation. Key transformations in global political and economic rationality led to a world that was seemingly more interconnected than ever. For example, the "opening up" of national markets to global trade, an embrace of wholesale global financial speculation and the increasing global fragmentation of labour—extending from both neoliberal political hegemony and late-capitalist economic rationality—have led to what David Harvey terms "the production of new forms of uneven geographical development, a recalibration and even recentering of global power." For Harvey, the role of late capitalism in such spatial rearticulations cannot be understated. As he suggests, within the epoch of late capitalism's unrelenting expansion, its increasing globalisation requires spatial placeholders to both absorb the surplus of overaccumulation and to create new strategic centres for further movement, expansion and accumulation. Harvey's examination of this global expansion—primarily developed through the notion of the "spatial fix"—leads him to claim that late capitalism "could not survive without being geographically expansionary."[13] Similarly, Neil Smith, emphasising the decidedly spatialised nature of late capitalism's operations, formulated the notion of "uneven development" to describe capital's inherently contradictory and uneven diffusion across material and economic space. For him, regular instances of capital crisis, flight and deindustrialisation have material and infrastructural impacts on specific territories and spaces. The crucial role played by late capitalism within the wider logics of globalisation is explored in much more detail within chapter one. For now, I simply want to signal the key role it plays within the wider spatial dynamics of contemporary globalisation, and how it has been

[13] David Harvey, "Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix'", *Geographische Revue*, no. 2 (2001): 25–26.

crucial to the expansion of the field of research loosely bracketed under the notion of the spatial turn.

Ultimately, these new forces of globalisation have fundamentally reshaped the world we live in and its centres of power and control; realigning geopolitical and spatial relations in significant and structural ways. Indeed, as John Agnew suggests, "the dominant image of globalization is the replacement of a presumably territorialized world by one of networks and flows that know no borders other than those that define the earth as such."[14] Around this time of global upheaval, many suggested that alongside such fundamental shifts in global power relations and the increasing interconnections present in the world we live in, there had been an interconnected annihilation of space and geography. With the planet becoming more interconnected, proximate and reachable, there was an argument to be made that the spatial might have ceased to exist as an important zone of study. With rapid advances in communications technologies operating alongside the neoliberal and late-capitalist logics mapped out above, some argued that we were witnessing the "death of distance."[15] Was it still possible to study the spatial and geographical in meaningful ways, when the forces of globalisation were so preoccupied with eradicating any sense of spatial specificity and difference? However, such claims of the "death of space" were ultimately overridden by a much stronger theoretical current that called for a renewed examination of spatiality in the face of such globalising logics. Instead of eradicating the importance of the spatial, the multifarious processes of globalisation made spatial and geographical investigation and theorisation even more crucial. For example, as Warf and Arias suggest,

> Far from annihilating the importance of space, globalization has increased it. Ironically, just as several pundits announced… the 'end of geography,' geography acquired a renewed significance in the analysis of international flows of information, culture, capital, and people. As neoliberal capital operates ever more effortlessly on a worldwide stage, small differences among regions become increasingly important.[16]

Thus, for Warf and Arias, the spatial and geographical became crucial sites of theoretical and political interrogation, precisely at a moment when globalisation might have led to a reading

[14] John Agnew, *Globalization and Sovereignty* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), vii.
[15] Frances Cairncross, *The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution Is Changing Our Lives* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2001).
[16] Warf and Arias, 5.

of space as theoretically unimportant, or—more dramatically—"dead" and "dying." Indeed, as Michael Pattison suggests, "in basic terms, the spatial turn is a response to the myriad forces of globalisation—which have… brought new attention to place as a key factor in shaping identity. At a time in which more and more people are being geographically displaced by capital, this shift assumes new and obvious urgency."[17] Thus, rather than the forces of globalisation—and their attendant impacts on the composition of the globe—leading to a decrease in the importance of the spatial and geographical, they have rather made the development of such spatially-attuned theories even more necessary. Moreover, as the interconnected forces of globalisation, neoliberalism and late-capitalism began to morph and shape the globe on an unprecedented scale, such spatially informed theorisations did not remain the exclusive property of urban theory or human geography. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a wider range of disciplines across social and cultural theory made underwent similar "spatial turns"—embracing the work of these human geographers to understand the contemporary transformation of the world through decidedly spatialised conceptual frames. As Warf and Arias suggest, "recent works in the fields of literary and cultural studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, history, and art history have become increasingly spatial in their orientation."[18] The aim of this thesis is to suggest that a similar spatial "reorientation" has occurred within the realm of contemporary nonfiction moving practice. All the spatio-political works to be examined within this thesis engage, to varying degrees, with issues closely connected to the rearticulations wrought by the spatialised power relations mapped out above. In a moment where spatialised thinking has become a prominent zone of theoretical enquiry, a significant strand of contemporary documentary practice has embraced a similarly spatialised perspective. Its position within this wider theoretical constellation must be mapped out, and it this work that *Documentary Spatiality* wishes to undertake.

Soja, in his book *Seeking Spatial Justice*, also contests that the spatial turn in social and cultural theory aimed to react against the historical dominance of strictly temporal understandings of the social and political. As he suggests, within social and cultural theory, "primary attention is [typically] given to social processes and social consciousness as they develop over *time* in comparison to what might be called spatial processes, spatial consciousness, and spatial development."[19] He continues to suggest that, for at least the last century, "thinking about the interrelated historical and social aspects of our lives has tended to

[17] Pattison, 2019.
[18] Warf and Arias, 1.
[19] Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 2.

be much more important… than emphasising a pertinent critical spatial perspective."[20] Thus, for many of the theorists who embraced the need for a critical spatial perspective within social and cultural theory, there was also a desire to push back against the dominance of the historicist thought that had dominated critical thinking for decades. Doreen Massey, in her book *For Space*, suggests that such an enduring emphasis on temporality within social and cultural theory extends chiefly from Bergsonian preoccupations with duration. For Bergson, she suggests, "the burning concern was with temporality, with duration; with a commitment to the experience of time and to resisting the evisceration of its internal continuity, flow and movement."[21] For her, Bergson's unrelenting emphasis on temporality and duration was folded into a wider critique of "psychophysics and the science of his day," where "intellectualisation was taking the life out of experience," and scientific representation contained an "over-insistent focus on the discrete at the expense of the continua."[22] Ultimately, Bergson's emphasis on the temporal had "devastating consequences for the way he conceptualised space."[23] Here, Massey echoes Michel Foucault's markedly similar critique of historicism and interrelated conceptualisations of spatiality. He offers the question, "did it start with Bergson or before? Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic."[24] Within Bergson's model, spatialisation is equated with representation, and consequently with a negative "fixation of meaning."[25] Soja—whilst not engaging with Bergsonian conceptions of duration directly—largely echoes the general sentiment of Massey's argument, suggesting "an essentially historical epistemology continues to pervade the critical consciousness of modern social theory… This enduring epistemological presence has preserved a privileged place for the 'historical imagination' in defining the very nature of critical insight and interpretation."[26] For Soja, it becomes important to understand such enduring historicism as an "overdeveloped historical contextualisation of social life and social theory that actively submerges and peripheralises the geographical or spatial imagination."[27] Consequently, with the dominance of such historicism and the interrelated uptake of Bergsonian duration, there has been—for Massey—an "association between the spatial and the fixation of meaning. Representation, indeed conceptualization, has been

[20] Ibid., 3.
[21] Massey, 20.
[22] Ibid., 20.
[23] Ibid., 21.
[24] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Vintage, 1980), 70.
[25] Massey, 20.
[26] Soja, 10.
[27] Ibid., 15.

conceived of as spatialisation… tam[img] the spatial into the textual and the conceptual."[28] Thus, Foucault, Massey and Soja all emphasise the manner in which spatiality and spatial thinking has been "peripheralised," "fixed," and equated with the representational, precisely through the dominance of theories of historicism and duration.

However, it is important to note that whilst these scholars aim to assert the need to embrace a critical spatial perspective they do not wish to simply reject the historical or temporal. As Soja suggests, "foregrounding a spatial perspective does not represent a rejection of historical and sociological reasoning."[29] Indeed, Soja—particularly in the introduction to *Postmodern Geographies*—warns against "creating the unproductive aura of an anti-history," calling instead for "a more flexible and balanced critical theory that re-entwines the making of history with the social production of space, with the construction and configuration of human geographies."[30] Similarly, Massey suggests that "time and space must be thought together… the imagination of one will have repercussions for the imagination of the other and… space and time are implicated in each other."[31] Consequently, within the spatial models offered by both there is not simply a rejection of the historical or temporal, rather they become interwoven into their theorisations. For example, Massey—dissatisfied with this enduring equation of the spatial with the discrete and representative—aims to insert conceptions of duration and temporality into the very fabric of her spatial thinking. She argues for a conception of "space as the dimension of multiple trajectories, a simultaneity of stories-so-far. Space as the dimension of a multiplicity of durations. The problem has been that the old chain of meaning – space – representation – stasis – continues to wield its power."[32] Soja makes a markedly similar suggestion, arguing that spatiality has often been considered simply as a "fixed background, a physically formed environment." For him, the danger of reading the spatial as a fixed and grounded container is that it "remains external to the social world and to efforts to make the world more socially just."[33] Consequently, for Massey and Soja, once we move away from a mode of thought that sees the spatial as simply a mirror of the representational, we can begin to apprehend the socio-political potentiality of spatial thinking. Thus, Massey argues that it is "not just that the spatial is political… but rather that thinking the spatial in a particular way can… contribute to political arguments already under way, and—most deeply—can be an

[28] Massey, 20.
[29] Soja, 17.
[30] Ibid., 12.
[31] Massey, 18.
[32] Massey, 24.
[33] Soja, 2.

essential element in the imaginative structure which enables in the first place an opening up to the very sphere of the political."[34] Reflecting on the spatial turn in social and cultural theory, Soja suggests that this movement "represents a growing shift away from an era when spatial thinking was subordinated to historical thinking, toward one in which the historical and spatial dimensions of whatever subject you are looking at take on equal and interactive significance."[35] For Soja, the spatiality of human life must be interpreted and understood as "a complex social product, a collectively created and purposeful configuration and socialization of space that defines our contextual habitat, the human and humanized geography in which we all live out our lives."[36] Through this understanding of space as a "complex social product" Soja offers up the notion of "spatial justice," where thinking spatially allows for the creation of "strategic pathways for reclaiming and maintaining an active and successful democratic politics, the foundation for achieving justice and reducing oppression and exploitation of all kinds."[37] Massey and Soja's Lefebvrian-informed theorisations of the spatial aim to shift our understandings of space away from a simplified equation with mere representation and, moreover, they aim to reassert its equal theoretical footing next to more strictly temporal understandings of the social and political. Fundamentally, across all these theorisations there is a continual emphasis on the need to repoliticise examinations of the spatial. Spatiality is read as a complex amalgamation of different political, economic and social forces.

As this thesis will argue, the nonfiction moving image works to be examined take up markedly similar approaches in their engagement with the spatial. They consistently resist a rendering of the spatial as "fixed," "dead," "undialectical" or merely representational. Rather, within these works, the spatial is continually understood as that "complex social product" suggested by Lefebvre; an assemblage of social, political and economic relations continually in tension with each other. The moving image is not an apparatus to simply visualise such spatial dynamics, but also a critical tool for examining and interrogating these complex power formations. For Foucault, such a Lefebvrian-informed approach to the spatial can "draw us out of ourselves… [it is] the space that claws and gnaws at us… a heterogeneous space."[38] The aim of this thesis is to suggest that this contemporary trend in nonfiction practice similarly confronts the spatial as a heterogeneous amalgamation of different social, political and economic power relations. And, for artists and filmmakers working within this spatio-political mode, the unique

[34] Massey, 9.
[35] Soja, 15.
[36] Ibid., 17-18.
[37] Ibid., 7.
[38] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986), 23.

aesthetic, visual and temporal qualities of the moving image make it particularly well suited to dissecting such complex spatial relations. The moving image as a "not quite" spatial *or* temporal medium might make it a particularly useful tool for engaging with the spatio-political as something "fluid," "alive" and "dialectical." Indeed, Massey, writing on another of Patrick Keiller's spatio-political works, suggests that through nonfiction moving image engagements with the spatial, "we see the landscape differently: not closed down into a familiar satisfaction but opened up to reinterpretation."[39] Here then, spatiality is not "closed down" to fixed or undialectical representation, instead, when rendered visible through the moving image, there is a potential for the spatial to be visualised as a complex and heterogenous social product—riven through with social, political and economic conflict.

Within Massey's formulation of the relationship between the cinematic and the spatial, we can begin to sense how the moving image might be particularly well-equipped to undertake such spatial investigations; operating perhaps as a privileged tool for confronting the political heterogeneity of the spatial. Within this section, I have mapped out the broad historical and theoretical origins of the spatial turn across social and cultural theory. I have also begun to point towards how this contemporary trend in nonfiction moving image practice extends from—and builds upon—such broad theoretical work on the spatial. Before developing this analysis further, I think it is crucial to zoom in a little; examining previous instances where moving image practice and theory and studies of the spatial have intersected. Within the next section of this introduction, I would like to more specifically delineate such moments of conceptual convergence. Where have these two theoretical realms previously intersected? Has the moving image always been invested in questions of the spatial? How does this contemporary trend in nonfiction practice extend from these previous moments of convergence? Unpacking the theoretical moments where the moving image and the spatial have previously intersected will help to lay some of the crucial theoretical groundwork for this thesis' examination of this contemporary spatio-political trend. Here, I will also consider the previous theoretical interrelations between studies of space and documentary. Throughout this section of theoretical analysis, I will also slowly layout my own theoretical approach to the spatio-political turn in contemporary documentary practice.

[39] Doreen Massey, "Landscape/Space/Politics: An Essay," *The Future of Landscape and the Moving Image* (blog), 14 April 2011, https://thefutureoflandscape.wordpress.com/landscapespacepolitics-an-essay/.

Moving Image and the Spatial

To begin examining these moments of conceptual convergence, I think it is important to start by highlighting a crucial area of crossover between the spatial and the moving image that this thesis is less concerned with. As should already be evident, this thesis is less concerned with the vast body of work produced on film and media's extra-textual, material and industrial entwinements with space and landscape (for example, the growth of particular media industries and their recomposition of specific geographical locations, considerations of media productions' environmental footprints, or the geopolitical flows and transnational movements of moving image media, to name but three). Such scholarly work, which has often been labelled as a "critical media industry studies" approach, has sought to examine "the operations of the media industries and the ways in which economic, regulatory, and institutional forces influence cultural output."[40] Clearly, such industrial and extra-textual analyses have significant spatial dimensions; examining and critiquing the geographical, geopolitical and spatial-economic impacts of media production. However, within this thesis I am instead concerned with the different ways in which scholars and practitioners have examined and theorised the moving image's *aesthetic* and *visual* engagement with the spatial. Thus, the analytical focus of this thesis remains at the level of the representational when attempting to delineate the presence of such a spatio-political turn within contemporary documentary practice. Of course, this approach is easily critiqued; to understand the political potentiality of a particular moving image work, we must take into account its material—and, by extension, spatial—conditions of production, distribution and exhibition. However, I feel that to try and bridge this gap between representational-aesthetic analysis and extra-textual material/industrial analysis would not only significantly bloat this project, it would also complicate the formal and analytical work I am trying to do. As we shall see, many of these works use a spatio-political praxis to examine different formations of "economic, regulatory and institutional" power. To supplement this analysis with a self-reflexive material and industrial examination of how these same works have been produced, exhibited and distributed would arguably detract from this formal and aesthetic analysis. Ultimately, to move between these two registers would, I think, do both forms of analysis an injustice. Consequently, I am happy to acknowledge that this is a political and theoretical shortcoming of this project; considering the material conditions of production, exhibition and distribution would of course change our understanding of these works and their

[40] Timothy Havens, Amanda Lotz, and Serra Tinic, "Critical Media Industry Studies: A Research Approach," *Communication, Culture & Critique* 2 (2009): 234.

political efficacies in fundamental ways. However, it is a choice I have made to allow myself the necessary space to explore the aesthetic and representational strategies of such a spatio-political tendency within contemporary documentary practice. It is my contention that remaining strictly at the level of the aesthetic and representational still affords us significant insights into the political potentialities of this contemporary turn in moving image practice.

Whilst this thesis argues that the spatio-political tendency in contemporary documentary practice has yet to be properly theorised, engagements with theories of space and landscape in moving-image practice and scholarship certainly have a much longer historical trajectory. From representations of urbanisation and industrialisation in the early 20th century, to the imaging of deindustrialised and postmodern landscapes and spaces more contemporaneously, moving-image practice and scholarship has been concerned with questions of spatiality from its earliest years. Moreover, there has been a consistent scholarly emphasis on understanding the moving image as an inherently spatialised medium, perhaps perfectly equipped for visualizing, examining and interrogating the spatial. For example, as John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel suggest in their edited volume *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image* "our experience of the moving image is intimately connected to our experience of place."[41] Similarly, Tom Conley in his book *Cartographic Cinema* suggests that the moving image often encourages us to "think of the world in concert with its own articulation of space."[42] Within these and other theorisations, the moving image's unique visual and temporal properties are understood as being particularly well suited to rendering visible the spatial.[43] Much of this spatialised discourse within film and media studies scholarship extended from the wider spatial turn in social and cultural theory mapped out above; aimed at bringing such spatialised thinking to bear on the moving image. However, it also originated from within the discipline itself, chiefly in the shape of Gilles Deleuze's much-cited theorisation of the shift from the "movement-image" to the "time-image." For Deleuze, moving image practice was dominated by the "movement-image" from its origins up until World War II. The movement-image describes filmic practices marked by logical temporal causality and a unity of filmic space. Typically, these works were narrative films that maintained a coherence of diegetic time

[41] John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel, "Introduction," in *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*, ed. John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), viii.
[42] Tom Conley, *Cartographic Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 1.
[43] It is important to note that within Gorfinkel and Rhodes' examination of cinema's relationship to the spatial they do not remain strictly at the level of the aesthetic and representational. They not only consider cinema's wider "real world" infrastructural impacts on material sites and places, they also problematise precisely what constitutes spatiality (preferring the term place). I will return to their work later, as it forms a crucial theoretical touchstone for this project.

and space, working through a causal chain of events and a classic story arc. The time-image came to dominate post-World War II, and was marked by inverse characteristics; an emphasis on discontinuity, duration and temporal ellipses. Scholars have suggested that the shift mapped out by Deleuze was a reaction to wider post-War socio-political events. In a world marked by rapid urbanisation, industrialisation and globalisation, new forms of cinematic expression and visual representation were needed to make sense of the increasingly unstable world around us. This is where, for Deleuze, the time-image intercedes. Indeed, as Conley suggests, the shift from the movement-image to the time image was marked by "the fact that film could 'no longer transcribe completed events but had to attain events in the process of their creation,' in other words, become consonant with the 'event as it was happening.' The new cinema brought forward the site of what [Deleuze] calls an 'open totality.'"[44] Thus, the slippage away from causality and unity and towards discontinuity and duration are perhaps symptomatic of the wider challenges posed by a post-modern world that was increasingly hard to visibly render in coherent and legible ways. As Deleuze writes, within this postmodern epoch, there was an increase in events and moments to "which we no longer know how to react… in spaces which we no longer know how to describe. These were 'any spaces whatever.'"[45] As the complex social, political, cultural dynamics of the world became harder to readily comprehend and render visible, alternative—and often antithetical—aesthetic and visual modes of address needed to be developed.[46]

For Tom Conley, as the new aesthetic and visual forms offered by the time-image came to fore, "space enter[ed] the field of view, isolating certain events in certain areas of the frame and allowing others to take place, simultaneously, in others."[47] Here then, as the contemplative and durational potentialities of the moving image were pushed to the fore, cinema's capacity to render the spatial was also foregrounded. Thus, building from Conley's analysis, the "time-image" might also be described as the "space-image," privileging deep and protracted engagements with the spatial. In many ways, Deleuze's conceptualisation of the move towards the forms and aesthetics of the time-image quite accurately describes the visual practices developed by artists and filmmakers working within this contemporary spatio-political mode of documentary practice. Indeed, as Michael Pattison suggests, within these contemporary

[44] Ibid., 9.
[45] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II: The Time-Image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), xi.
[46] Here, it is important to note that I am aware of the historiographical inaccuracies that such draconian split (pre-WWII and post-WWII) activates; however, I still feel it functions as a useful descriptor of the large-scale shift towards a more contemplative set of aesthetic tropes, which simultaneously privileged a heightened engagement with the spatial.
[47] Conley, 9.

spatio-political nonfiction works, we consistently find that "mediated observation itself is reified," through "considered framing" and an attention to the "arrangement of existing features."[48] As I have already suggested, within these contemporary spatio-political works, a consistent focus on urban/rural landscapes and spaces—typically presented through protracted, deep focus shots—becomes their central and structuring focus. Thus, from Pattison's description, we can see the close correlations between the aesthetics of these spatio-political works and the notion of the time-image; durational and observational strategies come to the fore, allowing the spatial to "enter the field of view" more concretely. However, this contemporary trend differs in two crucial ways from Deleuze's formulation. Firstly, the attention to the spatial within these contemporary practices has political aims and objectives that are absent within Deleuze's formulation of the "time-image"—mediated observation and durational temporalities in these contemporary spatio-political works allow for a spatial critique of wider socio-political events and power relations to come to the fore. Thus, this contemporary mode of practice is charged with a decidedly political rationale.[49] Secondly, Deleuze's formulation of the time-image predominantly focuses on a selection of narrative-based post-War art films. Documentary practices and their spatial potentialities have almost no place within his conceptualisation.

Indeed, a dominant trend within spatially-informed film and media scholarship has been predominantly been undertaken in relation to narrative cinema. A significant body of literature has been generated that focuses on cinematic depictions of specific spaces and landscapes; however, little of this work touches on nonfiction practices.[50] Of interest to these scholars are the moments in which a fiction film's location or setting seemingly "exceeds" the narrative flow of the work, operating above and beyond the diegesis. For example, Martin Lefebvre—engaging with Victor Freeburg's notion of narrative subordination—suggests that material spaces and landscapes have the potential to "interrupt the forward drive and flow of narrative with 'distracting' imagery… thus replacing narrativised setting with visual attractions and

[48] Pattison, 2019.
[49] I will return to this political potentiality shortly, examining other scholarly intersections between the spatial and political in moving image practice
[50] There are, of course, several notable exceptions to such a general scholarly focus on narrative cinema when examining cinematic depictions of landscape and space. For example, early actuality films (by the likes of Auguste and Louis Lumière and Alfred C. Abadie) often engaged with specific sites and landscapes of urban modernity, and they have been extensively theorised. Similarly, the early "city symphony films" (by the likes of Manoel de Oliveira and Dziga Vertov) were hybrid experimental-documentary works produced mainly in the 1920s and aimed to capture the rapid urbanisation and modernisation of city spaces, again, these have been well theorised.

unwanted moments of pictorial contemplation."[51] Consequently, the role of the spatial here exists in a subservient position to the film's narrative, able at times to exceed its "flow" and "enchainment," but only in "small units" or as "unwanted moments." A camera may linger on a specific location, or consider a space or landscape worthy of significant diegetic attention; however, these moments of excess are eventually subsumed into the film's overall narrative arc. The aim of this thesis is to shift the discursive focus on place and landscape away from its perceived "interruptive" function within narrative cinema to a focus on its *structuring potential* within these spatial nonfiction works. Within the spatio-political documentary trend that this thesis engages with, specific landscapes and spaces are not just a coincidental backdrop or setting that can be read as occasionally exceeding or complimenting the narrative flow of a work; rather, they the primary zone of interest and investigation, operating—aesthetically, politically, discursively—as these films' structuring conceit. As Lefebvre develops his argument on the role of space and landscape in relation to narrative cinema, he coins the notion of "intentional landscape." For him, the "intentional landscape" is a set of visual techniques that help a film to "almost unequivocally call attention to a film's natural setting." These visual techniques include "the use of temps morts, long takes and relative stillness in the depiction of often empty natural spaces." The result of such spatially attuned visual strategies is that "the narrative function of setting may momentarily fade and the depiction of space acquires, in the spectator's gaze, the kind of autonomy traditionally required by pictorial landscape imagery."[52] This definition of the "intentional landscape" in fact very usefully describes aspects of the spatio-political practices to be examined within this thesis. Within these works, long takes, static framing, temps mort become techniques through which to explore the spatial and political dimensions of material sites and spaces. However, where Lefebvre reads such moments of "intentionality" as occasionally exceeding some form of overall narrative continuity in fictional cinema, the deployment of such formal and aesthetic strategies become the structuring tools for this contemporary spatio-political trend in documentary practice. For example, Pattison suggests that within such contemporary works, "considered framing, the attention… [paid] to the arrangement of existing features, emphasises landscape and/or architecture as a thing to be looked at, investigated, studied."[53] Thus, for the artists and filmmakers working in this mode,

[51] Martin Lefebvre, "On Landscape in Narrative Cinema," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 20, no. 1 (2011): 65.
[52] Ibid., 66.
[53] Pattison, 2019.

there is a clear apperception that the formal and aesthetic properties of the moving image are particularly effective for undertaking such spatialised investigative work.

Therefore, in many ways, the spatio-political works under investigation here can be linked to aspects of Deleuze and Lefebvre's analysis of cinema's inherently spatial qualities. Across the works to be examined, there is a similar use of temps morts, long takes and considered framing to examine different aspects of the spatial. The aim of *Documentary Spatiality* is to take up such aesthetic concerns with the intersection between the spatial and the moving image and reorient them around this contemporary set of spatio-political works. By making this move, it is my contention that similar formal and aesthetic strategies to those mapped out above take on a radical political potentiality within this contemporary trend in nonfiction practice. Within this contemporary turn, deep examinations of the spatial mean that it is not only "a thing to be looked at, investigated, studied," but also an intensely politicised social product to be interrogated and critiqued. Thus, my aim across this thesis is not to provide a simple taxonomy of aesthetic tropes or political concerns shared by these works. Instead, I see this spatio-political turn as a slippery and amorphous trend in documentary practice and only through a slow and methodical examination of a range of works operating in this mode can we delineate its political, aesthetic and ideological potentialities. Thus, my analysis will build upon the aforementioned works that place an emphasis on the moving image as an inherently spatial medium, but it will also push these conceptualisations further; examining how a politicised spatial moving image has developed in contemporary nonfiction practice of late.

Documentary Spatiality

This is not to say that theoretical work on the intersection between spatiality, politics and nonfiction film has not been undertaken. Following on from the brief mention of Pattison's essay above, I would like to map out several other works (scholarly and practice-based) that have examined the intersection between these theoretical areas; focusing on the interactions between spatiality and documentary. As I shall suggest, aspects of these sporadic engagements with space and documentary will help me to develop my own theoretical and methodological approach towards examining this body of spatio-political nonfiction works. However, it is my contention that none of these examinations have sufficiently interrogated the explicitly *political* potentials of such a spatialised moving image practice. It is the contention of this thesis that a deeper interrogation of the theoretical, political and methodological potential of such

nonfiction moving image practice is needed, and it is this work that *Documentary Spatiality* aims to undertake. Elizabeth Cowie's 2011 article entitled "Documentary Space, Place, and Landscape" examines how documentary media might be particularly well suited to exploring the "immanent becoming" of specific spaces and landscapes.[54] For her, there are three different ways of experiencing landscape and space through the moving image. The first is landscape as "pictorial… an audio-visual performance of place and space." Secondly, she suggests documentary can "show place and space as immanent… in a freeing of depicted time from the temporal causality of cinematic representation." Thus, spatial representation can be both pictorial and cinematic, but also immanent and decidedly extra-cinematic. These two different Deleuzian-influenced readings of documentary's spatial potential are then drawn together in the conceptualisation of her "third way." Here, she writes that documentary film, in its "presentation of scenes of landscape and space, thereby also organizes these to produce a place of view for the spectator as a cognitive and emotional experience, so that we participate both as observers and as engaged in identifying, and this constitutes a third way in which we may encounter landscape."[55] Ultimately, for Cowie, what she terms the documentary time-image provides us with "an anthropology of place and space insofar as our dwelling in place and space involves our dwelling *with* both a landscape and fellow people, and thus a community."[56] Cowie's Deleuzian-influenced analysis is certainly pertinent to this thesis' delineation of a spatio-political aesthetic, particularly the tension she draws out between detached observation and more intimate spatial and place-specific identification. When considering the political potential of documentary's engagement with the spatial it is important to understand how these practices position the viewer in relation to the work; as detached observer or implicated socio-political participant. However, Cowie's engagement with the intersection of documentary and spatial does not sufficiently consider the political potential of such a practice.

There are other sporadic examples of theoretical and practical work interested in examining the intersection between spatial representation and documentary. For example—as Yuriko Furuhata suggests—a focus on landscape and space in the cinema of the 1960's Japanese political avant-garde offered an "analytic mode of investigating the immanent relations of power that are found within a historically specific social formation," enabling filmmakers like Oshima Nagisa and Masao Adachi to provide "a visual 'diagram' of social and economic relations, especially those of domination, at work," precisely within a social milieu

[54] Elizabeth Cowie, "Documentary Space, Place, and Landscape," *Media Fields Journal*, no. 3 (2011): 2.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 10.

that was witnessing a rising interdependence between "the increasing control over territorial space and the consolidation of postwar democratic state capitalism."[57] Such a mode of engagement was called the "fukeiron" (landscape) theory. The primary film associated with this theoretical work was Adachi's 1969 work *A.K.A. Serial Killer*. The film was composed of predominantly long static shots "of urban and rural landscapes from the tip of the northern island of Hokkaido to the southwestern cities of mainland Japan."[58] Through these shots, the filmmakers hoped to critique the "microphysics of power" embedded within these seemingly innocuous spaces, exposing the "invisible relations of power that produce such homogenized landscapes."[59] For them, the increasingly uniform landscapes of urban and rural Japan that are presented in *A.K.A Serial Killer* spoke to the wider "serial mass production and standardisation of commodities" that was radically rearticulating social relations and working conditions within the country. Therefore, an interrogation of landscape and space was undertaken to reveal connections to wider power formations, specifically the transformation of social relations and labour conditions by capitalist economic rationality within postwar Japan. Although not drawn upon directly within this thesis, the "fukeiron" landscape theory certainly shares many points of interconnection with the spatio-political aesthetic being delineated here. Across both, an intense engagement with the specificities of certain spaces and landscapes unearths connections to wider geopolitical dynamics and power relations. The fukeiron landscape theory thus shares close theoretical and methodological connections to the two case studies examined briefly at the outset of this introduction; localised examinations of particular landscapes and spaces help to reveal connections to wider spatial power dynamics. In addition, the theory is also closely tied to Pattison's formulation of documentary's spatial turn, where mediated observation can "unearth some of the material strata and spectral traces still present in the manufactured landscapes and architectures of the recent past."[60] In a similar vein, Sean Cubitt has argued that "as a technology that both inscribes and erases history and nature, film is a privileged medium for the mediation of landscape, and therefore for a renewed political aesthetics."[61] His article examines James Benning's 1995 film *Deseret*, a work which juxtaposes static shots of landscapes and spaces across Utah with *New York Times* articles about this same space. Cubitt argues that the newspaper extracts build up a picture of how these spaces have been irrevocably shaped and marked by colonial violence, sovereign genocide and

[57] Yuriko Furuhata, "Returning to Actuality: Fûkeiron and the Landscape Film," *Screen* 48, no. 3 (2007): 348.
[58] Ibid., 346.
[59] Ibid, 353-354.
[60] Pattison, 2019.
[61] Sean Cubitt, "Film, Landscape and Political Aesthetics: Deseret," *Screen* 57, no. 1 (2016): 23.

natural resource extraction: "the unerased memory of horror is not only an object; it marks the landscape gaze through its fidelity to the lost and silenced, those who died and those who have never come to exist, as something that is not so much incomplete as something that has lost its prior complete state."[62] Cubitt terms this approach an "ecologically informed political aesthetics." Through a combination of the textual and spatial, the film therefore seeks to reveal material layers of violence and abuse embedded within the landscapes of Utah. Here, we once again see echoes of both Pattison's previous formulation of the spatial turn, as well as the fukeiron landscape theory of the Japanese political avant-garde. Once again, there is a sustained attention to the ways in which the moving image can survey and examine spaces and landscapes to expose broader spatial power dynamics. Thus, across these three brief engagements with the intersection between documentary and the spatial, we are given a fleeting sense of how nonfiction cinema can operate spatio-politically. By examining this contemporary trend in documentary practice—which shares many of the conceptual approaches mapped out here—the aim of *Documentary Spatiality* is to build a more substantial theoretical picture of this broader turn to the spatio-political.

Perhaps the most crucial scholarly intervention that examines the intersection between spatiality and the moving image is Elena Gorfinkel and John David Rhodes' edited volume, *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*. This volume argues that space, place and geography structure and ground our understanding of moving image media in crucial ways. For Gorfinkel and Rhodes, understanding the complex entanglements between spatiality and media not only helps open new avenues of enquiry within media and film studies, it can also help to reshape and rearticulate spatial and geographical discourse and theory. Their study is twofold, concerned with both the politics of profilmicly rendering visible spaces, places and landscapes, as well as how film and media literally "take place"—embedded within material space through processes of production, distribituion and exhibition. Early in the introduction, they ask, "how can a political and politicised practice of attention to the place of the moving image serve to reanimate the practice of politicised image making more generally."[63] Their formulation of a "politicised practice of attention" develops quickly throughout the introduction, as they draw out the ways in which film and media are always intimately tied up with the spatial. They write of a desire to wrest "place from its status as mere setting and narrative 'support'… focus[ing] on the generative structures, aesthetic conditions, and political

[62] Ibid., 24.
[63] Rhodes and Gorfinkel, xii.

implications of the profilmic, drawing background to foreground, periphery to center" (echoing Lefebvre's notion of the "intentional landscape").[64] Here then, Gorfinkel and Rhodes are concerned with examining the political potentialities of how film and media can render visible particular spaces and places—not simply as pictorial landscapes, but rather as shifting, politically-charged spatial formations infused with uneven power dynamics.[65] Their theorisation of the relationship between the cinematic and the spatial has clear resonances with several of the more politicised spatial theorisations already mapped out. For Gorfinkel and Rhodes, such cinematic engagements can push beyond a simple rendering of the spatial as "fixed," "dead," or merely representational. Rather, the cinematic can allow the spatial to be interrogated as a complex and heterogenous social product—riven through with social, political and economic conflict.

The aim of this thesis is to examine a range of nonfiction works that are doing something very similar to the theoretical work mapped out my Gorfinkel and Rhodes. The works to be examined are centrally concerned with "drawing background to foreground," focusing intently on particular spaces to explore wider formations of spatial power and political violence. Consequently, these practices take up such theoretical concerns with the spatial-political and—through their material practice—utilise particular visual and aesthetic strategies to render such power dynamics visible. Through an analysis of the aesthetic and political concerns of these works, I aim to answer Gorfinkel and Rhodes' call to "reanimate the practice of politicised image making"—mapping out the contours of this spatio-political turn in documentary practice. Crucially, the editors also emphasise that the volume's focus on the spatial aims to resist the "pervasive discourse that proclaims the purported death of place in the era of late (or global, postindustrial) capitalism." Instead, they suggest that taking such a definitively spatial or place-based stance "might serve as a tactic (and even a topos) with which to resist the forces (ideological, material, rhetorical) that have threatened to flatten our notion of the uniqueness, the power, and the political potential of both place and the moving image."[66] In many ways, this specific emphasis draws us back to Pattison's earlier contention that the spatial turn is in fact a direct response to such global shifts and dynamics; reinforcing the

[64] Ibid., xi.
[65] It is important to note that Gorfinkel and Rhodes wish to make a conceptual shift away from the notion of "space" and towards that of "place," suggesting that the latter term offers a greater potential for "resonant and forceful political intervention." For them, conceptions of "place" are replete with "tensions between ontology and codedness," in ways that "space" is not. Whilst I fully embrace this conceptual reorientation, my theorisation remains at the broader level of the spatial, where I believe similar arguments over ontology and codedness remain extremely pertinent, especially in the realms of social and political geography (for example, the questions of fixity, representation, and the undialectical, explored previously).
[66] Ibid., xii.

importance of spatialised studies at a moment when space and geography might be perceived as being eradicated. The works to be examined in this thesis share a similar desire to reassert the importance (ideological, material, rhetorical *and* political) of embracing a critical spatial perspective.

Here then, we have mapped out some fleeting theoretical engagements with the interconnections between the moving image, spatiality and the political. Some of the ideas presented here will, either explicitly or implicitly, work their way into my examination of the spatio-political turn in contemporary documentary practice. These scholarly and practice-based works provide us with some important initial examples of how to think documentary and spatial theory together. Across them, there is a continual emphasis on how moving image practice is perhaps particularly well-suited to undertaking such spatial work. It is within Rhodes and Gorfinkel's work that we arguably get the most thorough examination of the spatio-political potentialities of the moving image. In many ways, their theorisation most closely connects to the aims and objectives of the spatio-political aesthetic to be examined across this thesis. A "politicised practice of attention" to different spatial power dynamics and injustices is readily visible across this contemporary set of practices. My aim is to build on their conceptualisation; taking it as an initial theoretical base from which to develop a wider theorisation of this turn to the spatio-political in contemporary nonfiction practice. More precisely, this thesis argues there is still more work to be done to examine the practices, politics, theories and potential future directions of spatio-political mode of nonfiction moving image practice. By analysing this trend, I am keen to more fully theorise and delineate how such a spatio-political documentary practice functions. How do these works differently employ visual aesthetics to construct their spatio-political practices? As a visual, temporal and spatial form of media, the moving image can become a crucial tool for comprehending and critiquing these spatial regimes of power. The aim of this thesis is to build upon such fleeting analyses and their filmic examples. By embedding such sporadic engagements with documentary and spatiality into a wider theoretical map of the spatial turn in nonfiction practice, I will argue that this is a much more pervasive contemporary trend, worthy of sustained critical and theoretical engagement. Ultimately, I aim to suggest that the nonfiction practices and practitioners to be examined here see the formal, aesthetic and political capacities of the moving image as uniquely well-suited to their spatio-political investigations. Thus, as we shall see, my delineation of this contemporary spatio-political trend cannot be boiled down to a simple set of aesthetic tropes or political concerns. Rather, the spatio-political turn under examination is an amorphorous and slippery

categorisation of a wide-ranging set of documentary practices. As my analysis unfolds, I will build a wider picture of its political, aesthetic and conceptual concerns.

Space has become the dominant site of capitalist exploitation and governmental power. Whilst important and extensive bodies of academic literature have been generated in relation to the geographical and spatial exploitations and mutations wrought by contemporary power relations, corresponding work within moving image culture has been far less extensive. This is a significant and continuing failure; nonfiction moving image work has a crucial role to play in undermining the apparently "seamless" functioning of a logistified neoliberalism, globalisation and state power, helping to throw into sharp relief their fissures, cracks and contradictions. The ultimate objective of this thesis is to examine a geographically and historically disparate group of nonfiction works, all of which aim to critique the destructive spatial forces of authoritarian state governance, global capitalism and neoliberal political hegemony. However, this "spatio-political" tendency in nonfiction practice remains a cultural and theoretical undercurrent at best; neither fully theorised or developed. Moving image practice must develop a more rigorous political praxis that makes the invisible exploitations of spatiality legible and, most importantly, resistible. By surveying a variegated set of works that have made steps towards such a critical visual praxis, this thesis hopes to map out some lines of flight for its continued critical development. It is the contention of this thesis that moving image practice must become a radical tool to fight against the spatial machinations of contemporary power relations. By mapping out the presence of a spatio-political tendency in experimental nonfiction practice, this thesis aims to highlight the importance of continuing its development by finding new and radical forms of praxis. In addition, as I have mentioned previously, the spatio-political turn in social and cultural theory—briefly mapped out above—has largely been developed through traditional literary modes of academic scholarship (particularly within the fields of human geography, ethnography, and political science). Therefore, this thesis also wants to argue that moving such spatio-political analysis beyond the realms of the literary/textual and towards the visual can offer new modes of engagement and resistance. Ultimately, what can moving image culture bring to such spatio-political debates?

Chapter Breakdown

This thesis is structured around three chapters, each of which centres on a different thematic concept: capital, carcerality and borders. The works to be examined within each chapter all centre around one of these concepts; interrogating the spatialised power dynamics at play

within each. More specifically, it is my contention that these three concepts—and their complex material impacts on landscape and space—have been radically transformed by contemporary shifts in economic, political and social power relations. Crucially for this thesis, these transformations have decidedly *spatial* impacts. This thesis explores a variety of nonfiction moving-image works that have attempted to adopt a spatio-political approach to exploring, interrogation and critiquing these shifting formations of power and their attendant spatial mutations. A significant number of the spatio-political works that form part of this wider nonfiction media trend have coalesced around these conceptual and political themes; a clear sign that they are areas of marked interest to such spatially and politically-minded practices and methodologies. There is not space in this introduction to fully delineate and define these three overarching concepts that structure each chapter. Instead, a fuller theoretical delineation and orientation for each will come at the start of each chapter; providing the necessary groundwork to then examine how the nonfiction works under examination both gather around and respond to these wider conceptual frames. For the moment, I would like to provide a brief road map of each chapter, examining both the wider theoretical and conceptual frameworks to be employed, as well as delineating the case studies that will be under examination within each chapter.

As I have already suggested, capitalism has undergone radical spatial transformations under the political hegemony of neoliberalism and late capitalist economic rationality. Under these new formations of political and economic power, regular instances of capital crisis, flight and deindustrialisation have had material and infrastructural impacts on specific territories and spaces. Works examining such spatial transformations are the focus of chapter one. The mass reduction of social welfare provision and infrastructure and the related rise of unemployment, homelessness and poverty globally have led to the care of the state often being replaced by increasing disciplinary state action and mass incarceration. The resulting expansion of carceral spaces and infrastructures has also been motivated by both broader economic shifts towards prison privatisation and attempts to download social costs onto the individual. Again, such shifting regimes of social, economic and political power have tangible spatial impacts; recomposing the landscapes where such carceral spaces find their home. Works exploring such carceral logics are the focus of chapter two. Borders now do much more than fulfilling their traditional roles as the markers of geopolitical sovereign boundaries. Regulating the movements of capital, bodies and labour, border regimes have rapidly proliferated, becoming markedly less visible spatial regimes of surveillance and control in our increasingly globalised world. Works examining borders as heterogeneous, shifting and proliferating regimes of spatial

control will be the focus of chapter three. As we shall see, although these three conceptual categories are addressed separately (allowing me to compartmentalise these works into different thematic chapters) there is in fact much cross-contamination between them and the moving image practices that explore the power dynamics and spatial logics intertwined with them. Therefore, the shifting regimes of late capitalist exploitation, carceral expansion, and border multiplication and proliferation are not discreet and separate events and categories, rather, it is often the case that similar constellations and formations of power are driving their spatial impacts and rearticulations. Thus, whilst I am keeping these categories separate, it is more for the sake of maintaining an organisational logic; the spatial impacts of these different areas frequently intersect and overlap. Similarly, the works to be examined across these different chapters also interest in their analytical, aesthetic and methodological approaches. Here, in a little more detail, I would like to flesh out the focus of each chapter.

Chapter 1: Visualising Late Capitalism's Landscapes

This chapter examines several moving-image works that aim to visualise and critique the various impacts of late-capitalist economic exploitation, including the exploitative practices of natural resource extraction and logistics. Several questions guide the analysis here. How can the operations of transnational late capitalism be visualised within nonfiction moving image practice? What role can nonfiction moving image works play in the fight against the savage encroachment of transnational global capital? What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped? By focusing on a variety of experimental nonfiction works that all share a concern with examining late capitalism's exploitative spatial logics, this chapter seeks to answer such questions. The chapter begins by defining the notion late capitalism, suggesting how processes of neoliberal deregulation, financialisation, global labour fragmentation etc. are all constituent parts of its wider economic logic. Such processes also lead late capitalism to appear as an increasingly unclear and pervasive system: "an abstract, intangible but overpowering logic, a process without a subject or a subject without a face."[67] The chapter then examines various geographical-Marxist theories that have examined the particularly spatial dimensions of such late capitalist machinations. Through a synthesis of these theories, it is suggested that late capitalism requires ever more "spatial fixes" to satisfy its accumulatory and inherently contradictory logics, and therefore it must exploit material geographical space on an ever-increasing scale. From this

[67] Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute* (London: Zero Books, 2015), 39.

initial contextual and introductory phase, the chapter moves on to ask, how can we visualise a system that is both increasingly hidden but also spatially exploitative? The chapter takes up Fredric Jameson's notion of "cognitive mapping" as a methodology that offers a way of visually and aesthetically countering such spatialised and "overpowering" economic logics. For Jameson, a new aesthetic form is needed to visualise and critique late capitalism's increasingly opaque spatial operations: "to propose an aesthetic of cognitive mapping under conditions of late capitalism could be taken as an attempt to force into being a certain kind of political visibility and thus to counter the objective, material effects of a dominant regime of representation."[68] The chapter then moves on to analyse several contemporary experimental nonfiction works that—either explicitly or implicitly—embrace the theory of cognitive mapping laid out by Jameson. These case studies offer an opportunity to interrogate the political potentialities of such spatio-political praxes. Ultimately, through this analytical work, the chapter examines how nonfiction moving image work can play a crucial role in the fight against the savage encroachment of transnational global capital—examining strategies of visualisation and critique that have already been developed, whilst also gesturing towards to those which remain underexplored or underdeveloped.

Chapter 2: Carceral Geographies: Spaces of Exception and Internment

Since the year 2000, carceral internment has risen by roughly 20% globally. This rapid expansion of carceral populations and infrastructure over the last half century has brought about a "punitive turn" within the humanities and social sciences, generally concerned with exploring "the historical, political, economic, and sociocultural roots of mass incarceration, as well as its collateral costs and consequences."[69] Understanding the infrastructural and spatial transformations wrought by this expansionary development of the prison industry has become a chief preoccupation for economic and human geographers over the past 20 years. Indeed, this research has developed into a subfield of its own, carceral geography. Most broadly, carceral geography—as an area of theoretical and political enquiry—involves a geographical engagement with the spaces, practices and experiences of confinement. In addition, geographers working within this field attempt to situate the carceral within wider social, economic and geopolitical infrastructures, aiming "to counter the imagination of a closed-off and sealed carceral institution, discussing instead the liminal spaces 'betwixt and between' the

[68] Ibid., 26.
[69] Deborah E. McDowell, Claudrena N. Harold, and Juan Battle, eds., *The Punitive Turn: New Approaches to Race and Incarceration* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013).

inside and outside of prisons."[70] This chapter examines several experimental nonfiction works that—in a manner much akin to the carceral geographic turn—seek to visualise and critique the shifting spatial and infrastructural relations of carceral spaces. Here, I focus on works that aim to unpack how, under the conditions of globalisation and neo-colonialism, carceral spaces "seep out into the everyday, domestic, street, and institutional spaces… 'betwixt and between' the inside and outside of prisons." In addition, I also examine works that focus on practices of internment that are more directly connected to the acceleration of states of exception that have become permanent rules; migrant detention centres, concentrations camps, holdings sites for political prisoners, to name but three. Across all these works, there is a clear emphasis on not only visualising carceral spaces that are increasingly occluded from site, but also understanding their tight interconnections with larger judicial and biopolitical structures of power. In addition to examining works that engage with the contemporary mutations of carceral spaces, I also look at filmic practices that engage with the transformation of historical sites of carcerality—often appropriated as radical political gestures or exploited for financial gain. All these works understand that such carceral sites and spaces can never be read as hermetically sealed; they always operate at the border with—and in relation to—larger structures of power and discipline, both geographically and historically. In a manner akin to the previous chapter's examination of works interrogating the seeming abstraction of late capitalism's spatial operations, the works examined in this chapter perceive a similar occlusion and fragmentation of carceral space. Consequently, similar questions drive this chapter: how can carceral spaces that are increasingly hidden from sight—intentionally masking sovereign state violence and control—be visualised within moving image practice. What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped? The works surveyed in the chapter engage with both historical and contemporary instances of internment, all variously connected to larger states of exceptionality and industrial prison expansion.

Chapter 3: Border Regimes: Labour, Ports and the Sea

This chapter contests that borders are no longer what they once were, or, at least, what they were once perceived to be. They have proliferated; shifting from the periphery to the centre of our social, economic and political lives. They have also become markedly less visible systems of control and surveillance, often functioning beyond (yet still alongside) their traditional roles

[70] Dominique Moran, *Carceral Geography: Spaces and Practices of Incarceration* (Farnham: Routledge, 2015), 90.

as the markers of geopolitical sovereign boundaries. Under the conditions of transnational global capitalism, understandings of borders as solid sovereign, geopolitical "boundaries," "walls" or "barriers" have shifted.[71] In addition, the concomitant rise of both an increasingly fragmented global division of labour and the rise of neo-colonial forms of extra-sovereign governance have changed the function and understanding of the border in myriad ways. The aim of this chapter is to examine how several nonfiction moving image works have attempted to articulate this contemporary reconstitution of borders as heterogeneous, shifting and proliferating regimes of spatial control. How is it that we can attempt to represent mechanisms of control—of bodies, labour and capital—that are increasingly fragmented and often withdrawn from sight? Thus, it is evident that borders striate the social landscape in heretofore unexplored ways, becoming productive mechanisms in the exploitation of labour and the acceleration of late capitalism's accumulatory movements. Border regimes operate both within, across and outside sovereign territorialities; relentlessly exploiting and reconstituting bodies, environments and labour pools. However, once we do away with a conception of bordering regimes as something strictly sovereign—the wall, the fence, the barrier, which marks the limits of a nation state—attempting to render visible their intricate operations and functions become more of a challenge. Moreover, as the border becomes something extra-sovereign, a plethora of new actors and forces that come into play—reshaping the function and operations of different bordering regimes. And, as the number of actors increases, locking down the responsibility for violence and exploitation across these new regimes of power and control also becomes more of a challenge. Yet, as I have previously suggested, a range of contemporary nonfiction works have attempted to visualise these expanded and multifarious border regimes. This chapter examines the various techniques utilised by these works when attempting to interrogate and render visible the operations of contemporary border regimes, particularly as they are continuously rearticulated and recomposed by the geopolitical operations of global capitalism.

Conclusion

Ultimately, through these chapters, I aim to explore how a range of contemporary nonfiction practices have embraced a critical spatio-political aesthetic in their examinations and critiques

[71] It is of course important to note that a focus on physical sovereign bordering practices is still crucial in the contemporary moment, particularly in relation to the continuing presence of "strong borders," such as the Wall in Palestine, Mexico's northern border, US travel bans and the rise of "fortress Europe." Physically locatable border in this sense still play a fundamental role in such forms of spatial violence.

of various formations of power and their attendant spatialised impacts. More precisely, these works focus intensely on particular spaces, landscapes and infrastructures as a way to open up to an examination of larger spatial formations of political, social and economic power and violence. The adoption of such a critical spatial perspective within contemporary documentary practice needs to be effectively surveyed and theorised, and it is precisely this critical work that this thesis aims to undertake. As we have seen, there have been sporadic examples of theoretical work examining the intersection between the moving image and the spatial; however, this thesis marks the first comprehensive theorisation of such a spatio-political trend in nonfiction practice. By forging connections between these works, the thesis not only highlights the presence of such a spatio-political tendency, but also examines the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. As a result, this thesis is a crucial intervention into documentary and spatial studies scholarship. By bringing these spatio-political works together, the thesis argues that they constitute an entirely new genre of political nonfiction media practice. Thus, by undertaking this crucial groundwork—mapping out the origins, politics and potential future directions of this critical practice—this thesis hopes to open the door to a whole new area of documentary study focused on such spatialised practices. By delineating the boundaries of this field of practice, the thesis aims to create a fertile space for further scholarly research and investigation within documentary and moving image studies. However, the conceptual and theoretical groundwork conducted by this thesis also aims to extend beyond such scholarly realms. This research also aims to have wider resonances across the interdisciplinary area of spatial studies; opening new avenues of conceptual and methodological enquiry into the spatio-political. As research-creation practices become more and more ubiquitous across a plethora of academic fields concerned with the spatial, this research's engagement with a range of interdisciplinary, practice-based projects aims to serve as a catalyst for more of this practical work to develop. Thus, the aims of this research are not simply theoretical, they also aim to foster the further development of such critical spatial praxes. By analysing these practices, I hope to demonstrate how opening up to a broader range of methodological, theoretical and aesthetic tools can offer productive new strategies to researchers aiming to embrace such a critical spatial perspective. For too long, spatial studies, across a range of disciplinary formations, have been limited to written word in their investigations. Moving image practice offers up a whole new range of techniques for interrogating the politics of the spatial.

Whilst this thesis attempts to examine a broad range of documentary practices invested in such spatio-political forms of analysis, it is important to acknowledge that the scope of this

thesis is—of course—limited in several ways. We are in an epoch defined perhaps primarily by irrevocable ecological crisis. As Jason W. Moore suggests, "the situation is deteriorating. Weekly, even daily, the research mounts. 'Human pressures' are pushing the conditions of biospheric stability—climate and biodiversity above all—to the breaking point. Multiple 'planetary boundaries' are now being crossed—or soon will be."[72] Whilst this thesis engages with a range of issues that have certainly contributed to the escalation of the global climate crisis—natural resource extraction, expansion of logistics infrastructure, etc. (dimensions that Moore sees as fundamental to his reconceptualization of the "Anthropocenic" as the "Capitalocenic")—it does not engage directly or consistently with this most fundamental form of spatialised violence, the consequences of which we are yet to fully comprehend. There has been a marked increase in the number of nonfiction works that examine and interrogate the multifarious spatial impacts of global warming (*Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*, Jennifer Baichwal, Nicholas de Pencier, Edward Burtynsky, 2018, *The Hottest August*, Brett Story, 2019, *The Lake and The Lake*, Sindhu Thirumalaisamy, 2019, *Earth*, Nikolaus Geyrhalter, 2019, *Kasiterit*, Riar Rizaldi, 2019). A focus on such environmentally-attuned spatio-political works could certainly have formed the basis of a fourth chapter of *Documentary Spatiality*. However, within the bounds of this thesis, my engagement with several works whose themes are tangentially connected to this global crisis must suffice. Hopefully, by mapping out the politics, ethics, and potential future directions of such spatio-political works, I can provide a solid theoretical base for similar work to be undertaken in relation to these more explicitly ecologically-minded practices.

It is also important to note that whilst this thesis covers a geographically disparate set of locations, it does not engage sufficiently with practices emerging from—or engaging with—the global South. Whilst some of the works to be examined do focus—in whole or in part—on countries located in the global South (natural resource extraction and First Nations displacement in the Philippines, oil pipeline infrastructure running through Azerbaijan and Georgia, military "resettlement" villages in northern Argentina; and the unstable and deadly corridors of migrant movement from Libya across the Mediterranean Sea), the selection of case studies under investigation could certainly have been more geographically encompassing. It is arguable that the global South has borne the brunt of globalisation's myriad spatial impacts and rearticulations. As Rory Horner, Seth Schindler, Daniel Haberly, Yuko Aoyama suggest,

[72] Jason W. Moore, "Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism," in *Anthropocene or Capitalocene?: Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, ed. Jason W. Moore (Oakland: PM Press, 2016), 1.

"globalisation largely served the interests of the global North at the expense of those in the global South."[73] Indeed, it is undeniable that neoliberal political hegemony and late capitalist economic rationality were the "means through which countries in the global North aggressively forced open markets in the global South."[74] Thus, many of the forms of spatial power and violence examined by this thesis had their most devastating impacts across the global South. The global fragmentation of labour, the rapid expansion of logistics infrastructure and the ever-broadening exploitation of natural resources have increasingly impacted the global South. Thus, this thesis could certainly have examined more works emerging from, or engaging with, the global South. An expanded and developed version of this project would certainly engage much more comprehensively and systematically with a range of these practices. Despite these limitations, *Documentary Spatiality* still provides a crucial set of insights into this contemporary phenomenon in nonfiction moving image practice. As I have previously suggested, I hope that this theorisation of documentary's spatial turn can stimulate further practical and theoretical work into the myriad forces of spatial exploitation and power that structure the world around us.

[73] Rory Horner et al., "Globalisation, Uneven Development and the North–South 'Big Switch,'" *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 11, no. 1 (2018): 21.
[74] Ibid.

Visualising Late Capitalism's Landscapes

"The conception of capital is admittedly a totalizing or systemic concept: no one has ever seen or met the thing itself; it is either the result of scientific reduction… or the mark of an imaginary and ideological vision."

Fredric Jameson[75]

How can the machinations of late capitalism be visualised within moving image practice? How can contemporary nonfiction practices capture and critique the diffuse movements and operations of contemporary transnational capital, an economic system that is itself an increasingly all-enveloping machine of capture? By focusing on a variety of experimental nonfiction works that all share a concern with examining late capitalism's exploitative spatial logics, this chapter seeks to answer such questions. Through such a comparative analysis, this chapter additionally seeks to examine the political potentialities—and limitations—of such political-aesthetic praxes. Ultimately, what role can nonfiction moving image works play in the fight against the savage encroachment of transnational global capital? What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped? Whilst important and extensive bodies of academic literature have been generated in relation to the geographical and spatial exploitations and mutations wrought by late capitalism, corresponding work within moving image culture (both practical and theoretical) has—I would contend—been far less extensive. This is a significant and continuing failure. Nonfiction moving image work has a crucial role to play in undermining the apparently "seamless" functioning of logistified and financialised capitalism; helping to throw into sharp relief its fissures, cracks and contradictions. Indeed, this point returns us to one of the overarching themes of this thesis; moving image practice must develop a political praxis that makes the invisible exploitations of spatial power relations legible and—most importantly—resistible. As Edward Soja suggests, spatiality under late-capitalism has become a dominant site of exploitation: "relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life… human geographies become filled with politics and ideology."[76] It is the contention of this chapter that the moving image is a crucial tool of resistance against such exploitative spatial logics. By surveying a variegated set of works that

[75] Fredric Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg and Cary Nelson (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 354.
[76] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 2011), 6.

have made steps towards such a critical visual praxis, this chapter hopes to map out some "lines of flight" for its continued critical development. After briefly defining the notion of late capitalism and its intersections with spatiality and spatial theory, I will then move on to survey the works of several filmmakers and artists: Thomas Kneubühler (*Forward Looking Statements*, 2014, *Relocation (FPIC)*, 2014, *Land Claim*, 2014-15), Ursula Biemann (*Black Sea Files*, 2005), Allan Sekula (*Fish Story*, 1995) and Noël Burch and Sekula (*The Forgotten Space*, 2010). Through this analysis, I hope to map some aesthetic and political connections between this geographically disparate set of filmmakers, all of whom have attempted to visualise late capitalism's landscapes.

Defining Late Capitalism

Here, I think it would be useful to historically situate my uptake of the notion of late capitalism, with a more general aim of providing a working definition of the term. Among the many texts that have engaged with the notion of late capitalism,[77] Ernest Mandel's 1999 book *Late Capitalism* provides perhaps the first definitive book-length examination of the concept. Across "nine analytical chapters" Mandel maps out the development of late capitalism, offering up four distinct phases in its evolution. The first two phases develop after the Second World War and are marked by the rise of informatics, rapid technological innovation and digitisation. For him, these developments led to the "radical improvement in the conditions for the valorisation of capital." Thirdly, he examines capital's "particular interconnexion with the world market" through the "international" and "centralising" force of the multinational corporation. Finally, Mandel examines late capitalism's "new forms and 'solutions'… [to] the problem of realisation—permanent inflation and the typical late capitalist trade cycle."[78] This final stage is marked by the consolidation of the multinational, the widening transnational flows of finance capital and the expansion of globalised trading markets. It is within these last two stages that, for Mandel, we find the consolidation of late capitalism's economic logics.

The development of these new forms of global-economic organisation suggested by Mandel were part of the shift towards neoliberal forms of economic governance. As David

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[77] *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Fredric Jameson, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*, Jonathan Crary, *Language in Late Capitalism: Pride and Profit*, Monica Heller, *Reification, Or, The Anxiety of Late Capitalism*, Timothy Bewes, *Late Capitalism, Neoliberal Globalization, & Militarism*, Harry Targ, *The Ruptures of American Capital*, Grace K. Hong, Herbert Marcuse, "Protosocialism and Late Capitalism: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis Based on Bahro's Analysis," *Hypercapitalism: New Media, Language, and Social Perceptions of Value*, Phil Graham, amongst others.
[78] Ibid., 9-10.

Harvey suggests, up until the end of World War Two, "market processes and entrepreneurial and corporate activities… [had been] surrounded by a web of social and political constraints."[79] However, as capital's movements were increasingly globalised and fluid, such "social and political constraints" had to be lifted. Neoliberalism promoted the opening of national markets to global trade and financial speculation, coupled with a massive reduction in state interventionism. Within these new approaches to the political economy, the supposedly "natural forces" of global trade were normalised and the "free hand" of the markets began to reign supreme. Within these new configurations of global capitalism, more emphasis had to be placed upon capital fluidity and mobility. As the fixity and embeddedness of traditional forms of constrained political-economic organisation no longer matched the operations of global trade, new strategies of organisation and exploitation had to be developed.[80] Indeed, Zygmunt Bauman has placed significant emphasis on fluid and mobile movement within the development of late capitalism. For Bauman, the increased "fluidity" and inequality of the global economic system is exactly where these new global power formations derive their strength from. For such a system based on logics of fluidity and inequality to be most effectively realised, Bauman suggests that there had to be effective "social disintegration." He writes:

> Global powers are bent on dismantling such networks for the sake of their continuous and growing fluidity, that principal source of their strength and the warrant of their invincibility. And it is the falling apart, the friability, the brittleness, the transcience, the until-further-noticeness of human bonds and networks which allow these powers to do their job in the first place.[81]

Thus, for Bauman, these new global suprastructures must necessarily disintegrate "the social network," those "effective agencies of collective action… any dense and tight network of social bonds, and particularly a territorially rooted tight network." For him, these such social networks are "obstacle[s] to be cleared out of the way."[82] It is from here that a system based on "the new lightness and fluidity of the increasingly mobile, slippery, shifty, evasive and fugitive power"

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[79] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11.
[80] I would like to thank my colleague Patrick Brodie for the many discussions and collaborations that helped me to think through these issues.
[81] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), 14.
[82] Ibid.

could be realised.[83] Fundamentally—for Mandel, Bauman and Harvey alike—late capitalism is defined by such fluid operations, the consequences of which are the rise the multinational corporation (and the complicity of state power in their perpetuation), an increasingly globalised post-Fordist labour market, and uneven geographical development (consequences that in turn feed back into, and perpetuate, the extension of such a fluid system).

Such apperceptions of late capitalism as a centralised—yet fundamentally fluid and mobile—system of power have led theorists to suggest that it is a deeply abstracted and interconnected political-economic formation. As David Hodge and Hamed Yousefi suggest, "the internationalisation of finance and other aspects of globalisation… can make it feel as if everything has become completely interconnected, and there is nowhere left to hide from the encroachment of capital."[84] Indeed, the fluidity and mobility of such a system has led many theorists to conclude that late capitalism is an increasingly all-pervasive and invisible system. Hodge and Yousefi suggest that, "as abstraction reaches into every crevice of our existence, art increasingly adopts a style that Emily Apter has called *oneworldedness*: 'a delirious aesthetics of systematicity ... held in place by the paranoid premise that 'everything is connected.'"[85] For Apter, at the level of aesthetic representation, oneworldedness "matches the circular form of the globe—imagined as a smooth surface allowing the unimpeded flow of capital, information, and language."[86] Whilst Apter uses this conception of "oneworldedness" primarily as a way to unpack US-centric narratives of "delusional democracy," it can also be seen as a dangerously homogenising trend within a broader range of contemporary aesthetic practices. The danger of such systems of representation is that the social totality takes on behemoth-esque proportions; indestructible and completely pervasive, here the residual cracks and contradictions of late capitalism are abstracted. A similar argument is made by Mark Fisher in his 2009 book *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* Fisher—building on Jameson's definition of postmodernism—defines the concept of "capitalist realism" as "the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it."[87] Thus, for Apter and Fisher alike, it is increasingly difficult for cultural and aesthetic practice to imagine an "outside" to

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Martin John Callahan et al., "Paranoid Subjectivity and the Challenges of Cognitive Mapping – How Is Capitalism to Be Represented?," *e-flux*, accessed 16 May 2017, https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/paranoid-subjectivity-and-the-challenges-of-cognitive-mapping-how-is-capitalism-to-be-represented/1080.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Emily Apter, "On Oneworldedness: Or Paranoia as a World System," *American Literary History* 18, no. 2 (2006): 370.
[87] Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (London: Verso Books, 2009), 2.

the all-pervasive nature of late-capitalism.

Figure 3. Still from Liquidity Inc., directed by Hito Steyerl, 2014, Germany.

For Hodge and Yousefi, Apter's notion of "oneworldness" is most poignantly (and critically) interrogated in Hito Steryel's 2014 film *Liquidity Inc.* Steryel's work as a visual artist and filmmaker has focused extensively on visualising and critiquing late capitalism's exploitative logics. *Liquidity Inc.* imbricates a range of narratives that focus on different understandings of "liquidity," ranging from the financial to the environmental. We meet Jacob Wood, a former financial advisor, whose career ended with the Lehman brothers' crisis. Wood—a practicing "Mixed Martial Arts" (MMA) fighter—discusses the flexible fighting style of Bruce Lee: "that's what makes it exciting, that's what keeps things liquid, and fluid." Another recurring narrative is a balaclava-wearing weather reporter—a nod, as Gary Zhang has suggested, to the 1970s militant-left group The Weather Underground—who maps the Vietnamese-born Wood's journey to the United states; his life constantly at the mercy of wider geo-political (Vietnam war) and financial (2008 crash) events. Mixed martial arts clashes with the 2008 financial crash, weather reportage with property foreclosure, all of which are hyperbolically threaded together by their shared concerns with liquidity.

Zhang suggests, "the interconnections of finance and hydrology affect us all: weather is water plus history. Therein lies also the elemental alignment proposed by Steyerl's montage… Anxiety is in the water here, not only because of the film's post-crash moment, but because of the inherent volatility of all the systems to which it alludes."[88] Whilst Zhang seems

[88] Gary Zhang, "Hito Steyerl's 'Liquidity Inc.' and Art Under Neoliberalism," *King's Review Magazine*, accessed 12 July 2017, http://kingsreview.co.uk/articles/hito-steyerl-liquidity-inc/.

to suggest that Steryel's emphasis on liquidity is sincere—aiming to present the inherent volatility of inextricably intertwined systems—I would instead suggest that it is more of a self-reflexive critique of the "oneworldness" style that it hyperbolically employs. One particularly memorable image from the start of the film overlays a variety of words—capital, blood, torrent, tsunami, sweat, statistic distribution, amongst others—on top of an image of a crashing wave.

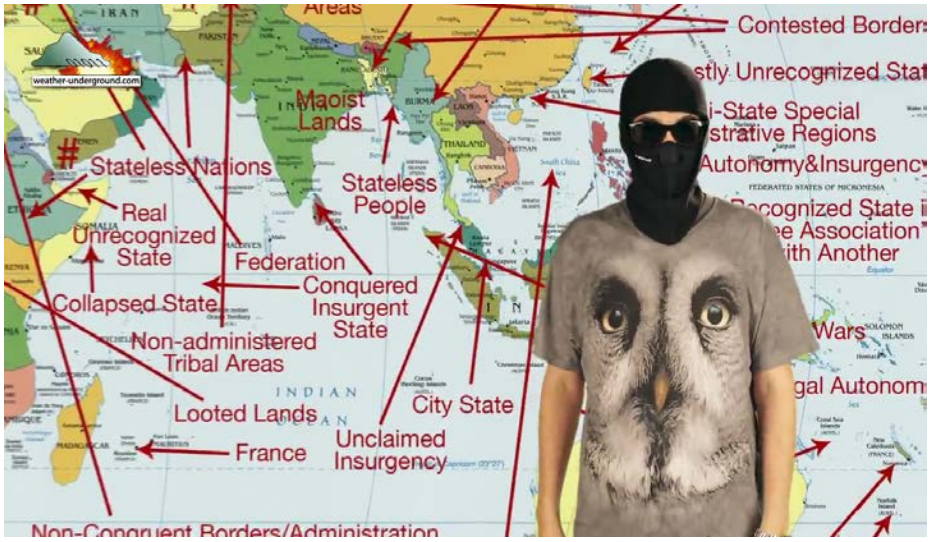

Figure 4. Still from Liquidity Inc., directed by Hito Steyerl, 2014, Germany.

Indeed, Hodge and Yousefi back up this point, suggesting *Liquidity Inc.* seems to *deliberately* confuse "various meanings of the word liquidity (physics, finance, climate, martial arts), showing intricate, but unfathomable links between seemingly unrelated spheres."[89] In a certain respect, Steryel's film seems to echo Jameson's famous claim that nowadays "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism."[90] From the Thatcherite/Reganite discourses of "market *forces*" to Adam Smith's "invisible hand of the market," there has been a prevalent tendency to treat late capitalism as some sort of natural phenomena. Ultimately—for Hodge and Yousefi—*Liquidity Inc.* points towards a larger tendency in artistic practice to enshrine a particularly abstracted, "oneworlded" and *liquid* representation of capitalism's contemporary machinations. Finally, Hodge and Yousefi close with the provocative question "can art help to induce new forms of subjectivity, which might be better equipped to trace the totality?"[91] Clearly, this question is intertwined with the one that opened this chapter; both seek to understand how we can fight against an aesthetic embrace of late capitalism's "naturalised" and "obfuscated" operations. Indeed, the works we will survey

[89] Callahan et al.
[90] Fredric Jameson, "Future City," *New Left Review*, no. 21 (2003): 76.
[91] Callahan et al.

later in this chapter are concerned with resisting such modes of aesthetic representation. Rather, they are concerned with locating and mapping the concrete socio-political impacts of such exploitative logics.

Spatiality and Late Capitalism

Several contemporary theorists have tried to understand how aesthetic practices can be employed to expose the inner workings of late-capitalism, from Fredric Jameson's notion of "cognitive mapping" to Alberto Toscano's formulation of mapping the "social totality." As the names of their concepts suggest, geographic and spatial understandings of late capital's movements are a critical component of such aesthetic approaches. Such a spatial thrust is representative of the wider spatial turn in social and cultural theory, extending from Henri Lefebvre's canonical *The Production of Space* to David Harvey's notion of the "spatial fix." For both these Marxist geographers—and we can include Jameson and Toscano here as well—contemporary finance capital seeks to exploit and bed itself within material space on an unprecedented scale. As Harvey suggests,

> The "spatial fix" (in the sense of geographical expansion to resolve problems of overaccumulation) is in part achieved through fixing investments spatially, embedding them in the land, to create an entirely new landscape (of airports and of cities, for example) for capital accumulation… the infrastructures of urbanization are crucial, both as foci of investment to absorb surpluses of capital and labor (providing localized/regional forms of the "spatial fix" as through the dynamics of suburbanization or the building of airport complexes) and as the necessary fixed capital of an immobile sort to facilitate spatial movement and the temporal dynamics of continued capital accumulation.[92]

Thus, within the epoch of late capital's unrelenting expansion, its increasing globalisation requires spatial placeholders to both absorb the surplus of overaccumulation and to create new strategic centres for further movement, expansion and accumulation. Harvey's examination of capitalism's global expansion—primarily developed through the notion of the "spatial fix"—resulted in three key findings. Firstly, capitalism "could not survive without being geographically expansionary." Secondly, "major innovations in transport and communication

[92] David Harvey, "Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix,'" *Geographische Revue*, no. 2 (2001): 28.

technologies were necessary conditions for that expansion to occur," specifically with "the progressive diminution of spatial barriers to movement of commodities, people, information and ideas over space." Thirdly, "its modes of geographical expansion depended crucially upon whether it was the search for markets, fresh labor powers, resources."[93] Neil Smith has also conducted important research into late capitalism's exploitative spatial logics. For him,

> Capital is continually invested in the built environment in order to produce surplus value and expand the basis of capital itself. But equally, capital is continually withdrawn from the built environment so that it can move elsewhere and take advantage of higher profit rates. The spatial immobilization of productive capital in its material form is no more or less a necessity than the perpetual circulation of capital as value. Thus it is possible to see the uneven development of capitalism as the geographical expression of the more fundamental contradiction between use-value and exchange-value.[94]

Ultimately, for Smith, the ascension of late-capitalism—particularly over the last three decades—has restructured geographical space on an unprecedented scale. The result of this restructuring is a pervasive and global process of "uneven development." As he continues to suggest, uneven development is the "hallmark of the geography of capitalism. It is not just that capitalism fails to develop evenly, that due to accidental and random factors the geographical development of capitalism represents some stochastic deviation from a generally even process. The uneven development of capitalism is structural rather than statistical."[95] Thus, for Smith, the forces of late capitalism that produce uneven development are not restructuring space in any natural or organic way, rather these transformations are the result of a structurally produced inequality—fostered with the complicity of national and supranational governing powers and global corporations. Thus, both Harvey and Smith see the ever-escalating globalisation of capitalism as being built around an ever increasingly streamlined ability to find and exploit new spaces of accumulation. Consequently, from Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*, and continuing through into the work of Smith and Harvey (amongst others: Massey, Soja, Gregory), there has been a clear theoretical emphasis on trying to understand the spatial

[93] Ibid., 25-26.
[94] Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 6.
[95] Ibid., 4.

transformations wrought by the machinations of late capitalism. What role can moving image practice play in such discursive formations? Can we push for the development of a political praxis within moving image culture that seeks to expose the spatial injustices wrought by late capitalism? What shape would such a praxis take?

One theoretical concept that responds—both directly and indirectly—to such questions is Fredric Jameson's notion of "cognitive mapping." Jameson's concept is an aesthetic rallying call, pushing artistic practitioners to develop new modes of praxis that map and figure the spatial logics of late capitalism. Whilst not focused specifically on the aesthetics and politics of the moving image, Jameson's concept is particularly central to this chapter, due to the way it works at the intersection of capitalist critique, spatial theory and aesthetic praxis. As Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle suggest, "to propose an aesthetic of cognitive mapping under conditions of late capitalism could be taken as an attempt to force into being a certain kind of political visibility and thus to counter the objective, material effects of a dominant regime of representation."[96] Jameson's aesthetic formulation will provide the theoretical underpinning for the analysis of several key experimental nonfiction works that follows. Ultimately, we will ask how these practitioners respond to, develop or subvert the principles of a "cognitive mapping" praxis. However, before we begin this analysis, I feel it is necessary to map out the germination and development of Jameson's concept—framing cognitive mapping's constituent parts and political stakes.

Jameson's Cognitive Mapping

According to Colin MacCabe, cognitive mapping is "the least articulated but also the most crucial of the Jamesonian categories."[97] Elucidations of cognitive mapping's theoretical parameters are scattered somewhat intermittently throughout Jameson's writings. Perhaps the most sustained exploration of the concept can be found in a chapter entitled "Cognitive Mapping," which forms part of the edited volume *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. He begins the chapter by outlining how three historic stages of capital have each produced unique geographic formations, and—concomitantly—cultural forms to represent such socio-spatial constructions. As he suggests, "the three types of space I have in mind are all the result of discontinuous expansions or quantum leaps in the enlargement of capital, in the latter's

[96] Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute* (London: Zero Books, 2015), 26.
[97] Colin MacCabe, "Preface," in *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System*, by Fredric Jameson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), xiv.

penetration and colonization of hitherto uncommodified areas."[98] Jameson begins by connecting the birth of classical or market capitalism to the reorganisation of "sacred and heterogeneous space into geometrical and Cartesian homogeneity."[99] As Robert T. Tally suggests, this initial stage is tied to a set of related social, economic and cultural processes: the superseding of "use value by exchange value" and the "denaturalisation of desire and its ultimate displacement by commodification." As a result, Jameson reads the geometrical forms of spatial representation and figuration that grew up around this epoch as unproblematic—perhaps even well suited. Indeed, as Toscano and Kinkle suggest, during the classical age of capitalist development, "the 'totality' that determines the life of an individual can be plausibly delineated in terms of the political-economic space of city and nation, the space of the great realist and naturalist narratives."[100] Moreover, as Tally suggests, "the market space is that of the grid, and is related to the broad Enlightenment project of secularising the world."[101] Thus, it is contestable that the birth of market capitalism finds its perfect representation in the neat and geometric organisation of the Cartesian coordinate system.[102]

As Toscano and Kinkle suggest, for Jameson, problems of representation only really start to become visible in the transition to the next stage of economic development—imperialist monopoly capitalism. Under the double-barrelled (and tightly enmeshed) development of colonialism and globalised free market capitalism, we find a "growing contradiction between lived experience and structure, or between a phenomenological description of the life of an individual and a more properly structural model of the conditions of existence of that experience."[103] More precisely, the spatial disjunctions resulting from capitalism and colonialism's expansion mean that "the phenomenological experience of the individual subject… becomes limited to a tiny corner of the social world… the truth of that experience no longer coincides with the place in which it takes place."[104] Fundamentally, as Tally suggests, as the individual's subjective life is increasingly bound up with colonial and capitalist exploitation, it becomes ever harder to forge connections between lived experience and the socio-economic forces that shape such an existence. Indeed, as Toscano and Kinkle suggest, "representation, understood as an oriented relationship between individual and collective,

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[98] Fredric Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg and Cary Nelson (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 348.
[99] Ibid., 349.
[100] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 8.
[101] Robert T. Tally, "Jameson's Project of Cognitive Mapping," in *Social Cartography: Mapping Ways of Seeing Educational and Social Change*, ed. Rolland G. Paulston (New York: Garland, 1996), 404.
[102] This theoretical summary of cognitive mapping extends from Tally and Toscano and Kinkle's crucial work.
[103] Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," 349.
[104] Ibid.

locality and world, is unsettled with capital's colonial projection."[105] It is here, in the face of such spatial dislocations, that we begin to encounter a crisis of representation and figuration: "such spatial disjunction has as its immediate consequence the inability to grasp the way the system functions as a whole."[106]

Whilst the transition between these two historical epochs—and their interlaced spatial articulations—are well elucidated by Jameson, his examination of the shift into the epoch of late capitalism and its particular spatial disjunctions is less comprehensive. As Tally suggests, "it is harder to detect the quantum leap from this form of nationalist space to the (current) postmodern space of late capitalism. Jameson does not clearly define the difference, or he suggests that there is merely a difference in degree."[107] However, whilst less concretely delineated than the previous shift, Jameson does point towards several changes wrought by the shift into the late capitalist epoch. As Tally argues, the withering of traditional models of settler colonialism, the birth of an obfuscated neo-colonialism, the shrinking power of the nation state and its replacement by the multinational corporation—all of which are tied up in the unrelenting accelerationism of late capitalism—have, for Jameson, fashioned a postmodern space that further resists representability. Whilst clearly an extension of the previous stage of imperialist monopolisation, late capitalism marks a break with this previous epoch; constructing "a vision of a world capitalist system fundamentally distinct from the older imperialism, which was little more than a rivalry between the various colonial powers."[108] Thus, whilst the transition into this epoch extended certain aspects of imperialist monopolisation, for Jameson it is "decisive but incomparable with the older convulsions of modernization and industrialization, less perceptible and dramatic, somehow, but more permanent precisely because more thoroughgoing and all-pervasive."[109] Consequently, we come to see how—for Jameson—the late capitalist epoch is perhaps centrally defined by an increasingly "undramatic" and "imperceptible" acceleration of capitalist exploitation. As touched upon earlier, when the operations of late capitalism are perceived as increasingly illegible, there is a theoretical tendency to embrace such a sense of imperceptibility; admitting powerlessness in front of an invisible social totality. Indeed, Toscano and Kinkle point towards this when they suggest that an apperception of late capitalism "as an infinitely ramified system

[105] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 8.
[106] Fredric Jameson, *The Modernist Papers* (London: Verso, 2007), 157.
[107] Robert T. Tally, "Jameson's Project of Cognitive Mapping," 404.
[108] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism: Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (New York: Verso Books, 1992), xix.
[109] Ibid., xxi.

of exploitation, an abstract, intangible but overpowering logic, a process without a subject or a subject without a face—poses formidable obstacles to its representation [and] has often been taken in a sublime or tragic key."[110] However, whilst Jameson admits that the machinations of late capitalism may be less immediately visible, he refuses to become defeatist. Indeed, it is precisely *within* the epoch of late capitalism that Jameson's call for a process of cognitive mapping is most concretely situated. For him, a new aesthetic form is needed to visualise and critique late capitalism's increasingly opaque spatial operations and fight back against the culture of lamentation and sublimation that surrounds such discourses of economic totalitarianism. As Jameson himself suggests, through this new political aesthetic "we may again begin to grasp our positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by our spatial as well as our social confusion."[111] Thus, in the face of a system that is increasingly opaque and omniscient we must struggle for new forms of representation that can reposition individual and collective political action. As Toscano and Kinkle continue on to suggest, works which would be classifiable under the banner of cognitive mapping would:

> enable individuals and collectivities to render their place in a capitalist world-system intelligible… we could argue, to propose an aesthetic of cognitive mapping under conditions of late capitalism could be taken as an attempt to force into being a certain kind of political visibility and thus to counter the objective, material effects of a dominant regime of representation.[112]

Thus, for Toscano and Kinkle there is strong political bite to Jameson's rallying call, aiming as it does to resituate and reorient political struggle against a more visible and definable opposition. Indeed, it is in fact the very representational challenges that such an increasingly imperceptible system presents which engender and foster a new struggle for political legibility.

Cognitive Mapping's Constitutive Parts

How is cognitive mapping presented as a variegated aesthetic protocol that can be taken up to aid in visualising late capitalism's socio-spatial injustices? Fundamentally, Jameson's

[110] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 40.
[111] Jameson, *Postmodernism: Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, 54.
[112] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 40.

delineation of cognitive mapping weaves together two theoretical concepts: Kevin Lynch's phenomenological urbanist notion of "cognitive mapping" and Louis Althusser's canonical reformulation of the "ideological." Let us pause to unpack these two concepts, as together they constitute the theoretical base for Jameson's aesthetic project. Here, I will draw further upon Robert Tally's "Jameson's Project of Cognitive Mapping," a key examination of cognitive mapping's theoretical composition. Lynch's project of cognitive mapping—unpacked most comprehensively in his book *The Image of the City*—is concerned with understanding an individual's (predominantly) phenomenological relation to ever changing and morphing urban environments. His central claim is that as urban topography is transformed and expanded, a sense of urban alienation—"directly proportional to the mental unmapability of local cityscapes"—can set in.[113] As Tally suggests, clear connections can be drawn between Lynch's conceptualisation of cognitive mapping and the Situationist/Lettrist development of psychogeography; both place an emphasis on understanding cognitive and phenomenological responses to the built environment. For Debord, "psychogeography could set for itself the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals."[114] Debord's delineation of the psychogeographical places a similar emphasis on an individual's cognitive and affective relationship to their built environment. However, whilst the Situationists/Lettrists drew on Dadaist and Surrealist strategies to revolutionise urban experience—perhaps most clearly articulated through the practices of "dérive and détournement"—Lynch's solution is far more pragmatic. For him, a comprehensive cognitive map is only realisable in an urban space that is constructed to be "'legible' to its inhabitants, or even to a transient visitor. He suggests that for an urban space to be successfully cognitively mapped, it "should possess a certain 'imageability.'"[115] For Jameson, Lynch's resolutely phenomenological—and at times dogmatically utilitarian—approach "can no doubt be subjected to many criticisms on its own terms (not the least of which is the absence of any conception of political agency or historical process)."[116] Indeed, as Tally notes, Lynch's notion of cognitive mapping is locked within a phenomenological analysis of an individual's location in particular urban spaces, and does little to account for the wider socio-politics of such a situatedness. Jameson is interested in how such a theory might be expanded—and, to a degree de-phenomenologised—to engage with the

[113] Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," 353.
[114] Guy Debord, "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography," *Les Lèvres Nues* 6 (1955): 23.
[115] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 11.
[116] Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," 353.

financialised and globalised spatial reconfigurations wrought by late capitalism. Consequently, Jameson's uptake of Lynch's concept is fundamentally "emblematic," serving as a basic methodological framework upon which a more overtly political—and wider reaching—strategy could be grafted.

To undertake such an extrapolation, Jameson takes up Louis Althusser's well-known theoretical formulation of ideology—most thoroughly articulated in the essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. As Jameson writes:

> I have always been struck by the way in which Lynch's conception of city experience—the dialectic between the here and now of immediate perception and the imaginative or imaginary sense of the city as an absent totality—presents something like a spatial analogue of Althusser's great formulation of ideology itself, as 'the Imaginary representation of the subject's relationship to his or her Real conditions of existence.'[117]

For Jameson, as Tally suggests, the great strength of Althusser's formulation—particularly in relation to Lynch's concept—is its articulation of a schism between the location of an individual subject and "the totality of class structures in which he or she is situated," thus moving us beyond a bounded phenomenological engagement with particular urban environments.[118] Indeed, as Tally suggests, "Althusser provides a theoretical framework for Lynch's more empirical or experiential analysis of the ways in which individuals negotiate their surroundings. 'Ideology' provides a bigger picture than the 'image of the city'… By 'synthesising' Althusser and Lynch, Jameson is able to expand Lynch's city model to a more global terrain."[119] Consequently, Lynch's spatial theorisation of the city can be extrapolated; shifting us into the realm of late capitalism's globalised and financialised structures and systems. Thus, Jameson's retooling of Lynch's concept "involves an extrapolation of… [such] spatial analysis to the realm of social structure, that is to say, in our historical moment, to the totality of class relations on a global (or should I say multinational) scale."[120] Fundamentally, for Tally, within Jameson's articulation of cognitive mapping, we can see a desire to keep the spatial and topological components of Lynch's analysis, whilst simultaneously upscaling the site of analysis beyond the city space to the totality of socio-economic relations constructed

[117] Ibid., 349.
[118] Ibid., 353.
[119] Tally, "Jameson's Project of Cognitive Mapping," 403.
[120] Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," 353.

under late capitalism. Thus, Jameson's project of cognitive mapping aims—through its synthesis of Lynch and Althusser—to make more visible and tangible the totality of the social structure and class relations within the late capitalist epoch, whilst also remaining attentive to individual's and collective's spatial emplacement within such a system.[121] Cognitive mapping aims therefore to confront understandings of late capitalism "as an infinitely ramified system of exploitation, an abstract, intangible but overpowering logic," by making its apparently invisible operations more visible, and our spatial location within this system more concretely locatable.[122]

Cognitive Mapping in Practice

Now that the theoretical foundations of cognitive mapping have been laid out, I will move into the analysis of several contemporary experimental nonfiction works that—either explicitly or implicitly—embrace the aesthetic and political principles laid out by Jameson. As Toscano suggests, "across the contemporary arts and social theory—in domains of production and practice difficult to pigeonhole and categorize—the past years have witnessed, alongside a resurgent concern with politics, a veritable efflorescence in efforts to provide models, diagrams or narratives that might allow us to orient ourselves around the world-system."[123] The following case studies will offer us an opportunity to interrogate the political potentialities of such spatio-political praxes. Here, I am also concerned with staking out the importance of nonfiction moving image work within the constellation of aesthetic approaches to cognitive mapping. As stated earlier, not only do I wish to examine those strategies that have already been developed, but also map out some "lines of flight" for their continued critical development. Ultimately, through this analytical work, I hope to examine how nonfiction moving image work can play a crucial role in the fight against the savage encroachment of transnational global capital—examining strategies of visualisation and critique that have already been developed, whilst also gesturing towards to those which remain underexplored or underdeveloped. This analysis will begin by focusing on Thomas Kneubühler's *Land Claim* project, which examines the displacement of First Nations communities in Northern Quebec and the Philippines by multinational natural resource extraction companies. I will argue that within the moving image works that form part of this larger multimedia project, the speculative

[121] Tally's essay was a crucial to my understanding of cognitive mapping's theoretical basis.
[122] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 40.
[123] Alberto Toscano, "Seeing It Whole: Staging Totality in Social Theory and Art," *The Sociological Review* 60 (2012): 64.

flows of global capital encounter the materiality of the landscapes they wish to exploit. By embracing the Deleuzian notion of the "stratigraphic image," I will argue that Kneubühler cognitively maps the relationship between abstract financial speculation and a topographical engagement with its proposed sites of future spatial fixing and exploitation. Next, the focus will shift to Ursula Biemann's *Black Sea Files*, a work that explores the socio-geographical re-composition of the territories carved apart by the creation of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline—which extends from the Azeri–Chirag–Gunashli oil field in the Caspian Sea to Ceyhan, a port city on the south-eastern Mediterranean coast of Turkey—and the connections to national and supra-national governance. Here, I will argue that Biemann utilises an aesthetic of "soft montage"—originally conceived by filmmaker and theorist Harun Farocki—to oscillate between the micro and macro spatial-geographical injustices wrought by the pipeline's construction. Such a strategy ultimately aims to bridge the gap between larger homogenised forms of financial and governmental power and their impact upon the myriad "local textures" and communities along the route of the pipeline. Finally, we will examine Allan Sekula's photo essay *Fish Story* and Noël Burch and Sekula's *The Forgotten Space*, both of which focus on visualising the logisitification of maritime space. Here, I will argue that Sekula's concept of "critical realism" structures his (and Burch's) attempt to cognitively map the materiality of human labour in increasingly automatised and logistified spaces of circulation. As we shall see, all these works move between micro and macro spatio-politics in their attempts to map the matrixes of contemporary domination.

Thomas Kneubühler's *Land Claim* Project

To begin this analysis, let us return to Harvey's notion of the spatial fix. For him, "the 'spatial fix' (in the sense of geographical expansion to resolve problems of overaccumulation) is in part achieved through fixing investments spatially, embedding them in the land, to create an entirely new landscape (of airports and of cities, for example) for capital accumulation."[124] Thus, within the epoch of finance capital's unrelenting expansion, its increasing globalisation requires spatial placeholders to both absorb the surplus of overaccumulation and to create new strategic centres for further movement and expansion. This section aims to examine how Thomas Kneubühler's *Land Claim* project tackles such spatial exploitations by visualising the transnational operations—and attendant spatial impacts—of several multi-national mining companies operating within both northern Quebec and the Philippines. Across several of the

[124] Harvey, "Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix,'" 28.

project's C-Print photographs, Kneubühler examines the interrelations between three seemingly disparate locations: Raglan, a nickel mine in Northern Quebec; Aupaluk, an Inuit village in Nunavik (under threat by a planned iron mine) and Zug, Switzerland, a known tax haven, where the headquarters of several Swiss mining companies are located. In addition, *Forward Looking Statements*—the first of two video works that formed a part of this larger multimedia project—directly juxtaposes an extended visual examination of a traditional hunting ground for the Aupaluk community with audio extracts from Oceanic Iron Ore Corporation's conference calls with its investors, where the discussion circulates around the possibilities for resource extraction from this site. The second video work, *Relocation (FPIC)* contains a similar visual-aural juxtaposition, this time focusing on the relationship between Anglo-Swiss multinational mining company Xstrata's headquarters in Zug, Switzerland and their mining operations in the Philippines. This paper will contest that such visual and aural juxtapositions function as a polemical spatio-political critique of these multi-national's planned appropriation and exploitation of such precarious spaces. Ultimately, through the employment of a rigorous spatio-political aesthetic, Kneubühler aims to throw into sharp relief the illegible socio-economic machinations of such multi-national organisations; the speculative flows of global capital encounter the materiality of the landscapes they wish to exploit.

The Raglan Mine, located approximately 62 miles south of Deception Bay in the Nunavik region of Quebec, has been operated by Glencore plc since 1997. Glencore (short for Global Energy Commodity Resources) is an Anglo-Swiss multinational commodity trading and mining company with headquarters in Zug, Switzerland. As stated on Glencore's website, the Raglan mine "takes up an area of nearly 70 kilometres and consists of a series of high-grade ore deposits composed mostly of nickel and copper… four active underground mines, a concentrator, as well as administrative and accommodation facilities."[125] Development of the mine was only given the go-ahead after the signing of an Impacts and Benefits Agreement—called the Raglan Agreement for short—by both Glencore and the Makivik Corporation, a legal body representing Quebec's First Nations population. Through what were termed "educational collaborations" between Glencore and the Kativik School Board, the agreement hoped to encourage employment of the First Nations community at the mine site. The final aim was to have a minimum of 20% of the work force made up by the indigenous population. Currently, the figure sits at 17%. *Land Claim* brings together a range

[125] Glencore, "Raglan Mine," Glencore Mine Raglan, 2017, http://www.mineraglan.ca/en/about-us/raglan-mine/Pages/default.aspx.

of C-Printed images of the Raglan site: a miner, their charging head torches, exploratory drill holes, company jets and helicopters. Kneubühler's images seem to oscillate between an almost forensic and topographical examination of the Nunavik landscape and a wider ranging exploration of the transportation and logistics infrastructures supporting the mine site.

It is my contention that this oscillation between the forensic and the logistical is further explored within *Forward Looking Statements*. The video work is a 3 minute and 55 second traversal of a traditional hunting ground for the First Nations community of Aupaluk in Nunavik. For the duration of the film, Kneubühler's GoPro camera—mounted on top of his guide Charlie Angutinguak's ATV—moves across this section of the Aupaluk landscape. Unstable and juddering over the uneven terrain, the camera seems to render the materiality of the landscape. We track along the side of a small ridge, before climbing to the top. The voiceover accompanying this work comes from a Prefeasibility Study conference call conducted by the Oceanic Iron Ore Corporation. This call features "forward looking statements," a term used in the corporate investment plans to describe future events which are subject to certain financial risks and uncertainties. How then does Kneubühler's moving image practice work alongside the Jamesonian call for an aesthetic of cognitive mapping?

Figure 5. Still from Forward Looking Statements, directed by Thomas Kneubühler, 2014, Canada.

To answer this question, it is useful to turn to another aesthetic-topographic notion: the stratigraphic image. As Tom Conley suggests, "toward the end of the ninth chapter of *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Gilles Deleuze speculates that modern cinema accedes to a 'new visibility of things.' The visibility he describes is of a character that accompanies what he calls the new

and unforeseen presence of the 'stratigraphic" image.'"[126] For Deleuze, with the shift from the movement-image to the time-image, "the visual image becomes *archaeological, stratigraphic, tectonic.* Not that we are taken back to prehistory (there is an archaeology of the present), but to the deserted layers of our time which bury our own phantoms; to the lacunary layers which we juxtaposed according to variable orientations and connections."[127] As the durational temporality of the time-image came to dominate modern moving image practice (as examined in the introduction), there was a fundamental shift in the visual representation of space: a change that pushed to the fore the archaeological, stratigraphic and tectonic qualities of cinema's rendering of landscape. As Tom Conley continues,

> taking up the rupture of the sensorimotor connection that, in the earlier regime of the movement-image, had tied the spectator's gaze to the motion of what was projected on the screen, now Deleuze sketches out what seems to be a thumbnail treatise of the *landscape* of contemporary cinema. He writes of a layered and metamorphic landscape, a landscape composed of so many deposits of time that it indicates the presence of an extremely long duration.[128]

For Deleuze, this new cinematic stratigraphy fits into the larger function of the time-image, which was supposed to foster a new "cinematic visibility of the world." In certain ways, the notion of the stratigraphic image can be read as a precursor to the contemporary practice of deep mapping; long-form multimedia documentations of particular spaces that aim to render "inherent instabilities" as well as "the ongoing development of a place's identity, and its capacity to reveal historical and contemporary human experience," in an almost palimpsestic fashion.[129] For Deleuze, the formally rigorous and avowedly modernist filmmakers Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub were the primary practitioners of this new cinematic stratigraphy. For him, their images traced

> the abstract curve of what has happened, and where the earth stands for what is buried in it: the cave in *Othon* where the resistance fighters had their weapons, the marble quarries and the Italian countryside where civil populations were massacred in *Fortini*

[126] Tom Conley, "The Strategist and the Stratigrapher," in *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, ed. D. N. Rodowick (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 193.
[127] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II: The Time-Image*, 243-244.
[128] Conley, "The Strategist and the Stratigrapher," 193-194.
[129] http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/lakesdeepmap/the-project/gis-deep-mapping/

> *Cani*, the cornfield in *From the Clouds to the Resistance*, fertilized by the blood of the sacrificial victims… [and] the French countryside and the Egyptian countryside in *Too Early, Too Late.*[130]

For Deleuze, the works of Straub and Huillet thus constituted a "manual of stratigraphy," with each shot "functioning as a cross section revealing little pointed lines of absent *facies* and full lines of those we continue to touch."[131] Conley readily acknowledges the metaphorical thrust of Deleuze's conceptualisation. For him, the stratigraphic image works in a dialectical fashion, causing "one to think of the impossibility of being able to think about or through it in all its totality… Yet we are able to perceive to some degree what we cannot perceive."[132] Thus, the process of stratigraphy makes us confront the impossibility of comprehending the precise functioning of the social totality, whilst also allowing us to discover the cracks and fissures left behind by such marco-movements. *Too Early, Too Late* is a prime example of this oscillatory dialectic. The film is divided into two parts: the first is shot across various locations in rural France. Landscapes dominate, figures remain fleeting. Accompanying these rural landscape shots is Huillet's voiceover, reading extracts from a letter correspondence between Friedrich Engels and Karl Kautsky. The letter, dating from 1889, describes the impoverished condition of the French peasantry. In addition, excerpts are read from the "Notebooks of Grievances," written by the Mayors of these same rural areas in protest of the establishment of the seigneurial system (a model of subsistence, royalty-based farming) in 1789.[133] The second section— shot throughout Egypt—contains extracts from a Marxist text by Mahmoud Hussein, focusing on the Egyptian peasants' "resistance to English occupation prior to the 'petit-bourgeois' revolution of Neguib in 1952."[134] As Jonathan Rosenbaum has suggested, both sections "suggest that the peasants revolted too soon and succeeded too late."[135] Within both sections, the voiceover undermines any "neat" or "pictorial" rendering of the landscape; examining, interrogating and *excavating* palimpsestic spaces of historical significance in peasant resistance movements of the 18th and 19th century.

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[130] Deleuze, *Cinema II: The Time-Image*, 244.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Conley, The Strategist and the Stratigrapher," 196.
[133] Jonathan Rosenbaum, "Too Early, Too Late," *Chicago Reader*, accessed 2 October 2017, https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/too-early-too-late/Film?oid=1068259.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.

Figure 6. Still from Too Early, Too Late, directed by Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub, 1981, France.

I would argue that within Kneubühler's moving image work there is a similar stratigraphic impulse at work; he seeks to examine the topographic transformation of the landscape and the concomitant impact upon its inhabitants, both of which are under threat from the operations of multinational capital. However, there is a fundamental difference that places Kneubühler's work somewhat apart from the particularities of both Deleuze's theorisation and Huillet and Straub's practice. The stratigraphy of latter two is centrally concerned with a palimpsestic deep mapping of the historical landscape; unearthing often partially uncovered or socio-politically unacknowledged past injustices and horrors. Alternatively, Kneubühler's work is less of an archaeological examination of the palimpsestical histories of the Nunavik landscape. Instead, the film offers a mediation on the precarious and "unknown" future exploitations and injustices that might take place within this space. In certain ways, this ties back to our earlier examination of Harvey's spatial fix. When we confront the precarious "unknown" futures of the landscape and its inhabitatants we are also confronting how these are inextricably bound up with late-capitalism's own "projections" and "risks." Therefore, instead of an excavatory look back, we are instead offered a precarious look forward at a landscape and people in flux; unsettled by capital's spatial fixing. Indeed, David Harvey has examined how the spatial fixing response is riven through with its own contradictions; "it has to build a fixed space… necessary for its own functioning at a certain point in its history only to have to destroy that space (and devalue much of the capital invested therein) at a later point in order to

make way for a new "spatial fix"… at a later point in its history."[136] The reason for such destruction is the speculative nature of such immobile spatial fixes. As Harvey goes on to suggest, "global flows have been in part guided by such [immobile] investments but at the same time these investments are speculative developments that depend for their profitability upon a certain expansionary pattern of global flows of commodities, capital, and people. If the flows fail to materialize, then the fixed capital stands to be devalued and lost," and—by extension—destroyed.[137] Within *Forward Looking Statements*, the speculative flows of global capital encounter the materiality of the landscapes they wish to exploit. Thus, the cognitive map constructed by Kneubühler takes up aspects of Deleuze's stratigraphy, whilst simultaneously moving beyond it—constructing a dialectical relationship between abstract financial speculation and a topographical engagement with its proposed sites of future spatial fixing and exploitation. Telescoping the abstract, opaque and invisible with a material traversal of the spaces of future exploitation, Kneubühler aims to visualise and critique late capitalism's increasingly opaque spatial machinations. As Toscano and Kinkle suggest, what is at stake in such aesthetic praxes "is the figurability or representability of our present and its shaping effect on political action." Whilst the central polemic of Kneubühler's project may seem deceptively simple, its emphasis on the need to constantly apprehend the link between abstract financial flows and the appropriation and exploitation of material and social space is an important example of just one strategy of cognitive mapping.

The other moving image work that forms part of the *Land Claim* project, *Relocation (FPIC)*—presented as a looped video installation—presents a single 41 second static shot of Anglo-Swiss multinational mining company Xstrata's headquarters in Zug, Switzerland. The audio comes from an Xstarta shareholder meeting, with discussion centring on the merger with Glencore. The voice belongs to Mick Davis, the company's last CEO. Xstrata—merged with Glencore in 2013—never actually operated from Zug; this small office was put in place to take advantage of Switzerland's generous tax breaks for large multinationals. This is a common—and widely acknowledged—strategy amongst global firms. As Jane G. Gravelle suggests, "multinational firms can artificially shift profits from high-tax to low-tax jurisdictions using a variety of techniques, such as shifting debt to high-tax jurisdictions… by not reporting income

[136] David Harvey, "Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix,'" 25.
[137] Ibid., 28-29.

earned abroad" and by using "foreign tax credits on other income" to shield income that is typically taxed.[138]

Figure 7. Still from Relocation (FPIC), directed by Thomas Kneubühler, 2014, Canada.

Indeed, Xstrata has a history of tax evasion. In Zambia, Xstrata-Glencore manages the Mopani Copper Mines. Xstrata-Glencore holds a majority stake in Mopani, alongside the Canadian mining company First Quantum and the Zambian government. A leaked report from 2011, commissioned by the Zambia Revenue Authority, found that "Mopani's operations included tax planning strategies 'equal to moving taxable revenue out of the country.'"[139] Furthermore, they "alleged that there had been an inexplicable increase in Mopani's declared costs between 2006 and 2008, and inconsistencies in the production volumes declared."[140] Most interestingly, the audit also suggested that Mopani had been artificially lowering its prices to sell stock to Glencore's Swiss operation, with the metal then being sold on, allowing "Glencore to take advantage of Switzerland's ultra-low tax regime."[141] In addition, the ownership structure of the mine means that 90% of the company is located in "secrecy jurisdictions." Mopani is "90% owned by a company registered in the British Virgin Islands, which in turn is majority owned by Glencore Finance, registered in Bermuda."[142] Thus, by "moving ownership of profitable assets to overseas subsidiaries," whilst incurring expenses in areas with relatively higher tax

[138] Jane G. Gravelle, "Tax Havens: International Tax Avoidance and Evasion," *National Tax Journal* 62, no. 4 (2009): 727.
[139] War on Want, "Extracting Minerals, Extracting Wealth: How Zambia Is Losing $3 Billion a Year from Corporate Tax Dodging" (War on Want, October 2015), 7.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid., 8.
[142] Ibid., 9.

rates, multinationals like Glencore can exploit their geographic and spatial flexibility to avoid national regulations and restrictions.[143]

The specific section of audio included within *Relocation (FPIC)* is Davis' response to a question from a representative of MultiWatch—an organisation which aims to raise awareness about the human rights violations of Swiss multinationals—regarding Xstrata's involvement with Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) in the Philippines. SMI are a contractor of the Philippine Government and—as of 2012—Xstrata held a majority share of 62.5% in the company. The involvement of the government in the company came about through the signing of a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA). This FTAA agreement was built around two "twin principles." Firstly, the government expected "real contributions to the economic growth and general welfare of the country from the large-scale exploration, development and utilization of mineral resources under its national sovereignty and patrimony."[144] Secondly, SMI expected the terms of the agreement to "enable it to plan, obtain and commit large-scale financial and technical resources to the Mining Operations in order to realize a return of its investment which takes into account the high risks of exploration, the requirements of financiers."[145] The backbone of the agreement was the initiation of the Tampakan Copper-Gold Project (TCGP), which aimed to excavate the Tampakan copper-gold deposit; one of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world, located in the south of the island of Mindanao. The MultiWatch representative at the Xstrata shareholder meeting questions the impact the TGCP would have on five ancestral domains of the indigenous Bla'an people. Two separate reports from 2007 and 2008 highlighted that levels of pollution in the area could be significantly increased by the mining operation. The 2008 report ultimately recommended "that mining in the area be banned, considering the risk of pollution, erosion, siltation, and continuing devastating flash floods and landslides. The potential huge negative impact involving food insecurity, seismic geo-hazard and presence of armed conflicts was also cited."[146] A report from 2014, co-written by the Europe-Third World Centre (CETIM) and Franciscans International suggested "at least three incidents of extra-judicial killings are directly linked to the mining project."[147] These killings, carried out by military or para-military

[143] Ibid.
[144] Republic of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, "Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement," 7942 (1995), 2.
[145] Ibid., 2.
[146] Europe-Third World Centre and Franciscans International, "The Tampakan Copper-Gold Project and Human Rights Violations in the South Cotabato, Philippines," *Europe-Third World Centre*, 2014, http://www.cetim.ch/legacy/en/interventions/386/the-tampakan-copper-gold-project-and-human-rights-violations-in-the-south-cotabato-philippines.
[147] Ibid.

groups, show the interconnections between state power and multinational finance in the expansion of TGCP. In addition, the report also stated that "all the victims are families and relatives of Daguil Capion, the Bla'an chief entrusted with defending the ancestral lands, particularly against the entry of the Tampakan mining project. Daguil Capion has been wrongfully tagged as a communist insurgent by the military." It is precisely through such a discourse of illegitimacy—labelling community rights activists as "insurgents," "bandits" or "criminals"—"that the state justifies the arrests and attacks on the community."[148] The bracketed "FPIC" in the film's title refers to Section 7, point C in The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997.[149] FPIC stands for "free, prior and informed consent," which must be obtained by a party before any relocation of an indigenous group is enacted. Section 7, point C, "Right to Stay in the Territories" provides "the right to stay in the territory and not to be removed therefrom. No Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples will be relocated without their free and prior informed consent, nor through any means other than eminent domain."[150] Thus, the FPIC clause aims to prevent any attempts to coerce or misinform indigenous populations when they are considering relocation offers. However, as the 2014 report states, Glencore-Xstrata/SMI have regularly engaged in activities that attempted to divide the Bla'an peoples, including offers of misleading social development projects and scholarships, as well as the forced installation of corrupt indigenous leaders. Currently, TGCP is "officially on a downscaled status," however, Glencore-Xstrata/SMI are still pushing towards "their target for commercial operations in 2019."[151]

Within *Relocation (FPIC)*, the small Xstrata office in Zug, Switzerland is centrally framed, presenting three lit floors of the building. Several workers can be seen moving around this clinical corporate space, as Mick Davis' words repeat twice during the 41 second duration: "we have not commenced any relocation activities and will not do so unless we have received the free, prior and informed consent of the affected indigenous people." Davis' words remain somewhat detached and ephemeral; a vacuous corporate-speak structures his intonation and, additionally, he speaks of the impact on a community far away from this sequestered, offshored space. Therefore, *Relocation (FPIC)* functions in a markedly different way to *Forward Looking Statements*. Within the latter, we are offered a voiceover that speaks directly to the potential

[148] Ibid.
[149] Republic of the Philippines, "The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997," 8371 (1997), 1-25.
[150] Ibid., 5.
[151] Europe-Third World Centre and Franciscans International, "The Tampakan Copper-Gold Project and Human Rights Violations in the South Cotabato, Philippines," *Europe-Third World Centre*, 2014, http://www.cetim.ch/legacy/en/interventions/386/the-tampakan-copper-gold-project-and-human-rights-violations-in-the-south-cotabato-philippines.

transformation of the material space through which the camera moves. Within the former, the camera presents a space at a complete remove from the location being described; however, it of course remains intimately tied up in the potential social, economic and geographic transformation of the Tampakan region. Within *Relocation (FPIC)* the camera remains static, offering a degree of stability and fixity to the space where Xstrata-Glencore have their offshored offices; circumventing the national tax infrastructures in the countries they seek to extract from. This sense of fixity offered by the camera of course belies the logistical transience that structures such processes of tax evasion and profit sequestering; being "on the move" is a prerequisite for offshoring practices—whilst one national or sub-national zone may tighten regulation, another will open up elsewhere to take its place. As Keller Easterling suggests, within such infrastructural spaces,

> Buildings are often no longer singularly crafted enclosures, uniquely imagined by an architect, but reproducible products set within similar urban arrangements. As repeatable phenomena engineered around logistics and the bottom line they constitute an infrastructural technology with elaborate routines and schedules for organizing consumption. Ironically, the more rationalized these spatial products become the better suited they are to irrational fictions.[152]

Easterling highlights the fact that such spaces take on a purely infrastructural role; aiding in the logistification of finance capital's movements. In addition, the reproducibility of such clinical corporate spaces has, for her, a rationalising logic that masks over the irrational and extraterritorial financial exploitations they facilitate.

Through the visual/aural juxtaposition found within *Relocation (FPIC)*, an interesting geographical dialectic is set up that explores tensions between socio-economic constructions of "mobility" and "fixity" under late-capitalism. To further explore this tension, it is useful to turn to Zygmunt Bauman's extensive work on globalisation and—more particularly—the specific discourses that he perceives to have emerged around issues of mobility and fixity. For Bauman, by the turn of the millennium, globalisation had become a totalising—and, by extension, opaque—theoretical concept. Indeed, as Russell Harding suggests, "as a totalizing theory, globalization tries to enfold more and more experience, and in so doing becomes

[152] Keller Easterling, *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space* (London New York: Verso, 2016), 11-12.

opaque."[153] Therefore, in *Globalisation: The Human Consequences*, Bauman aims to undermine the apperception of "unity" within globalisation's functioning; it is rather a process riven with contradictions, divisions and structural inequalities. Therefore, by examining the "social roots and social consequences of the globalizing process," Bauman aims to tease out such incongruities and oppositions.[154] As Winnie Lem and Pauline Gardiner Barber have suggested, for Bauman, "a more profound understanding of the global forces at work in contemporary capitalism, in its varying manifestations, requires a consideration of the forces that produce mobility as well as immobility… and categories of people who remain tied to particular locations."[155] For him, one of the central tensions centres on the notion of "space/time compression," a discursive metaphor that "encapsulates the ongoing multifaceted transformation of the parameters of the human condition."[156] However, through his deconstructive socio-economic analysis, Bauman aims to pick apart this notion: "once the social causes and outcomes of that compression are looked into, it will become evident that the globalising processes lack the commonly assumed unity of effects. The uses of time and space are sharply differentiated as well as differentiating. Globalisation divides as much as it unites; it divides as it unites."[157] Thus, whilst certain socio-economic forces "take on planetary dimensions," through intensive logistification and financialisation, the opposite—fixation and localisation of certain populations—also occurs, and is in fact a structural necessity for the alternative's growth. As Bauman states, "what appears as globalisation for some means localisation for others; signalling a new freedom for some, upon many others it descends as an uninvited and cruel fate."[158] Ultimately, in the age of globalisation, mobility becomes the dominant "stratifying factor." Thus, whilst we are experiencing the increasing "planetary dimensions" of trade, finance and logistics, simultaneously, "a 'localising,' space-fixing process is set in motion." For Bauman, this "progressive spatial segregation, separation and exclusion" is due to "the progressive breakdown in communication between the increasingly global and extraterritorial elites and the even more 'localised' rest."[159] As the centres of "meaning and value production" become increasingly "extra-territorial," localised constraints—and populations—become increasingly unimportant. However, by returning to

[153] Russell Harding, "Review of Globalization: The Human Consequences, In Search of Politics, Zygmunt Bauman; Liquid Modernity, Zygmunt Bauman," *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 24, no. 3 (2002): 613.
[154] Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 1.
[155] Winnie Lem and Pauline Gardiner Barber, *Class, Contention, And A World in Motion* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 4.
[156] Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, 2.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid., 3.

Harvey, we still see that immobility and fixity is a crucial component of capital's geographical expansion. As touched upon earlier, late-capitalism's explosive expansions are primarily due to its "insatiable drive to resolve its inner crisis tendencies by geographical expansion and geographical restructuring."[160] For Harvey, this is the basic principle for his conception of the "spatial fix"—whilst needing to be highly mobile, at particular points in time capital also needs to be fixed and secured in space. This contradictory operation is thus another cause of the divisions between mobility and fixity mapped out above. As Harvey continues to suggest, "capitalism has to fix space (in immoveable structures of transport and communication nets, as well as in built environments of factories, roads, houses, water supplies, and other physical infrastructures) in order to overcome space (achieve a liberty of movement through low transport and communication costs)."[161] The specificities of such fixings rest upon whether capital searches "for markets, fresh labor powers [or] resources (raw materials)."[162]

This tension between fixity and mobility is something that is rendered within *Relocation (FCIP)*. The location of the office in Zug, Switzerland is a strategic logistical site for Glencore-Xstrata to both sequester and re-route profits whilst minimising taxation and overheads; it is a use of space that is built around a desire for financial and extra-judicial mobility. Directly in opposition to the mobility and extraterritoriality of such tax evasion strategies are the impacted communities in the Tampakan region, who remain fixed to the site of exploitation. Within *Relocation*, these two sites are directly juxtaposed. Visually, we are presented with a clinical corporate site that encapsulates financial and regulatory mobility, whilst the audio track speaks of the exploitative locality enforced or exacerbated by capital's global movements. The mediator between the two is the business technocrat, who must keep this relationship between mobility and fixity in a perfect balance. Thus, the cognitive map fashioned by Kneubühler emphasises the process of stratification built around zones of financial exception and mobility. Across both these works, Kneubühler constantly focuses on issues of globality-locality, mobility and fixity; deploying different cinematic techniques to emphasise the exploitative work of these multinational organisations. Such forms of exploitation, which frequently operate in geographically detached and obfuscated ways, are brought into close and intimate relation with the sites and communities that they will potentially affect. Now, let us turn to the next case study of this chapter, Ursula Biemann's *Black Sea Files*, a work that also seeks to connect global and local spatial injustices.

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[160] David Harvey, "Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix,'" 24.
[161] Ibid., 25.
[162] Ibid., 26.

Ursula Biemann's *Black Sea Files*

The Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline extends from the Azeri–Chirag–Gunashli oil field in the Caspian Sea to Ceyhan, a port city on the south-eastern Mediterranean coast of Turkey. The pipeline is 1,768 kilometres (1,099 miles) long and carries crude oil out from the land-locked Caspian Sea. The line also travels through Georgia, with a terminal in Tbilisi. The primary shareholder in the project is British Petroleum (30.1%) followed by Azerbaijan BTC (AzBTC) (25%) (figures from BP website). The smaller-stake shareholders included Chevron, Statoil and Total. The Azerbaijan section was constructed by the Greek company Consolidated Contractors International, Georgia's section was a joint venture between France's Spie Capag and Britain's Petrofac International, whilst Turkey's section was constructed by the Turkish crude oil/natural gas trading company BOTAŞ Petroleum Pipeline Corporation. The collective funding for the project was a mix of private finance and what British Petroleum CEO John Browne called "free public money."[163] As Daphne Evitar suggested back in 2003, "regional conflicts and uncertain production make the $3.5 billion pipeline so risky that the oil executives who devised the venture don't want to pay for it—and the commercial banks they normally deal with don't want to lend them the money."[164] These multinationals therefore looked to the US government for financial assistance. As Evitar suggests, the Bush administration's involvement in oil investment was well publicised, with several figures previously holding key positions in major oil companies (Vice President Dick Cheney was chief executive of Haliburton, Commerce Secretary Donald Evans had investments in oil and gas exploration company Tom Brown Inc. and National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice was a director at Chevron). The saturation of the administration by oil connections led to an energy policy program built around investment into foreign private oil.[165] Funds for investments came from two wholly owned federal government corporation, the Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). As Paul Stuart suggests, whilst the investment was justified through neoliberal discourses of "trade boosts" and job creation—alongside the need to "reduce dependence on OPEC oil producers in the Middle East, create a secure supply of oil to Israel, and begin to end dependence on Russian

[163] Daphne Eviatar, "Public Money in the Pipeline," *Mother Jones*, accessed 11 September 2017, http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2003/01/public-money-pipeline/.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.

and Iranian oil transportation networks from the Caspian region"—the administration's investment tactics ultimately enriched only a select few oil companies.[166]

This is the starting point for Ursula Biemann's *Black Sea Files*, a film which explores the socio-geographical re-composition of the territories carved apart by the creation of this subterranean pipeline and the connections to national and supra-national governance. Biemann—a multidisciplinary artist and former senior researcher at the Zurich University of the Arts—has always been concerned with developing an artistic praxis that explores the ecological, sociological and environmental impacts of natural resource extraction. For Biemann, a central concern of such a praxis is to understand the large-scale power relations and investments—both national and supranational—embedded within such extraction projects. For example, as she states in the opening of *Black Sea Files*,

> these records are about the new Caspian oil and the deep incision made through the Caucasus to secure the precious fluid for the West. They speak of power that no longer resides in weapon technology but in the possession of vital resources or the ability to procure them. Building the oil pipeline means more than the invisible transfer of fluid, it is an economic project with military objectives.

Thus, as we can see from this opening statement, *Black Sea Files* is invested in mapping the power relations at play within new zones of oil extraction—focusing particularly on the tight imbrication of global-financial and national-governmental interests. Alongside this attempt to map the deeply interconnected financial and governmental machinations involved in the pipeline's construction, Biemann also attempts to render visible the micro-impacts upon a range communities along the pipeline. This imperative is signalled within Biemann's short summary of the work, where she suggests, "the video sheds light on a multitude of secondary sceneries. Oil workers, farmers, refugees and prostitutes who live along the pipeline come into profile and contribute to a wider human geography that displaces the singular and powerful signifying practices of oil corporations and oil politicians."[167] This oscillation between micro and macro spatial-geographical injustices becomes a structuring concern of *Black Sea Files*. Examining the spatio-political aesthetic that Biemann utilises to "cognitively map" such a

[166] Paul Stuart, "Caspian Basin Oil Pipeline Company Founded," World Socialist, 2002, https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2002/08/casp-a30.html.
[167] Ursula Biemann, 'Black Sea Files, 2005', Geobodies, 2005, https://www.geobodies.org/art-and-videos/black-sea-files.

"hidden matrix of… political space"—moving between the micro and the macro—will be the central focus of this section.

The film is built around a series of 9 field recordings, coded as separate "files." Each file—ranging in length from approximately 50 seconds to 5 minutes—jumps to a different location impacted by the creation of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline: Baku, Azerbaijan; Zeytinburnu, Turkey; Lake Tsalka, Georgia; Ankara, Turkey; Yevlax, Quaradagir and Bangüsat, Azerbaijan; Trabzon, Turkey; Yumurtalık, Turkey and Kurtkulagi, Turkey. Across this range of locations, Biemann attempts to understand both the macro and micro economic, social and political impacts of the pipeline. Alongside the constantly shifting focus on different socio-political stakeholders in the pipeline's construction—displaced Kurds, migrant workers from Columbia, Azerbaijani famers, Turkish sex workers—Biemann also moves between different modes of nonfiction address, from found-footage news reportage to ethnographic documentation, which aids her ability to shift between different scales of impact.

"File 1", filmed at the Baku oil extraction zone in Azerbaijan, opens with a close-up shot of a slew of oil passing the camera, with the "field note" summary overlaid. Next, we are presented with a split screen image of several pump jacks extracting oil. Biemann's voiceover states "the place is literally soaked in oil, for over 100 years the earth has been pierced down to the fossil fuel. First by the Europeans, then the Soviets and now by a transnational consortium. Powers have changed, but the problem remains of how to pump the Caspian crude to the west." As the image on the right of the screen remains focused upon a solitary pump jack, the images on the left begin to depict a variety of labourers working on the site.

Figure 8. Still from Black Sea Files, directed by Ursula Biemann, 2005, Switzerland.

Figure 9. Still from Black Sea Files, directed by Ursula Biemann, 2005, Switzerland.

This thematic split—with images alternatively rendering the technological and industrial infrastructure of the mining site and the human labour that supports it—remains in place for the duration of the file's 3 minute and 26 second length. After a brief fade to black roughly half way through the file, we are presented with a series of shots that depict the worker's downtime; chatting, joking and playing football. Over these images, Biemann asks "what will it take to write the hidden matrix of this political space? When transnational relations increasingly take place in the invisibility of electronic spaces, off-road terrains and classified zones. And when international media only features political elites and large economic stakes in the region, offering little insight into local textures." As these shots of the labourer's recreational activities on the site continue to unfold, Biemann introduces several scrolling, and often overlapping, passages of text across the screen, rendered in a large bright yellow font, each of which presents a particular news headline—evidence, perhaps, of this mediatised "macro political-economic" focus: "1992 - Five Memoranda signed by SOCAR and Foreign Oil Companies for joint infrastructure: export pipeline, offshore pipeline, onshore processing facilities, offshore marine fleet and onshore supply base," "1993 - Foreign Oil Companies Amoco, BP, Statoil, Pennzoil, McDermott, Ramco, Turkish Petroleum and Unocal sign contract," "1994 - $7.14 B Oil contract signed by FOCs and leaders from UK, Norway, Saudi Arabia, US, Turkey and Russia," "1994 – SOCAR and Foreign Oil Companies sign 'Contract of the Century' for the offshore fields," "1994 – major negotiating sessions with FOCs in Baku and Istanbul."

Figure 10. Still from Black Sea Files, directed by Ursula Biemann, 2005, Switzerland.

Both the speed of the text and its overlapping structure make it often illegible; passing by as a slew of multinational and governmental legislative news, much like the crude oil at the opening of the segment. This visual-textual juxtaposition serves to reinforce Biemann's argument that the international media's focus upon the macro-politics of oil extraction mask over "local textures." Indeed, Biemann reinforces this point after the text has finished scrolling, suggesting that "the pushing of resources on a macro level is bound to be accompanied by a myriad of human trajectories on the ground." Thus, throughout this sequence, Biemann not only juxtaposes the on-site relationships between workers and machines, labour and infrastructure but also begins to unpack how the abstracted macro politics of the pipeline infrastructure masks over local textures and micro politics. For her, such "local textures" must be made visible and, directly relatable to these larger supra-national operations.

The split screen is a constant presence throughout the film. It is my contention that such an aesthetic strategy allows Biemann to create several of these oscillatory juxtapositions, all of which are primarily concerned with bridging the gap between larger homogenised forms of financial and governmental power and their impact upon the myriad "local textures" and communities along the route of the pipeline. To more fully unpack the strategy deployed by Biemann, it is productive to place it in dialogue with German filmmaker and theorist Harun Farocki's notion of "soft montage." It is my contention that when we frame Biemann's split screen aesthetic through the lense of such a "soft montage" praxis, we can begin to more concretely comprehend her strategic approach to an aesthetic of "cognitive mapping." Firstly,

let me map out Farocki's conceptualisation of "soft montage." The first serious elucidation of the term is found in *Speaking About Godard*, a dialogue between Farocki and Kaja Silverman centring on Godard's oeuvre. The pair discuss Godard's 1975 film *Numéro deux* (*Number Two*), which focuses on "the domestic life of three generations of a proletarian family living in a social housing apartment." Most of the film's sequences were shot on video and then reshot from video monitors in 35mm. Throughout the film, Godard often has two monitors on screen, showing separate video images. As Farocki suggests, this "doubling" of the image is likely a result of Godard's shift from film to video: "video editing is usually done while sitting in front of two monitors. One monitor shows the already edited material, and the other monitor raw material, which the videomaker may or may not add to the work-in-progress. He or she becomes accustomed to thinking of two images at the same time, rather than sequentially."[168] Thus, for Farocki, Godard's use of dual screens in representative of a wider shift in his approach to image construction and editing practice; from the sequential to the simultaneous. It is this shift that provides the foundation for the development of the "soft montage." As Nora M. Alter suggests, soft montage "comprises a general relatedness of images, rather than a strict equation of opposition produced by a linear montage of sharp cuts. If the dialectical montage of Sergei Eisenstein operates according to a binary logic that excludes any alternative not accounted for by a pervasive dualism, soft montage operates according to a logic of difference."[169] Thus, for Alter, the technique of soft montage is structured around the creation of "relations" and "differences" rather than the dialectical oppositions of sequential cinematic montage. Three years prior to this engagement with Godard's work—and the simultaneous theoretical definition of "soft montage"—Farocki had begun to embrace a similar strategy of image construction in his own work. In 1995's *Interface*, Farocki reflected on his own transition from film to video. The film begins with dual overlapping images of a sheet of paper and a video monitor. The voiceover states "I can hardly write a word these days if there isn't an image on the screen at the same time. Actually: on both screens." Farocki then appears on screen, presenting his video editing station and explaining how it has restructured his editing process. Next, we are presented with another set of dual overlapping images of two video monitors. The image in the top left of the frame is duplicated on the video screen in the bottom left, which Farocki partially masks with his hands—further nesting frames within frames.

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[168] Kaja Silverman, Harun Farocki, and Constance Penley, *Speaking about Godard* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 142.
[169] Nora M. Alter, "Two or Three Things I Know about Harun Farocki,"
October 151 (2015):151-152.

Figure 11. Still from Interface, directed by Harun Farocki, 1995, Germany.

The voiceover states that "Paul Cozighian shot this footage in Bucharest, on December 21st 1989, shortly before the revolution began." Within both images, the camera pans up from the video set and focuses on the scene outside the room, as crowds of protestors flood past. In the bottom right image, Farocki follows the pan of the camera with his hands. Farocki's voiceover suggests, "with his camera he established a connection between the TV set and the street… Cozighian moved his camera from the TV screen to the window. He juxtaposed the official image with the street image: image with counter-image. It was now time to abandon the TV set and go into the streets." Thus, for Farocki, the simple juxtaposition and nesting of images that Cozighian undertook with his pan from the TV to the window functioned as a potent "soft montage" between the mediatised coverage of the Romanian revolution and the "local texture" of events immediately outside his domestic space. Clearly, this sequence from *Interface* ties back to the previous analysis of Biemann's *Black Sea Files*. Within both, the strategy of the soft montaging—created by image nesting and simultaneous presentation—affords a space to juxtapose the traditionally mediated and mediatised macro-politics with the impacts and local textures "on the streets" or "in the fields." Farocki, reflecting on his soft montage praxis some 14 years later, in a 2009 articles entitled "Cross Influence/Soft Montage," suggests,

> There is a succession as well as simultaneity in a double project, the relationship of an image to the one that follows as well as the one beside it; a relationship to the preceding as well as to the concurrent one. Imagine three double bonds jumping back and forth between the six carbon atoms of a benzene ring; I envisage the same ambiguity in the

> relationship of an element in an image track to the one succeeding or accompanying it.[170]

Another key example of how Biemann develops her own oscillatory montage strategy—with a specific emphasis on trying to cognitively map the spatial machinations of multinational resource extraction—can be found within "File 5." This file focuses on a range of farming communities in Yevlax, Quaradagir and Bangusat, Azerbaijan. Within the first pair of images we are presented with a slow tracking close-up on a map that shows the pipeline's route through Azerbaijan (left) and a portrait of an Azerbaijani farmer and his daughters (right).

Figure 12. Still from Black Sea Files, directed by Ursula Biemann, 2005, Switzerland.

Over this pair of juxtaposed images, Biemann's voiceover states: "it seemed so easy to draw a long red line on a map, but contrary to the corporate fantasy, the space was not void. 20,000 farmers along the trajectory had to yield their land. But eventually the oil company gained the right of way for the pipeline across all three territories." The image on the right then cuts to a woman cleaning a table in an outhouse, the image on the left continues to track along the map. The voiceover continues: "they launched a campaign that would define the land use politics for the corridor, which is as much governed by the production, dissemination and withholding of knowledge, as it is by direct interventions in national legislations." Next, both images present slightly different framings of the same woman from the previous shot, one with her

[170] Harun Farocki, "Cross Influence/Soft Montage," in *Harun Farocki: Against What? Against Whom?*, ed. Antje Ehmann and Kodwo Eshun (London: Koenig Books, 2009), 70.

standing next to her daughter and the other slightly blurred. She states "I don't know exactly how much land we had to give for the pipeline. My husband knows." Biemann then asks her what the family have done with the money they have received from BP. The woman replies that they have bought a car and started work on a house, but the money was not enough for this to be completed. Within this sequence, Biemann's soft montage constructs a juxtaposition between what Henri Lefebvre would term the "conceived space" of the pipeline (representations, renderings and mappings of space by dominant social groups, such as logistical engineers who determine routes and distributive networks for natural resource extraction) and its "lived" and "perceived" spatial formations and impacts (both of which arise from the daily inhabitation—and material engagement with—a particular socio-spatial formation; in this case, the micro "local textures" that arise from the communities living and working on the land). Within this sequence, the images of cartographic mapping become representative of BP and AzBTC's conceived "corporate fantasy," which aimed to reimagine and restructure social space and land use politics along the route of the pipeline through the "production, dissemination and withholding of knowledge." Simultaneously, we witness the impacts that such conceived spatial formations have upon the communities living along the pipeline; forced to yield their land through pressure tactics and coercion. Indeed, the "ease" of mapping the pipeline's route was ultimately matched by the logistical "ease" with which these multinationals forced through the yielding of land by communities living along the pipeline's path. Thus, the marco and micro spatio-politics of multinational resource extraction are cognitively mapped by Biemann here; rendering the localised impacts of large-scale transnational exploitations. Ultimately, this juxtaposition leads Biemann to suggest, "what is the farmers imaginary of this same space? Those who have inhabited and laboured the land for generations, what is their agency in this moment of contact with transnational interests?"

The next sequence of the film further develops this oscillatory strategy of cognitive mapping. The image on the left presents two pairs of legs seemingly "standing atop" a superimposed image that presents an animated cross section of the pipeline in full flow. The image on the right presents another portrait of a farming family. A passage of text then moves across both images, which reads: "the transcaucasian post-kolkhoz subterranean energy tunnel sucks out the black fluid from Caspian reservoirs and connects it to a distant elsewhere. Silently. Invisibly. Highspeed." As this text scrolls, the top left image cuts to a travelling shot that depicts a rural landscape. The image on the right then cuts to another farmer who holds various images of the pipeline's proposed route through his land. Next, this farmer is interviewed, he states: "I don't know the exact sum they will pay, it isn't mentioned in the

contract. There was no space for negotiation, they had fixed the price on their own." The image on the right then cuts to a close up of the same land yield proposals, and the farmer suggests; "the first time they came, the proposal was for a much wider land strip. The second time it was reduced to 8 meters. The security area is much less now." Here, Biemann confronts how the coercion of local communities along the pipeline is structured around a "masking" or "making invisible" of oil infrastructure itself. The second part of the sequence highlights how a key strategy of coercion by BP and AzBTC was to marginally reduce the geographical size of their proposed land yield requests. Within the first part of the sequence, Biemann emphasises how the completed pipeline will ultimately function as a largely invisible transportation infrastructure; moving oil "Silently. Invisibly. Highspeed"—quite literally under the feet of the communities it has irrevocably impacted.

As Biemann suggests, through such techniques of abstraction and invisibility, "BTC gained the right-of-way for the pipeline across all 3 territories. It gives BP effective governing power over a strip of land 750km long. Where the company may override all national, environmental, social and human rights laws for the next 40 years." Thus, whilst the logistical infrastructures of the oil pipeline may ultimately remain physically invisible, the myriad of governmental powers ceded to BP and AzBTC through their land grabs have given them tangible and legal control of this space. Thus, through the process of soft montage, Biemann attempts to bridge the gap between the tangible and intangible structures of spatial dominance and governance fostered by pipeline's planning, logistics and infrastructure.

Figure 13. Still from Black Sea Files, directed by Ursula Biemann, 2005, Switzerland.

Biemann also interrogates issues of visibility and invisibility surrounding the pipeline's structures of power within the film's previous section "File 4." Here, she is primarily concerned with understanding the ways in which the involved multinationals have constructed their own mediatised "image regimes." Over images that depict both Biemann recording her narration and 3D renderings of the planned pipeline, the voiceover suggests, "it sounds odd, but it's risky to simply record a pipeline. Oil companies run a severe image regime. During construction, image making is prohibited; later it will be invisible anyway. What is the meaning of this tube in the hidden corporate imaginary of this space? What function does it have in their own secret bordering system of the Caucuses?" As this section of voiceover ends, text scrolls across both images: "Local bypass through network design," "Seamless connection between resources and premium consumers," "Logistics based on spatial division," "Silent and invisible transfer of energy," "Linking and delinking," "Space of flow." Next, we are presented with images that show Biemann shooting a section of the pipeline under construction. The voiceover states that to generate images of oil infrastructures "is not an aesthetic project, it is an undercover mission. The challenge is to go undetected, probing for hidden, secret and restricted knowledge. Are these cognitive methods any different from the ones used by geologists, anthropologists or secret intelligence agents?" Next, we are offered a pair of images where Biemann's camera traverses the land yielded to the pipeline. Over these images, the voiceover states "they all probe different sorts of sediments and plots that could give meaning to this space." The way Biemann's camera moves across this space very much links us back to the stratigraphic impulse found within Kneubühler's *Forward Looking Statements*.

There is a similar emphasis on the need to engage with the material sites where these exploitative spatial machinations are operating. Indeed, this material traversal of the landscape sits in marked contrast to the preceding 3D renderings and cartographic projections of these same spaces; the smooth corporate gloss of the latter's imagery is continually undermined and broken down by Biemann's intense focus upon the material "local textures," both social and topographic. Through the oscillatory strategies adopted by Biemann—which shuttle between the macro and micro impacts—she also seems to fold her images together, opening a space for new configurations and understandings of how natural resource extraction functions at several socio-economic and biopolitical levels. As Alter suggests later, "the segments are meant to be taken together, as a succession and simultaneous with one another. This play of images constructs temporal as well as spatial relationships… each concurrent image no more significant than the one beside it, the recto

always dependent on the verso."[171]

Figure 14. Still from Black Sea Files, directed by Ursula Biemann, 2005, Switzerland.

To conclude, let us return to one of the questions that Biemann poses at the opening of *Black Sea Files*: ""what will it take to write the hidden matrix of this political space?" I would contend that Biemann—through the aesthetic praxis of soft montage—fashions the "spatial relationships" that Alter sees as key; precisely as a method that tries to expose the hidden matrix of the pipeline's logistical and infrastructural space. Spatial operations at the macro level are always intimately wedded to their micro-impacts. Through an aesthetic of Farockian soft montaging, Biemann fashions powerful connections between these different scales of exploitation and violence. Such a strategy ultimately aims to bridge the gap between larger homogenised forms of financial and governmental power and their impact upon the myriad "local textures" and communities along the route of the pipeline. Thus, in a manner akin to Kneubühler's work, *Black Sea Files* is continually concerned with the ways in which spatial violence operates at different scales. The juxtaposition of these different scales of violence are where these works affective power comes from.

Allan Sekula's *Fish Story* and Noël Burch and Sekula's *The Forgotten Space*

The two case studies examined thus far in this chapter have focused on the spatio-politics of resource extraction; arguably one of the more tangible and visible forms of contemporary capitalism's exploitations. Consequently, the final pair of case studies to be examined will

[171] Nora M. Alter, "Two or Three Things I Know about Harun Farocki," 152.

focus on a less immediately visible form of late capital's spatial machinations; global trade logistics. Firstly, however, how do we define the concept of logistics, and, moreover, how is it wedded to—and structured by—the logics of late capitalism? For Jesse LeCavalier, logistics "concerns the entire life of a product and works to flatten, connect, smooth, and lubricate as it organizes material in both space and time."[172] In a certain sense, the increasing importance of logistics is deeply imbricated with global capital's contradictory search for spatial fixes (examined in some detail above, through the lens of Harvey's conceptualisation). As new spaces, markets and labour pools are exploited globally, the supply chains that connect these geographically fragmented sites rely on (typically ruthless) strategies of logistical streamlining to maximise profitability. As LeCavalier suggests, "rather than encouraging congestion, logistics pursues unencumbered movement. Rather than seeking density, logistics aspires to coverage. It is a horizontalizing and externalizing industry, not a vertical and integrating one."[173] For Deborah Cowen, the rise of logistics is "a highly specialized form of spatial calculation [that] has been crucial but overlooked in the process of time–space compression that has remade geographies of capitalist production and distribution at a global scale."[174] Here, Cowen is clearly invoking David Harvey's formulation of "time-space compression"—the necessary condensing or eliding of spatial and temporal distance by late capitalism's globalisation and the simultaneous reduction in the turnover time of capital.

For Cowen, the rise of logistics as a structuring component of global trade under late capitalism is not only ruthless but structurally violent. In her 2014 book *The Deadly Life of Logistics*, Cowen is concerned with unpacking "how the seemingly banal and technocratic management of the movement of stuff through space has become a driving force of war and trade… examin[ing] how the military art of moving stuff gradually became not only the 'umbrella science' of business management but… 'perhaps the central discipline of contemporary world.'"[175] Thus, Cowen traces the militaristic origins of logistics, arguing that it was "dedicated to the art of war for millennia only to be adopted into the corporate world of management in the wake of World War II."[176] For Cowen, within the epoch of late capitalism, "corporate and military logistics are increasingly entangled; this is a matter of not only military

[172] Jesse LeCavalier, *The Rule of Logistics: Walmart and the Architecture of Fulfillment* (University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 6.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Deborah Cowen, "A Geography of Logistics: Market Authority and the Security of Supply Chains," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 100, no. 3 (2010): 602.
[175] Deborah Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics: Mapping Violence in Global Trade* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 4.
[176] Ibid., 3.

forces clearing the way for corporate trade but corporations actively supporting militaries as well."[177] Thus, whilst the art and tactics of logistics was historically a militaristic enterprise, contemporary capitalism's desire to connect ever-more disparate spatial fixes means that "'public' military logisticians rapidly cycle into the private sector, often precisely to facilitate the shifting of logistics contracts to private military companies."[178] Ultimately, Cowen suggest "that any serious engagement with contemporary political life must think through the violent economies of space."[179] This deep imbrication of the militaristic and commercial under late capitalism extends from logistics' historical military imperative to not only "circulate stuff" but "sustain life… [by] fuelling the battlefield." Thus, the extreme and often violent securitisation of logistics space results chiefly from the fact that "threats to circulation are treated not only as criminal acts but as profound threats to the *life* of trade… Those on the outside of the system, who aim to contest its flows, face the raw force of rough trade without recourse to normal laws and protections."[180]

Logistics infrastructures are not only violent, they largely go unseen. Whilst the infrastructure of resource extraction examined above—either planned or enacted—leave material scars upon the landscape (both geographical and social), the infrastructure of logistics operates within what Toscano terms an "increasingly Taylorized and militarized 'forgotten space.'"[181] Indeed, Cowen backs up this point, suggesting "the entire network of infrastructures, technologies, spaces, workers, and violence that makes the circulation of stuff possible remains tucked out of sight for those who engage with logistics only as consumers."[182] Thus, the logistical frequently operates in hidden ways, disguising its operations and movements. It operates within and across material spaces that exist at the peripheries and margins of different regimes of control and governance. Consequently, it becomes apparent that the smooth and fluid functioning of logistics infrastructure is crucial for the continued expansion of its own supra-national governance and violence.

Oftentimes, the ocean is perceived as the ultimate peripheral and hidden space. As Brett Story suggests, "the sea ('and its ancient terribleness') is the forgotten space par excellence of our age; that space with which it is no longer possible to relate, except by a few as yet another commodified vista during annual seaside vacations, or for even fewer, traded on as value-added

[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid., 5.
[180] Ibid., 4.
[181] Toscano, "Seeing It Whole," 76.
[182] Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics*, 1.

to beachside luxury real estate."[183] Philip E. Steinberg makes a similar claim about the imaginative "cognitive blankness" that surrounds ocean space, suggesting, "under capitalism, the sea is idealised as a denatured and seemingly immaterial surface of latitude-longitude coordinates."[184] Both these scholars rearticulate—either explicitly or implicitly— Deleuze and Guattari's 1987 claim that the sea had become the "smooth space par excellence."[185] Moreover, the ever-increasing movement of commodities across maritime space ("95 percent of U.S.-bound global trade moves through ports and more than 11 million containers enter") is similarly abstracted: "still remote is the maritime movement of commodity capitalism; the ocean's role in the concrete movement of goods and the abstracted circulation of capital, displaced in our imagination of the ocean by an intractable, cognitive blankness."[186] Thus, in particular ways the ocean—now dominated by the movements of global trade—seems to completely resist constructions of territory or national governance.[187]

In addition to the obfuscation of ocean space under late capitalism, we have also witnessed the increasing invisibility of the commodities that move across its network of supply chains, chiefly through the process of containerisation. Nested within the wider rise of the global logistics infrastructure, containerisation also had militaristic roots; experimented with during the Second World War to reduce the friction involved in transporting military supplies. The efficiency of this militaristic system soon attracted the logisticians of global commodity trading. Indeed, as several scholars have noted, one central feature of logistics "is the drive to maximise the capacities of existing infrastructures… containerisation is an emergent global system which 'piggy-backs' on top of existing infrastructures."[188] Thus, global trade logistics' appropriation of existing infrastructure is intimately related to the abstraction of the commodities it transports; funnelling commodities through pre-established supply networks helps to mask their movements, "'smoothing' the interfaces between them, and… reorganising material flow."[189] Under late capitalism, containerisation has become a crucial tool to "flatten, connect, smooth, and lubricate" global trade networks. Indeed, as Cowen suggests,

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[183] Brett Story, "The Forgotten Space by Allan Sekula and Noël Burch," *Antipode* 44, no. 4 (2012): 1575.
[184] Philip E. Steinberg, "Maritime Cargomobilities: The Impossibilities of Representation," in *Cargomobilities: Moving Materials in a Global Age*, ed. Thomas Birtchnell, Satya Savitzky, and John Urry (New York: Routledge, 2015), 36.
[185] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 479.
[186] Brett Story, "*The Forgotten Space* by Allan Sekula and Noël Burch," 1575.
[187] Such a reading of maritime space as "borderless" will be re-examined—and pushed against—in chapter 3.
[188] Thomas Birtchnell, Satya Savitzky and John Urry, *Cargomobilities: Moving Materials in a Global Age*, 3.
[189] Ibid., 4.

containerisation "has been repeatedly dubbed the single most important technological innovation underpinning the globalization of trade."[190]

Attempting to render visible the functioning of an ever-logistified and containerised maritime economy was a central preoccupation of photographer, filmmaker and theorist Allan Sekula. His 1995 exhibition and photo-essay project *Fish Story* sought to visualise the functioning of the maritime economy across a geographically diverse set of spaces. However, from the outset of this photo-essay, Sekula readily acknowledged the representational challenges posed by such "flattened" and "smooth" spaces. Within the essay "Dismal Science Part I," Sekula poses the question, "why would anyone be foolish enough to argue today that the world economy might be intelligently viewed from the deck of a ship?"[191] Expanding on this provocation, he writes "use values slide by in the channel… the more regularised, literally containerised, the movement of goods in harbours, that is, the more rationalised and automated, the more the harbour comes to resemble the stock market."[192] Thus, for Sekula, the inherent abstractions of finance capital's machinations are increasingly reflected in the sequestered infrastructures of containerisation. How does Sekula seek to tackle this "crisis of representation"? The bulk of the photographs contained within the collection seek to capture the materialities of human labour expended in support—and, as a consequence—of such global trade networks. Sekula moves between a variety of geographically disparate locales, visualising a wide range of labour activities: we shift from a welder working on a fast combat support ship for the U.S. Navy in San Diego, California, to welders working in a privatised section of the former Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk, Poland, to a man salvaging bricks from a demolished waterfront warehouse in Rotterdam, Holland.

Sekula's materialist rendering of human labour moves between activities that are alternatively state-funded, privatised and "illicit." In the early 1990s, Sekula had developed his concept of a photographic "critical realism." As Bill Roberts notes, Sekula's critical realism sought to fight against "postmodern 'hyperreality'" and instead insisted upon "the historical, social and institutional inscription of photographic meaning."[193] For Roberts, this meant Sekula desired to not only bring home to "his audience some of the myriad local effects of global capitalism, but to relate his necessarily incomplete impressions of the totality dialectically.

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[190] Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics*, 31.
[191] Allan Sekula, *Fish Story* (Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, 1995), 48.
[192] Ibid., 12.
[193] Bill Roberts, "Production in View: Allan Sekula's Fish Story and the Thawing of Postmodernism," *Tate Papers*, 2012, http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/18/production-in-view-allan-sekulas-fish-story-and-the-thawing-of-postmodernism.

Above all, this means to recognise the inherent contradictions of a complex and continuously changing world-system, and indeed to insist on contradiction as the very locus of change."[194] Thus, through the myriad of "local effects" and labour forms captured by Sekula's camera—moving between different geographical, sovereign, economic and juridical frames—we come to recognise the "social contradictions" and "economic disparities" at the heart of the operative logics of logisitics infrastructure.

Figure 15. Image from Fish Story, photographed by Allan Sekula, 1995, Germany.

The emphasis that Sekula's critical realism places on rendering the "local effects" of a structurally "global" system concretely ties us back to Biemann's micro-macro praxis of soft montage. Toscano and Kinkle frame this in different—yet relatable—terms when he suggests, "Sekula's photographs resist, with their attention to the slowness and materiality of labour at sea, the immaterialization of global capitalism into a smooth space of flows, his essays track the passage from the panorama to the detail."[195] Micro-macro/"panorama"-"detail"; both filmmakers develop an aesthetic praxis of cognitive mapping that pin points localised labour

[194] Ibid.
[195] Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 60.

conditions and social effects within the broader matrix of global capitalism's extractive and logistical infrastructures.

This critical realist approach to maritime economies is further developed within the nonfiction feature *The Forgotten Space*, co-directed with Noël Burch. Jumping back and forth between four port cities—Los Angeles, Rotterdam, Hong Kong, Bilbao—the film similarly resists the "immaterialization of global capitalism" through a focus on the transformed materialities of human labour under late capitalism. Whilst acknowledging the structural impacts that the rise of global trade logistics and post-Fordist production have had upon the form of human labour, Sekula and Burch are still keen to focus on the "slow materiality" of work within a global trading network that increasingly hides its labour force. The opening section of the film focuses the Port of Rotterdam and the ever-increasing levels of automation involved in its shift to containerisation. Over shots that present the movement of containers through the port, Sekula's narration states "in the outer terminals in Rotterdam, the physical human labour that remains has become a literal appendage to the machine."

Figure 16. Still from The Forgotten Space, directed by Noël Burch and Allan Sekula, 2010, USA.

Next, the film presents a brief interview with a dock worker. Sekula asks, "there's a new terminal here which is completely automated. Why?" The dock worker responds; "I think that's because they wanted to get rid of the human factor. Workers may become ill and so on." Next, we are presented with several shots of rearticulated forms of labour that are generated with the shift to automation: a worker at a centralised control centre, another controlling a container spreader. Sekula's voiceover continues:

> Starting in the late 1980s, Dutch terminal operators took container handling to a new level of automation. Some of the new land became intelligent. Robot vehicles are guided by transponders in the pavement. We speak of labour saving machines, and yet what is really saved by automation? Automation does not guarantee freedom from drudgery. It merely raises drudgery to a higher power. The skilled workers who remain work in isolation. Lonely aristocrats of labour.

With the human labour nested within such logisitics infrastructures appearing more abstracted, Sekula and Burch focus heavily upon the sites where it has been rearticulated and rehoused. Thus, the camera moves into the spreader's control cabin, where an interview is conducted with the controller. As he continues to move containers, he states "you actually need to work here peacefully in your own little world. If there's trouble at home you go crazy simply because you have to focus all the time here. I'm look down 30 meters through a dirty window and I still have to get those containers out at a specific time."

Figure 17. Still from The Forgotten Space, directed by Noël Burch and Allan Sekula, 2010, USA.

Sequestered in this space of logistics infrastructure par-excellence, Sekula and Burch are keen to render "slow materiality" of his labour—primarily through a focus on the cognitive and affective demands placed on the controller by his isolation and temporal regulation. Indeed, as he states, "I still have to get those containers out at a specific time." From here, *The Forgotten Space* moves through its other disparate locations, always concerned with oscillating between the larger logistical infrastructures of global trade and their connected impact upon the material labour embedded within them. Consequently, we move between interviews with Mexican truckers in Los Angeles, to deckhands in Bilbao, to factory workers in Beijing, all the time

concerned with trying to understand the relationality at work between labourer and infrastructure.

It is my contention that *Fish Story* and *The Forgotten Space* are both intrinsically built around the development of Sekula's "critical realist" approach to image making. Indeed, as Brett Story has suggested, "against the popularity of an aesthetics of abstraction, irony, and pastiche, *The Forgotten Space* is a study in social institutions, experiences, and relationships; its curious digressions now recognized as realism's partiality for those on the outer margins or left behind, the potency of their 'mutinous longings' recalled and historicized."[196] Here, connections can be made to Erika Balsom's polemical 2017 piece on documentary realism, "The Reality-Based Community." Here, Balsom argues for a renewal of an avowedly realist documentary practice; working in direct opposition to the currently popular nonfiction strategies of "reenactment, essayism, heightened subjectivism, and docufiction."[197] Balsom wishes to push against postmodernist critiques of documentary realism, which read it as a hopelessly utopian aspiration at best, and complicit with dominant structures of power at worst. For Balsom, the currently popular forms of documentary practice—which worked against such a realist aesthetic, and privilege reflexivity, artifice and performativity—have become the new orthodoxy. Consequently, documentary strategies that insist on artifice as the way to access reality contain "a dangerous relativism that annuls a distinction between truth and falsity that we might rather want to fight for."[198] Arguing for the reinvigoration of documentary realism, Balsom examines several works—Antje Ehmann and Harun Farocki's *Labour in a Single Shot*, Libbie D. Cohn and J.P. Sniadecki's *People's Park*, amongst others—and argues that they "revive key elements of the observational mode while challenging the epistemological claims that historically accompanied it through strategies of partiality, blockage, and opacity."[199] It is my contention that we can embed Sekula's development of a "critical realism" within Balsom's wider call for a renewal of documentary realism. Fundamentally, both are concerned with pushing for a documentary practice that seeks to examine and critique dominant structures of power not through a "panoramic" or "totalising" world views, but by focusing on the myriad of localised impacts that such infrastructures of domination cause. Indeed, Balsom suggests later that such works "seek not to master the world but to remain faithful to it, creating for the viewer a time and space of attunement in which a durational encounter with alterity and

[196] Brett Story, "*The Forgotten Space* by Allan Sekula and Noël Burch," 1578.
[197] Erika Balsom, "The Reality-Based Community," *e-flux*, June 2017, http://www.e-flux.com/journal/83/142332/the-reality-based-community/.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

contingency can occur, with no secure meaning assured."[200] Sekula's construction of a critical realism is built around an examination of the hidden power structures of global trade logistics through an observational engagement with the "slow materialities" of the labour force that supports it. Thus, the micro, local textures of labour begin to paint a picture of the wider structures of power at play within global maritime economy. Ultimately, the film's process of cognitive mapping is built around an attempt to render a geographically disparate range of material labour forms; disrupting the apperception of global trade logistics as a smooth, lubricated and flattened infrastructure through the insertion of these instances of belaboured "alterity and contingency."

Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to examine a range of nonfiction practices that capture and also critique the diffuse operations of contemporary global capitalism. I began by suggesting that nonfiction moving image work has a crucial role to play in undermining the functioning of late capitalism; helping to throw into sharp relief its fissures, cracks and contradictions. Next, I worked through some discursive definitions of "late capitalism," examining their shared perceptions of it as a system that was alternatively "obfuscated", "fluid," and "invisible." I then introduced Jameson's call for an aesthetic of cognitive mapping, which proposed several strategies for trying to render and critique the social totality, whilst simultaneously resisting such narratives of "obfuscation." Whilst not focused specifically on the aesthetics and politics of the moving image, Jameson's concept was particularly central to this chapter, due chiefly to the way it works at the intersection of capitalist critique, spatial theory and aesthetic praxis. Indeed, Jameson's aesthetic proposition structured the subsequent analysis of the selected case studies. Across the works of Kneubühler, Biemann, Sekula and Burch we find a shared preoccupation with constructing cognitive maps that oscillate between micro and marco spatio-politics; moving between what Toscano calls the "panorama and detail." Whether it is Kneubühler's "stratigraphic" approach, Biemann's use of "soft montage," or Sekula's "critical realism," these films, through their presentation the local, textural and material impacts of the machinations of transnational global capital, insert points of rupture into a system that is typically read as "smoothed", "flattening" and all-pervasive. It is precisely here, within these sites of tension, that we can begin to tease open the fissures, cracks and contradictions embedded within the operative logics of late capitalism. For Toscano, we must "understand the

[200] Ibid.

'aesthetic' dimension of social research not as a supplement or an ornament, but as a matter of our modes of representing, figuring or imaging the social."[201] He moves on suggest that "there is much to learn from those critical artistic practices which at one and the same time seek to 'see it whole' and to explore the numerous ways in which such sight is imposed or occluded, modulated and mutable."[202] Within the works examined above, we find such an intersectional approach to social research—attempting to "cognitively map" a global system whilst also remaining attentive to the myriad of local textures on the ground.

[201] Toscano, "Seeing it whole: staging totality in social theory and art," 80.
[202] Ibid.

Carceral Geographies: Spaces of Exception and Internment

"Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?"

Michel Foucault[203]

"The state of exception tends increasingly to appear as the dominant paradigm of government in contemporary politics."

Giorgio Agamben[204]

Global prison populations continue to expand. In the United States, 2.2 million people are currently behind bars—representing a 500% increase over the last 40 years. Shifts towards ever subtler (yet, simultaneously structurally violent) forms of disciplinary governmentality—both juridical and biopolitical in nature—are the predominant causes for this continuing upward trend. These factors are also supplemented by the increasing economic lucrativeness of expanding the industrial carceral complex, for both public and private interests. Indeed, under the economic logics of late-capitalism the care and discipline of the state is so often replaced by the private multinational, and prison infrastructure adheres to these market logics. The Nixonian "War on Drugs" era is emblematic of these structural shifts in the forms of governmentality. For example, in 1980 those imprisoned for non-violent drug offences represented 7.5% (23,900) of the total prison population, by 1990, this figure had risen to 24% (177, 600). These shifts in governmentality also operate along blatantly racialised lines; in 2010, people of colour made up 69% of the total US prison population. In addition, the female prison population has increased by roughly 50% since the year 2000. This is by no means a US-centric phenomenon. Whilst the US prison population has seen the most dramatic rise, "since about the year 2000 the world prison population total has grown by almost 20%, which is slightly above the estimated 18% increase in the world's general population over the same period."[205] Thus, the expansion of the prison-industrial complex is certainly a global phenomenon.

In addition, historical and contemporary epochs of violence by governments and militaries—perhaps less immediately structured by the neoliberal logics of the domestic US

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[203] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), 228.
[204] Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 2.
[205] Roy Walmsley, "World Prison Population List," World Prison Brief (Institute for Criminal Policy Research: Birkbeck, University of London, 2005), 2.

context mapped out above—are also invariably marked by myriad forms of internment. These violent disciplinary practices are usually undertaken during periods that Giorgio Agamben would term "states of exception."[206] Agamben's theorisation confronts how governments, operating under the auspices of a "crisis period," simultaneously diminish constitutional and human rights, whilst increasing state power and extra-juridical forms of control. As Sharon Dolovich has suggested, under such a state of exception, "protection of law and other constraints on state power have been withdrawn. In such a state, occupants are reduced to 'bare life.'"[207] Such "periods of crisis" usually take the form of military coups and civil wars; however, oftentimes such periods become states of prolonged exceptionalism where the exception becomes a permanent rule. Indeed, as Agamben writes

> modern totalitarianism can be defined as the establishment, by means of the state of exception, of a legal civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system. Since then, the voluntary creation of a permanent state of emergency (though perhaps not declared in the technical sense) has become one of the essential practices of contemporary states, including so-called democratic ones.[208]

Agamben explicates the transition from temporally fleeting to permanent states of exception as a shift that defines modern forms of totalitarianism. This isn't to suggest that we can neatly separate forms of internment geographically and temporally; clearly the states of exception that structure the military coup or civil war in predominantly non-Western contexts are also present in a myriad of supposedly Western "liberal democratic" contexts. For example, Agamben highlights the issuing of the USA Patriot Act on October 26, 2001 as a case in point. Those held under its terms—typically when deemed a threat to national security—are "neither prisoners nor persons accused, but simply 'detainees'… the object of a pure de facto rule, of a detention that is indefinite not only in the temporal sense but in its very nature as well, since it is entirely removed from the law and from judicial oversight."[209] Thus, we see how supposed liberal democracies exercise similar states of exception primarily through the control of

[206] Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*.
[207] Sharon Dolovich, "Exclusion and Control in the Carceral State," *Berkeley Journal of Criminal Law* 16, no. 2 (2011): 273.
[208] Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, 2.
[209] Ibid., 3-4.

movement; tighter border security, immigration detention and immigration removal. For Agamben, such a state of exception "radically erases any legal status of the individual, thus producing a legally unnamable and unclassifiable being."[210] Sites and spaces of internment become crucial infrastructural mechanisms in the deployment of such an extra-judicial biopolitics, where "law encompasses living beings by means of its own suspension."[211] Carcerality has, of course, always relied upon a significant spatial infrastructure for the internment of bare life. However, with the rapid expansion of the prison population globally and states of exception increasingly becoming the permanent rule (particularly through border regimes), sovereign governance has required the establishment of ever larger—yet also necessarily imperceptible—carceral spaces for imprisonment.

This rapid expansion of carceral populations and infrastructure over the last half century has brought about a "punitive turn" within the humanities and social sciences, generally concerned with exploring "the historical, political, economic, and sociocultural roots of mass incarceration, as well as its collateral costs and consequences."[212] Understanding the infrastructural and spatial transformations wrought by this expansionary development of the prison industry has become a chief preoccupation for economic and human geographers over the past 20 years.[213] Indeed, this research has developed into a subfield of its own, carceral geography. Most broadly, carceral geography—as an area of theoretical and political enquiry—involves a geographical engagement with the spaces, practices and experiences of confinement. In addition, geographers working within this field attempt to situate the carceral within wider social, economic and geopolitical infrastructures, aiming "to counter the imagination of a closed-off and sealed carceral institution, discussing instead the liminal spaces 'betwixt and between' the inside and outside of prisons."[214] This broadened definition of what constitutes the carceral attempts to throw into sharp relief "the overlaps and synergies between these spaces, their functional and post-functional lives, and also their porosity… recognising that techniques and technologies of confinement seep out of 'carceral' spaces into the everyday,

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[210] Ibid., 3.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Deborah E. McDowell, Claudrena N. Harold, and Juan Battle, eds., *The Punitive Turn: New Approaches to Race and Incarceration* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), outside back cover.
[213] See Nick Gill, Dominique Moran, and Deirdre Conlon, eds., *Carceral Spaces: Mobility and Agency in Imprisonment and Migrant Detention* (Burlington: Routledge, 2013), Jennifer Turner and Kimberley Peters, eds., *Carceral Mobilities: Interrogating Movement in Incarceration*, (New York: Routledge, 2016), Dominique Moran, *Carceral Geography: Spaces and Practices of Incarceration* (Burlington: Routledge, 2015).
[214] Nick Gill et al., "Carceral Circuitry: New Directions in Carceral Geography," *Progress in Human Geography*, 3 November 2016, 2.

domestic, street, and institutional spaces."[215] This attempt to shift the study of carceral spaces outside the physical boundaries of the prison or camp has been driven by several interrelated factors, including: the "mutations in the neoliberal landscape, [the] inclusion of criminal justice systems in industrial systems for the generation of value, [the] criminalization of poor and othered communities, the mobility and agility of finance capital and the expedient generation of surplus populations."[216] Thus, under the conditions of these socio-economic factors, carceral spaces become more fragmented and fluid; functioning in more occluded and less detectable ways than before. Strategies of border control and immigration detention are perhaps most emblematic of such a fragmented carcerality; controlling the movement of surplus populations through a vast network of detention and removal centres, typically located near transport hubs.

The aim of this chapter is to examine several experimental nonfiction works that—in a manner much akin to the carceral geographic turn—seek to visualise, and also critique, the shifting spatial and infrastructural relations of carceral spaces. Here we will focus on works that aim to unpack how, under the conditions of globalisation and neo-colonialism, carceral spaces "seep out into the everyday, domestic, street, and institutional spaces… 'betwixt and between' the inside and outside of prisons."[217] In addition, we will also examine works that focus on practices of internment that are more directly connected to the acceleration of states of exception that have become permanent rules; migrant detention centres, concentrations camps, holdings sites for political prisoners, to name but three. Across all these works, there is a clear emphasis on not only visualising carceral spaces that are increasingly occluded from site, but also understanding their tight interconnections with larger sovereign structures of power. In addition to examining works that engage with the contemporary mutations of carceral spaces, we will also look at filmic practices that engage with the transformation of historical sites of carcerality—often appropriated as radical political gestures or exploited for financial gain. All these works understand that such carceral sites and spaces can never be read as hermetically sealed; they always operate at the border with—and in relation to—larger structures of power and discipline, both geographically and historically. In a manner akin to the previous chapter's examination of works interrogating the seeming abstraction of late capitalism's spatial operations, the works examined in this chapter perceive a similar occlusion and fragmentation of carceral space. Consequently, similar questions drive this chapter: how

[215] Dominique Moran, "CfP: 2nd International Conference for Carceral Geography," Oxford Law Faculty, 8 September 2017, https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/news/2017-09-08-cfp-2nd-international-conference-carceral-geography.
[216] Nick Gill et al., 2.
[217] Moran, "CfP: 2nd International Conference for Carceral Geography."

can carceral spaces that are increasingly hidden from sight—intentionally masking sovereign state violence and control—be visualised within moving image practice. What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped? The works to be surveyed in the chapter engage with both historical and contemporary instances of internment, all variously connected to larger states of exceptionality and industrial prison expansion. We will begin with an examination of Forensic Architecture's *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*, a 26-minute video work that interrogates the historical and contemporary function of the mine-turned-concentration camp in the village of Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. From there, we will move on to examine James Bridle's 2015 work *Seamless Transitions*, which attempts to visualise the occluded infrastructure of UK migrant removal and detention centres in the UK. Finally, we will explore Jonathan Perel's 2015 film *Toponimia*, which examines the historical and contemporary conditions of four military "resettlement" villages in northern Argentina. This analysis will be underpinned by the general question, how can we visualise spaces of carcerality, as well as the formations of power that structurally support them?

Between the Extractive and Necropolitical: Carceral Geographies in Forensic Architecture's *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*

We are in an epoch defined by the alleged death of nonfiction media facticity and veracity. Discourses of supposed "conspiracy" and "paranoia"—mobilised from the fringes to the centre of the political spectrum, and labelled as such depending on one's political affiliations—perpetuate ideas of fake news, mediatised echo chambers, "deepfaked" military surveillance images, documentary falsity and clandestine social media manipulation (amongst a myriad of other concepts). Whilst these ideas are often underpinned by legitimate truth claims, typically these moments of potential veracity are lost within the sheer deluge of "post-truth" discourse.[218] Interconnected with this notion of "post-truth" is the wider postmodern critique of "realism" and "truth production" within theories of media culture.[219] As notions of "truth" and "realism" are increasingly read as contingent, plural and socially constructed, simple conceptions of nonfiction media forms as tools for evidence-creation, witnessing and documentation have

[218] Jane Suiter, "Post-Truth Politics," *Political Insight* 7, no. 3 (2016): 25–27 and Lee McIntyre, *Post-Truth* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2018).
[219] Jane Gaines and Michael Renov, *Collecting Visible Evidence* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999), Thomas Austin and Wilma de Jong, *Rethinking Documentary: New Perspectives and Practices* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2008) and Lucia Nagib and Cecília Mello, eds., *Realism and the Audiovisual Media* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

been widely problematized, if not outright rebuked. Consequently, it is arguable that we live in a decidedly "post-factual" and "post-representational" moment. However, within an epoch that seemingly tries to evade veracity and facticity at every turn, we have recently witnessed a reengagement with questions—and, crucially, representations—of the evidentiary and forensic across a wide range of nonfiction media practices. What we could perhaps crudely term as a push towards an "aesthetics of the evidentiary" has also been reflected in other areas of contemporary artistic practice. For example, the 2017 exhibition *Evidentiary Realism* at the NOME gallery in Berlin brought together a range of artists concerned with examining the "aesthetics of secrecy, complexity, rhetoric, and the control of social, economic, and technological systems."[220] As suggested by the curator Paolo Cirio, "the contemporary features of the social landscape are unintelligible at first glance. Although we see the shocking results of our social reality, we are nonetheless often unable to see the systems and processes that generate such conditions."[221] For Cirio, artists working within this mode are attempting confront the "complexities," "secrecy" and abstraction of contemporary power relations and violations in a manner that offers new modes of visibility, exposure and accountability. Indeed, as Cirio continues, "realism today can be conceptualized as an expansion of ways of seeing and portraying contemporary social complexities, while maintaining the concern of presenting subject matter factually within the aesthetics of visual language."[222] Cirio cites the work of artists like Hans Haacke, Mark Lombardi and Harun Farocki, suggesting that they were some of the first practitioners "invested in decoding complex systems of power and conveying them in bold artistic forms."[223] For example, Haacke's photomontage work *A Breed Apart* sought to critique UK state-owned manufacturing company British Leyland's involvement with the apartheid regime in South Africa. The company sold vehicles to the South African police and armed forces and the local branch of the company in South Africa refused to recognise trade unions and bargaining units. Haacke appropriated and reworked British Leyland's adverts, juxtaposing images of apartheid abuses with text from the company's own press releases. For example, the "advertisement" below features an image of military abuse alongside text that reads "in 28 years of production the Land-Rover has become one of the United Kingdom's greatest export winners, opening up areas of the world previously inaccessible to ordinary vehicles and playing a major role in the development of overseas territories."

[220] Paolo Cirio et al., *Evidentiary Realism* (Berlin: NOME, 2017), 7.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid., 3.
[223] Ibid., 2.

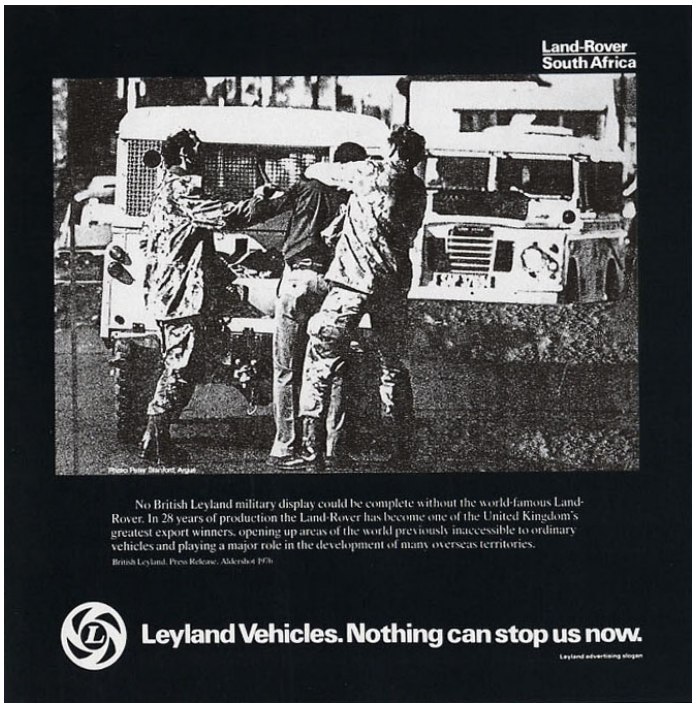

Figure 18. Image from A Breed Apart, photographed by Hans Haacke, 1978, Germany.

Thus, when the company's own rhetoric (extremely neo-colonialist in nature) is placed alongside evidentiary materials of complicity in state violence, this commercial discourse takes on a self-reflexive quality; a rope to hang themselves. The works that formed part of the *Evidentiary Realism* exhibition aimed to continue this work, interrogating "post-9/11 geopolitics, increasing economic inequalities, the erosion of civil rights, and environmental disasters." Consequently, this broad turn towards evidentiary realism mapped out by Cirio is preoccupied with visualising the social and humanitarian consequences of particular forms of control and violence, whilst additionally attempting to render visible the structures of power that have not only been intentionally occluded from sight, but which also structurally facilitate such forms of brutality.

Within the range of contemporary practices that have engaged with an "aesthetics of the evidentiary," questions of geography, spatiality and architecture have become crucial sites of interrogation. One group that has been working at the forefront of this spatio-evidentiary mode is multidisciplinary research group Forensic Architecture, based at Goldsmiths, University of London. Primarily, this research agency is interested in how geographic and architectural space can function as evidentiary repositories and sensors of state violence/violations of human rights, and how such spatial-architectural evidence can be visualised and presented in judicial forums. The aim of this section is to focus on one of Forensic Architecture's recent investigative projects, entitled *Omarska: Memorial in Exile—*

examining how their exploration of a mine turned concentration camp in Bosnia and Herzegovina intertwines their interest in both an "aesthetics of the evidentiary" and the sovereign violence of carceral space. Through this analysis, I hope to show that the group's spatio-evidentiary approach not only reflects upon the historical trauma associated with such sites, but also points towards their contemporary post-carceral function and use-value; dimensions that are more intimately connected than we might first think.

Before moving into the analysis of *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*—and its dual interrogation of carceral trauma and post-carceral functionality—I think it is useful to map out the origins of the evidentiary approach utilised by Forensic Architecture, paying particular attention to the importance they accord to geography and spatiality. Eyal Weizman—director of the London-based interdisciplinary research hub Forensic Architecture—has suggested that "the direction of the forensic gaze could… be inverted, and used… to detect and interrupt state violations… a *new forensis* must emerge to challenge the assumptions of received forensic practices."[224] Since 2011, Forensic Architecture has attempted to enact such a process of inversion; utilising a variety of forensic and aesthetic praxes to make visible previously opaque or hidden instances of state violence and human rights abuses.[225] In a 2012 article entitled *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums*—which sought to lay out the basic theoretical concerns of the group's practice—Weizman begins by mapping out the contemporary rise of a forensic-evidentiary sensibility:

> The primacy accorded to the witness and to the subjective and linguistic dimension of testimony, trauma, and memory—a primacy that has had such an enormous cultural, aesthetic, and political influence that it has reframed the end of the twentieth century as 'the era of the witness'—is gradually being supplemented (not to say bypassed) by an emergent forensic sensibility, an object-oriented juridical culture immersed in matter and materialities, in code and form, and in the presentation of scientific investigations by experts.[226]

[224] Eyal Weizman, "Introduction: Forensis," in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, ed. Forensic Architecture (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014), 10.
[225] It is also important to note that the word forensics comes from the latin for "forum." Indeed, another crucial aspect of Forensic Architecture's work is to shift their new practices of witnessing and jurisprudence into social and cultural spaces outside the courtroom; the gallery, the cinema etc.
[226] Eyal Weizman, *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2012), 5.

Once again, we can see close connections to the mapping out of "evidentiary aesthetics" by Cirio above. Here, Weizmann accords a similar importance to forensic and evidentiary modes of investigation. Whilst Weizmann tackles the question of the evidentiary and forensic from a judicial rather than aesthetic standpoint, techniques of visuality are still of critical importance for him—for example, he speaks repeatedly of the aesthetics of matter and materialities. Thus, for Weizman, the subjective and linguistic basis of testimony, trauma, and memory as evidentiary repositories are now being bolstered by deeper visual and aesthetic interrogations and examinations of material, aesthetic and object-orientated forms of evidence. For example, in a conversation between Yve-Alain Bois, Hal Foster and Weizman, we are offered the following question and response:

> *Bois*: You write that 'Forensic Architecture seeks to… employ aesthetics as a way of intensifying the investigation process by augmenting our senses and increasing our sensitivities to space, matter, narrative or images.'
> *Weizman*: Yes, seeing is a kind of construction that is also conceptual and culturally conditioned, hence the indispensability of artistic sensibility.[227]

Thus, for Weizman, new aesthetic techniques of evidentiary examination and presentation become tools for reinforcing architectural and spatial forensic evidence, "augmenting our senses and increasing our sensitivities to space."[228] Some examples of these new aesthetic techniques include "geospatial data, maps and models of cities and territories, the 'enhanced vision' of remote sensing, 3D scans."[229] Weizman has stated this more explicitly elsewhere, suggesting that one of Forensic Architecture's central aims is to "reorient the practice of contemporary forensics and expand it… bring[ing] new material and aesthetic sensibilities to bear upon the legal and political implications of state violence, armed conflict and climate change."[230] Thus, the work of Forensic Architecture is inextricably tied up with wider questions of aesthetics and visuality.

Weizman takes up Arjun Appadurai's notion of "methodological fetishism" to develop the aesthetic and visual dimensions of the group's practice further. Pushing back against utilisation of the fetish that highlight its obfuscating or mystifying capacity (Marx's commodity

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[227] Yve-Alain Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture: A Conversation with Eyal Weizman," *October* (1 May 2016): 122.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Weizman, *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums*, 6.
[230] Weizman, "Introduction: Forensis," 9.

fetishism and its cloaking of the human relations of production), the concept of "methodological fetishism" put forward by Appadurai focuses on how objects hold an inherent "thingness" and are an amalgamation of "complex social relations" and "imprinted political forces."[231] Weizman builds on Appadurai's argument to suggest that "it is in forensics that the fetish can be most productively practiced today."[232] Within such a practice of forensic fetishism, "the part or the detail becomes an entrypoint from which to reconstruct larger processes, events, social relations, conjunctions of actors and practices, structures and technologies."[233] Here, Weizman's "forensic fetishism" works in opposition to that of the commodity fetish; unveiling rather than veiling the complexity of an object's embedded social relations through new aesthetic and representational strategies. Thus, the utilisation of these aesthetic protocols have explicitly socio-political aims and objectives—examining evidence in ways that offers new methods of visualisation and comprehension. Indeed, Weizman has confronted how particular aesthetic praxes and protocols are central to Forensic Architecture's material and architectural investigations: "aesthetics is at the centre of our approach… in the meaning of the aesthetics of matter—aesthetics is the meaning of a sensing, of a sensor. The aesthetics of architecture is how its material components react—that is, how they sense politics—registers politics as if it was a sensor."[234] Here then, the aesthetic is instrumentalised as a tool for "sensoring" particular forms of political violence—becoming a crucial means to render those "material, formal and object-orientated forms of evidence." Within Forensic Architecture's practice, new technologies and representational practices of evidentiary and forensic analysis are utilised and interrogated as mediated sensing devices that can help unearth new forms of evidentiary material. Alongside such a showcasing of new evidentiary technologies within these practices, new aesthetic and formal strategies also help to frame evidence in new and novel ways. Certain formal and aesthetic strategies—mapping, 3D modelling, diagramming—aim to reframe and augment the truth-bearing capacities of certain forms of evidence. Ultimately, across a variegated set of practices, we have seen the showcasing of new technologies and aesthetic strategies that attempt to evince and forensically examine various formations of socio-political injustice and violence: humanitarian crises, police abuse, indigenous genocide and miscarriages of justice, to name but a few. Across this broad spectrum of works, new technologies and aesthetics of evidentiary and forensic

[231] Ibid., 19.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Gal Kirn, Niloufar Tajeri, and Eyal Weizman, "The Age of Forensics: Memory, Emancipatory Politics or Visual Strategy? Interview with Eyal Weizman and Anselm Franke," *Maska* 30, no. 177/178 (2016): 27.

investigation are deployed with the aim of creating new modes of what Weizman and Thomas Keenan term "truth construction." For them, this practice is "an arduous labor… one employing a spectrum of technologies… and all sorts of scientific, rhetorical, theatrical, and visual mechanisms."[235]

As suggested previously, tied into the primacy accorded to the aesthetic and the visual in Forensic Architecture's work is a wider concern with examining spatial and architectural formations as evidentiary repositories. Thus, questions of geography, architecture and space play a crucial role in the "emergent forensic sensibility" of Weizman and his group. As we shall see, the notion of the "architectural" does not simply refer to the spatiality of individual structures or the infrastructure of the urban environment, rather, for the group, it represents a much wider focus on the socio-spatial—interrelating the urban, ex-urban and rural. For example, Weizman suggests how

> the surface of the earth—now increasingly called upon to perform as evidence/witness in political negotiations, international tribunals, and fact finding missions—has a certain thickness, but it could not be considered a volume. It is not an isolated, distinct, stand-alone object, and nor did it ever 'replace' the subject; rather, it is a thick fabric of complex relations, associations, and chains of actions between people, environments, and artifices.[236]

Within Weizman's definition of the spatial—and its interconnections with the evidentiary—he emphasises how space can never be read as an "isolated" or "discreet" surface or object, rather it is inherently imbued with sets of "relations, associations and chains of actions" that give it a socio-political thickness. In many ways, Weizman's definition of the spatial returns us to the theories of spatiality mapped out in the introduction to this thesis. There is a clear connection between Weizman's definition and the wider politicisation of geography and spatiality across the social sciences and humanities, extending primarily from both Marxist discourse on late-capitalism's destructive "spatial fixity" and neo-colonial geo-politics. Here, we are reminded of both Edward Soja's contention that "relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics

[235] Thomas Keenan and Eyal Weizman, *Mengele's Skull: The Advent of Forensic Aesthetics* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), 67.
[236] Ibid., 9.

and ideology"[237] and Doreen Massey's suggestion "that thinking the spatial in a particular way can… contribute to political arguments already under way, and—most deeply—can be an essential element in the imaginative structure which enables in the first place an opening up to the very sphere of the political."[238] In their theorisations, like Weizman's, spatiality is not seen as surface, object or empty container, rather space is always a "thick" web of social relations and politics. Thus, within the work conducted by Forensic Architecture, spatiality is similarly understood as the terrain through which violence is increasingly conducted, becoming something that is, as Trevor Paglen suggests, "actively 'produced' through human activity. The spaces humans produce, in turn, set powerful constraints upon subsequent activity."[239] It is also important to note that this spatial engagement moves across multi-scalar levels, "concerned not only with buildings but rather with an ever-changing set of relations between people and things, mediated by spaces and structures across multiple scales: from the human body to human-induced climate change, from the scale of a single home, through that of larger territories."[240] Thus, within the wider "emergent forensic sensibility" mapped out by Weizman, the spatial plays a crucial role and this moves across different registers; from micro to macro geopolitics.

As I have already briefly suggested, within the group's expanded definition of the architectural, an aesthetic approach to the spatial allows it to operate as a sensoring device. For example, as Weizman writes, "buildings are sensors registering environmental forces or impacts. Material deformation holds information, recording some things and erasing others."[241] Here, we see how Weizman reads architectural infrastructure as capable of registering a myriad of social and environmental impacts and events, functioning as particular kinds of "sensors" or "recording devices." Elsewhere, Weizman has pushed back against the tendency for architecture to be seen as a "static thing"—an approach that is very much congruent with the group's wider "thick" socio-political/relational approach to the spatial. Rather, for him, "physical structures and built environments are elastic and responsive. Architecture… is 'political plastic'—social forces *slowing* into form. This is true on the scale of a building and also on that of larger territories."[242] For him, this "slowing into form" of social forces can take the form of minute material changes within individual buildings (deterioration, cracks, sagging,

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[237] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 2011), 6.
[238] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005), 9.
[239] Trevor Paglen, "Experimental Geography: From Cultural Production to the Production of Space," in *Experimental Geography: Radical Approaches to Landscape, Cartography, and Urbanism*, ed. Nato Thompson (New York: Melville House, 2009), 29.
[240] Eyal Weizman, "Introduction: Forensis," 13.
[241] Yve-Alain Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture: A Conversation with Eyal Weizman," 122.
[242] Eyal Weizman, *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums*, 7.

subsiding) or can be a consequence of the creation of entirely new architectural infrastructures (perhaps pointing towards the "slow violence" enacted by the infrastructures associated with border control or gentrification, to give just two examples). Within both models, we find this "slowing into form" of social relations. Consequently—and as touched upon above—whilst Weizman focuses on the potentiality for architecture to operate as a "political plastic," he also extends this further to wider macro-spatialities. Fundamentally, for him, singular architectural spaces—and, by extension, larger spatial formations—register "the influence of an entangled and potentially infinite political/natural environment… indications of political transformations, patterns, and tendencies."[243] Again, here we find Weizman pushing back against a reading of space as simply surface, object or container—it is rather imbued with a social-relational force.

Beyond spatiality's role as a sensor, Weizman also suggests that it can function as an "agent." For Weizman, "built environments are composite assemblies of structures, spaces, infrastructure… and technologies with a certain capacity to act and interact with their surroundings. They structure rather than simply frame events."[244] Thus, whilst architectures oftentimes operate as passive sensors of social and environmental forces—as we have explored above—they also have the capacity to hold an agency of their own; "acting and interacting" with their surroundings. To further explicate architecture's role as "agent" as well as sensor, Weizman focuses on the trials of the West Bank Separation Wall in Jerusalem. Here, the trials were "not… of people but rather trials of an apparatus." Using the proportionality principle of international humanitarian law, "the wall was found to disproportionately violate an entire territory that included people, fields, houses, roads, military bases, colonies."[245] Moreover, the rerouting of the wall that the verdict called for meant that "aggressive acts of colonization and dispossession were presented as a tragic necessity administered with care and responsibility."[246] Thus, the judgement against the border wall—whilst ultimately reinforcing colonial violence—provides us with an example of both architecture operating as agent as well as the "attribution of liability to material things.'"[247] Here, we have a particular spatial infrastructure that takes on an agency of its own; a capacity for "disproportionate violations."

This notion of architecture as an agent of disproportionate violations offers a good pivot point into the analysis of Forensic Architecture's *Living Death Camps* project. Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina is the site of a former mine turned concentration camp. Today, the

[243] Ibid., 8.
[244] Ibid., 15-16.
[245] Ibid., 16.
[246] Ibid., 17.
[247] Ibid., 16.

site functions as a mine once again; bought in 2004 by commercial mining company ArcelorMittal. *Omarska: Memorial in Exile* explores the shifting status of these territories; marked by the historical violence of murder and incarceration, yet still occupied and financially exploited rather than memorialised. With a particular focus on the latter project at the Omarska site, the aim of this analysis is to examine how forensic and aesthetic praxis explores the relationship between the material pasts and presents of such sites of historical trauma and incarceration. Ultimately, through the lens of the *Omarska* project, I seek to explore the efficacy of Forensic Architecture's methods of visualising—and transforming historical relations to—instances of state violence and incarceration. Through an intertwining of critical, legal, spatial and aesthetic practice, Forensic Architecture attempts to excavate and memorialise these instances of carceral trauma; taking them up as practical political tools to be utilised against those forces of late capitalism that wish to once again exploit such unused "dead spaces." In addition, I will examine how the film attempts to render visible the infrastructural and geographical conditions that facilitate the transition between the use functions of Omarska, from its origins as a mine, then as a death camp, then as a mine again—from the extractive to the necropolitical and back to the extractive. My usage of the term "necropolitics" builds from Achille Mbembe's formulation. For him, the "ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die. Hence, to kill or to allow to live constitute the limits of sovereignty."[248] Mbembe's notion of the necropolitical is thus defined by the sovereign technologies of power that can both "foster life" and "produce death." These outer limits of the sovereign operate most intensely within carceral space. For example, as Sarah Lamble suggests, "the prison is a site that produces the conditions of living death; it is a place where bodies are subject to regimes of slow death and dying."[249] Therefore, the carceral space closely maps onto what Mbembe terms the creation of necropolitical "deathworlds," with "death" here including both literal material death, but also "social, political and civil death.[250] Mbembe's concept will also be a fundamental reference point when we examine how carceral spaces like those in Omarska operate most effectively through logics of invisibilisation.

Between May and August 1992, more than 3,200 Bosnian Muslims and Croats were killed in and around the town of Prijedor and at the Omarska concentration camp—previously

[248] Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 11.
[249] Sarah Lamble, "Queer Necropolitics and the Expanding Carceral State: Interrogating Sexual Investments in Punishment," *Law and Critique* 24, no. 3 (2013): 244.
[250] Ibid., 242.

an iron ore mine. The Omarska camp was a concentration camp run by Bosnian Serb forces in the mining town of Omarska, near Prijedor in northern Bosnia and Herzegovina, set up for Bosniak and Croat men and women during the Prijedor massacre. Functioning in the first months of the Bosnian War in 1992, it was one of 677 alleged detention centers and camps set up throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war. While nominally an "investigation center" or "assembly point" for members of the Bosniak and Croatian population, Human Rights Watch has subsequently classified Omarska as a concentration camp. 3400 Bosniaks and Croats from Prijedor went missing or were killed during 1992 and 3334 were imprisoned in the camp at Omarska. ArcelorMittal, a Luxembourg-based multinational steel manufacturing corporation bought the Omarska mining complex—which had remained inactive since the war—in 2004 and planned to resume iron ore extraction. In 2005, the company made a commitment to finance and build a memorial on the grounds of Omarska; however, two decades later, no progress had been made. In addition, the mine's postwar workforce is comprised almost exclusively of Bosnian Serbs, with evidence of systemic discrimination against Bosnian Muslim workers. In 2012, the ArcelorMittal Orbit—a 114.5-metre-high sculpture and observation tower—was created in the Olympic Park in London, UK, using iron from the Omarska mine. The 2013 experimental documentary *Omarska: Memorial in Exile* was created for Forensic Architecture's *Living Death Camps* project by artist and researcher Susan Schuppli. The work examines the historical transformations of the Omarska mine from a variety of perspectives—geographical, economic, archaeological—all with a keen eye towards understanding the material relations between state-sanctioned violence and natural resource extraction. Ultimately, the documentary points towards the interrelations between these two differing—yet structurally connected—forms of violence; one extractive and one necropolitical. Schuppli's film remains attentive to the porosity and mutability of this space; continually emphasising its shifting function as a site of exploitation and violence.

The documentary draws parallels between the extractive and necropolitical right from the off—forging connections between the shifting function of Omarska and its surrounding landscapes. An opening frame of text provides us with the chemical composition of Limonite, the primary mineral form of iron ore extracted from Omarska and its surrounding sites. After a brief fade to black, we find ourselves located in the passenger seat of a car travelling along a road in the early morning. Initially, the camera follows a line of trees along the roadside, before panning down to the road in front. Over these images, Schuppli's voiceover states "it's September now, five months after our initial visit and it's still overcast. It is this constant moisture that gives Limonite its particular name." We then transition to close-up shots of the

mineral form, and Schuppli's voiceover explains how the substance derives its name from the "greek word for meadow, due to its frequent occurrence in bogs and marshes." We are then presented with various archival images of mass killing sites from both the Bosnian and Kosovo wars.

Figure 19. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

The first set of archival images are preceded by an intertitle that reads Izbica [IT-05-87]. As Schuppli states, "these tapes form part of… [a] material evidence archive and were entered as exhibits during the trials of Slobodan Miloševic and Milan Milutinovic." The bracketed information in the intertitle refers to the trial's case number. The footage—shot by Liri Loshi and Sefedin Thaqi in the aftermath of the massacre at Izbica, 28th March 1999—begins with some magnetic feedback and interference; symptomatic of multiple transfers and improper preservation. The image then corrects itself and we are presented with various groups of bodies at the Izbica site. The first shot is brief and shows a group of bodies on a hillside, the image then falters once more. Within the next sequence, the camera pans across an open meadow, before we cut to a close-up on several bodies lined along the far hedgerow. At the end of this shot, the image once again degrades. We then return to the close-up shots of Limonite, as Schuppli's voiceover states "while Limonite is amorphous, a number of minerals will decompose to produce it without losing their own unique crystal shape. As such, Limonite is the carrier of form, but has no distinctive form itself. It is matter in potential, a becoming structure of formless matter."

Figure 20. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

The fact that the presentation of this archival footage is bookended by a close examination of Limonite's material composition is certainly not incidental; it carves open a space for Schuppli to interrogate the shifting function of Omarska and its landscapes. As touched upon earlier, within the initial section focusing on Limonite, Schuppli highlights its etymological connection to the greek word for meadow (leimṓn). The archival images we are subsequently presented with are implicitly connected by their shared focus on bodies in remote rural spaces; perhaps not coincidentally, these are mainly fields and meadows. The sites of extraction become the sites of necropolitical violence, before returning to the extractive. Indeed, later in the film Schuppli suggests "some contend that the subterreanean deposits of iron ore still carry the decomposing remains of victims and that oxides have been hydrated with their blood, producing the ore that is limonite." Consequently, Limonite becomes a connective thread between Omarska's shifting infrastructure; a space alternatively utilised for extractive industry and state-sanctioned murder. Through the dialectical juxtaposition of the material landscapes of extraction and the sites of sovereign violence, Schuppli begins to interrogate the shifting function of these spaces.

This emphasis on the shifting functionality of Omarska perhaps points towards a more fundamental spatio-political question; are sites of extraction particularly well suited to adaptation into spaces of carceral internment and violence? Interconnections between natural

resource extraction and carcerality do have historical precedents.[251] For example, under colonial rule in South Africa, prison labour satisfied the demands for additional workers in the burgeoning diamond and gold mining industries. In 1885, the De Beers Diamond Mining Company became "the first private organisation to employ convicts for labour… the population of both compounds and prisons consisted not only of criminals in the ordinary sense, but of a new labouring population criminalised by laws and controlled in new institutions."[252] Moreover, in the following decade De Beers also built their own prison branches, which they owned and managed. As Shanta Singh suggests, "the characteristic feature of the development of South African prisons was its resemblance to the mine compound. Such compounds housed mine workers, of whom many were convicts supplied by the prison system."[253] Thus, in the case of De Beers, we see an early example of the interconnections between natural resource extraction and carceral infrastructure. The demands for surplus labour meant that carceral spaces had to be adapted so they could be sequestered within the infrastructural spaces of resource extraction. The origins of the Omarska mine's role as a carceral space was, of course, qualitatively different. In the South African case, it was the increased demand for labour that led to the development of new kinds of carceral infrastructure; one that could serve the needs of private enterprise. The Omarska mine, by contrast, was opened under post-War Yugoslav socialism, before the conflicts of the 1990s led Bosnian Serb forces and local authorities to freeze excavation and transform the mine into a concentration camp. Indeed, as David Campbell has suggested, the majority of camps in Bosnia "were not purpose built as detention centres. Instead, existing buildings—a mining complex, as in the case of Omarska, or former community buildings and a school as in the case of Trnopolje—were redeployed as part of the ethnic cleansing campaigns."[254] Thus, rather than new carceral spaces being developed in tandem with privatised sites of resource extraction, in the case of Omarska the interconnections between extraction and carcerality are temporally demarcated; from the extractive to the carceral-necropolitical and back to the extractive.

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[251] It is also important to acknowledge the wider interconnections between private enterprise and prison infrastructure over the last century, particularly in the US. Indeed, the notion of the "prison–industrial complex" has been formulated precisely as a way to explain not only the rapid expansion of the US prison population, but also the involvement of private business within the prison infrastructure—primarily through companies who contract prison labour.

[252] "A History of Prison Labour in South Africa," *South African History Online*, 8 May 2015, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/history-prison-labour-south-africa.

[253] Shanta Singh, "The Historical Development of Prisons in South Africa: A Penological Perspective," *New Contree: A Journal of Historical and Human Sciences for Southern Africa* 50 (2005): 15.

[254] David Campbell, "Atrocity, Memory, Photography: Imaging the Concentration Camps of Bosnia–the Case of ITN versus Living Marxism , Part 1," *Journal of Human Rights* 1, no. 1 (2002): 13.

What are the potential explanations for the decision to appropriate existing spaces and architectures rather than produce new ones? And how does Schuppli's film seek to visualise such strategies of appropriation? To answer these questions, it is necessary to turn back to Agamben. Under the logics of the Agambian state of exception—examined briefly in the introduction to this chapter—the concealment and occlusion of carceral space is key. For Agamben, with the intersection between the exception and the production of bare life, it is the camp that becomes the quintessential example of the state of exception. The camp is thus "the pure, absolute, and impassable biopolitical space… which will appear as the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity, whose metamorphoses and disguises we will have to learn to recognise."[255] Domonique Moran, furthering Agamben's definition, suggests that "bare life and spaces of exception exist in multiple concealed forms within the political space in which we now live."[256] Thus, for both Agamben and Moran, processes of occlusion, disguise and concealment come to define the camp under the state of exception. Thus, the choice to locate the Omarska camp within an already established spatial infrastructure clearly would have aided the occlusion and concealment of its new function. In this way, spatial and architectural appropriation, rather than fresh construction, served to mask the camp's true function from public view. Here, it must be acknowledged that I am taking Agamben's political ontology quite literally; thinking through how the material infrastructure of carceral space has been effectively "disguised" and "concealed" in Omarska. Indeed, Dominic Campbell's two-part essay "Atrocity, memory, photography: imaging the concentration camps of Bosnia—the case of ITN versus *Living Marxism*" maps out the protracted debates that took place over the veracity of images from the camps, both during and following the conflict. As Campbell writes, the occlusion of the camp—facilitated mainly by its appropriation of existing mining infrastructure—and the resulting disputes over its true function, enabled "the potential link between Bosnia and the Holocaust to be cut, the meaning of the Bosnian war to be diminished, and the responsibility of those who perpetrated the ethnic-cleansing campaigns to be denied."[257] In addition, the typical geographical location of mining complexes—remote, though never too far away from pools of labour—mean that they serve the dual function of remaining out of sight, yet also accessible. Thus, the prisoners housed at Omarska were moved there easily enough, and, once interned, they could largely be hidden from public view.

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[255] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 73.
[256] Dominique Moran, *Carceral Geography: Spaces and Practices of Incarceration*, 19.
[257] David Campbell, "Atrocity, Memory, Photography: Imaging the Concentration Camps of Bosnia - the Case of ITN versus Living Marxism, Part 2," *Journal of Human Rights* 1, no. 2 (2002): 144.

Shots throughout the film highlight the strategic location of the mine; existing outside heavily populated areas and dominated (spatially and representationally) by the exterior presence of mining technologies and infrastructure. For example, around five minutes and thirty seconds into the film we transition from an aerial shot of the Omarska mine—which shows its geographically sequestered location—to a travelling shot from the interior of a car that focuses on the exterior mining architectures and technologies. These shots continue for the next minute and a half as we move around the perimeter of the complex, still travelling by car. As the camera registers fleeting glimpses of the mining infrastructure, a voiceover states, "once a spectral silence hung over these buildings, the cavernous rust coloured hanger containing a heavy industrial plant and piles of tyres."

Figure 21. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

The combination of these crawling tracking shots around the perimeter of the space and Schuppli's voiceover serve to emphasise the ways in which the processes of occlusion and concealment of sovereign violence—so central to Agamben's formulation of the camp—would have been aided by the exterior presence of the mine and its infrastructures. From here, we transition to a series of archival images. Firstly, we are presented with an aerial photograph that focuses on a building known as the white house (previously an administrative building for the mine); the primary location for torture and murder at Omarska. Next, we have a sequence of news reportage that captures fleeting glimpses of prisoners lined up in a canteen. Shot through the broken windows of the canteen space from an exterior position, the prisoners inside are visible only as fleeting shadows. We are then presented with a photograph taken after the conflict that shows the interior of this same canteen space. Finally, the two photographs and a

still from the archival footage are presented on screen as a triptych. Within the archival news report sequence, it is possible to imagine that we are simply observing factory workers from a distance; collected together in a communal space. Indeed, this was often one of the rhetorical strategy utilised by the military to conceal the true function of Omarska—work was simply "continuing as normal." However, as Andrew Herscher has suggested, perhaps the Omarska mine continued to function as a factory during the conflict. He writes, "just as the factory was a space where the modern industrialized worker was made, the mine's functional ruin at Omarska yielded a space where citizens of socialist Yugoslavia were remade as subaltern ethnic communities of Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats."[258] Thus, for Herscher, the Omarska mine came to function as a space for the production and "formation of political subjectivities."[259]

Figure 22. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

Thus, it is contestable that whilst one form of production ended at the mine, another—facilitated by sovereign torture and murder—was initiated. As Hercher suggests, "ethnicity, in other words, was not only a social construction; it was also conjoined to the architectural reconstruction of a mine into a camp."[260] Perhaps this is another reason for the connections that Schuppli draws between Limonite and the prisoners interned at the camp; both are subjected to different forms of production. Through this reading, we see a potential shift from an extractive to necropolitical form of production, facilitated by the appropriation of this

[258] Andrew Herscher, "In Ruins: Architecture, Memory, Countermemory," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 73, no. 4 (2014): 464.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Ibid.

infrastructure. Within the latter necropolitical mode of production, sovereign murder and violence—as well as "architectural reconstruction"—facilitated the formation of new political subjectivities.

As suggested earlier, there were extended debates over the veracity of the news report images filmed by ITN during the conflict. Many simply refused to acknowledge that the architecture and infrastructure of the mine was being used for mass internment and murder. Similar debates over the veracity of images also extended into the trials of Slobodan Miloševic and Milan Milutinovic, and, more specifically, the video material that had been shot by Thaqi and Loshi. During the presentation of their footage in the film, the voiceover presents a reading from a section of the transcripts of the Miloševic/Milutinovic trial. Dated Tuesday, 3 September 2002, lead prosecutor Dirk Ryneveld describes a section of the video shot by Loshi and Thaqi, during the cross examination of Loshi:

> I propose to show the witness this four-minute tape, and it shows four - and I'm now told actually five - scenes. The first scene shows the first group of victims where they were found. And I pause here to say you've heard one witness who testified about that first group. Then there is a short break in the film, purposely to separate the scenes, and we then see the second group of victims - and I pause here to say that you've also heard a witness who testified about being a survivor of that second group - followed by a brief view of the large meadow where the people had been assembled. The original videotape was apparently handed over by the witness to an investigator, Tait-Harris, of the ICTY while he was in Tirana, Albania, on the 18th of May, 1999. The witness, in his statement, explains how the video was made and states that this tape was the original version and had not been edited, added to, or altered in any way.

This voiceover not only narrates and interprets the images we see, it also situates their role as evidentiary materials within the judicial forum. As Schuppli has suggested elsewhere, much of the discussion during Loshi's cross-examination focused "not only to the veracity of the images recorded on one of the tapes, but also regarding its material integrity and the custodial handling of the videotape prior to its admittance into the legal archive of the ICTY [The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia]."[261] Indeed, in another section of Loshi's cross-

[261] Susan Schuppli, "Law and Disorder," in *Realism Materialism Art*, ed. Cristoph Cox, Jenny Jaskey, and Suhail Malik (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2015), 137.

examination we hear of how the tape and camera were stolen for a period of time, and multiple transfers were made—the primary cause for the decomposition of the images. Schuppli is keen to examine the tension that is evident in the court discussions between the visual information captured on the tape and these instances of "incidental inscription." Whilst within the judicial forum these two evidentiary forms—the visual information rendered and the incidental inscription resulting from material degradations—exist in a tension (with the latter potentially disrupting the veracity of the former), for Schuppli "the material violations evidenced in the dense overlay of defects caused by the repeated copying and over-coding of the tape immediately alerts us to the material violations of the body-proper that will soon emerge out of the depths of the image."[262]

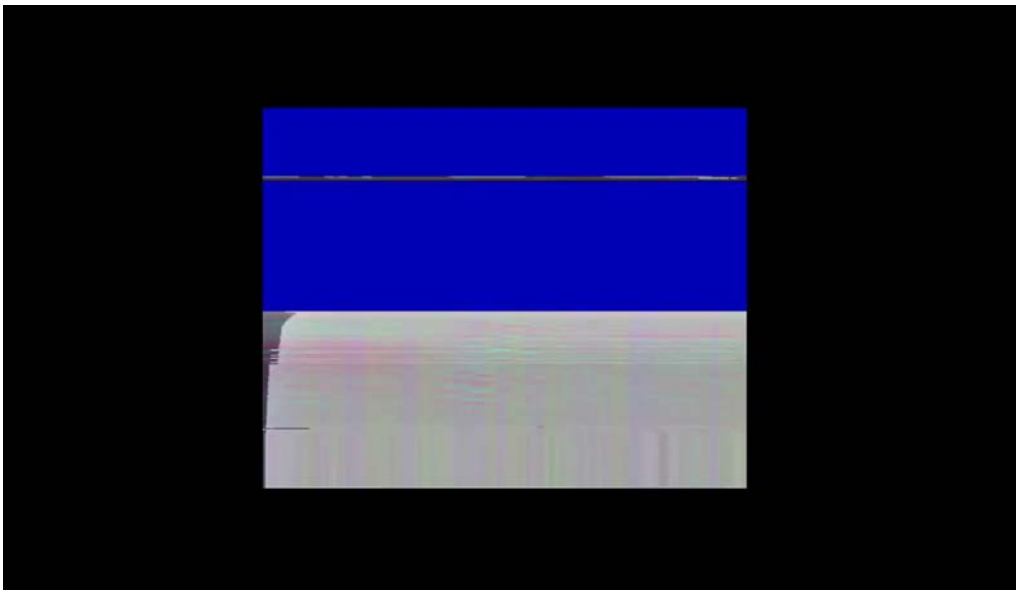

Figure 23. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

Thus, for Schuppli, the "material violations" present within these archival sequences do not serve to undermine the veracity of the images—the driving line of questioning within the judicial forum—rather they forcefully signal the necropolitical violence that will soon become visible within the sites and spaces filmed. Schuppli continues to suggest that within the realm of the cinematic, such distortions "signal immanent danger and threat, as the stability of a world organized as a coherent picture falls apart and is consumed by violence."[263] Whilst she recognises that the visual documentation of the massacre cannot be equated with cinematic narrative construction, Schuppli does contest that "the impoverished condition of the tape, with

[262] Ibid., 139.
[263] Ibid.

its material degradations and destabilized image field, are disturbingly resonant with chilling effect, reminding us of the political program that sought to eradicate difference through ethnic cleansing."[264] Thus, the condition of the tape—rendered visible through the instances of material "degradation" to the image—mirror the processes of attempted spatial and architectural concealment and occlusion described above. More precisely, whilst events at Omarska were concealed by the spatial and architectural veneer of the mining complex, the visual documentation of this same sovereign violence was also forcibly removed from public view—and the material degradation of the images becomes evidence of attempts to conceal and destroy it. Moreover, whilst both the spatial infrastructure of the mine and the material degradation of the images become sites for undermining the veracity of events at Omarska, Schuppli's film attempts to reverse these processes—allowing them to function as evidentiary repositories in and of themselves.

Figure 24. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

Whilst the veracity of the degraded image is reestablished by Schuppli through her engagement with the massacre footage, she is also keen to utilise contemporary technologies of hypervisuality as evidentiary devices—those "new material and aesthetic sensibilities," that Weizman suggests must be brought "to bear upon the legal and political implications of state violence." This is particularly evident in a section midway through the film, which focuses on the architectural construction of the white house—the primary site for torture and murder at

[264] Ibid.

Omarska. Schuppli and her team used a 3D laser scanner to create detailed images and renderings of the white house building. Over shots that show the scanner at work, Schuppli states, "scanning the surfaces of the white house, our camera's high resolution sensors are charged with the task of documenting history. Searching for residual clues that might somehow disclose the violence unleashed in this now rather prosaic place." Following this sequence, we are presented with the resulting series of images captured by the 3D scanner. The voiceover provided here is a re-enactment of testimony provided by a former Omarska prisoner.

> Question: Do you recall the number of people who were in the white house?
> Response: Yes, I do. On the 24th June, when I was brought to Omarska, I spent my first night in the white house. The second room on the right as you go in. There were 43 people inside, plus the 8 of us who had just arrived. That's 51 people all together. I had recognised a young man I had known when we were both very young. He had been badly beaten and he was the only one who was allowed to lie down as his kidneys had been broken.

The images provided by the laser scanner allow us to see the complete skeletal structure of the building, with walls and partitions rendered as partially opaque. Thus, these almost spectral images simultaneously allow us to see the building's complete architectural footprint, whilst also impressing upon us the restricted spatial organisation of the individual rooms. Such imaging technology also allows for the potential visualisation imperceptible material degradations to the structure, which are themselves possible evidence of sovereign violence. For Weizman, visualisation tools like the 3D scanner function as "prosthetic technologies… [which] mediate, and thus augment, the aesthetic sensitivity of material formations, buildings, and territories."[265] The combination of traditional testimony and these prosthetic technological renderings serve to heighten our apperception of the sovereign violence enacted within the space of the white house. Thus, within this sequence, we return once again to the notion of how, under forensic aesthetics, built structures operate as sensitive sensoring structures; able to provide testimony in ways that mirror traditional linguistic forms of evidence—and "prosthetic techonlogies" like the 3D scanner become key in this regard. Indeed, as Schuppli suggests near the end of the film, "what trace effects might linger in the surface grain of plaster

[265] Yve-Alain Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture: A Conversation with Eyal Weizman," *October* (1 May 2016): 128.

and paint, and are captured by electronic pixels… can images be made to speak, to testify, on behalf of events that precede them?" Thus, within this closing passage of voiceover, Schuppli points us back towards Weizmann's wider definition of architectural space as a "political plastic'—social forces *slowing* into form."

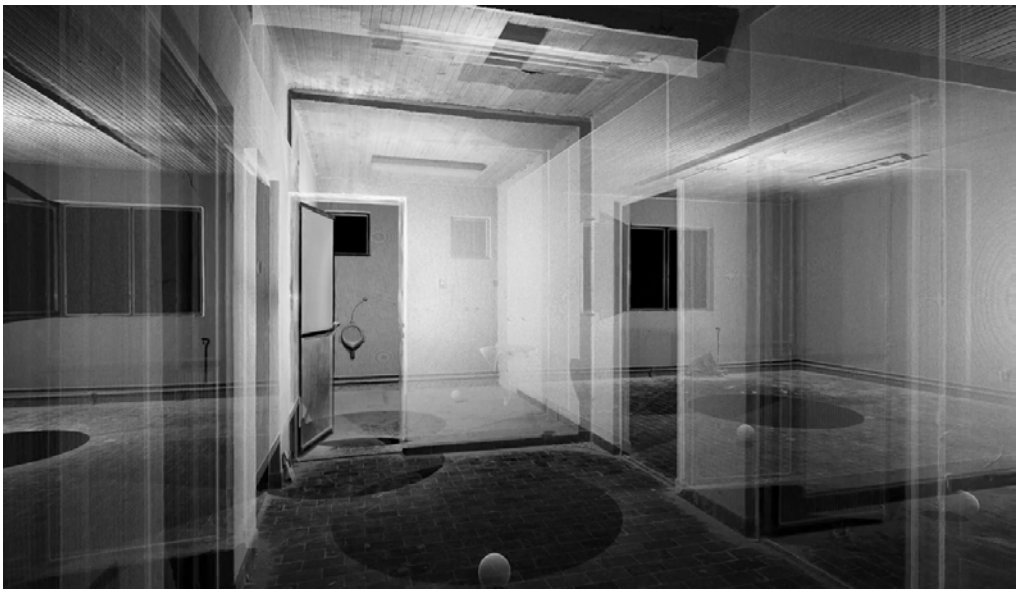

Figure 25. Still from Omarska: Memorial in Exile, directed by Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer, 2013, UK.

By way of a conclusion, I think it is important to place *Omarska: Memorial in Exile* within the context of recent work on "geographic carcerality," as it will help to further unpack Schuppli's interrogation of the oscillating infrastructure at Omarska. The way Schuppli attempts to unpack the shifting infrastructures of violence at the Omarska mine can, I think, be read in close relation to the carceral geographer's attempt to render visible the porosity of carceral spaces during both their "functional and post-functional lives." However, instead of engaging with how contemporary carcerality transforms social and economic geographies outside the immediate space of the prison—those contemporary sites and spaces impacted by the current "expansion, diversification and proliferation of… strategies of control and coercion," towards which geographic carcerality is attuned—Schuppli's project is instead concerned with the appropriation and exploitation of a seemingly "dead" or "post-functional" site of carcerality. Thus, within *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*, the traditional carceral geographer's process and praxis is reversed; here we look at how a historical carceral site of violence is coopted and exploited—returned to its original function as a space for resource extraction. What factors—be they infrastructural, legal, geo-political etc—facilitate the Omarska mine's oscillation between a carceral space of violence and an economic space of extraction; between the extractive and necropolitical? Whilst blood soaks the iron ore at

Omarska, does it also help to lubricate ArcelorMittal's expansionary infrastructure? Schuppli's film continually seeks to address these questions, always remaining attentive to the mutability of the Omarska site, always conscious of its "porosity… recognising that techniques and technologies of confinement seep out of 'carceral' spaces into the everyday, domestic, street, and institutional spaces."[266] The closing section of the film is also intensely focused on such instances of carceral "seepage" and "porosity." Here, Schuppli describes how the ArcelorMittal Orbit, a large metallic sculpture built for London for the 2012 Olympics, was constructued using iron ore extracted from the Omarska site. Forensic Architecture, in collaboration with the activist group Four Faces of Omarska, claimed the Orbit as a "Memorial in Exile." Calling a press conference to reveal their claims to the structure, the two groups used this event as an opportunity to present their wider findings about the horrors at Omarska. As Schuppli suggests, the structure is "tragically intertwined with the history of war crimes that took place at Omarska." Here then, the work takes up a particular site of "seepage" from the Omarska site—the Orbit—to publicly expose the historical violence that took place there. Consequently, such a site of seepage becomes the ground for a new political struggle to be waged. From here, we transition to a markedly different carceral network, though one that still bridges public-private infrastructure and the occlusion of sovereign violence; UK immigration detention and removal.

Seamless Transitions: Rendering the Invisible Spaces of Migrant Detention

Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre at Heathrow Airport, the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC), Field House in the City of London, and the Inflite Executive Jet Centre at Stanstead Airport are the three sites investigated by James Bridle in his short video work *Seamless Transitions*. Bridle, a multi-disciplinary artist, writer, journalist, and technologist, is perhaps best known for his formulation of the "New Aesthetic." Through the conceptualisation of this term, Bridle aimed to highlight both the increasing illegibility of technology and technological infrastructure as well as the moments when the visual image regimes of digital culture erupt into the physical world. Bridle was also keen to explore what images produced within such infrastructural networks potentially "reveal about the underlying systems that produce them, and/or the human viewpoint which frames them."[267] Therefore, the theoretical work grouped under the banner of the "New Aesthetic" was centrally preoccupied

[266] Dominique Moran, "CfP: 2nd International Conference for Carceral Geography."
[267] James Bridle, "The New Aesthetic and Its Politics," *Booktwo* (blog), 12 June 2013, http://booktwo.org/notebook/new-aesthetic-politics/.

with this relationship between the physical and digital, examining how our material environment is increasingly built, or—perhaps more aptly—generated by digital technologies. For Bridle, a primary example of the "New Aesthetic" is the particular ways architectural rendering and visualisation technologies imagine and advertise private housing infrastructure across the globe. Discussing his *Render Ghosts* project, Bridle suggests how he became fascinated with the "aesthetics and processes of architectural visualisation—the computer-generated images of future buildings visible on the hoardings around construction sites," and how these technologies of visualisation are inextricably tied to processes of "intensive development, regeneration, and gentrification."[268] [269] The theoretical impetus behind the "New Aesthetic" has also structured much of Bridle's more recent work, which has focused primarily on how to visualise abuses of sovereign power and discipline. As Adam Kleinmann has suggested, Bridle has become increasingly concerned with "how to make the invisible visible— particularly when it comes to concealed abuses of power, and those who lack political representation."[270] As we shall see, *Seamless Transitions* is a work that is very much a part of Bridle's wider "New Aesthetic" project. However, as the examination of this work will show, the physical/digital nexus so central to the "New Aesthetic" is crucially inverted within *Seamless Transitions*, as Bridle aims to examine the spatial and sovereign power dynamics of border control and immigration detention. Here, architectural visualisation is utilised to imagine physical locations that already exist, in an attempt to understand the power relations embedded within them. Before examining how *Seamless Transitions* interrogates the spatial power dynamics of these three unique, yet intertwined, sites of border control, I think it is important to briefly map out the history of the UK's expanded immigration detention infrastructure. Laying out this history—which involves a steady accrual of increasingly stringent legislation, xenophobia-inflected policy-making and socio-economic fearmongering—will help to highlight how such sites of exception (which resolutely interlock detention with criminalisation) have become naturalised and widely accepted within public discourse.

Mapping out the historical patterns of border control and immigration detention within the UK, Mary Bosworth suggests that we have seen a steady increase in state intervention, with

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[268] Bridle's work in this area is also concerned with understanding the power dynamics and agency at work within the creation of such CGI renderings and how these structure their physical counterparts

[269] James Bridle, "The London Render Search," *Booktwo* (blog), 4 April 2017, http://booktwo.org/notebook/the-london-render-search/.

[270] Adam Kleinman, "On Jame's Bridle's Glomar Response," in *The Glomar Response, James Bridle*, ed. Laurie Schwartz (Berlin: Nome, 2015), 3.

"the British government gradually and then more rapidly [beginning] to deny entrance, remove, deport, and eventually, detain."[271] An early catalyst for the escalation and expansion of border control and immigration restriction was the dissolution of the Empire. The British government implemented a range of legislative measures to manage Britain's "changing relationship to places it had previously governed." Measures such as the British Nationality Act 1948, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 and 1968 were "competing and contradictory measures that "recognised on the one hand while restricting on the other, the rights of former imperial subjects."[272] For example, the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act offered the right to live in the UK to those Commonwealth citizens who "could boast a British father or grandfather, effectively linking the right to enter and reside with race."[273] The racialised restrictions imposed by legislative measures like this were contested and pressured for change. Bosworth locates the origins of the contemporary British immigration detention system in the opening of the Harmondsworth Detention Unit in 1970. For her, this site—along with its sister institution Dover Castle—"linked custody and border control in new ways."[274] Both these sites were set up primarily in response to the Immigration Appeals Act 1969—itself a response to the pressure on the earlier racialised legislation—which had given Commonwealth citizens who had been denied entry the right to in-country appeal.[275] Thus, whilst this 1969 Act had aimed to offer recourse to Commonwealth citizens seeking entry through a process of appeal, the act also "greatly expanded the Immigration Service and concomitant Tribunals and resulted in the first purpose-built Immigration Detention Centre [Harmondsworth]."[276] Thus, for Bosworth, the construction of these two sites, alongside the measures put in place by the Immigration Appeals Act "unlocked the potential for administrative confinement of foreign nationals, thereby expanding state power."[277] With this legislative shift, and it's interrelated architectural enclosures, the UK began to see the steady naturalisation of administrative immigration detention.

A primary cause for this steady increase—amongst an entanglement of other legal and logistic conditions—is the fact that, firstly, "the state tends to be reactive rather than proactive in immigration law," and, secondly, once such legislation is passed, "the state rarely hands back its control." We have thus seen a steady accumulation of immigration legislation—

[271] Mary Bosworth, *Inside Immigration Detention* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 25.
[272] Ibid., 30.
[273] Ibid., 30
[274] Ibid., 22.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Ibid., 31.
[277] Ibid.

responding primarily to the dissolution of the Empire—which has rarely been revised or expunged, leading inevitably to an increased web of control and discipline. Alongside this accrual of legislation, Bosworth highlights several other factors that have created the harsh state of contemporary immigration detention. Firstly, basic fears and rhetoric around race and national identity have long been identifiable within policy development, where "immigration" oftentimes appears as "an adjunct to race."[278] Secondly, economic concerns also underpin the current structure of immigration detention and border control. Bosworth highlights the interrelations between debates over "mass migration, post-Fordism (De Giorgi, 2010), and neo-liberalism (Melossi, 2013; Sitkin, 2013) or the popularization of the term 'economic migrant' to refer, disparagingly, to those who move in search of work."[279] She is also keen to emphasise that these factors have historical lineages that often intersect. For example, she quotes from a letter written to *The Telegraph* in 1968 by the former Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office, the Right Hon Dame Patricia Hornsby-Smith, where she suggests "for every Briton who wants to work abroad… there are a hundred Europeans and a thousand coloured people who, given the chance, would stream into Britain. We, therefore, must have immigration control." Within Hornsby-Smith's article, we see the way race, national identity and economics are interwoven to fashion a xenophobic narrative that emphasises the supposed "need" for strict immigration and border control. Alongside these longer-term systemic factors, particular events have also repositioned the politics and ethics of border control—the most obvious and central being the terror attacks of 2001 in New York and Washington and 2005 in London. As Bosworth suggests, there was a noticeable discursive shift in official and popular discourse "linking issues of asylum to potential terror threats. Foreigners were no longer simply a danger to social order or race relations. They were potentially perilous to the very lives of British citizens."[280] Bosworth later highlights how the Labour government of the time rapidly increased the "sum of laws… governing non-British citizens," including the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, both of which helped to shore up and solidify policy that allowed for the indefinite detention of foreign nationals. Indeed, as Susan Schuppli has also suggested, "the global war on terror… [has resulted] in the systematic erosion of rights as well as the legal guarantees of citizenship."[281] Thus, this accrual of post-Empire and anti-terror legislation has led to the ever-escalating severity of immigration

[278] Ibid., 27.
[279] Ibid., 28.
[280] Ibid., 34.
[281] Susan Schuppli, "Infrastructural Violence: The Smooth Spaces of Terror," in *The Glomar Response, James Bridle*, ed. Laurie Schwartz (Berlin: Nome, 2015), 9.

and border policing and control. In addition, this growing web of legislation led directly to the expansion of the physical infrastructure for immigration control, including the construction of three immigration detention centres. One of these, Harmondworth, is a central focus of Bridle's film.

The origin of the *Seamless Transitions* project extends back to 2013, when Bridle read an article on the British government's use of private chartered flights for the deportation of asylum seekers whose applications had been rejected.[282] The use of private contractors within the immigration detention and removal system is widespread, from the logistics of deportation transportation to the infrastructure of internment. Whilst failed asylum seekers were previously transported on commercial flights, typically accompanied by privately contracted security guards, this process of removal is now funnelled exclusively through private charter companies. Bridle, offering a possible cause for this shift, suggests "the main reason the government uses private planes is because commercial carriers (and their passengers) don't like flying people under duress, especially after the horrific death by suffocation of deportee Jimmy Mubenga." As Bridle suggests, in 2010, Mubenga, a political refugee from Angola, had his asylum application rejected. Later that year, on October 12th, he was placed on British Airways Flight 77 back to Angola. During the flight, he died. Official reports initially claimed that Mubenga had become unwell on the flight, the plane was rerouted to Heathrow, he was taken to hospital and he later died. However, the investigative journalists Paul Lewis and Matthew Taylor gained witness testimonies from other passengers on the plane that attested to the fact that Mubenga had been placed in a dangerous restraining hold by three security guards—Terrence Hughes, Colin Kaler and Stuart Tribelnig—employed by private security firm G4S. Thus, the calculated attempt to cover up the cause of Mubenga's death was only thwarted by the presence of passengers who could provide public testimony to counter this official narrative. This tragic event not only offers a possible reason for the shift to privately chartered flights for immigration removal, it is also representative of a collaborative effort between governmental and private sector forces involved in immigration detention and removal to increasingly occlude the physical and material presence of such disciplinary (and potentially deadly) practices from public view. Indeed, Bridle, speaking about this shift, suggests "what struck me most was the incongruity and apparently deliberate obfuscation of what was happening: a luxury private jet terminal being used to hurry overwhelmingly poor and

[282] Hugh Muir, "Hugh Muir's Diary: Millions on Charter Flights, Private Jets: It's the Deportation Game," *The Guardian*, 28 November 2013, sec. Politics, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/28/hugh-muir-diary-charter-flights-deportation-game.

vulnerable people out of the country under cover of darkness and blanket security."[283] Gareth Peirce's *Dispatches from the Dark Side*: *On Torture and the Death of Justice*, is a volume which similarly interrogates the increasing occlusion of various extrajudicial processes in the UK. Exploring UK complicity in practices of rendition, internment without trial and torture, Peirce writes that "what is in fact the law precisely mirrors instinctive moral revulsion" but that "in this country, the government hardly needs such acceptance, since here the additional and crucial factor is that the public is unlikely to be given sufficient information to trigger revulsion."[284] As Bridle suggests, engaging with Peirce's work, "hence the night, the private terminals, charter flights, the hired coaches. All of this is deliberate: it is a policy of not being seen."[285] These practices of increasing obfuscation within immigration removal and detention—enabled primarily via increased private contracting—were the catalyst for Bridle's project; attempting to bring into public view the extrajudicial practices that were increasingly occluded.

Bridle worked with the London-based architectural visualisation studio Picture Plane to create the 3D renderings of Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre, the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) at Field House and the Inflite Executive Jet Centre. He had previously written about this group's work as part of his *Render Ghosts* project, itself a part of the wider "New Aesthetics" project. Here, Bridle was interested in the way that architectural visualisations, like those created by Picture Plane, could be "considered the most visible public, legal, urban art of the 21st century. Displayed on hoardings throughout the metropolis, they confront us every day with a kind of digital futurism."[286] What struck Bridle was the fact that many of the visualisations produced by companies like Picture Plane never ended up becoming physical structures, rather they operate as particular kinds of "digital imaginaries" of future urban development. As Bridle continues, "today's architectural visualisations exist… to call into being, and physicality, the buildings of the imagination."[287] Thus, Bridle was interested in the relationship between architecture and visualisation, particularly in the rendering of urban imaginaries that might not find physical form. Through

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[283] James Bridle, "Making 'Seamless Transitions'," *Oxford Law Faculty: Border Criminologies* (blog), 25 February 2015, https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2015/02/making-seamless.
[284] Gareth Peirce, "Make Sure You Say That You Were Treated Properly," *London Review of Books* 31, no. 9 (2009): 9–14.
[285] James Bridle, "Planespotting," *Booktwo* (blog), 18 December 2013, http://booktwo.org/notebook/planespotting/.
[286] James Bridle, "Balloons and Render Ghosts," *Domusweb* (blog), 27 February 2013, https://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/2013/02/27/balloons-and-render-ghosts.html.
[287] Ibid.

the *Render Ghosts* project, Bridle offers a subtle critique of the impact that such digital architectural imaginations have on processes of urban development—particularly the placing of rendered simulacra of future urban exploitation into socio-economically vulnerable sites and spaces (billboards or hoardings on vacant properties and land). As briefly suggested above, the interesting dimension of Bridle's return to Picture Plane for the *Seamless Transitions* project is that the digital visualisation company are asked to imagine and render spaces that already have a physical form, yet remain hidden and occluded through a matrix of extrajudicial legislation and private ownership. Thus, instead of Picture Plane's architectural visualisations imagining the urban futures of gentrification or commercialisation, these same tools are used to expose sites that materially exist, yet lack a place in the public imaginary—precisely through the deliberate obfuscation of the violence and internment that takes place within their walled boundaries.

Bridle used a mix of evidentiary materials to create these visualisations: satellite images, planning documents, interviews with activists, academic literature (predominantly drawing on Bosworth's volume) and testimony from those who are "subject to… [the] machinations" of these spaces.[288] The film is a series of slow tracking shots that move throughout these digitally rendered spaces. We begin with a crawling tracking shot through the entrance of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC), Field House. As the camera moves over a security x-ray belt in the main lobby, the image divides in two. The bottom image continues tracking towards a set of double doors at the end of a corridor immediately off the main lobby, whilst the top image focuses on two sets of lifts to their immediate left. We then shift locations, moving down another corridor in the same building. This corridor opens onto a larger space that is flanked on either side by chairs, presumably a waiting area that connects several of the floor's court chambers and hearing rooms. Moving inside one of these rooms, we see a typical configuration for a small hearing chamber. The furthest wall is adorned with a large Royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom. In an article for The Guardian newspaper, Bridle discusses his sole field trip to Field House in 2015. His first interaction was with a security guard in the main lobby, who told Bridle "how proud he was to work there, because: 'It's transparent. It's open to the public and anyone can come and see justice being done.'"[289] However, as Bridle suggests, after handing over his recording equipment to the security guard

[288] James Bridle, "What They Don't Want You to See: The Hidden World of UK Deportation," *The Guardian*, 27 January 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/jan/27/hidden-world-of-uk-deportation-asylum-seamless-transitions.
[289] Ibid.

and proceeding to one of the court rooms, he "found the door was locked. The court was in secret session: under the special rules of SIAC, not even the defendant nor their legal team are allowed into the room to know the evidence against them."[290]

Figure 26. Still from Seamless Transitions, directed by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

The SIAC was established in 1997 primarily as a venue of appeal for foreign nationals who were "facing detention, deportation or exclusion from the UK on grounds of national security."[291] Prior to 9/11, SIAC was a rarely used system as such deportation cases were uncommon. However, the steady accrual of anti-terror legislation post-9/11 and 7/7 meant the number of cases heard by the SIAC greatly increased. The reason for SIAC's implementation was the fact that evidence heard in cases involving alleged terrorism offences often included material that the appellant and their legal team could not access due to national security protections—"reports of spying operations, phone taps or the testimony of informers deep inside terrorism organisations."[292] Therefore, there were parts of the case that could not be accessed by the appellant. The SIAC aimed to address this by appointing "security-vetted special advocates (SA) to act for the appellant."[293] These security-vetted advocates could work with appellants on the case to a certain degree; however, closed sessions were held where only

[290] Ibid.
[291] "Q&A: Secret Court Explained," BBC News, 28 April 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/3666235.stm.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.

the special advocate could challenge the protected evidence, with no oversight by the appellant. Therefore, whilst the special advocate can access and challenge the secret evidence, this material cannot be discussed with the appellant and his legal team—a "virtual shutter" is drawn.[294] Thus, the fundamental issue remains; appellants and their legal team cannot access certain evidence. Some have suggested that "special advocate is hamstrung because they cannot build a proper case without being able to discuss the evidence with the appellant."[295] In addition, Amnesty International have argued that "judgements rely on a 'shockingly low burden of proof' because evidence cannot be tested to the same standards in the criminal courts."[296] They also suggest that much of the secret evidence has been obtained by methods that amount to torture. Bridle and Picture Plane's rendering of the SIAC at Field House seems to emphasise the hidden nature of the processes that take place within this building. Whilst their architectural visualisations afford us virtual access to this site, the fact that the space remains devoid of the infrastructural and judicial figures and mechanisms responsible for such extrajudicial obfuscation means that these levers of power remain beyond our grasp.

Figure 27. Still from Seamless Transitions, directed by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

However, Bridle has suggested that maintaining this level of impenetrability was intentional:

[294] Ibid.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Ibid.

> I realised the work was doing something slightly different to that tradition of direct, subject-oriented photoreportage. *Seamless Transitions* is not about the individual stories of immigrants and borders—as necessary and important as those stories are. It's about the unaccountability and ungraspability of vast, complex systems: of nation-wide architectures, accumulations of laws and legal processes, infrastructures of intent and prejudice, and structural inequalities of experience and understanding."[297]

Thus, whilst Bridle's attempt at visualisation attempts to afford us some degree of "access" to the spatial configuration of this site of sovereign power, it also reinforces the fact that the tactics of extrajudicial power within its walls remains "ungraspable" through the intricate web of anti-terror legislation that encases appellants and their legal support. The only true "image of power" we are offered in this sequence is purely symbolic; the Royal coat of arms—a representation of sovereign extrajudicial law and exploitation par-excellence.

From here, we shift locations, moving through the Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre. Originally named Harmondsworth Detention Unit, the site was opened in 1970. As Bosworth has noted, Harmondsworth was created as a space to detain "Commonwealth citizens denied entry at the border who had been given in-country right of appeal under the Immigration Appeals Act 1969."[298] This site was the first purpose built Immigration Detention centre and the first to be constructed outside a prison or airport. It expanded state power in crucial ways as it "unlocked the potential for administrative confinement of foreign nationals."[299] As briefly touched upon above, whilst the 1969 Appeals Act aimed to strengthen denied Commonwealth citizens right to in-country appeal, the resulting web infrastructure surrounding it—of which Harmondsworth forms a crucial part—ultimately served to enhance sovereign power over foreign nationals, with powers for indefinite detention being perhaps the most crucial dimension of this control. The original Harmondsworth Detention Unit is now a vacated building and IRC Colnbrook—another immigration removal centre—occupies the site. In 2000, the new Harmondsworth facility—the version that is rendered in *Seamless Transitions*—was constructed a short distance away from the previous site. This new site was built to Category B prison standards. Category B is part of a 4-category system devised by the HM Prison Service. Whilst Category A spaces are

[297] Ibid.
[298] Bosworth, 22.
[299] Ibid.

reserved for “Prisoners whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public or the police or the security of the State,” Category B is reserved for “prisoners for whom the very highest conditions of security are not necessary but for whom escape must be made very difficult.”

We begin with a slow tracking shot through a set of double doors, reinforced by iron bars and monitored by a CCTV camera. This room then opens up onto what appears to be a waiting room or lobby area, fluorescent lighting panels in the ceiling give the room an austere white glow. The track continues, moving us across the room and towards an identical set of double doors to the first, on the far side. Between these two doors, the supposedly natural exterior light casts a long ray of light onto the floor. Already “illuminated” by the fluorescent lighting panels on the ceiling, this ray of “natural” light seems particularly incongruous.

Figure 28. Still from Seamless Transitions, directed by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

Moving through this second set of double doors, the camera opens onto an interior courtyard. The weathered concrete floor has the markings of a sports field and at the far end of the courtyard a giant chess set is visible. The courtyard is enclosed on all sides by a three story building. As we near the halfway point of the courtyard, the camera begins to track towards the left, once again the image splits in two. The lower half of the image is shifted 45 degrees to the left of the upper image, and moves us through an exit from the left of the courtyard; a large concrete structure that is topped by several feet of wire mesh and coiled barbed wire. Beyond this, we can see the exterior wall of the prison. Again, a concrete base is topped by the same wire mesh/barbed wire configuration. Next, we move into one of the cell blocks. This

space is split over two open plan floors, each level is lined with individual cell blocks. The center of the floor is lined with bolted down chairs and tables. The myriad of florescent lights on the ceiling bounce their light off the hard, highly polished floor. Each of the cell block doors has an external lock and metal observation flap. We track to the far side of the room, before the image splits in two once more. The lower half presents another view of the open plan seating area, whilst the upper half gives us a closer view of the cell doors. The upper half of the image settles on a cell door that is now open, offering us a view inside. Returning to a single frame, the camera now tracks into the cell space. At the far end of this narrow space is a small sink, and above it is a small iron barred window. To the far left is a bunk bed, and on the near side a table and chair.

Figure 29. Still from Seamless Transitions, directed by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

As suggested above, Bridle's rendering of these sites remains attentive to the "unaccountability and ungraspability" of these spaces of sovereign power. Whilst these spaces remain devoid of the infrastructural and judicial figures and mechanisms responsible for such extrajudicial force, the "uncanniness" of their digital rendering and visualisation also plays an important role in trying to understand where the responsibility lies for the creation of these extrajudicial carceral spaces. As briefly touched upon above, Bridle has a long-standing interest in architectural visualisation technologies. For years, he has "been fascinated with the increasing visibility in the world of unreal representations: the computer-generated images of products, buildings, even whole districts. If you watch TV adverts carefully, you start to notice

the impossibly clean lines of fitted kitchens and background streetscapes."[300] Thus, once again we are returned to some of the central preoccupations of the "New Aesthetic"—that nexus between the digital and physical within the built environment. Within *Seamless Transitions*, we find multiple instances of "uncanny" representation that mirror the "impossibly clean lines" discussed by Bridle above; the incongruous double illumination of the lobby area in Harmondsworth or the impossibly smooth and reflective floor in the cell block. As Jörg Majer, Director of Picture Plane has suggested, "we didn't want to take it to an absolute real space, we wanted it to feel like it is still… somehow virtual, so that we are not pretending to know exactly what it's like. It was important to have a slightly diagrammatic feel to the whole experience." Thus, the incongruity of certain features of the spatial renderings in *Seamless Transitions* seem to have been intentionally constructed. Why did Bridle insist on keeping these "diagrammatic" qualities within his architectural renderings? As he suggests, "the film is itself at a distance; like all simulations, it cannot possibly convey the bodily, fleshy, visceral realities of detention and deportation"[301] Thus, Bridle acknowledges that the film operates at a remove, both through the absence of figures and infrastructures responsible for the execution of sovereign power and through the virtual and diagrammatic veneer of the renderings themselves. As he suggests, "I believe these unreal representations to be emblematic of some truth about the present that we live in: a technologically augmented reality which both obscures the true intentions of its creators while simultaneously offering us a clearer view of the realities of power than anything we have been able to see before."[302] Thus, through the uncanny aesthetics of these images, Bridle seems to want to point towards their inherent constructedness, as well as the larger formations of power behind their creation. Within her article, "Infrastructural Violence: The Smooth Spaces of Terror," Susan Schuppli makes a markedly similar point, suggesting that there is something "deeply sinister in the relentless perfection of these multiplying screen spaces emptied of human presence. Dread streams from their plasmatic pixels and violence lurks beneath their digital cladding."[303] For both Bridle and Schuppli, the "perfection" of these renderings seems simultaneously to mask and point towards the violence they conceal. Bridle furthers this point in a separate interview on *Seamless Transitions*, where he asks,

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[300] James Bridle, "Making "Seamless Transitions."
[301] Ibid.
[302] Ibid.
[303] Susan Schuppli, "Infrastructural Violence: The Smooth Spaces of Terror," 7.

> Who designs these CGI systems? Designed in pieces of software—assemblages of planners and engineers, plus people who originally wrote the software—where does the responsibility for these buildings lie, when they're constructed from these images. The same is true of immigration policy and justice system; these are kinds of agglomerations and accumulations of practice and policy, law and political intent that are extremely complex and difficult to parse out who's responsible and where pressure can be applied

Here, Bridle offers a potent parallel between the generation of such architectural visualisations and the increasingly impenetrable web of immigration policy-making and border control. For him, within both these realms of practice—one primarily corporate and visual, the other judicial and semantic—there is a similar obfuscation of who is accountable for their creation. The complex webs of actors and infrastructure involved in their generation mean that these "kinds of agglomerations and accumulations" make it extremely difficult to locate who is fundamentally responsible. This is particularly true of the current immigration detention system in the UK, where we find the complex interrelations between public and private actors, policy and contracting, law and finance, all united around a wider aim to occlude the visibility of the extrajudicial processes they are tasked—and oftentimes financed—to carry out. Indeed, Schuppli has suggested something markedly similar when she writes that the locations depicted in *Seamless Transitions* are "enveloped in the computational veneer of synthetic architecture, the cinematic capture of corporate culture merges with the super-mesh of carceral space."[304] For Schuppli, architectural spaces like those examined within *Seamless Transitions* function as "key components" in the "infrastructural violence of the global war on terror that results in the systematic erosion of rights as well as the legal guarantees of citizenship."[305] Schuppli is keen to develop this connection to the larger machinations of the war on terror further, and she does so by examining the exhibitory strategies used by Bridle. Originally exhibited at The Photographer's Gallery in London, *Seamless Transitions* was presented on the gallery's "Media Wall"—a combination of eight large portrait-orientated monitors nested closely together to create the appearance of a single large frame. For Schuppli, Bridle's work does more "than simply bring the unseen into public view and therefore into public discourse." By using CGI and video wall technologies, Bridle attempts to make explicit "the degree to which the smooth surfaces of data-space will produce the very screens on which the war on terror and

[304] Ibid.
[305] Ibid., 8.

its various protagonists will wage their battles—their de facto image wars."[306] Indeed, when we compare the organisation of screens used to exhibit *Seamless Transitions* to the "televisual interface" used in drone warfare, there are visual/compositional similarities; an artificial maximisation of visibility is paramount. Moreover, both these image regimes form part of wider clandestine and occluded forms of violence that are inherently architectural and spatial. Whilst the sites of drone operation are placed at a physical remove from the battlefield—typically on remote air force bases—occluding the sovereign forces controlling them, in a similar way the sites of immigration detention are increasingly withdrawn from sight.

Figure 30. Image from Seamless Transitions exhibition, curated by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

Figure 31. Image of two military drone operators (author and date unknown).

[306] Ibid., 9.

The third and final section of the film opens with a shot from the back of a bus. As the camera slowly tracks forward, we can see another bus from the left window and to the front and right the entrance to the Inflite Executive Jet Centre at Stanstead Airport, lit by two small floodlights. After a fade to black, we now find ourselves positioned at the back right corner of the bus in a car park, facing the entrance to the Jet Centre directly. As we begin to track forwards towards the entrance, we move over several pools of water, each offering an unbroken—and uncanny— reflection of the surrounding space. We then move through the entrance way and into the interior lobby of the Jet Centre. This space sits in marked contrast to the two spaces focused on previously.

Figure 32. Still from Seamless Transitions, directed by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

A small central table, positioned on a wider circular rug, is flanked on either side by various sofas, lamps and plants, an elegant chandelier extends down from the centre of the ceiling. A low-level halogen strip light that runs the length of the apex between the far ceiling and wall offers a low purple glow. We move through this space to a pair of double doors on the far side of the lobby. Here, we move across a short track of airport tarmac towards a small private jet, half white and half black, shrouded in low-level mist. We move up the central stairs of the plane, towards the cabin door. Beyond, all is black.

Our movement through this final space offers the clearest articulation of the interconnections between sovereign power and private infrastructure, which simultaneously structure the increasing invisibilisation of immigration detention and removal. Writing about

his field trip to the Jet Centre on a cold night in December 2013—briefly touched upon above—Bridle describes how after approximately 9pm a series of coaches arrived "accompanied by police and private security vans. Most of them are from WH Tours in Crawley; one bears the exuberant legend of the holiday company "Just Go!" The coaches have come from detention centres all over England. They are carrying people who are being deported."[307]

Figure 33. Still from Seamless Transitions, directed by James Bridle, 2015, UK.

The Inflite Jet Centre is located on the Eastern fringe of Stanstead, near a series of other private hangers. As Bridle suggests, Inflite "presents itself online as something between a boutique hotel and a serviced office complex, offering 'luxurious' furnishings, on-site chef and meeting rooms."[308] Indeed, the Inflite website repeatedly emphasises both the luxuriousness of their facilities and the "seamless" movement through the space that passengers will experience. Whilst this discourse is of course directed towards the Inflite's moneyed clientele—who, because of their wealth, have no issues with global movement—it also seems to speak to the "discreet" and "occluded" practices of deportation that take place during the night. Both practices must function seamlessly, though for markedly different purposes. Indeed, as Susan Schuppli suggests, "even the executive lounge in the airport terminal at Stansted withdraws from the regime of visibility when its human cargo switches from its elite business clientele to

[307] James Bridle, "What They Don't Want You to See: The Hidden World of UK Deportation."
[308] Ibid.

that of the dispossessed."[309] The gliding, floating tracks through this space of corporate travel—slightly faster than those through the judicial and carceral spaces that come before—perhaps speaks to the duality of the need for frictionless movement through this space; at once satisfying the needs of two distinct (yet financially lucrative) client bases—those private "global travellers" who wish to move with maximum ease, and the state, who wishes to remove those who have been denied such freedom with ruthless efficiency. At once intensely visible and occluded—depending on the site's use function—the space of the Inflite Jet Centre becomes representative of the inherent contradictions between "global frictionless travel" for some and detention and removal for others; divisions which, more often than not, are drawn along the lines of race, class and nationality. *Seamless Transitions* is a work that focuses on the spatial and infrastructural complexities of immigration detention and removal. Bridle's film attempts to render visible the complex tensions that surround these highly volatile spaces. However, the work is not merely an attempt to make visible certain aspects of immigration detention and removal's architectural infrastructures, it also aims to show the complex forms of control and governance that go into the constant occlusion of these spaces and how these same processes can be so ruthlessly efficient. As the camera tracks into the empty abyss of the waiting aircraft, the phrase on the introductory page of the company's website takes on a double irony: "Something awesome has happened at Inflite." Indeed, the very name "inflite" evokes a state of perpetural in-betweeness and precarious liminality.

Toponimia and the Carceral Village

Here, we shift into the final case study of this chapter, focusing on artist filmmaker Jonathan Perel's 2015 film *Toponomia*. The case studies examined thus far in this chapter have been focused upon architecturally enclosed sites of carceral internment. Whilst appropriating existing architectures and embedding themselves within already existing infrastructural networks—maximising their ability to occlude their violent practices—both the Omarska camp and the infrastructural sites of immigration detention and removal in the UK are enclosed by concrete physical perimeters. They have spatial boundaries, the limits of which are surveyed and traversed by cameras both real and virtual. However, within Perel's film we examine sites of historical interment that have porous boundaries and perimeters—they are physically "liminal spaces 'betwixt and between' the inside and outside of prisons."[310] Here then, we will

[309] Susan Schuppli, "Infrastructural Violence: The Smooth Spaces of Terror," 9.
[310] Nick Gill et al., "Carceral Circuitry: New Directions in Carceral Geography," 2.

examine how Perel's film interrogates sites of carceral internment that are seemingly boundless; the structures of sovereign power that aided their construction seemingly bleed out into the wider social landscape, linking up with the wider project of state terror undertaken by Argentina's military dictatorship in the 1970s. Located in the far north of the country, Tucuman is the smallest and most densely populated of Argentina's provinces. Tucuman was the site of "an armed rebellion of mountain-dwelling peasants [led primarily by the guerrilla group the People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo or ERP)] in the early 1970's, crushed in brutal fashion by the country's military during what was officially known as 'Operation Independence'" (Operativo Independencia).[311] As Miguel Teubal suggests, the ERP—the armed faction of the Workers' Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores, a Trotskyist-Maoist communist organisation)—was formed in direct opposition to the military dictatorship that had overthrown the government in June 1966. The PRT (and ERP, by extension) opposed the political and economic policies implemented by the military junta and their first de facto president Juan Carlos Onganía. These policies were primarily neoliberal in outlook, favouring minimal state intervention and maximum free market speculation. They simultaneously aimed to suppress advances that had been made to improve workers' rights over the previous half century. Indeed, as Teubal writes, "policy measures adopted during the military dictatorship… known as '*proceso*', were designed to favour financial and speculative activities associated, in one way or another, with foreign debt contracted in this period."[312] Alongside this neoliberal economic doctrine, the military dictatorship was also responsible for a sustained period of state terror throughout the mid to late 1970s, involving the torture, murder and disappearance of many thousands of Argentinians. These clandestine extrajudicial military operations were undertaken to suppress guerrilla insurgencies like the ERP, which had risen in opposition to the ruling junta.[313] The aim of this section is to examine how Perel's *Toponimia* confronts the socio-spatial recomposition of Tucuman province after the brutal suppression of the uprising. Focusing on four villages constructed by the military to rehouse locals and dissidents, Perel's film utilises a rigorous spatio-political aesthetic that aims to interrogate how the spatial organisation of these sites sought to maximise powers of surveillance and military state control. As previously suggested, it also shows how the limits of these carceral spaces were fluid and porous. Whilst

[311] Neil Young, "'Toponymy': FIDMarseille Review," *The Hollywood Reporter*, 20 July 2015, http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/toponymy-fidmarseille-review-809291.
[312] Miguel Teubal, "Rise and Collapse of Neoliberalism in Argentina: The Role of Economic Groups," *Journal of Developing Societies* 20, no. 3–4 (2004): 175.
[313] Ibid.

techniques of observation were maximised, concrete boundaries did not exist. Thus, across these four villages we are presented with less spatially demarcated carceral sites, which concomitantly allowed for subtler forms of sovereign violence to seep out beyond their borders; reflecting in crucial ways the wider project of state terror that engulfed the whole country. Simultaneously however, such an aesthetic also highlights contemporary social transformations post-dictatorship. More specifically, it will be argued that while the inhabitants of the villages post-dictatorship have been able to reclaim and appropriate such authoritarian social spaces, uneven geographical developments between urban centres and rural periferies in Argentina have created the economic and infrastructural void for such strategies of (re)appropriation. Before moving into this analysis of Perel's work, I think it is necessary to lay out more concretely the historical circumstances that led to both the suppression of the insurgency in Tucuman and the subsequent creation of these four sites of surveillance.

As Donald C. Hodges suggests, during the Fifth Congress of the PRT in July 1970, the ERP took the decision to shift from resistance to revolution. During congress, the official document of the ERP was adopted, part of which read "in the course of the revolutionary war launched in our country, our party has begun to fight with the objective of disorganising the armed forces and making possible the insurrection of the proletariat and the people… the armed forces of the regime can only be defeated by opposing to them a revolutionary army." Diaz Bessone has divided the revolutionary war into three periods:

> the initial aggression with the complicity of General Peron that came as the culmination of the resistance (1970-1973); the continuing and intensified war by the guerrillas on their own account in opposition to the Peronist party in power (1973-1975); and the extension of the revolutionary war to the entire country that compelled the last Peronist government to authorise the intervention of the armed forces in February 1975.[314]

As Hodges writes, it was during the early 1970s that the ERP and other guerrilla insurgencies sought to secure control of rural zones beyond the urban centres, where conflict had typically taken place. Their aim was to secure larger land bases for their military operations and Tucuman was a prime site for this expansion. The ERP's activities in Tucuman were primarily "responsible for Isabel Peron's directive to the military in February 1975 to use any and all

[314] Donald C. Hodges, *Argentina's 'Dirty War': An Intellectual Biography* (University of Texas Press, 2011), 102.

means for combating the rural guerrillas."[315] The issuing of these "annihilation decrees" greatly expanded military powers; enabling state-sanctioned torture and murder in the name of suppressing left-wing dissidents. The signing of the annihilation decrees is widely acknowledged by many historians as the primary catalyst for Operation Independence.

Operation Independence formed a crucial part of this wider practice of state terror. It was the first large-scale military operation to take place during the "Dirty War" (Guerra Sucia)—the name given to this latter stage of state terror in the country that lasted from approximately 1975 to 1983. Known officially as the Process of National Reorganisation (Proceso de Reorganización Nacional), the conflict was one of the first instances where the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance (Alianza Anticomunista Argentina)—formed in 1973 during the rule of Isabel Perón and which united a number of military units and rightist death squads under a single title—actively sought to eradicate left-wing guerillas and leftist political organisations, such as the ERP. By 1983, the conflict's death toll was estimated to stand at between 10,000 and 30,000, with many more disappeared. Moreover, as Hodges suggests, by the peak of the Dirty War, even the vaguest espousal of left-wing leanings or political affiliations became enough to make individuals subject to the threat of disappearance, torture or internment. Therefore, with the rapid expansion of the country's interned and disappeared population, there was an increased necessity to find sufficient carceral space to house them. As Hodges writes, "with Operation Independence began the so-called dirty war. In retaliation for the ERP's frustrated attack on the army's command post in the town of Famailla, the army turned the town's school into the first clandestine concentration camp for the disappeared."[316] Thus, the rapid expansion of potential prisoners required spaces that could easily be coopted for such acts of clandestine sovereign violence. Indeed, as Hodges continues, "from February 1975 to April 1976, after which the methodology of disappearance, interrogation, and toruture was extended to the rest of the country, this chamber of horrors processed hundreds of the ERP's militants from all over Argentina."[317] The appropriation and creation of clandestine spaces for detention, torture and murder was a central tactic utilised by the military during this period. Changing the functional use of already existing public/private infrastructures and spaces is—as we have seen throughout this chapter—a common practice during the expansion of such extrajudicial state violations and violence; allowing for the cloaking and occluding of such furtive practices. Alongside this appropriation of already existing territories and

[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid.
[317] Ibid.

architectures, there was also the creation of new settlements within Tucuman province. The primary aim of these new sites was "to prevent the repetition of such an uprising… [with] the surviving indigenous population… [being] relocated to the four new settlements where they could be more easily kept under surveillance and thus controlled."[318] Part of the larger military sanctioned "Rural Relocation Plan" (Plan de Reubicación Rural), each town was named after a prominent member of the state military who had died during Operativo Independencia: Capitán Cáceres; Soldado Maldonado; Sargento Moya and Teniente Berdina.

Toponimia is divided into four chapters, each focusing on one of the four villages. Perel employs a rigorous formal structure, with each chapter consisting of "sixty-eight shots lasting fifteen seconds apiece."[319] The ten initial shots in each chapter present "excerpts from official documents relating to the settlement's founding," whilst the remaining fifty-eight visually map out each of the villages, as they exist today.[320] With the construction of each village being near identical, the film cycles through the same setups for each of the live action shots across the four locations. For example, we find near-identical setups that depict markedly similar gateways, roads, farmland and monuments across the four locations. In addition to these four meticulously organised chapters, a twenty-two shot prologue offers further archival evidence of the villages' construction. The following images and text are taken from the urban planning documents presented within this prologue.

> In 1974, the inhabitants of the region in some ways lacked basic support until the Armed Forces arrived and developed a broad action plan of assistance, guidance and support for residents. "Operation Independence" completely eradicated the subversion returning peace to those who did not accept the criminal arrogance of organised terrorism. The "Rural Relocation Plan" had as its primary objective to centralise the scattered population and to stop the subversive action that was developed with support of the dissemination by inhabitants of the Tucuman hills. The constructions are modern and urbanised. The homes are distributed among four rectangular blocks, seventy-eight homes… The urban layout of the town is connected by a total of seven streets, completely paved each named for a hero of the subversion. Created by the efforts of soldiers and workers, it symbolises the victory of the Argentine Army over the armed

[318] Ibid.
[319] Ibid.
[320] Ibid.

subversion. Its inhabitants, proud of their town, wait, full of hope, for the establishment of some source of work… dreams of progress.

Figure 34. Still from Toponimia, directed by Jonathan Perel, 2015, Argentina.

Whilst attempting to espouse a rhetoric of community cohesion and collective struggle—think, for example, of phrases such as "the inhabitants, proud of their towns, wait, full of hope, for the establishment of some source of work… [and] dream of progress"—the planning documents presented by the film are in fact ideologically shot through with the military dictatorship's desires for social suppression and containment; aiming, for example, to "centralise the scattered population" and "return peace to those who do not accept the criminal arrogance of organised terrorism."

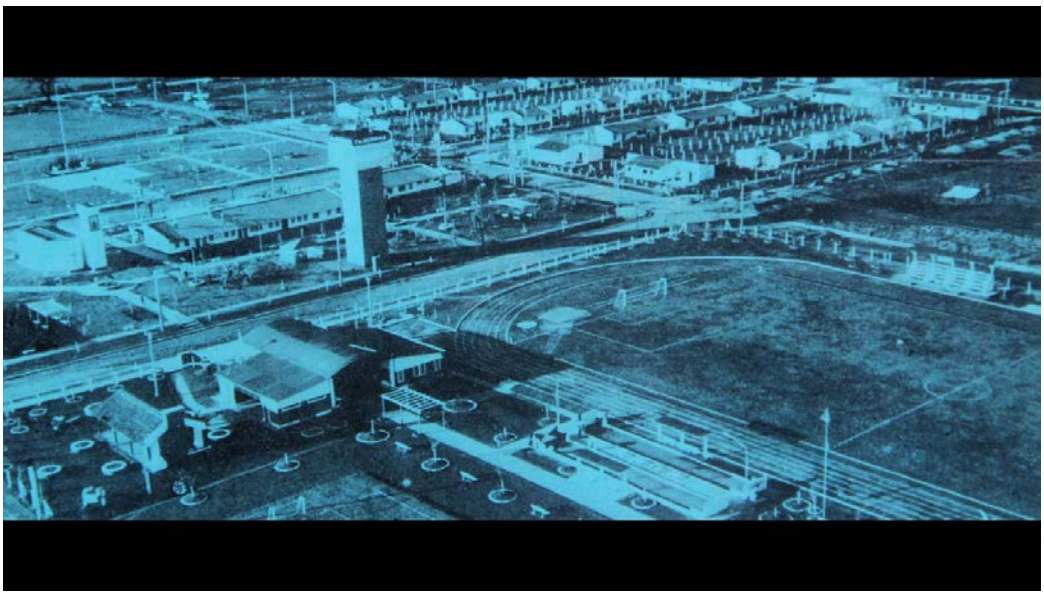

Figure 35. Still from Toponimia, directed by Jonathan Perel, 2015, Argentina.

Additionally, various visual documents of the villages are presented in this prologue – blue prints, architectural plans, maps – indicating how these social spaces were to be organised in such a way as to maximise surveillance and control. For example, archival photographs from this opening section underscore the panoptic and carceral organisation of the four villages, which are structured in a grid-like manner around a central watchtower.

Figure 36. Still from Toponimia, directed by Jonathan Perel, 2015, Argentina.

Consequently, within this opening sequence a clear disjuncture develops between the socially progressive and liberatory rhetoric espoused by the military dictatorship and the panoptic and carceral social spaces they fabricate. Furthermore, the rigorous formal style employed by Perel aims in particular ways to echo not only the rigidity of these fabricated social spaces, but also the military dictatorship's ideological and spatial desires for control and surveillance. As Michael Pattison suggests, *Toponimia* "imposes (as might a fascist dictatorship) mathematical precision onto pre-existing landscapes that are at once geographically disparate and ideologically linked, fragmenting each space into images that are echoed from one numbered chapter to the next."[321] Consequently, it is arguable that the mathematical—and arguably dictatorial—formal structure employed by Perel functions as somewhat of an ideological corollary to the panoptic and carceral construction of these post-revolutionary social spaces in Tucuman province. Fundamentally, there is a conceptual mirroring between the formal structure of the film and the panoptic and carceral organisation of the four villages.

[321] Michael Pattison, "Medium-Length Highs Over Fragmented Landscapes: FIDMarseille," *Filmmaker Magazine*, 7 July 2015, http://filmmakermagazine.com/94795-medium-length-highs-over-fragmented-landscapes-fidmarseille/.

Here, it is worth pausing briefly to more concretely delineate the boundaries of Perel's formal-spatial construction and examine how it mirrors the ideological desire for control and suppression by the military dictatorship. To draw together such formal and ideological elements, it is productive to turn once more to Lefebvre's theoretical framework of space as a social product. Returning to such a concept is also useful as it structures and undergirds the theoretical frameworks of an array of the spatial thinkers examined throughout this thesis. For Lefebvre, there is a tripartite division of social space: conceived space, lived space and perceived space. Conceived space can be understood as the conceptualisations and representations of space within dominant social groups and spheres, such as urban planners.[322] Lived space is constituted by spatial representations "which ordinary people make in living their lives, the mental constructs with which they approach the physical world."[323] Perceived space is "the practical basis of the perception of the outside world" and is also intimately related to Lefebvre's notion of "spatial practice," which is constituted by activities in a person's day-to-day life that are determined by particular social, political and economic conditions and contingencies.[324] As Doreen Massey has noted, there are marked connections between the models of lived and perceived space, both of which arise from the daily inhabitation of—and material engagement with—a particular socio-spatial formation.[325] Consequently, the central division to be found within this tripartite framework is between conceived space—the somewhat abstracted strategy of (re)organising a particular socio-spatial formation, typically influenced by particular institutional forms of governmentality—and the more intimately wedded (and potentially liberatory) notions of lived and perceived space.

Such a socio-spatial framework can be productively mapped onto the spatio-political formalism of Perel's film. Providing a further delineation of the notion of conceived space, Stephen Connolly has suggested that it is constituted primarily by "techniques of measuring, enumeration and apportioning space by the spatial disciplines."[326] It is arguable that both the presentation of planning materials (drawings, maps, letters etc.) and the rigorous formal construction employed by Perel across the later live action sequences, expose the "conceived" aspects of this social space, and, concomitantly, the governmental imperatives of the military dictatorship in conceiving and fashioning such carceral sites. The notion of governmentality is

[322] Marion Roberts, "Lefebvre and the History of Space," accessed 15 October 2016, http://www.rudi.net/books/12219.
[323] Ibid.
[324] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), 40.
[325] Roberts, "Lefebvre and the History of Space."
[326] Stephen Connolly, "Spatial Cinema" (18 May 2016).

defined by Foucault as "the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population."[327] Productive connections can thus be made between the conceived and governmental dimensions of such spatial constructions. Consequently, we can return to Pattison's earlier contentions about the mathematical and dictatorial structure of the film through a more specifically spatial lense; that of the ideologically constructed "conceived" space. Perel's formal structure aims to expose such "conceived" spaces—and their embedded forms of governmentality—thus highlighting the panoptic and carceral enclosure of the rural proletariat within Tucuman province. However, these images also seem to implicitly emphasise the boundlessness of the villages; no fixed perimeters are visible in the archival materials. Indeed, the seemingly incongruous "openness" of these carceral spaces mirrors the pseudo-liberatory rhetoric espoused by the military dictatorship. However, as we have seen across the previous case studies, these are potentially processes of carceral occlusion and masking; the physical "boundlessness" of these carceral spaces potentially makes them less immediately detectable as sites of internment. Indeed, as Agamben suggests, for camps to be effective mechanisms of control, they must be removed from plain sight. Once we understand the wider forms of disciplinary governmentality that underpinned the spatial organisation of the four villages, it is impossible to read this boundlessness as anything other than a seeping out—or, perhaps more aptly, in—of the sovereign and militaristic violence felt across the whole of Argentina during this period of state terror. Although these sites are not physically demarcated, the less perceptible structures of power move across these spaces of "soft" internment.

It is also crucial to note that by utilising this mathematical (or arguably dictatorial) formal structure to examine the *contemporary* social milieu of the four villages, a powerful juxtaposition is set up between the historical desire for control/surveillance and contemporary attempts to reclaim such social spaces. With vandalised government monuments and community appropriation of state buildings in evidence throughout these live action sequences, there is a growing apperception of the liberatory transformations of these suppressive spaces post-dictatorship. Critic Neil Young highlights this juxtaposition, suggesting that "while the government may have succeeded in quelling the troublesome populace, the condition of the villages forty years on displays the triumph of human individualism over externally imposed

[327] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 88.

uniformity."[328] Thus, whilst Perel's structuring logic arguably aims to reflect the military dictatorship's desire for rigid control over these fabricated social spaces in Tucuman province, the live action shots of the villages today undermine such a sense of oppression, indicating the ways in which the community has reshaped and reappropriated its social milieu.

The manner in which *Toponimia* juxtaposes conflicting approaches to these social spaces—the historical desire for control/surveillance and contemporary attempts at reclamation and reappropriation—arguably lends the film an almost *heterotopic* dimension. Foucault, defining the heterotopia, suggests, "we live inside a set of relations that delineate sites that are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another… The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible."[329] Thus, the heterotopia is a non-hegemonic and heterogeneous space that contains connections to other places and temporalities that are not immediately readable within material space. One of Foucault's "principles" for heterotopic space – which is particularly applicable to *Toponimia* and its manifestation of different conceptualisations of space – is the suggestion that "a society… can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion; for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within a society and the same heterotopia can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs, have one function or another."[330] Consequently, the ability of a society to significantly transform the function of a particular socio-spatial location is a concept that can productively be mapped onto the four villages in Tucuman; here we find communities that have fundamentally undermined the previously militaristic and carceral function of their social spaces.

Foucault's notion of the heterotopia is very much interrelated with both Massey and Soja's discourse on spatiality. For example, earlier in the same piece Foucault suggests, "the great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history… The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed."[331] Clear connections can be made here between Foucault's "epoch of space" and Massey's "space as the dimension of a multiplicity of durations." Elsewhere, Massey has suggested the relationship between the spatial and the durational is key to understanding how such a filmic spatio-politcal aesthetic functions. Discussing the extended examinations of space that

[328] Young, 2016.
[329] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias," *Architecture/Mouvement/Continuité* 5 (1984): 3.
[330] Ibid., 5.
[331] Ibid., 1.

structure such works, Massey suggests, "these long takes give us, in the midst of the rush and flow of globalisation, a certain stillness. But they are not stills. They are about duration. They tell us of 'becoming', in place."[332] Fundamentally, for both, when thinking spatially, we must remain attentive to the myriad of historical and durational temporalities that have informed—and continue to inform—the organisation of social space. It is my contention that Perel's filmic practice aims to juxtapose different historical and ideological constructions of space, bumping them up against one another to highlight their shifting socio-political configurations of such sites—from militaristically conceived to contemporaneously appropriated and reclaimed. Such an approach echoes both Massey and Foucault's theories in productive ways. For example, we are presented with a variety of artefacts throughout the film—busts, religious statues etc., leftover from the time of the dictatorship—which are either significantly damaged, or completely destroyed. Whilst the busts of Capitán Cáceres, Soldado Maldonado and Teniente Berdina are still relatively intact, only the plinth upon which the bust of Sargento Moya should sit remains. Graffiti also becomes a recurring motif throughout the film, once again further evincing the manner in which the community has placed its indelible mark on such social spaces post-dictatorship. Consequently, such images of reclamation and appropriation can productively be mapped onto the "lived" and "perceived" dimensions of Lefebvre's tripartite formulation of social space, where a sense of everyday co-habitation, social practice and community building works in opposition to the militaristic and panoptic ideology that originally underpinned the villages' "conceived" spatial structuring.

Figure 37. Still from Toponimia, directed by Jonathan Perel, 2015, Argentina.

[332] Doreen Massey, "Landscape/space/politics: an essay," *The Future of Landscape and the Moving Image*, accessed March 24 2016, https://thefutureoflandscape.wordpress.com/landscapespacepolitics-an-essay/.

Figure 38. Still from Toponimia, directed by Jonathan Perel, 2015, Argentina.

It is also necessary to examine and imbricate the uneven economic and political operations—both historically and contemporaneously in Argentina—that have helped to facilitate the virtually unhindered community restructuring of these social spaces. Tucuman province has consistently been one of Argentina's most impoverished provinces, lacking both adequate government investment and infrastructural support. Writing in 1968, María Teresa Gramuglio and Nicolás Rosa suggest, Tucuman had been subjected to "underdevelopment and economic oppression." The current government, "insistent upon a disastrous colonial policy, closed most of the Tucuman sugar refineries, a vital force in the province's economy. The result has been widespread hunger and unemployment, with all its attendant social consequences."[333] Such a socio-economic situation continues into the present day, with much of the provincial economy precariously relying on minimal state subsidies to maintain this "unprofitable but labour intensive" sugar industry.[334] Consequently, it is easy to see how the community appropriation of these authoritarian spaces post-dictatorship was facilitated by the fact that the government—historically and contemporaneously—has paid little social or economic attention to the area. Thus, another layer of heterotopic spatio-politics is imbricated into *Toponimia*, with

[333] María Teresa Gramuglio and Nicolás Rosa, "Tucuman is Burning," in *Listen Here Now! Argentine Art of the 1960s: Writings of the Avant-Garde*, eds. Andrea Giunta and Ines Katzenstein (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2004), 305.
[334] Dorte Vener, "Rural Poverty and Labor Markets in Argentina," *World Bank*, accessed March 24 2016, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARGENTINAINSPANISH/Resources/Argentina_Rural_Poverty_Labor_Market_062105_2.

the neoliberal metropolitan centres of governmentality neglecting the region and thus facilitating the rural proletariat's virtually unhindered (re)appropriation of their social space. Here, we can once again imbricate Soja's claims about the impact of urban neoliberal centres on non-urban space; uneven development and strategic neglect are indicative of how the "urban condition has extended its influence to all areas."

Throughout the film, we not only gaze into these carceral spaces, we also look outwards; examining the peripheries and liminal zones at the fringes of the villages. This is particularly true of the film's epilogue, which presents us with a series of shots that move further outside the inhabited space of the four villages, focusing initially on a network of rivers and abandoned buildings, before moving into a dense forest. As this sequence progresses, we increasingly focus on the minutia of this natural landscape—primarily plant life and vegetation—through a series of tight close ups. These shots also inhibit our ability to locate ourselves spatially and geographically within this environment.

Figure 39. Still from Toponimia, directed by Jonathan Perel, 2015, Argentina.

It is arguable that this slow progression out into the liminal spaces beyond the four villages reinforces the fact that their carceral formation had no fixed boundaries; the sovereign violence enacted by the military dictatorship did not stop at the edges of these carceral spaces, it spread throughout the entire social landscape of Argentina during this period of state terror. Thus, under the military dictatorship, the "lived" and "perceived" spatial formations beyond the peripheries of these carceral sites were still structured around control and violence. However, as we move into these ever more remote locales, this sequence also seems to reinforce the fact that, contemporaneously, the country's neoliberal centres have strategically neglected the region's infrastructure and have thus structurally enabled the strategies of community

reappropriation the film bears witness to. Thus, these rural zones are extremely porous; heavily influenced by the structural neglect of neoliberal centres of control. This section has argued that through the spatio-political aesthetic deployed by *Toponimia*, a juxtaposition is set up between the historical desire for authoritarian control of social space and contemporary attempts for spatial liberation. However, it has also gestured towards the uneven geographical development between urban centres and rural periferies that created the economic and infrastructural void for such strategies of (re)appropriation. Thus, *Toponimia* imbricates a number of contrasting socio-spatial formations, allowing us to perceive both the forms of governmentality and the broader uneven economic power relations that have structured the (re)creation of such heterotopic spaces. The film continually emphasizes the porosity of this post-carceral space.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined three different engagements with sites of carcerality and internment. As I have argued, all three examples share a desire to push back against understandings of carceral space as infrastructurally or representationally "closed-off" or "sealed." For example, in the analysis of *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*, I pointed towards the way in which Schuppli's film interrogates the shifting function of the Omarska site, moving from the extractive to the necropolitical and back to the extractive. Through the dialectical juxtaposition of the material landscapes of extraction and the sites of sovereign violence, the film interrogates the shifting function of these spaces. Ultimately, Schuppli's film focuses upon how the appropriation of an already established spatial infrastructure clearly would have aided the occlusion and concealment of its new function. The analysis of James Bridle's *Seamless Transitions* suggested how the "uncanniness" of the digital renderings created by Picture Plane sought to emphasise the complex webs of actors and infrastructure involved in the creation of such carceral spaces; the "kinds of agglomerations and accumulations" that can be extremely hard to disentangle and visualise. Simultaneously, Bridle's film points towards the deliberate occlusion of sovereign power and violence within these sites of detention and removal through the strategic mixing of public and private infrastructure and labour. Within the analysis of Jonathan Perel's *Toponomia*, I focused on how Perel's film examines "borderless" sites of carcerality. The formal structure of his film emphasises not only the occluded sovereign control and surveillance over these spaces, but also their reclamation post-dictatorship. The work also points towards the ways in which such processes of reclamation were facilitated by the

structural neglect of contemporary neoliberal governance. Thus, a lack of control and support produces new forms of socio-political violence. Ultimately, all three works can be closely tied to the wider turn towards theorising carceral geographies, "meaning not simply a geography 'above' carceral institutions, but one that enquires beyond them, combining supra-, sub-, inter-, intra- and extra-institutional imaginaries and perspectives."[335] We are confronted by carceral spaces that are increasingly hidden from sight—intentionally masking formations of sovereign violence and control—and, as this chapter has demonstrated, moving image practices have a crucial role to play in the visualisation of such formations of power.

[335] Nick Gill et al., "Carceral Circuitry: New Directions in Carceral Geography," 2.

Border Regimes: Labour, Ports and the Sea

The contemporary configuration of global space cannot rightly be mapped as a series of discrete territories. This is because it comprises a series of overlaps, continuities, ruptures, and commonalities

Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson[336]

Borders are no longer what they once were, or, at least, what they were once perceived to be. They have proliferated; shifting from the periphery to the centre of our social, economic and political lives. They have also become markedly less visible systems of control and surveillance, often functioning beyond (yet still alongside) their traditional roles as the markers of geopolitical sovereign boundaries. Under the conditions of transnational global capitalism, understandings of borders as solid sovereign, geopolitical "boundaries," "walls" or "barriers" have shifted. In addition, the related rise of both an increasingly fragmented global division of labour and the rise of neo-colonial forms of extra-sovereign governance have changed the function and understanding of the border in myriad ways. The aim of this chapter is to examine how several nonfiction moving image works have attempted to articulate this contemporary reconstitution of borders as heterogeneous, shifting and proliferating regimes of spatial control. How is it that we can attempt to represent mechanisms of control—of bodies, labour and capital—that are increasingly fragmented and often withdrawn from sight? Charles Heller has suggested that such reassessments of bordering regimes "bring us a long way from what may still be imagined as border work: the control, by state actors, of the movement of people and goods across the *line* that defines the outer limit of a state's territory."[337] Thus, a rethinking of the politics of borders is closely related to a wider re-examination of the role of the nation-state in the epoch of globalisation. This dismantling of the inside/outside of sovereign territoriality has been well theorised over the last two decades.

Before moving into an analysis of how the selected film works confront this rearticulation of "border work," I think it is productive to briefly map out some of the discourse on the shifting function of the nation state under globalisation, as this provides us with an entry point into understanding how such bordering practices have taken on a particularly *extra-sovereign* dimension. A steady stream of scholars throughout the 1990s and early 2000s

[336] Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 63.
[337] Charles Heller, "Liquid Trajectories: Documenting Illegalised Migration and the Violence of Borders" (PhD Thesis, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2015), 27.

signalled what they perceived to be the declining power of the nation state. As Ulrich Beck suggested in 2000, globalisation had transformed the traditional conception of the national sovereign, that "idea that we live and act in the self-enclosed spaces of national states and their respective national societies."[338] For Marek Kweik, this was a consequence of the fact that within the geopolitical configuration of globalisation, "capital, goods, technologies, information and people cross frontiers in ways that were unimaginable before: thus globalisation is 'the space/time compression' (Bauman), 'the overcoming of distance' (Beck), *la fin de la geographie* (Virilio)."[339] These scholars were united around two fundamental approaches to the impacts of globalisation. Firstly, under globalisation "state sovereignty was being eroded by supra and sub-national flows and the proliferation of competing non-state actors."[340] Secondly—and intimately tied to this first point—national sovereign borders were perceived as increasingly porous and ineffectual; "capital, goods, technologies, information and people" traversed them largely unhindered.[341] There have, however, been significant push-backs against such understandings of waning sovereign power—and, concomitantly, the functioning of such border formations. For example, Heller points towards the Eurocentrism inherent to the multifarious theorisations of the waning of national sovereignty. There is a tendency for such Eurocentric scholarship—which inevitably dominates contemporary debates—to conceive of idealised, geographically homogenous sovereign formations that have only in recent decades been eroded and fragmented under the geopolitical impacts of transnational global capitalism. As Heller suggests, outside such Eurocentric contexts and perspectives, "spatial fragmentation and competing claims for authority between multiple actors over the same space has been the rule rather than the exception."[342] Heller highlights several scholars that suggest that rather than a waning of state power under globalisation, the function of the national sovereign has instead shifted and morphed. For example, Saskia Sassen has suggested that "globalization is not simply growing interdependence… but the actual production of spatial and temporal frames that *simultaneously* inhabit national structures and are distinct from national spatial and temporal frames as these have been historically constructed."[343] Thus, for her, the state plays a fundamental role in the (re)constitution of the

[338] Ulrich Beck, *What is Globalization?* (New York: Wiley, 2000), 20.
[339] Marek Kwiek, "The Nation-State, Globalisation and the Modern Institution of the University," *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, no. 96 (2000): 77.
[340] Heller, 27.
[341] Kwiek, 77.
[342] Heller, 28.
[343] Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton.: Princeton University Press, 2008), 23.

border and is complicit in many of its extra-sovereign rearticulations by transnational global capital. Configurations of power have thus shifted rather than waned. For example, she suggests elsewhere that "some aspects of state participation are in fact instances of states adapting to and participating in the global, other components of the national state… are themselves strategic sites for the structuring of the global and in this process undergo foundational change."[344] Here then, the nation state becomes a crucial actor and node within the multifarious logics of globalisation, aiding the transformation of border regimes by the increasing global division of labour, the rise of logistics and new forms of extra-state governance. Thus, the power of the nation state has not waned, rather it has been interpolated and transformed; it becomes a constituent part of globalisation's bordering operations.

Understanding the nation state as a crucially reconstituted actor—rather than a waning force—within the geopolitics of globalisation can also assist the way we approach related theorisations of border regimes. Tied to this shifting function of the nation state in the era of escalating global mobility, regimes of bordering have also been reconfigured; they still function as traditional sovereign boundaries and yet, crucially, they have also proliferated as new forms of socio-economic control under global capitalism. Bauman's "space/time compression," Beck's "overcoming of distance," Virilio's "end of geography"—all these late 20th century theories of globalisation would like us to envisage a flattening of space; a removal of barriers and boundaries that allows for the unimpeded flows of "capital, goods, technologies, information and people." Indeed, as Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson suggest, "there can be no denying that the hydraulic metaphor of flow has almost come to monopolize the critical discussion of the new forms of global mobility."[345] However, this repeated scholarly emphasis on "flows," "flattening" and "compression" elides the fact that borders—in new and multifarious forms—have proliferated in the epoch of globalisation, functioning as mechanisms that aid the violence of global capital's transnational machinations. Indeed, Mezzadra and Neilson's project of "border as method" is centrally preoccupied with restating the importance of border regimes and practices in the epoch of global capitalism. They aim to describe the ways borders are integral to "the very *production* of the deep heterogeneity of global space and time."[346] Thus, they wish to shift discourse on globalisation away from the notion of "unimpeded flows" or the "overcoming of distance," articulating instead "the crucial

[344] Ibid., 229.
[345] Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, "Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor," *Transversal*, accessed 19 October 2018, http://eipcp.net/transversal/0608/mezzadraneilson/en.
[346] Ibid.

role that borders play in the production of the deeply heterogeneous space and time of global capitalism."[347] As they suggest elsewhere, the concept of border as method allows them

> to grasp the mutations of labour, space, time, law, power, and citizenship that accompany the proliferation of borders in today's world. Among these are the multiplication of labour, differential inclusion, temporal borders, the sovereign machine of governmentality, and border struggles. Taken together, these concepts provide a grid within which to fathom the deep transformations of the social, economic, juridical, and political relations of our planet.[348]

Thus, in a similar way to the changing operations of the nation state in the era of globalisation, borders have also shifted in their functionality. Crucially, they are no longer just the markers and protectors of nation states, they have become new—and proliferating—mechanisms in the global management of capital, labour and people. They also become new technologies of violence, containment and control. Thus, heterogeneous border practices and regimes now criss-cross the socio-geographical landscape, oftentimes functioning to delimit and control "extra state" sites such as free trade zones, special economic areas, privately operated ports, global corridors of logistics transportation and labour pools etc. Here, border regimes control movement through spaces of capital flow and transportation. Indeed, as Heller suggests, borders "are not necessarily tied to territorial demarcations of state boundaries, but may evolve in a fluid way in frontier zones… operat[ing] through scattered but connected networks."[349] Ultimately, these various reconceptualisations of borders focus on how their proliferation is intimately related to the new and multifarious demands for geographical control wrought by late capitalism. Under such conditions, borders can longer be read as negative mechanisms of exclusion, rather, they take on a *productive* force. Indeed, as Heller points out, channelling the work of Mezzadra and Neilson, "borders do not simply serve to obstruct flows, but to channel and hierarchize them, and that border control is not simply repressive but *productive*, amongst other things of new conditions of illegalised and precaritised labour through 'inclusive exclusion.'"[350] The notion of "inclusive" or "differential inclusion" is central to Mezzadra and Neilson's theorisation of contemporary border regimes. The proliferation of these extra-

[347] Ibid.
[348] Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*, 7.
[349] Heller, "Liquid Trajectories: Documenting Illegalised Migration and the Violence of Borders," 28.
[350] Ibid.

sovereign borders function to filter and stratify labour pools, typically with the aim of further illegalising and precaritising migrant labour. For Mezzadra and Neilson, such "divisions and hierarchies… are a necessary feature of the organization of labor under capitalism."[351] Thus, it is evident that borders striate the social landscape in heretofore unexplored ways, becoming productive mechanisms in the exploitation of labour and the acceleration of late capitalism's accumulatory movements. Border regimes operate both within, across and outside sovereign territorialities, relentlessly exploiting and reconstituting bodies, environments and labour pools. However, once we do away with a conception of bordering regimes as something strictly sovereign—the wall, the fence, the barrier, which marks the limits of a nation state—attempting to render visible their intricate operations and functions become more of a challenge. Moreover, as the border becomes something extra-sovereign, a plethora of new actors and forces that come into play—reshaping the function and operations of different bordering regimes. And, as the number of actors increases, locking down the responsibility for violence and exploitation across these new regimes of power and control also becomes more of a challenge. Yet, as I have previously suggested, a range of contemporary nonfiction works have attempted to visualise these expanded and multifarious border regimes. The aim of this chapter is to examine the various techniques utilised by these works when attempting to interrogate and render visible the operations of contemporary border regimes, particularly as they are continuously rearticulated and recomposed by the geopolitical operations of global capitalism. Within the first section, titled "Logistical Peripheries" I will focus on Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip's *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds*. This work investigates how logistical spaces—ports, transportation corridors, storage facilities etc.—materially impact the sites that they border and interact with. Through this focus, the work aims to examine how logistical spaces cannot be read as materially and geographically detached from the spaces at their peripheries. Instead, such sites and infrastructures of contemporary logistics create new, messy and violent forms of extra-sovereign bordering. The second section of this chapter, entitled "Regimes of (In)visibility" examines Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani's multimedia work *Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat*. This work examines the fragmentation and proliferation of bordering regimes across the Mediterranean Sea. The aim of this section is to examine how Heller and Pezzani's project unpacks the structural interconnections between these new forms of oceanic bordering/securitisation that striate the sea and the intensification

[351] Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, "Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor," *Transversal*, 2008, http://eipcp.net/transversal/0608/mezzadraneilson/en.

of visibility and surveillance across these same spaces. With a multitude of sovereign and extra-sovereign actors now involved in the control and securitisation of this space, new technologies of visualisation and surveillance now exist to document movement across this oceanic area. Across both case studies, there is a consistent concern with examining, documenting and visualising how border regimes have been rearticulated and recomposed in this late capitalist and neo-colonialist epoch.

Logistical Peripheries: Piraeus in Logistical Worlds

We have visited the port—via the infrastructural geographies of logistics—before. In the final section of Chapter 1, Visualising Late Capitalism's Landscapes, we explored how Allan Sekula and Noel Burch's work resisted the "immaterialisation" of global capitalism through a focus on the transformed materialities of human labour across four ports that are crucial nodes in the global supply chain: Los Angeles, Rotterdam, Hong Kong and Bilbao. Here, the notion of "immaterialisation" extended primarily from theorisations of the logistical that emphasise its inherent desire to operate across material space in a manner that is perceived to be "frictionless" and "borderless." As Jesse LeCavalier suggests, "rather than encouraging congestion, logistics pursues unencumbered movement. Rather than seeking density, logistics aspires to coverage. It is a horizontalizing and externalizing industry, not a vertical and integrating one."[352] Thus, crucial to the optimisation of logistics operations is a conception of space—both geographical and political—as "flattened" and "smooth." Here then, we can see the distinct conceptual interrelations between the theorisations of logistics space and the theorisations of globalisation mapped out above.[353] Across both, things—"capital, goods, technologies, information and people"—can "cross frontiers in ways that were unimaginable before." The zones of logistics—seaports, airports, inland ports, freight villages, logistics parks, intermodal rail terminals—that connect these webs of logistics space are also predominantly understood as discreet spatial arrangements, seamlessly networked across the globe; a series of supra-national nodal points that don't interact with their immediate geographical surroundings. Indeed, as Katja Werthmann and Diana Ayeh suggest, paraphrasing from James Ferguson, "global capital does not flow but 'hops' from one securitized… enclave to another."[354] Within such

[352] Jesse LeCavalier, *The Rule of Logistics: Walmart and the Architecture of Fulfillment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 6.
[353] Indeed, these two notions have an intertwined conceptual and material history, with much of globalisation's acceleration caused by ever-increasing efficiencies in the operations of logistic's infrastructures.
[354] Katja Werthmann and Diana Ayeh, "Processes of Enclaving under the Global Condition: The Case of Burkina Faso" (Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 3 May 2017), 6.

conceptualisations of the logistical—which perceive space as "seamless," "networked" and "flowing"—we also, by extension, find varying degrees of emphasis on the erosion or displacement of borders, which supposedly helps structurally facilitate the free-circulation of goods, capital and bodies. Logistics space is perceived as smooth and flattened, whilst the zones that connect these spaces up are predominantly perceived as divorced from their immediate material surroundings. Thus, within such conceptions of the logistical, there is a continual lack of emphasis on the myriad of impacts—social, economic, environmental, human—that such movements and sites can have.

The aim of this section is to examine a work that emphasises the ways in which logistics space creates new forms and mechanisms of bordering; practices which structurally impact the spaces at their peripheries. More specifically, through an examination of the 2014 short film *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds* (Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras, Carolin Phillip), I aim to examine how the film undermines such a "frictionless," "nodal" or abstracted reading of logistics space. Instead, the film aims to emphasise how the logistical spaces that are so central to the operations of global capital, produce new, powerful and multifarious forms of bordering, which materially impact the geographical spaces peripheral to them. Indeed, as Deborah Cowen suggests, "these 'pipelines' of flow are not only displacing the borders of national territoriality but also recasting the geographies of law and violence that were organized by the inside/outside of state space."[355] Where the previous examination of the logistical space of the port was focused on the materialities of human labour contained with them, here I wish to explore how such zones of logistics create new regimes of extra-state governance and bordering that interact with and impact the spaces at their peripheries. Thus, I am interested in examining how the film visualises the port's *peripheral zones*; those largely forgotten border spaces that interact and are restructured by the logistical port itself. Here, the *border sites* at the periphery of the port impact and restructure the lives of those who inhabit these spaces; shifting us away from a conception of the supposedly "nodal" space of logistics "networks." Therefore, the spaces of logistics become key sites where we witness the contemporary "proliferation of borders" suggested by Mezzadra and Neilson. This need to reemphasise the material interrelations between logistics space and its peripheral zones has been emphasised by several scholars. Indeed, as Martin Danyluk has suggested,

[355] Deborah Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics: Mapping Violence in Global Trade* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 4.

> the goods-movement network is not a seamlessly integrated system or a cohesive operational unit, as it is often depicted by the industry, but a fragmentary, unstable ensemble of physical and social infrastructures that are conceived, constructed and managed by formally independent actors… bound together in complex relations of contingency and interdependence.[356]

For Danyluk, it is important to emphasise that logistics space cannot be read as a seamless or cohesive network or "operational unit" that is detached from its immediate milieu. Instead, we must understand its forms of operation and influence as fragmentary and interdependent; interacting with the social-political spaces at their peripheries. The spaces of logistics and their border spaces are messy and violent mixes of sovereign and extra-sovereign (often private multinational) control. Indeed, as Danyluk suggests, by understanding logistics space as unstable constellations of physical and social infrastructures we can gain a stronger insight into how "communities and workers who live and labor in the arteries of global trade, as the costs and risks of supply-chain volatility are disproportionately borne by the most vulnerable actors in the network."[357] Thus, reading logistics space as fragmentary and interdependent allows for a better insight into the impacts on those who live and labour in these peripheral arteries. As I will argue through my analysis, *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds* examines how these sites at the periphery of logistics space often find themselves trapped in a sort of social and economic liminality. As Kay Dickinson suggests, logistical free zones "ultimately perform at a remove from state jurisdiction."[358] It is my contention that such exceptional "extra-state" conditions also bleed out into the peripheral spaces of logistics zones; state infrastructure and care is typically minimal, and whilst the zone itself periodically exploits these peripheries, they have no mandated duty of care. They are then, following Keller Easterling's formulation, what we could term "extra-state" peripheries—structured around "overlapping, or nested forms of sovereignty, where domestic and transnational jurisdictions collide."[359] Through such collisions between domestic and transnational infrastructure, these peripheral spaces fall into the fissures and gaps between the two, typically left to structural decline. Indeed, as Waltraud Kokot suggests, "port neighbourhoods and their environs have undergone processes of social

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[356] Martin Danyluk, "Fungible Space: Competition and Volatility in the Global Logistics Network," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 43, no. 1 (2019): 107.
[357] Ibid., 96.
[358] Kay Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels: Transnational Syria, Palestine, Dubai and Beyond* (London: British Film Institute, 2016), 156.
[359] Keller Easterling, *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space* (London: Verso, 2016), 15.

and economic degradation."[360] Under dominant forms of neoliberal governance (certainly the case for contemporary Greece) that emphasise reductions in social welfare and infrastructure spending—whilst simultaneously promoting the reduction of global trade barriers and the expansion of logistics infrastructure—those living in these peripheral spaces find themselves largely beyond the limits of minimised state care and support. As Kokot suggests, "the segments of the urban population living close to the ports, or making their living from the ports, have been particularly affected by the loss of job opportunities and relatively cheap housing, and by the decline of social networks and local infrastructure."[361] Here then, the care of the state is replaced by the fickle care of transnational capital. For periods of time these peripheral sites are exploited for their labour and resources before the arteries of global trade are realigned—shifting to another, cheaper zone, and thus dispossessing this population of its source of livelihood. Consequently, logistics zones both materially dispossess those in their peripheries and create new forms of "extra state" governance, often with the removal of more traditional forms of sovereign power. Here then, I am interested in the ways that the film articulates this ever-shifting division between investment, exploitation and dispossession of these peripheral spaces. Through the new forms of power and governance afforded to logistics multinationals and the intertwined neoliberal logics of reduced state support and infrastructure, logistical spaces have a huge influence over the sites and spaces in their peripheries, alternatively exploiting and dispossessing those on the borders of their trading arteries. Ultimately, the film seeks to *reground* the space of logistics, examining how it interacts with its peripheral economies, societies and landscapes.

The port of *Piraeus* has long historical interconnections with trade, transport and seafaring. As Sitta Von Reden has suggested, until approximately the 3rd millennium BC, Piraeus was an island; detached from the mainland for long periods by coastal tidal pools that flooded the low-lying areas in between. During the fifth century BC, and after the Athenian-led coalition of city-states defeated the Persian invasion in 478 BC, the port was selected as the main trading and transport hub for Athens. It was during this "Golden Age of Athenian democracy" that the "long walls" were constructed between Athens and Piraeus. Approximately 6 kilometres in length, these walled fortifications protected the route between Athens and Piraeus during periods of wider conflict in the Attica region.[362] As Von Reden

[360] Waltraud Kokot, "European Port Cities: Disadvantaged Urban Areas in Transition: A Collaborative Project Under the EU Transnational Exchange Programme: Final Report, Phase I," Fight Against Poverty and Social Exclusion (Hamburg: University of Hamburg, 2002), 2.
[361] Ibid.
[362] Sitta Von Reden, "The Piraeus - A World Apart," *Greece & Rome* 42, no. 1 (1995).

writes, "the foundation of the Piraeus is closely linked to the development of democracy and sea power in fifth-century Athens. Immediately after the defeat of the Persians the Piraeus was built and fortified as the main harbour of the polis."[363] Over the centuries that followed, the port went through stages of territorial contestation as well as abandonment and degradation during the rule of the Ottoman Empire. It was only in the middle of the 19th century, and following the declaration of Piraeus as an independent municipality in 1833, that serious infrastructural investment (in terms of both trade and transport) was put into the port once again, helping to re-establish it as the main hub for trade and transport into and out of Athens.[364] The rapid expansion of the port over the next 100 years leads to the creation of an autonomous port administration body, the Piraeus Port Authority (OLP) in 1930 and the establishment of the Piraeus Free Zone in 1932. The boom in the global logistics trade throughout the latter half of the 20th century meant that the port expanded even more; new container terminals were built, quays were extended, new technologies were invested in to streamline flows of capital through the port. The financial crisis of 2008 hit the Greek economy particularly hard and caused significant shift in the operations and power relations at the port. It is at this moment that *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds* begins.

Over the opening shot of the film, the text at the bottom of the screen reads "Cosco's motto 'bridging the east with the west' begins in the port of Piraeus." The film begins by focusing on the takeover and operation of two of the port's piers by Chinese state-owned company Cosco in 2009. Previously operated by the Greek state-owned company the Piraeus Port Authority (OLP), the concession agreement with Cosco was signed amid the death throes of the global economic crisis, which had particularly serious impacts upon the Greek economy. As Rossiter and Neilson have suggested, part of the country's bailout package meant signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the "so-called troika of the European Commission (EC), the International Monetary Fund, and European Central Bank."[365] The signing of this Memorandum paved the way for the troika to implement their much-criticised policy reforms via a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). Supposedly aimed at resolving crisis-hit countries' fiscal imbalances, the SAPs primarily consist of internal economic changes that aim to open up markets through a combination of deregulation, the weakening of labour rights and the removal of barriers to trade. The film itself forms part of a wider research project called

[363] Ibid., 26.
[364] Paraphrased from Sitta Von Reden, "The Piraeus - A World Apart."
[365] Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter, "Logistical Worlds: Territorial Governance in Piraeus and the New Silk Road," *Logistical Worlds: Infrastructure, Software, Labour*, no. 1 (2014): 9.

"Logistical Worlds: Infrastructure, Software, Labour (2013-2016)." This project was centred on three locations, Athens, Kolkata and Valparáiso, and aimed to investigate how "regimes of circulation and containment… connect China's manufacturing industries to different corners of the world."[366] Whilst this larger project was broadly focused on how "infrastructure and software combine as technologies of governance" within—and between—nodal sites in the logistical expansion of Chinese production along the "New Silk Road," the short film *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds* moves outside the space of the port itself, focusing instead on the changing socio-economic composition of the local peripheral zones that border such sites of logistics operation. Thus, as suggested before, the film is concerned with examining how such zones of logistics can never be read as detached from their material surroundings, rather they are deeply embedded in the local landscape and socio-economic environments that house them. Indeed, as Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter suggest in their broader overview of the *Logistical Worlds* project, "logistics also actively produces environments and subjectivities, including those of workers and labour forces, through techniques of measure, coordination and optimization."[367] Thus, the border sites of logistics zones are reconstituted and recomposed by their interaction with these spaces of capital and commodity flow. The film offers up a deceptively simple formal construction, slowly telescoping outwards from an initial examination of the port itself to the multiple peripheral border spaces it interacts with. It is this slow widening of the film's spatio-political lense that allows us to perceive the impacts logistics space has on its border sites and spaces; regrounding it within the material space (economic, political, social) that it interacts with. My analysis of the film will proceed in a similar fashion, tracing the film's slowly expanding formal structure.

The initial section of the film combines both still and moving images of the port at night and in the early morning. An initial pair of shots render the port as something akin to a cityscape skyline; lights flicker and blink as the camera picks out several container carriers—the dominant architectural structures in this logistical space. Here, the focus is primarily upon the state of the port and its border spaces prior to the 2009 takeover by Cosco. Over the image that picks out several containers, a passage of text reads "most people of the New Ikonion used to work at the ship repair docks west to the Pier III." The town of New Ikonion sits on a hill to the north of the Piraeus Container Terminal. Historically tied to the shipping industry, the small town of around 300 people has recently been heavily impacted by the decreasing flow of

[366] Ned Rossiter, *Software, Infrastructure, Labor: A Media Theory of Logistical Nightmares* (New York: Routledge, 2016), xvii.
[367] Neilson and Rossiter, "Logistical Worlds: Territorial Governance in Piraeus and the New Silk Road," 5.

business through the port in the late-2000s (itself a consequence of the wider 2008 financial crisis that hit the Greek economy particularly hard). As Anna Lascari, one of the filmmakers behind *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds*, has suggested:

> framed between new quay cranes and super post-panamax quay cranes, New Ikonion appears as an irregularity or a forgotten backdrop standing totally irrelevant to the working norms of PCT. The lives of the residents of Ikonio seem to be affected by PCT and its daily operations. Stacks of containers, large quay cranes and tracks going in and out of the piers are the predominant view from this rather precarious settlement.[368]

Indeed, the next passage of text on screen suggests that "since 2009, the shipyards lost more than 70% of their business leaving most of New Ikonion residents unemployed." Likely a combined result of both the increasing automation of operations at the port and the overarching ripple-effects of the 2008 crash, unemployment has steadily increased in the town of New Ikonion. Largely dependent upon the port for employment, the town has now become a largely "forgotten backdrop." Technological unemployment in combination with the more endemic crises of late-capitalism have rearticulated the relationship between the port and its border spaces. Moreover—and as we will examine in more detail later in this section—such peripheral "extra state" spaces are also typically vacated of the traditional networks of state infrastructure and support; the care of the state is often replaced by the care (or lack thereof) of the zone. Thus, we begin to see the ways in which the "logistical world" of the port also impacts and reconstitutes the zones peripheral to it. Indeed, just preceding this passage of text, we are offered an image that reinforces the deep spatial and historical interrelations between the socio-economic life-world of the port and its nearby border town.

Shot within the town, the camera captures the reflected image of a road mirror. Within its circular frame, we can see some of the town's architecture and landscape in the immediate foreground, as well as the infrastructure and technology of the container terminal beyond.

[368] Anna Lascari, "The New Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line," *Logistical Worlds* (blog), 2014, http://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/new-ikonion.

Figure 40. Still from Piraeus in Logistical Worlds, directed by Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip, 2014, Greece.

The visual composition of the image—which closely nests together the port and its peripheral zone—serves to emphasise the spatio-political interconnectedness of these two sites. Moreover, the convex shape of the mirror collapses the geographical distance between the logistics zone and its border town even further. Through a dual emphasis on both the spatial proximity of the port as well as the textual narration of the destructive impact on the socio-economic life of New Ikonian, we begin to understand how logistics space not only "actively produces environments and subjectivities" in its peripheral zones, but also has the capacity to destroy or dispose of them during periods of capitalism's structural crises.

Figure 41. Still from Piraeus in Logistical Worlds, directed by Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip, 2014, Greece.

Whilst the logistics space of PCT has the capacity to sustain a town like New Ikonion, it also has the capacity to dispossess and destroy the socio-economic lifeworld of such a border space. Indeed, the subsequent images in this sequence similarly emphasise the spatial and economic interconnections between the town and port; we are presented with shots that frame various views from the town—fields, plant life, walls, debris—in the foreground, with the infrastructure of the port in the background. In these shots, there is also a marked contrast between the crumbling and dilapidated infrastructure of the town and the sleek logistified efficiency of the terminal. As suggested above, functioning largely as an "extra-state" periphery, the care of the state has been largely withdrawn within such a border space. It has supposedly been left to the care of logistical zone, but as Katja Werthmann and Diana Ayeh suggest of such sites, they "are either governed by underperforming national administrations or by non-state actors, or left to themselves."[369] Thus, whilst the logistical space looms large in the landscape of this small town, the socio-economic support it once offered has been materially withdrawn.

As I suggested earlier, I am interested in the ways the film *regrounds* the space of logistics, resisting an understanding of such logistical zones abstracted and networked nodal points in the transnational movements of global capital. Instead, the focus here is on the material social, environmental and economic interactions and exploitations happening at the borders of such sites. This "practice of regrounding" can I think be productively connected to Alberto Toscano's call to "defetishise" visual and aesthetic engagements with logistics. As Toscano suggests, "in contemporary visual practice, especially photographic and cinematic work oriented toward logistical complexes, the mimetic lure of real abstraction has several modalities, among which is the figure of logistics as a depopulated landscape of megastructures."[370] Thus, for Toscano, visual practices that have attempted to render logistics space visible have privileged the same "smooth," "flattened" and "abstracted" conceptualisations as much of the theoretical discourse mapped out above. Toscano wishes to push back against such approaches to the logistical through a process of defetishisation: "logistics might be framed not only through its material apparatuses but also through its legal, operational, managerial and commodity form."[371] It is my contention that the regrounding work undertaken by *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds* can be read as such an attempt to defetishise its

[369] Werthmann and Ayeh, 6.
[370] Alberto Toscano, "The Mirror of Circulation: Allan Sekula and the Logistical Image," *Society & Space* (blog), 2018, http://societyandspace.org/2018/07/30/the-mirror-of-circulation-allan-sekula-and-the-logistical-image/.
[371] Ibid.

visual engagements with logistics space. Through the film's focus on the border spaces of the port, it is more interested in these peripheral operations (legal, political, operational, governmental) than the port itself as an abstracted "megastructure." This attempt at defetishisation also matches up Danyluk's assertion that we must confront logistics space and their peripheries as "fragmentary, unstable ensemble[s] of physical and social infrastructures." This shot of the road mirror, which emphasises the spatio-political interconnectedness of these two sites can very much be aligned with both Danyluk and Toscano's assertions; the site of logistics is defetishised, and, concomitantly, its "fragmentary" and "unstable" relationship with its border space is reasserted. Therefore, the attempt to both reground and defetishise logistics space are intertwined structuring conceits of *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds*.

The interrelations between town and port are further examined in the film's next section; however, the established visual-textual structure is reworked. Here, the camera returns to the port itself, whilst we are offered the testimony of local PCT ex-employees via onscreen subtitles. Over a shot that shows the construction of a new jetty at the port, the text reads "you were receiving an SMS to be at work in 3 hours. Nobody knew in which shift he would work the next day." Over another image of the same jetty, another passage of text reads "for nine months, I never worked on the basis of a work schedule. There was no schedule at all." We then shift to a series of close-up, low-angle shots of trucks and cranes in and around the port. The on-screen text reads "in Cosco working conditions are of the Middle Ages. The main thing is that they want the workers to be little soldiers and not persons who think."

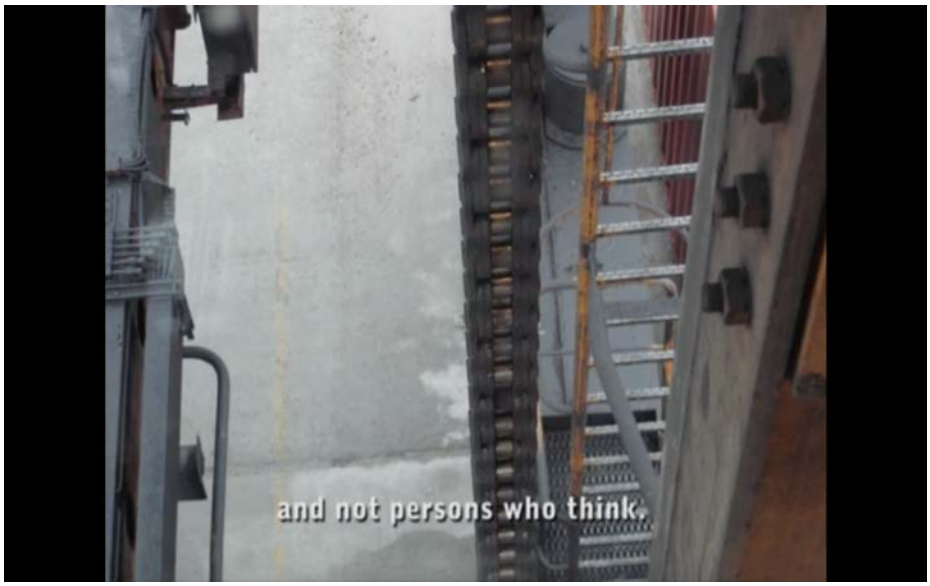

Figure 42. Still from Piraeus in Logistical Worlds, directed by Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip, 2014, Greece.

Through this sequence, we are thus grounded in the material space of the terminal, whilst we hear testimony from several local former employees of PCT. Where we previously found ourselves outside looking in, now we are inside "looking" out; reading about the labour conditions at the port from those who live in spaces adjacent to it. Once again, the film seeks to emphasise the material interconnections between the port and the spaces it borders. Lives and livelihoods are reconstituted by the ebb and flow of capital and business through the PCT. Where the opening of the film sought to emphasise these interconnections by visualising the spatial proximity of town and port, here it is textual testimony that renders these same interconnections palpable. The legal and political "extra-state" functioning of logistics zones typically means they don't have to adhere to the traditional forms of worker protections and rights of the state. Indeed, as Kay Dickinson suggests, there is often "eradication of worker rights legacies" within such spaces that are beyond the control of the state.[372] Through the textual testimony provided in this sequence, we bear witness to how such reconstitutions of labour regulations materially impact those living in the port's peripheral spaces. Working schedules are ad hoc and conditions are precarious. Whilst the camera focuses on the solid material infrastructure of the port, the textual testimony reveals the precarious and fragile working conditions that support this same space. Once again, the film seeks to emphasise how logistics space can never simply be read as "enclaved" or "nodal," rather it has material impacts upon the spaces that it borders—reconfiguring labour regimes and regulations in its peripheries. Thus, whilst focusing on the material site of the port and its infrastructures, the textual juxtaposition once again serves to fragments and defetishise this logistics space; exposing it as an "unstable ensemble of physical and social infrastructures."

As the film's geographical lense widens, we shift to an examination of the new Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line, which extends from the PCT to the under construction Thriassion Freight and Intermodal Center in Thriassion Plain, Western Attica. The opening shot of this sequence presents us with a sketch of a railway track and a distant tunnel. The writing next to the drawing reads "corridors connect zones, corridors cross borders, decisions are made in the corridor." Here, the film foregrounds the fact that within this section we will be focusing on a connective thread between two zones of logistical operation. However, as we shall see, even this connective "corridor" materially impacts the spaces it borders; rearticulating and recomposing social imaginaries, as well as sovereign and infrastructural dynamics in its peripheral zones. Thus, such logistics corridors not only cross borders, but create new border regimes. Next in

[372] Kay Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels: Transnational Syria, Palestine, Dubai and Beyond*, 154.

this sequence, we transition to a series of shots that traverse a section of the track. The first of these shots is a pan up from the track itself to a tunnel in the distance, visually replicating the drawing seen in the previous shot.

Figure 43. Still from Piraeus in Logistical Worlds, directed by Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip, 2014, Greece.

Here, the text reads, "from Schisto, the line, clean and polished, runs its lonely route to Thriassion." The next sequence of shots, once again a mix of still and moving images, focus further on the infrastructure of the Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line. The text reads, "as it crosses the Attica landscape, the New Ikonio-Thriassio line carries the optimism of growth implied by the State and the Media and the illusion of change, even when all it does is to be visible." As with much of the infrastructural development extending out from the PCT, the communities living in the spaces peripheral to these zones and corridors are hopeful that they will experience the knock-on benefits of such development projects. Whilst expectations of wider social economic development within the zones immediately peripheral to the PCT have largely been quashed (with strikes, pushbacks and protests on the rise) as the logistics zone spreads itself further across the Greek landscape, hope remains for the wider population of the region. Thus, expectations for economic and social stability and growth are pinned on the expansion of such infrastructures of global trade. Indeed as Lascari suggests, "forgotten settlements imagine themselves within this cartography of promised growth."[373] As a result, beyond simply impacting the daily realities of life and material conditions of labour, such zones and corridors of logistics also impact the construction of social imaginaries for the communities living in the

[373] Anna Lascari, "The New Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line."

spaces peripheral to them. The inclusion of the corridor "sketch" in combination with the textual focus on the potential optimism (economic, infrastructural etc.) that the corridor's construction carries, emphasises the imagined desires that communities place upon such spaces of logistical capitalist expansion. Consequently, this section of the film aims to examine how certain social imaginaries and developmental desires are connected to, and grounded in, the expansion of these infrastructures of global trade. However, as we have seen, the tangible impacts of such expansionary projects continue to exploit and dispossess much more that they support and invest. And there is a renewed focus on these processes within the film's next section. Here, we also confront the potential ways in which these border communities attempt to co-opt the infrastructures of such logistical spaces in acts of simultaneous necessity and resistance.

We begin this next section of *Piraeus* with an extract from Christos Karakepelis' 2011 film *Raw Material*. Shot over six years, the film focuses on various communities across Greece who survive by collecting and selling scrap metal. One of the groups Karakepelis focuses on are a Roma community living in the town of Neoktista (Newly Builds), which borders the Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line. Over a shot of several men removing scrap metal from the back of a van, we hear a voiceover that states "it would take two months to mine the metal we collect in a day. The prices vary from day to day." From here, we transition to a series of still shots of piles of scrap metal, shot both within the town and around its peripheries. Here, some context for the historical importance of the scrap metal industry is provided:

> As a by-product, the ship building provided scrap metal for recycling. It was used mainly for building material that used to be one of Greece's most profitable businesses and export commodities. With the decline of the shipbuilding as well as of the domestic building sector the production of steel declines. One phenomenon in the end of the local economy's hierarchy chain is diversifying though: individual and groups of scrap metal seekers working the streets with their supermarket carriers.

We then shift back to a second extract from *Raw Material* and the scrap metal collectors of Neoktista. Over shots of more collectors throwing their scrap into a large skip, a voiceover describes the informal economy surrounding the valuation of the collected metal. Unregulated by the government, the valuation market is extremely corrupt, resulting in huge fluctuations in the amount of money collectors receive for their materials. As the voiceover suggests, "I keep my mouth shut, I need the money. The state does not exist here. If we had a proper government,

I would send an official from the department of weights and measures to tell them 'Let's take a look at those scales'. They thrive in this lawlessness." The relationship between the sovereign state and the zones/peripheries of logistics space has been a continually recurring theme throughout this section, and this is reemphasised by the scrap metal collector's claim that "the state does not exist here." As is so often the case within such peripheral spaces, state jurisdiction overlaps with the transnational control of the logistics zones, often meaning that crucial social, economic and infrastructural mechanisms of state support and welfare fail to extend into these liminal spaces. Again, these forms of overlap and rupture bring us back to Danyluk's contention that the spaces of logistics and their peripheries are "fragmentary, unstable ensemble[s] of physical and social infrastructures that are conceived, constructed and managed by formally independent actors."[374] As the excerpts from *Raw Material* point out, the now largely defunct ship building industry in Piraeus once provided ample excess materials to support the scrap metal industry. However, with the decline of the ship building industry, scrap metal collectors were forced to extract their resource from elsewhere.

The penultimate section of the film begins with a series of shots that survey the landscape of Neoktista. Over these shots, the film describes how the town is a site of openly racialised tension between the ethnic Greek and Roma inhabitants, who are "accused of being responsible for the degradation of the town, due to their involvement in the drug trade and the scrap metal industry." Alongside a subsequent series of shots showing debris and rubbish on the streets of Neoktista, we are presented with a quotation from the president of ERGOSE SA, a subsidiary of the Hellenic Railways Organisation (OSE), a company who were instrumental in the creation of the Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line. He states that "vandalism is a huge problem. It particularly grew during the economic crisis but it is gradually being mitigated." From here, the camera continues to scour the streets of Neoktista, showing evidence of the theft of various metals—sewer caps, street lights etc.—from the town's infrastructure. The on-screen text states, "the Newly Builds are linked to infrastructures in contingent and fleeting ways… They are constructed and sustained by what was stolen, reused and sold from existing infrastructures." We are then presented with a shot of a stuffed toy bear plugged into the open sewer—a warning to drivers to avoid this spot.

The film's detailed focus on these infrastructural absences seeks once again to reinforce the interconnection between the logistics zone and its peripheral spaces. Although the expansion of logistical channels may offer up imaginaries of development—both in terms of

[374] Martin Danyluk, "Fungible Space: Competition and Volatility in the Global Logistics Network," 107.

infrastructure and jobs—the material reality is that these peripheral communities have been left to cannibalise their own infrastructures.

Figure 44. Still from Piraeus in Logistical Worlds, directed by Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip, 2014, Greece.

Whilst the infrastructural development of the Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line passes by the edge of Neoktista, the town itself is evidence of how economic and infrastructural mechanisms fail to extend their support into such liminal spaces. They are largely "left to themselves," indefinitely subjected to structural "processes of social and economic degradation." Thus, whilst developmental imaginaries might bleed of from the arteries of global trade zones and corridors, the reality is that liminal spaces fall between the gaps of private and sovereign control and support. More specifically, these sites' very positions as peripheries result in fragmentations, instabilities and gaps between state jurisdiction and the infrastructures of global trade; neither is prepared to take control of these areas and they are therefore left to a process of managed decline.

The aim of this section has been to examine how *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds* regrounds and defetishes its engagement with the sites and spaces of logistics. Through the work's close engagement with the peripheral sites of global trading networks, the film repeatedly emphasises that logistical spaces foster new, violent and messy forms of governance and bordering. Through this close, piecemeal engagement with the border spaces of global trade, the film simultaneously resists "the mimetic lure of real abstraction"[375] that has dominated aesthetic engagements with logistics space. Instead, the film is invested in practicing

[375] Alberto Toscano, "The Mirror of Circulation: Allan Sekula and the Logistical Image."

what Toscano, pace Allan Sekula, terms "a materialist and corporeal, as well as partisan, practice of photography, practicing 'purposeful immersion' into the social."[376] Through a piecemeal study of such peripheral zones, the film seeks to reground logistics spaces, providing a better understanding of how they interact and intersect with the spaces they border. Through this focus on such peripheral zones we begin to understand how the border regimes of contemporary logistics are central to "the very *production* of the deep heterogeneity of global space and time." Much discussion of tactically negotiating and negating such logistical power formations emphasises the need to expose chokepoints or weak links in such infrastructural systems, which are predicated on precarious and fragile forms of mobility/immobility; a conception that, in and of itself, further undermines a reading of these spaces as seamless/smooth. Beginning to unpick and undermine such totalising and abstracted imaginaries of logistics space in indicative of the visual's potential capacity to act as a tool of resistance in the fact of such formations of power.

Regimes of (In)visibility: Liquid Traces- The Left-to-Die Boat

If the rise of logistics as one of the dominant modes of contemporary capital accumulation fosters new forms of governance and bordering, it also simultaneously rearticulates patterns of movement and mobility. Oceanic space has become a crucial site for the expansion of logistical transportation, particularly with the increasing importance of containerisation in supply chain operations. As oceans become increasingly important to the workings of logistified capital, its spatial securitisation has also become a primary concern. Additionally, the perceived risks—typically racially and xenophobically inscribed—posed by the supposed increase and expansion of various "illegalised" activities that could threaten such capital flows in these same spaces ("migration," "piracy," and "terrorism") also accelerate the implementation of such security infrastructures. Consequently, securitisation of oceanic space is a fundamental dimension of such reformulations; however, these modes of safety and protection are unevenly distributed; aiding certain forms of mobility whilst structurally precluding (and endangering) others. During the night of the 27th March 2011, 72 migrants fleeing from Tripoli boarded a small dinghy in the hope of reaching the Italian island of Lampedusa. Approximately 18 hours after departure, the boat sent out a distress call from an on-board satellite phone. In the early hours of the 28th March, the boat ran out of fuel. For the next 14 days, the boat drifted. Finally, on the 10th April, the boat finally drifted back onto the coast of Libya. Only 9 of the 72

[376] Ibid.

passengers survived.[377] During the period of the boat's fateful journey, NATO was in the process of enforcing an arms embargo in the central Mediterranean. As a result, the oceanic space the boat moved across was being meticulously patrolled and surveyed by an array of national and supra-national forces. Consequently, the boat's drift took place in one of the "most highly surveyed areas of sea in the entire world."[378] As Charles Heller suggests, the boat was spotted, surveyed and interacted with approximately 9 times during its fateful journey: initially by a French aircraft, then through its GPS distress call and on several other occasions by military ships, fishing vessels and helicopters. Despite these myriad instances of visibility and interaction, the boat was offered no substantive assistance or aid. How is it that a boat travelling through such a space of intense visibility did not receive the help and support it so desperately needed?

Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani's multimedia work *Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat* sought to find the answers to this question. Their multifaceted investigative project sought to highlight the structural neglect of the migrant vessel by an array of state and extra-state actors. However, the work is more than simply an investigative study into the results of criminal inaction by these state/extra-state bodies. It is also concerned with examining the intensification and proliferation of bordering, surveillance and visualisation technologies across contemporary oceanic space. More precisely, alongside its focus on such an instance of state/extra-state neglect, the work also aims to underscore the new and powerful forms of bordering that striate the sea, and how these new forms of governance create the conditions for the proliferation of new regimes and technologies of surveillance and visibility. The increasing modes of technological visibility across oceanic space are intimately connected to the multiple fragmentations of the border within these same spaces. Consequently, reformulations and multiplications of the border have led to marked rise in "operational" or "instrumental" images, necessary for the documentation and contestation of movement across these spaces. Their investigation was nested under the wider Forensic Oceanography project, headed by Heller and Pezzani and closely related to the Forensic Architecture research centre at Goldsmiths University, London. As Heller and Pezzani suggest, Forensic Oceanography "is a project that critically investigates the militarised border regime in the Mediterranean Sea, analyzing the spatial and aesthetic conditions that have caused over 16,500 registered deaths at the maritime

[377] Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, "The Left-to-Die Boat," *Forensic Architecture*, accessed 3 July 2019, https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-left-to-die-boat.
[378] Ibid.

borders of Europe over the last 20 years."[379] The aim of this section is to examine how Heller and Pezzani's project unpacks the structural interconnections between these new forms of oceanic bordering/securitisation that striate the sea and the intensification of visibility and surveillance across these same spaces. The fragmentation of the border has led to a multiplication of image regimes surveying this oceanic space, and *Liquid Traces* is keenly focused on examining this interconnection. Ultimately, the work seeks to highlight the deep contradiction in the fact that whilst there have been a rapid proliferation of new forms of surveillance and border protection, there is an increasing risk involved in traversing these spaces for sections of the population that are deemed to fall "in-between" the various sovereign and extra-sovereign remits of control and protection.

As briefly mentioned above, this deep contradiction in oceanic securitisation brings us back to the earlier considerations surrounding the role of logistics in contemporary regimes of bordering and control. As has previously been suggested, both earlier in this chapter and chapter 1, logistical efficiency is now one of the primary methods for profit accumulation under late capitalism. As Charmaine Chua has noted, this revolution in logistics has "shifted capital's focus from its sites of production to its sites of circulation… firms began to experiment with increasing the speed and efficiency through which commodities could circulate across the globe."[380] The increasingly fragmented global division of labour, continually aiming to search out lower-cost labour pools and cheaper sites of production, has meant that efficient circulation between these new locations of exploitation is of primary importance. As this new form of circulatory profit accumulation evolved, anxieties have clearly developed around how to protect and secure such infrastructures, corridors and channels. Thus, much of the expansion of oceanic surveillance and control has been in aid of such logistical securitisation. Deborah Cowen has suggested that, "the rise of supply chain security entails a move away from territorial models of security in order to protect the transnational material and informational networks of global trade."[381] Consequently, shifts towards transnational forms of bordering and control—primarily in service of increasing the security and safety of logistics space—have led to the creation of "intensely policed naval corridors."[382] Indeed, a 2011 report from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) entitled "Securing the Supply Chain" aimed to provide "a

[379] Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, "Forensic Oceanography," *Visibleproject* (blog), accessed 13 June 2019, https://www.visibleproject.org/blog/project/forensic-oceanography-various-locations-in-europe-and-northern-africa/.
[380] Charmaine Chua, "Logistics, Capitalist Circulation, Chokepoints," *The Disorder Of Things* (blog), 9 September 2014. https://thedisorderofthings.com/2014/09/09/logistics-capitalist-circulation-chokepoints/.
[381] Deborah Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics*, 53.
[382] Ibid., 154.

multifaceted analysis of the importance of supply chain security for the transportation and logistics industry." The report suggested that an "upswing in terrorism and piracy" could potentially have devastating impacts on logistical supply chains. The report concludes "transportation and logistics companies… need to take security concerns into account when choosing transport routes."[383] Similarly, as Deborah Cowen suggests, "the threat of disruption to the circulation of stuff has become such a profound concern to governments and corporations in recent years that it has prompted the creation of an entire architecture of security that aims to govern global spaces of flow."[384] Thus, such a shift in the sites of profit accumulation inevitably mean that new forms of state and extra-state security must be developed to survey and patrol these corridors of capital flow. Cowen has labelled these new forms of regulation and control as methods of "supply chain security," which rely "on a range of new forms of transnational regulation, border management, data collection, surveillance, and labour discipline, as well as naval missions and aerial bombing."[385]

Over the past ten years, and roughly matching up with PwC's report, we have seen the development of a range of new forms of border surveillance and control technologies. For example, the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR), created and operated by the Joint Research Centre, "represents a mechanism for EU Member States' authorities responsible for border surveillance, such as border guards, coast guards, police, customs and navies, to share operational information… with the aim of reinforcing the control of the European southern maritime borders." A slew of other EU security research projects supported EUROSUR. Amongst these were PERSEUS (Protection of European seas and borders through the intelligent use of surveillance), led by the private Spanish information technology and defense systems company Indra Sistemas and CONTAIN (Container Security Advanced Information Networking), led by TNO (Organisatie voor Toegepast Natuurwetenschappelijk Onderzoek, part of the Swedish Defence Research Institute) which aimed to "support transport security stakeholders in managing container security threats as part of an integrated approach to the management of transportation networks." This emphasis on "managing container security threats" underscores how the securitisation of oceanic space is closely intertwined with the advance of supply chain capitalism. As suggested earlier, the perceived risks posed by the supposed increase in "illegalised" migration have also fed into these desires for an expansion

[383] PricewaterhouseCoopers, "Securing the Supply Chain: Transportation and Logistics 2030," Transportation & Logistics 2030 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2011).
[384] Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics*, 2.
[385] Ibid.

of oceanic securitisation. Much of this highly prejudicial discourse perhaps extends from a more endemic "spectacularisation" of contemporary processes of migration and bordering. Indeed, as Bernd Kasparek, Nicholas De Genova and Sabine Hess suggest, the border spectacle is defined by how "the enactment of exclusion through the enforcement of the border produces (illegalized) migration as a category and literally and figuratively renders it visible. A representation of illegality is imprinted on selected migration streams and bodies, while other streams and bodies are marked as legal, professional, student, allowable."[386] Thus, in many ways, the extension and expansion of bordering regimes—typically in the service of logistics contemporary domination—become a performative act, "where illegalization functions along with other devices (waiting, denial, missing paperwork, interview, etc.) to govern and manage migration."[387] Consequently, the expansion of such security and surveillance infrastructures across oceanic space create a particular sort of feedback loop, where their very presence reinforces the spectacularisation and illegalisation of migratory flows. As securitisation is amped up, inevitably "illegality is imprinted on selected migration streams and bodies." However, it is also important to note that whilst these methods of securitisation and surveillance may help produce the such illegalised representations of migration, they also oftentimes structurally avoid responsibility for such precarious forms of movement and mobility. More precisely, whilst extensive infrastructures have been developed to protect the movement and circulation of contemporary containerised capital across the seas, these same forms of spatial surveillance and control have arguably made other forms of oceanic movement and transportation more dangerous than before. Whilst the increasing importance of global supply chains—and the safety anxieties attached to their development—seemingly create a "safer" oceanic space, as with any spatial infrastructure operating according to the logics of capital accumulation, these forms of safety and protection attempt to structurally preclude and bypass other forms of supposedly "unproductive" or "harmful" movement and circulation. Migration is one of these forms. As a result, whilst bodies and organisations like EUROSUR, PERSEUS and CONTAIN attempt to secure ocean space, they do so in ways that further endanger the lives of those sections of the population that fall outside their accumulatory strategies; rendered as "superfluous" or "bare" life—such as the 72 migrants fleeing from Tripoli. It is this contradiction that is explored within Heller and Pezzani's film; as new regimes of surveillance and technologies of visualisation allow for intensified visibility across oceanic

[386] Maribel Casas-Cortes et al., "New Keywords: Migration and Borders," *Cultural Studies* 29, no. 1 (2015): 6.
[387] Ibid.

space, other supposedly "illegal" forms of transportation and movement are increasingly hidden, precaritised and made more dangerous. Through these processes of obfuscation, the violence of inaction reigns supreme. Heller and Pezzani's work interrogates these new regimes of bordering and surveillance, unpacking how these formations of governance and security create an abundance of imagery of "illegalised" migration, whilst simultaneously structurally avoiding any responsibility and accountability for the safety of these very same people. Thus, these new regimes of bordering and security not only create a violence of visibility, they simultaneously foster a violence of inaction; leaving those cast as illegalised exposed to an uncertain and often deadly fate on the high seas.

The centrepiece of the multimedia *Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat* project is a 17-minute video work, which brings together the central evidence and findings of the overall investigation. The video is built around a single image of the Mediterranean Sea, the oceanic space traversed by the migrant vessel. The masses of land surrounding this expanse of water—southern Europe and northern Africa—are rendered as black, negative spaces of absence. In contrast, the oceanic space itself is presented as a thick, swirling mass of dark blue.

Figure 45. Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat, Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, 2012, UK.

This aesthetic choice perhaps signals Heller and Pezzani's intention to render the ocean not as an empty space of absence and neutral traversal, but rather as a space of deep political contestation and political violence. Indeed, this is backed up by the voiceover at the opening of the film, which suggests, "modulations of the sea's ever moving surface immediately fold back into its immense liquid mass. What traces might death at and through the sea leave? How to reconstruct violations when the murder weapon is the water itself? What are the conditions

that transform the sea into a deadly liquid?" This search for the "conditions of transformation" becomes the central preoccupation of the work, as it aims to examine and unpack how various regimes of bordering and visual surveillance have rearticulated this oceanic space. The opening of the film aims to establish how such regimes of maritime control have expanded over the past ten years. Heller and Pezzani suggest that a central catalyst for this expansion was the fall of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia in 2011, one of the earliest events of the so called "Arab Spring." As the voiceover states, "in early 2011, the turbulent movement of maritime currents spilled over onto North African land… following the fall of Ben Ali, several thousand Tunisians seized their freedom to move." Within the bottom right corner of the frame, we are presented with a short extract from a YouTube video entitled "Le Peuple a Parlé," which shows some of the protests in Tunisia in 2011. Simultaneously, a small white marker on the central image of the land and sea indicates the location of Tunis. As the film progresses, the entire image is overlaid with a grid and different diagrams and lines begin to criss-cross the ocean space as the film's investigative narrative unfolds. In the top right section, we are presented with a list of items: "Migration Routes, Search and Rescue Zones, Military Ships, GPS Location, NATO Surveillance Area etc."—these are a key, helping to identify each of the diagrammatic elements introduced onto the map. The film proceeds to map out how FRONTEX (European Border and Coast Guard Agency, a crucial part of the EUROSUR infrastructure) stepped up their surveillance and patrols after the fall of Ben Ali. The protest footage is now replaced by a copy of a FRONTEX document that lists the newly patrolled areas across the Mediterranean.

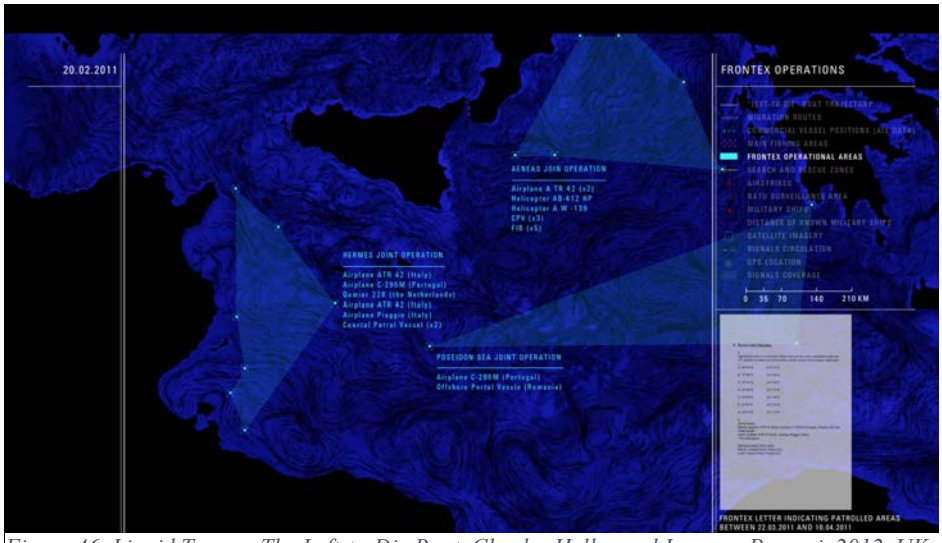

Figure 46. Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat, Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, 2012, UK.

Simultaneously, three geometric shapes mapping out these areas of surveillance appear across the map: the Aeneas Joint Operation, the Hermes Joint Operation and the Poseidon Sea Joint Operation. Under each of these headings, we are also offered a detailed breakdown of the various international vessels and aircraft involved in the operations. As the voiceover suggests, FRONTEX deployed "patrol boats and aircraft to police the unruly freedom of the high seas, it constituted a mobile and deterritorialised border." Over this voiceover, the image of the FRONTEX document is now replaced by footage shot from an Italian coastal patrol vessel, which formed part of the Hermes Joint Operation. This is a recurring technique used throughout the film; images gleaned from a variety of the visual surveillance and patrol technologies in action across this "mobile and deterritorialised border" are visually stitched together by Heller and Pezzani. This ever-morphing composite map becomes the structuring visual coda for the film; its matrix-like web of images and diagrams helping to map out how the new forms of oceanic bordering/securitisation that striate the sea lead to an intensification of visibility and surveillance technologies across these same spaces.

From here, the film focuses on the civil war in Libya, the subsequent international military intervention, and the associated arms embargo enforced by NATO across the Mediterranean. As part of this embargo, NATO also created a Maritime Surveillance Area. Here, the image of the sea is criss-crossed by a series of red lines, indicating the parameters of the surveillance area. The bottom right image shows the official NATO map of the same area. The voiceover describes how several days after the Maritime Surveillance Area was established, up to 38 warships were participating in this surveillance project. However, these warships were not the only technologies of control and surveillance to be deployed. NATO also relied on a "complex assemblage of remote sensing technologies so as to detect threats hidden within maritime traffic. These included AIS vessel tracking systems, which emit a signal to coastal radar systems." However, as the AIS system's scope was limited in the area immediately surrounding the Lybian coast, "NATO also relied on Synthetic Aperture Radar Imagery, which emits radar signals from satellites, snapping the surface of the earth according to their orbit." Using electromagnetic pulses, SAR creates much higher resolution images and 3D renderings of landscapes than traditional satellite photography. Here then, the film seeks to highlight how different technologies, both "on the ground" and "in the air" were taken up to create a dense web of visibility across this oceanic space. As Heller and Pezzani suggest, "through such technologies, the sea's liquid ways are supplemented by a constantly pulsating sea of electromagnetic waves." Consequently, this opening section of the film establishes how these infrastructures and technologies of surveillance came to form a crucial part of such a

"mobile and deterritorialised border" across the Mediterranean sea. What the film seeks to do in this opening section is map out the various forms of intense control and visibility that now criss-cross this oceanic space. By initially presenting us with the overabundance of how such imaging and surveillance technologies operate, the film also foreshadows how the migrant vessel could only have existed an extremely *visible* node within this space. Consequently, it was only through what they term a "violence of non-assistance" that the tragedy occurred. Here then, the film not only shows us how new regimes of bordering create new infrastructures of visibility, it also takes up the images generated by these new forms of surveillance and patrolling as evidentiary materials in and of themselves; retooled as forms of counter-evidence to expose the crime of non-assistance. Indeed, in their summary of the investigation, Heller and Pezzani suggest that they aimed to turn "the knowledge and awareness generated by those surveillance technologies into evidence of responsibility for the crime of non-assistance."[388] Thus, as suggested at the outset of this section, central to their work is a co-option and subversion of such dominant image regimes of power and control.

It is arguable that these acts of subversion and co-optation lead to the emergence of a strong "counter forensic" sensibility within their work. Whilst not directly addressed by Heller or Pezzani, the notion of the counter forensic has strongly informed the broader work of Forensic Architecture as a research collective. The concept of the counter forensic was originally put forward by Allan Sekula. For him, the practice of counter forensics aimed to take up forms of forensic evidence and forensic techniques—typically state-created and produced—and turn them into an archive of accountability and resistance against the very same formations of power responsible for generating them. As Thomas Keenan suggests—channelling Allan Sekula's original formulation of the term—counter forensics "refers to nothing less than the adoption of forensic techniques as a practice of 'political manoeuvring,' as a tactical operation in a collective struggle, a rogues' gallery to document the microphysics of barbarism."[389] Sekula's original conceptualisation of the term comes from the essay "Photography and the Limits of National Identity."[390] Here, Sekula focused on the work of photographer Susan Meiselas in Kurdistan after the end of the First Gulf War.[391] His argument centres on the fact that the Kurds had always been a population subjected to photographic "surveillance and cataloguing… [they are] a people defined from without by multiple oppressors and scientists

[388] Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, "The Left-to-Die Boat."
[389] Thomas Keenan, "Counter-Forensics and Photography," *Grey Room* 55 (2014): 69.
[390] Allan Sekula, "Photography and the Limits of National Identity," *Grey Room* 55 (2014): 28–33.
[391] For a more detailed examination of Sekula's argument, see Thomas Keenan, "Counter-Forensics and Photography."

and adventurers." For Sekula, different actors have been responsible for this process; "Ottoman Turks and Persians and Europeans in the nineteenth century, Turks, Iraqis and Iranians in the present period."[392] In addition, Keenan suggests that such "administrative practices to which photography can be turned went hand-in-hand with 'torture and extermination'… Sekula sees this process of identification, and especially the kind of identification in which photography is a basic element, as the essential accomplice to or even the instrument of ultimately genocidal operations."[393] Thus, when photographic surveillance and observation—alongside other evidentiary and forensic practices—are tied to processes of genocidal extermination and disappearance we get an intimate bond between what Sekula terms "Identification" and "Annihilation":

> The oppressor state catalogues its victims as precisely as possible, typing them as a group, but seeking to register and track individual members. The key to ideological power over the "other" lies in typing; the key to functional power lies in individuation. In other words, stereotypes are ideologically useful and necessary, but in the end it is individuals who must be reduced to ashes.[394]

Thus, identification is of central importance within the process of such violence, as it relies on individuation for effective "annihilation." Crucially however, Sekula believes that such processes of cataloguing and surveillance can be taken up and used against those very same formations of power. This reversed process then operates as "Identification-Annihilation-*Identification*," where the process of re-identification can help not only with the discovery and documentation of those who may have been killed or disappeared by various forms of state violence, but can also cast new light on the perpetrators of those same crimes. As Keenan suggests, "the history of human rights forensics is marked by this asymmetrical reversal of state policing techniques into tactics for resisting and challenging injustice."[395] Thus, for Sekula (and later Keenan), state produced materials hold the potential to be taken up and utilised as tools for "political manoeuvring" and, consequently, to produce an archive of state violence. As Keenan suggests, quoting Sekula, "'forensic methods (detective methods focusing on evidence and the body) offer a tool for oppressive states.' But, he [Sekula] somewhat

[392] Allan Sekula, "Photography and the Limits of National Identity," 30.
[393] Keenan, 69.
[394] Sekula, 55.
[395] Keenan, 71.

unexpectedly continues, 'forensic methods have also become tools of opposition.'"[396] Thus, the aim of a counter forensic practice is to build up evidence of violence and oppression though a "reversal" or co-option of "policing techniques." Ultimately, various power formations have—intentionally or not—created vast archives documenting their acts of violence and neglect, and the practice of counter forensics seeks to retool these repositories; holding those same power formations to account.

A counter forensic praxis is clearly in evidence throughout *Liquid Traces*. As we have already seen, the film repeatedly stitches together a variety of evidentiary materials—geo-location data, surveillance imagery, transcripts—to both emphasise the rapid proliferation of such surveillance regimes and expose the "crime of non-assistance" carried out by a mix of state and extra-state bodies. These counter forensic strategies and techniques continue to proliferate and develop throughout the rest of the film. For example, as the film begins to map the boat's journey on the 27th March, it describes its first sighting. The voiceover states that "at 14.55, the passengers noticed an aircraft flying high above them. It was a French patrol aircraft, which, as an investigation by the Council of Europe has subsequently determined, transmitted a photograph and the boat's coordinates to the Italian coastguard headquarters in Rome." In the bottom right of the screen, we are presented with an image taken by the French patrol aircraft. This grainy photograph, taken almost directly above the vessel, shows how tightly the migrants are packed onto the deck. Next, the voiceover describes a call for help made from the vessel to Vatican priest Father Zerai, whose number had been widely circulated between different groups attempting the Mediterranean crossing. The priest then transferred this message to the Italian coast guard, "who determined the vessel's location through the satellite phone provider based in Abu Dhabi." However, as the boat was positioned outside the "Italian Search and Rescue Area… the Italian coast guard did not intervene. Neither did they ensure themselves that any other actor would. But they did alert their Maltese counterparts and NATO HQ in Naples." The image of the oceanic space is then overlaid with the parameters of both Italian and Maltese search and rescue areas, with the migrant vessel clearly beyond the limits of both. The coast guard also alerted all vessels in the Sicily channel of the boat's position through a INMARSAT-C distress call. Here, we are presented with the locations of all the boats within this channel, acquired through AIS tracking data. In addition, we are presented with a transcript of the INMARSAT-C call sent out by the Italian coast guard, in the bottom right corner of the screen. Next, the film highlights the fact that whilst the boat was outside both

[396] Ibid., 69.

these national jurisdictions, it was within NATO's maritime surveillance area and, additionally, there were "several military vessels" located within the boat's immediate vicinity. In the bottom right hand corner, we are presented with a copy of a document NATO presented to the Council of Europe "indicating the distance of several military ships from the migrants' boat." At this time, NATO's "standard practice regarding migrants in distress at the time was one of minimal assistance… NATO sought to enable migrants just far enough for Italy or Malta to become responsible for them."

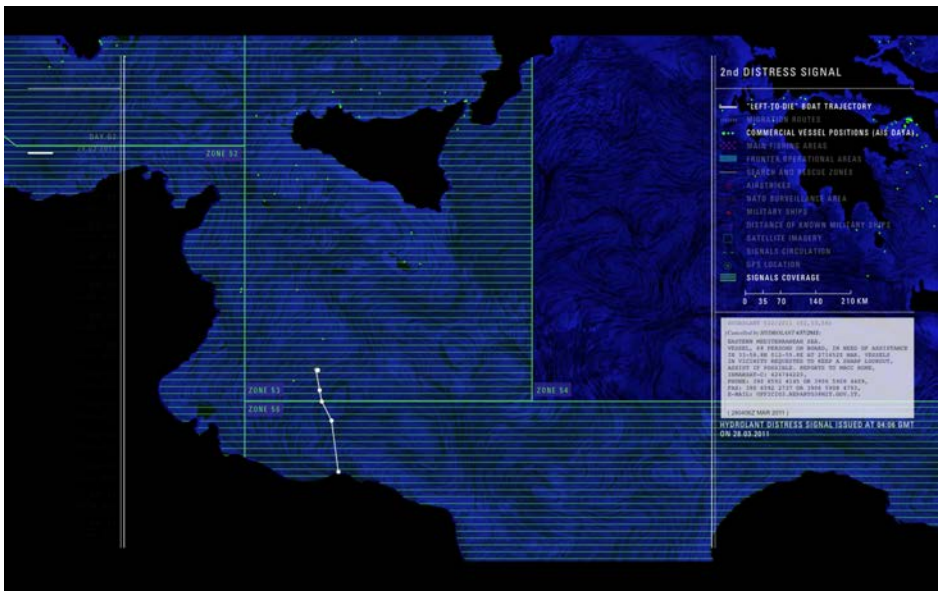

Figure 47. Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat, Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, 2012, UK.

This is a clear example of just one instance of active "non-assistance" undertaken by one of the key actors within oceanic space of the Mediterranean. Here, we are offered a firm sense of how the multiple and fragmented border regimes across this ocean space attempted to strategically shift responsibility for the migrant vessel through active non-assistance. Throughout this sequence, we see the practice of counter forensics in action: tools and images utilised and generated by different power formations are co-opted, appropriated and ultimately turned into archives of evidence, presenting the "microphysics of barbarism," or—perhaps more aptly in the case of *Liquid Traces*—the microphysics of non-assistance.

The work continually stacks up these different techniques and technologies of surveillance and imaging, almost to the point of oversaturation. Occasionally, there is such a dense web of materials across the oceanic backdrop that we forget where our attention is supposed to be focused. This is arguably an intentional move by Heller and Pezzani, as they attempt to reinforce the sheer proliferation of surveillance technologies within this space of intense securitisation. However, such a stacking up of evidence never leads to total visual

incomprehensibility. The very composition of the work, its grid-like structure and detailed organisational key, continually foreground the intimate connections and localised points of interaction between these multifarious actors and forces. Whilst stitching together a wide array of evidentiary forms, the work is always concerned with a focus on the detail and fragment—those key points of interaction. These compositional strategies continue into the next section of the film. The narration describes how on the morning of the 28th March, the vessel ran out of fuel. Next, the film presents us with evidence of another distress signal sent out in the early hours of the 28th, roughly matching up with the time that the vessel's engines stopped. Here, we are once again presented with the location of commercial vessels within this area, acquired through AIS tracking data. In addition, laid over the top of these locations are horizontal green lines, representing the area coverage of the distress signal. As the narration suggests, "none of the commercial vessels accounted for by AIS data diverted its course to abide by its duty to rescue passengers in distress." Next, the film overlays Synthetic Aperture Radar Imagery acquired from the Envisat satellite, showing the location of additional "large vessels" within the immediate vicinity of the migrant boat, several of which "must have been military."

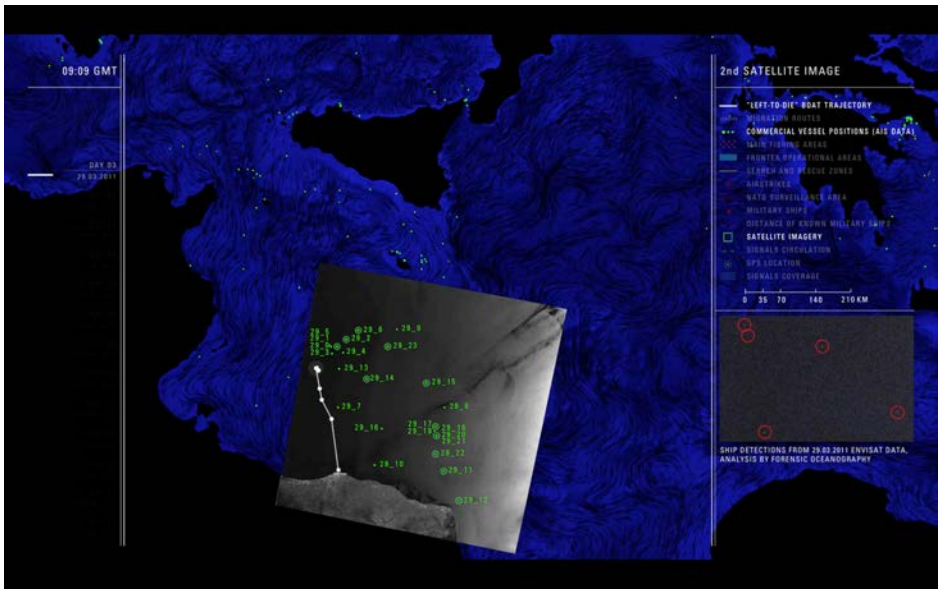

Figure 48. Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat, Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, 2012, UK.

As the narration suggests, " the closest vessels appearing in the image from the 29th March were only 40 kilometers away and could have reached the migrant's boat in less than two hours." With no assistance offered within this space of intense visibility, the migrant vessel was left to the natural forces of the sea: "abandoned to the winds and currents they became prisoners of their frail boat, chained to the sea's open expanse. The sea became an unwilling killer and yet it is also a witness to the events." Here then, another interactive force—and

potential evidentiary repository—is introduced into the film; the sea itself. The role of the "sea as witness" becomes evident in this section of the film. The narration explains how an oceanographer was employed to more specifically map the subsequent trajectory of the drifting boat. Whilst the satellite signals provided periodic locations for the boat, this did not account for its entire journey. Working with oceanographer Richard Limeburner (Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute), the group were able "to reconstruct the trajectory of the boat during its fourteen days of deadly drift, by analysing winds and currents."[397] According to this "drift analysis," the vessel did in fact briefly cross into the Maltese search and rescue zone, although no assistance was offered. From here, the boat began to drift back towards the Lybian coast. The film's constant search for ever-more precise ways to map of the boat's trajectory, and consequently, to detect those localised points of traversal and interaction is underscored by their utilisation of this drift analysis. Here, the sea becomes an almost mediated form; a supplementary evidentiary repository to map the microphysical movements of the boat and its apparent crossing into Maltese space.

As suggested earlier, this focus on the techniques and technologies of surveillance as a crucial site of resistance has become a crucial facet of Forensic Architecture's work. For example, Eyal Weizman suggests the group is "committed to the possibilities of reversing the forensic gaze… turning forensics into a counter-hegemonic practice… to challenge and resist state and corporate violence and the tyranny of their truth."[398] However, as I have already touched upon, this practice of counter forensic appropriation and co-option does not simply create archival evidence of the crimes committed, it also—somewhat reflexively—points towards the explosion of such technologies and techniques of surveillance and imaging at these border sites. Thus, Heller and Pezzani not only take up these images to expose such humanitarian crimes, but they also emphasise how these image regimes have expanded and multiplied; becoming a widespread infrastructure and, as a result, a complicit part of this violence. Consequently, through its counter forensic appropriation of such forms of evidence, *Liquid Traces* also aims to present and critique the explosion of techniques and technologies of surveillance and imaging across oceanic space and how these are interlinked with new policies of bordering and securitisation. Here then, Heller and Pezzani are not only interested in taking up these technologies of surveillance and their corresponding archives to expose their contents and documentations (such as the fateful trip of this particular migrant vessel), they

[397] Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, "The Left-to-Die Boat."
[398] Eyal Weizman, "Introduction: Forensis," in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, ed. Forensic Architecture (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014), 10.

also wish to examine and critique the wider explosion of such infrastructural image regimes. Thus, it is arguable that Heller and Pezzani have somewhat retooled the notion of the counter forensic, not only interested in the *content* that can be gleaned and appropriated from such "state and corporate" image archives, but also examining and critiquing the wider *forms and infrastructures* that support this explosion of surveillance and monitoring within oceanic space. Heller and Pezzani have pointed towards this reformulation of the counter forensic through their coining of another term, the "disobedient gaze" in "New Keywords: Migration and Borders."[399] This article aimed to develop "a nexus of terms and concepts that fill-out the contemporary problematic of migration."[400] Within the subsection entitled "counter-mapping," the authors suggest, the

> Disobedient Gaze is a counter-cartographic response to the extension of the militarized border regime in the Mediterranean Sea which, in recent years, has become a highly surveilled and mapped space. Optical and thermal cameras, sea-, air- and land-borne radars, vessel tracking technologies and satellites constitute an expanding remote sensing apparatus that searches for 'illegalized' activities.[401]

Thus, we can see here how their counter forensic practice is also structured around an attempt to understand and visualise the wider expansion of different surveillance regimes across the oceanic space of the Mediterranean. Indeed, as the article continues, the disobedient gaze aims to "turn surveillance mechanisms back on themselves by demarcating those areas that are being monitored by different technologies and agencies to show what could be 'seen' by which border control agency in any particular case."[402] Therefore, this attempt to turn such devices back on themselves not only aims to expose evidentiary materials, but also aims to look at the wider infrastructures that produce these new archives of surveillance and monitoring. Through this approach, the film also explores the broader interconnections between new practices of border securitisation and the expansion of various surveillance and monitoring image regimes.

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[399] Maribel Casas-Cortes et al., "New Keywords: Migration and Borders," *Cultural Studies* 29, no. 1 (2015): 65.
[400] Ibid., 55.
[401] Ibid., 65.
[402] Ibid.

Conclusion

Within this chapter's previous case study *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds*, we explored how the work engaged with the sites and spaces of logistics and their interrelated border spaces. Through the work's close focus on the peripheral sites of global trading networks, the film repeatedly emphasises that logistical spaces foster new, violent and messy forms of governance and bordering. Although taking up a markedly different aesthetic approach, in many ways *Liquid Traces* attempts to operate in a similar fashion. It is also concerned with focusing on how contemporary border regimes operate in complex and fragmented ways; materially impacting those who traverse these peripheral and bounded spaces. The work stitches together fragmentary forms of evidence to counter forensically challenge the (in)action of various state and supra-state regimes of control and surveillance. Thus, across both works there is a shared interest in how to reconceptualise the border as a multiple and fragmented space of political and geographical contestation. Towards the end of the analysis of *Piraeus*, I touched upon Alberto Toscano's claim that "the mimetic lure of real abstraction" has dominated aesthetic engagements with logistics space. He develops this argument further, suggesting that "in contemporary visual practice… oriented toward logistical complexes, the mimetic lure of real abstraction has several modalities, among which is the lure of logistics as a depopulated landscape of megastructures."[403] Moreover, crucial to the very optimisation of logistics operations is a general conception of space—both geographical and political—as "flattened" and "smooth." In many ways, similarly abstracted aesthetic approaches have also dominated approaches to visualising the operations of bordering regimes. The "spectacularisation" of border regimes in much artistic practice also privilege imaginaries of border spaces as solid walls, barriers and controlled zones; another set of "depopulated megastructures." Consequently, issues of how to visualise and map such systems of power are consistent problematics that have plagued visual culture and artistic practice. Through various forms of ruthless efficiency that structure both the operations of logistics and border control, these power formations resist visibility and legibility. Moreover, these processes of obfuscation also simultaneously help to facilitate the continued effectiveness of their myriad forms of exploitation and brutality. How do we comprehend systems and networks of power that are predicated on what we could perhaps term a violence of abstraction? It is my contention that both *Piraeus* and *Liquid Traces* are examples of aesthetic practices that resist the "mimetic lure of real abstraction." Within both works there is a keen focus on how the large-scale power

[403] Alberto Toscano, "The Mirror of Circulation: Allan Sekula and the Logistical Image."

dynamics of logistics and border control have material impacts on those at the peripheries of these spaces. Within *Piraeus*, there is a constant return to the peripheral sites of the port, examining the local textures and infrastructural impacts of such a space of global trade. *Liquid Traces* methodically weaves together detailed evidence of the dangerous fragmentation of border space within the Mediterranean and the deadly impact this has on those trying to move through these politically contested sites. All this might just be a question of scale (mirco vs macro), but when such systems of power are predicated on forms of violent abstraction, the scalar and detail both seem of central importance. Thus, focusing on the fragment or the detail offers up the potentiality for the visual to act as a choke point; a locus for intervention.

Conclusion: Media's Spatial Wake

For the closing remarks of this thesis, I would like to stay in the unstable zone between land and sea. In 1996, Twentieth Century Fox built a 51-acre studio in the small Mexican coastal village of Popotla, Rosarito, Baja California, Mexico. The central feature of this new studio complex was a 360,000-square foot "infinite horizon" water tank overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The catalyst for the development of both the studio and tank was James Cameron's 1997 film *Titanic*. In the following years, the tank was utilised by a variety of other production companies for their own oceanic escapade films, such as Warner Brothers' *Deep Blue Sea* (1999) and Buena Vista Pictures' *Pearl Harbour* (2001).

Figure 49. Image of Titanic set in Popotla, Baja California, Mexico (author and date unknown).

In 1997, Allan Sekula travelled to Popotla to photograph the studio and its water tank, upon which floated a 775-foot-long replica of the Titanic. These photographs were compiled into a photo essay entitled *Dead Letter Office* and later formed part of a multimedia exhibition entitled *TITANIC's wake*. In the press release for this later exhibition, Sekula wrote about how Twentieth Century Fox chose Popotla as the location for the studio primarily to take advantage of lower Mexican wages and other related production tax breaks. Thus, the choice of Mexico as a production location for the film was primarily financially motivated; the construction and day-to-day operation of the studio would be markedly cheaper than a comparable coastal location in the US. Such strategic relocations of cinematic production are a reflection of capital's broader and more systematic search for cheaper sites of production and manufacture;

maximising profits by cutting a range of geographically variable operating expenses. In the case of *Titanic* and the Popotla studio, such processes of financial exploitation had other interconnected spatial impacts.

As Sekula writes, "the neighboring village [Popotla], just to the south of the walls and guard towers of the set, has no running water. Efflux from the filming tanks has lowered the salinity of the coastal tide pools, damaging the traditional mussel-gathering livelihood of the villagers."[404] Thus, through Twentieth Century Fox's global drive for overhead reduction and profit maximisation, a local ecosystem and connected industry were destroyed. I bring up the example of the Popotla studio to invert—albeit momentarily—the dominant theoretical and methodological focus of this thesis. Throughout this thesis, I have engaged with a wide range of nonfiction works that utilise the moving image to visualise and critique various formations of spatial power. However, what the example of the Popotla studio forces us to consider is moving image media's own capacity for spatial exploitation. Indeed, as Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt suggest in their introduction to *Ecomedia: Key Issues* "our love of media and media technology has become part and parcel of our *global environmental crisis*."[405] Such an eco-critical approach to media studies has become a prevalent trend over recent years, with scholars keen to underscore how the different material infrastructures, formations and movements of media "are inextricable from their frictive landscapes of resource depletion, protest, social inequality, and environmental risk."[406] Thus, within a thesis that has explored the political potential of moving image media to examine and critique different formations of spatial power and violence, it is also necessary to highlight how such forms of media are themselves predicated on similar forms of spatial exploitation. Indeed, as Cubitt suggests elsewhere, any media object or practice must "take responsibility for its own existence, an existence premised on the medium's imbrication in circuits of materials and energy."[407] Thus, in multiple ways, different media forms leave their own traces of financial, social, political, ecological and ultimately *spatial* violence—as the example of the Popotla studio and the *Titanic* production make starkly evident.

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[404] Allan Sekula, "TITANIC's Wake," *Art Journal* 60, no. 2 (2001): 26.
[405] Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt, "Introduction: Ecologies of Media," in *Ecomedia: Key Issues*, ed. Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt (London: Routledge, 2015), 1.
[406] Patrick Brodie, Lisa Han, and Weixian Pan, "Becoming Environmental: Media, Logistics, and Ecological Change," *Synoptique* 8, no. 1 (2019): 6.
[407] Sean Cubitt, "Film, Landscape and Political Aesthetics: Deseret," *Screen* 57, no. 1 (2016): 21.

As I highlighted in the introduction to this thesis, an examination of film and media's extra-textual, material and industrial entwinements with space and landscape have not been the central focus of this project. Clearly, such forms of industrial and material analysis must account for the spatial in multiple ways; examining and critiquing the geographical, geopolitical and spatial-economic impacts of media production. However, within these pages I have instead been concerned with the different ways in which scholars and practitioners have examined and theorised the moving image's *aesthetic* and *visual* engagement with the spatial. Thus, the analytical focus of the thesis has remained at the level of the representational when attempting to delineate the presence of such a spatio-political turn within contemporary documentary practice. As I have previously suggested, this is an approach that is easily critiqued; to understand the political potentiality of a particular moving image work, we must take into account its material—and, by extension, spatial—conditions of production, distribution and exhibition. However, I bring up the example of Popotla, *Titanic* and Sekula's work not to underscore the potential shortcomings of this project, but instead to highlight—one last time—the potential fecundity of visual media practices when attempting to critique different formations of spatial power and violence, even when such forms of exploitation extend from the realm of media production itself. In one of Sekula's most striking diptychs from his photographic exploration of this area, we are presented with the two distinct—yet structurally intertwined—forms of production and labour in Popotla.

Figure 50. Image from TITANIC's wake, photographed by Allan Sekula, 2005, Austria.

The image on the left present us with the under-construction *Titanic* set. The foreground of this image is dominated by a large pile of dirt and rubble, likely materials that have been excavated to make way for the water tank. A short dirt road leads up to the concrete surrounds of the tank, upon which sits the under-construction Titanic replica. The image on the right presents us with

two mussel gatherers outside one of several shacks, cooking some of their daily haul. In the top right of the image, we catch a glimpse of the ocean. When placed side-by-side, it appears as if the large pile of rubble from the studio excavation in the left image is almost stacked upon the frame of the right image; about to collapse onto the mussel gatherers. Here, Sekula is perhaps overtly emphasising the damaging impacts—environmental, industrial and financial—that this new media-industrial formation in Popotla has had. Indeed, through the diptych presentation of these images we are perhaps drawn back to the Farockian notion of soft montage, that technique of image juxtaposition that aims for the creation of "relations" and "differences" rather than the dialectical opposition of sequential montage. The fate of the mussel gatherers is indissolubly wedded to the ebb and flow of Twentieth Century Fox's media production, and Sekula's simple visual strategy of soft montaging makes these interconnections powerfully evident. As a result, if we read this diptych as emblematic of such a strategy of soft montaging, we can begin to see how Sekula's visual investigation is fundamentally concerned with examining the exploitative spatial logics of another, larger-scale form of visual media production. Here then, we enter a feedback loop of sorts. Within Sekula's photographic investigation it becomes starkly evident that visual media can be responsible for such forms of spatial exploitation; however, at the same time, through the very creation of these photographic diptychs, we are given yet another example of how a visual media practice can also function as an effective tool for spatial examination and critique. To highlight the spatial exploitations of a visual media industry, Sekula takes up another form of visual critique; the visual to critique the visual, with a constant focus on the spatial. Therefore, for Sekula, the best method for examining and critiquing the impacts of a visual media industry is another decidedly visual praxis. Consequently, whilst it is important to account for the forms of spatial exploitation upon which different media forms and practices are built, these very same forms and practices always hold the powerful potential for spatio-political critique. Media forms and formations are powerful and potentially violent industries and infrastructures, but this doesn't mean we should discount their various political potentialities. It is this latter argument that has structured the analytical work of this thesis.

The spatio-political potentiality of nonfiction moving image practice has been explored across a wide range of case studies within these pages. This thesis has traced a connection between a geographically disparate set of experimental nonfiction works that have a shared concern with visualising the spatial logics of contemporary power relations. This is a trend in nonfiction practice that has never been fully examined nor theorised. By forging connections between these works, the thesis has not only highlighted the presence of such a spatio-political

tendency, but has also examined the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. It has been the contention of this thesis that moving image practice must become a radical tool to fight against the spatial machinations of contemporary power relations. By mapping out the presence of a spatio-political tendency in experimental nonfiction practice, this thesis has highlighted the importance of continuing its development by finding new and radical forms of praxis. The first chapter, "Visualising Late Capitalism's Landscapes" examined a range of moving-image works that aimed to visualise and critique the various impacts of late-capitalist economic exploitation, including the exploitative practices of natural resource extraction and logistics. A variety of aesthetic and visual strategies were taken up by these works to explore the different scales at which such financial-extractive-logistical forms of exploitation operate. The chapter took up Fredric Jameson's notion of "cognitive mapping" as a methodology that offers a way of visually and aesthetically countering such spatialised and "overpowering" economic logics. For Jameson, a new aesthetic form is needed to visualise and critique late capitalism's increasingly opaque spatial operations. The chapter then moved on to analyse several contemporary experimental nonfiction works that—either explicitly or implicitly—embraced the theory of cognitive mapping laid out by Jameson. These case studies offered an opportunity to interrogate the political potentialities of such spatio-political praxes. Ultimately, through this analytical work, the chapter argued that nonfiction moving image work can play a crucial role in the fight against the savage encroachment of transnational global capital—examining strategies of visualisation and critique that have already been developed, whilst also gesturing towards to those which remain underexplored or underdeveloped. This analysis began by focusing on Thomas Kneubühler's *Land Claim* project, which examined the displacement of First Nations communities in Northern Quebec and the Philippines by multinational natural resource extraction companies. I argued that within the moving image works that form part of this larger multimedia project, the speculative flows of global capital encounter the materiality of the landscapes they wish to exploit. By embracing the Deleuzian notion of the "stratigraphic image," I argue that Kneubühler cognitively maps the relationship between abstract financial speculation and a topographical engagement with its proposed sites of future spatial fixing and exploitation. Next, the focus shifted to Ursula Biemann's *Black Sea Files*, a work that explores the socio-geographical re-composition of the territories carved apart by the creation of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline—which extends from the Azeri–Chirag–Gunashli oil field in the Caspian Sea to Ceyhan, a port city on the south-eastern Mediterranean coast of Turkey—and the connections to national and supra-national governance. Here, I argued that Biemann utilises an aesthetic of "soft montage"—originally conceived by

filmmaker and theorist Harun Farocki—to oscillate between the micro and macro spatial-geographical injustices wrought by the pipeline's construction. Such a strategy ultimately aims to bridge the gap between larger homogenised forms of financial and governmental power and their impact upon the myriad "local textures" and communities along the route of the pipeline. Finally, I examined Allan Sekula's photo essay *Fish Story* and Noël Burch and Sekula's *The Forgotten Space*, both of which focus on visualising the logisitification of maritime space. Here, I argued that Sekula's concept of "critical realism" structures his (and Burch's) attempt to cognitively map the materiality of human labour in increasingly automatised and logistified spaces of circulation. All these works move between micro and macro spatio-politics in their attempts to map the matrixes of contemporary domination.

The second chapter "Carceral Geographies: Spaces of Exception and Internment" examined several works that attempted to reassess the functioning of carceral space beyond the physical boundaries of the prison space. These works utilised a variety of visual strategies to examine how carceral space functions "betwixt and between" the limits of the carceral institution, impacting a much wider set of social, political, economic and spatial infrastructures. This rapid expansion of carceral populations and infrastructure over the last half century has brought about a "punitive turn" within the humanities and social sciences. Understanding the infrastructural and spatial transformations wrought by this expansionary development of the prison industry has become a chief preoccupation for economic and human geographers over the past 20 years. Indeed, this research has developed into a subfield of its own, carceral geography. Most broadly, carceral geography—as an area of theoretical and political enquiry—involves a geographical engagement with the spaces, practices and experiences of confinement. In addition, geographers working within this field attempt to situate the carceral within wider social, economic and geopolitical infrastructures, aiming to examine how carcerality structures social, economic and political space beyond the boundaries of the prison. This chapter examines several experimental nonfiction works that—in a manner much akin to the carceral geographic turn—seek to visualise and critique the shifting spatial and infrastructural relations of carceral spaces. In addition, I also examined works that focus on practices of internment that are more directly connected to the acceleration of states of exception that have become permanent rules; migrant detention centres, concentrations camps, holdings sites for political prisoners, to name but three. Across all these works, there is a clear emphasis on not only visualising carceral spaces that are increasingly occluded from site, but also understanding their tight interconnections with larger judicial and biopolitical structures of power. All these works understand that such carceral sites and spaces can never be read as hermetically sealed; they

always operate at the border with—and in relation to—larger structures of power and discipline, both geographically and historically. I began with an examination of Forensic Architecture's *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*, a 26-minute video work that interrogates the historical and contemporary function of the mine-turned-concentration camp in the village of Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. I argued that through the dialectical juxtaposition of the material landscapes of extraction and the sites of sovereign violence, the film interrogates the shifting function of these spaces. Ultimately, Schuppli's film focuses upon how the appropriation of an already established spatial infrastructure clearly would have aided the occlusion and concealment of its new function. From here, I moved on to examine James Bridle's 2015 work *Seamless Transitions*, which attempts to visualise the occluded infrastructure of UK migrant removal and detention centres in the UK. I argued that Bridle's film points towards the deliberate occlusion of sovereign power and violence within these sites of detention and removal through the strategic mixing of public and private infrastructure and labour. Finally, I examined Jonathan Perel's 2015 film *Toponimia*, which examines the historical and contemporary conditions of four military "resettlement" villages in northern Argentina. The formal structure of the film emphasises not only the occluded sovereign control and surveillance over these spaces, but also their reclamation post-dictatorship. The work also points towards the ways in which such processes of reclamation were facilitated by the structural neglect of contemporary neoliberal governance. Ultimately, I argued that all three works can be closely tied to the wider turn towards theorising carceral geographies. Here, we are confronted by carceral spaces that are increasingly hidden from sight—intentionally masking formations of sovereign violence and control—and, as this chapter has demonstrated, moving image practices have a crucial role to play in the visualisation of such formations of power.

The third and final chapter, "Border Regimes: Labour, Ports and the Sea" examined a range of works that have attempted to articulate how border regimes have proliferated; shifting from the periphery to the centre of our social, economic and political lives. They have also become markedly less visible systems of control and surveillance, often functioning beyond (yet still alongside) their traditional roles as the markers of geopolitical sovereign boundaries. Under the conditions of transnational global capitalism, understandings of borders as solid sovereign, geopolitical "boundaries," "walls" or "barriers" have become theoretically and politically unproductive. Within the first section, titled "Logistical Peripheries" I focused on Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras and Carolin Phillip's *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds*. This work investigates how logistical spaces—ports, transportation corridors, storage facilities etc.—

materially impact the sites that they border and interact with. I argued that the work aims to examine how logistical spaces cannot be read as materially and geographically detached from the spaces at their peripheries. Instead, such sites and infrastructures of contemporary logistics create new, messy and violent forms of extra-sovereign bordering. The second section of this chapter, entitled "Regimes of (In)visibility" examines Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani's multimedia work *Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat*. This work examines the fragmentation and related proliferation of bordering regimes across the Mediterranean Sea. Here, I focused on how Heller and Pezzani's project unpacks the structural interconnections between these new forms of oceanic bordering/securitisation that striate the sea and the intensification of visibility and surveillance across these same spaces. With a multitude of sovereign and extra-sovereign actors now involved in the control and securitisation of this space, new technologies of visualisation and surveillance now exist to document movement across this oceanic area. Across both case studies, I suggested that there is a consistent concern with examining, documenting and visualising how border regimes have been rearticulated and recomposed in this late capitalist and neo-colonialist epoch.

As I already highlighted at the end of the introduction to this thesis, it is important to acknowledge that the scope of this project is—of course—limited in several ways. I previously highlighted how the thesis is geographically restricted; not engaging enough with works emerging from the global South. I also suggested there was a lack of engagement with that most fundamental form of spatialised violence, global warming—the consequences of which we are yet to fully comprehend. As I think about the reshaping of this work for publication, it will be crucial to expand the scope of the work to address these and other pressing political, social and geographical concerns. Moreover, the forms of spatial violence I have examined throughout this thesis also have other impacts, both gendered and racialised, that have not been examined or critiqued in enough detail through the selected case studies. I hope that an expanded version of this project would build and develop a more intersectional understanding of how such spatialised power relations operate, particularly in relation to such questions of gender and race. By bringing more nonfiction works into the conversation, I would hope to show how questions of identity, positionality and agency are indissolubly wedded to these larger formations and structures of power.

Ultimately, the central argument of this thesis has been that nonfiction moving image practices can play a key role in examining and critiquing a wide variety of different formations of spatial power and violence. This is a trend in nonfiction practice that has never been fully examined nor theorised. By forging connections between these works, the thesis not only aimed

to highlight the presence of such a spatio-political tendency, but it has also aimed to examine the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. It has been the contention of this thesis that moving image practices must become radical tools in the fight against the spatial machinations of contemporary power relations. More specifically, this thesis has argued that moving image practice must develop a more rigorous political praxis that makes the invisible (or obfuscated) exploitations of spatiality legible and, most importantly, resistible. By surveying a variegated set of works that have made steps towards such a critical visual praxis, this thesis has mapped out some "lines of flight" for its continued critical development. Each year, more and more spatio-political nonfiction works are being produced, examining an ever-widening range of spatially-attuned topics. This thesis serves as a broad introduction to—and examination of—this nascent trend in documentary practice, but exciting works remains to be done.

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