SHARPENING THE HAZE

Visual Essays on Imperial History and Memory

Edited by
Giulia Carabelli
Miloš Jovanović
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Introduction: Of Images and Empires

In a blog post on a recent trip to a Peruvian monastery, Sara Salem recounts the moment she recognized Andalusian tiles dating from the era of Spanish colonization. Reflecting on this encounter with the lasting material legacy of imperial expansion, she concludes that "[w]e could tell a nice story … about how art travels and spreads and crosses boundaries; or, we could ask how art comes to be made, by whom, what happened to those artists, and what happened to those who the art was brought to" (Salem 2019). Salem's meditations are timely, indicative of a broader expansion and intensification of conversations about empires, imperialism, and their lasting effects. Today more than ever, all of us—especially those who live in territories that were once epicentres of imperial power—are compelled to re-engage with persisting imperial legacies in a variety of forms and forums, including museums, educational curricula, and geopolitics, to decolonize our imaginaries from the enduring power of empire. This book stems directly from the desire to trouble the legacies of empire. Our goal is twofold: to capture the workings of imperial pasts in the present, and to produce works that challenge empire's lasting "duress" (Stoler 2016).

We start by asking how to depict empire visually. What images might conjure the political, social, and aesthetic formations of empire? As Jay and Ramaswamy (2014: 4) note, "empire and art—or more broadly, power/knowledge and visual subjectivities—are mutually constituted and entwined, both in the colonies and in the metropole". With Jay and Ramaswamy, we contend that empire is both abstract and protean, subject to myriad modulations and embodied in legion avatars. As such, it entails an uncircumscribed multiplicity of images, and can only be understood in the plural. Accordingly, our volume examines imperialism through the visual essay form, which we understand as a series of images juxtaposed with words. With attention to the double friction of pictorial depiction—its limitations in relation to its object(s) and its open-ended viewership(s)—we address two intertwined facets of the relationship between empires and images: *imperialism as an ideological project of image-making* and *images as a means of challenging empires*.

Our aim is not simply to intervene in the vast debates within the field of visual culture or to suggest new analytical directions in the study of imperial history and memory. Rather, we seek to make visible the "range of ways" in which empire "helps to constitute social relations" (De Marrais and Robb 2013: 4). Accordingly, this volume presents a variety of visual genres and forms, including photographs, illustrated advertisements, stills from site-specific art performances and films, and maps. A shared ethos and critical commitment span across and unite these different genres: to illuminate the contours of empire's social worlds and its political legacies through the visual essay. This multiplicity of genres and visions is purposeful, as it aims to foster conversation between artistic and academic practice. In doing so, we follow the artistic duo Cooking Sessions, who employ the "visual language, identity, typography and spatial design [developed] for colonial propaganda" to call upon new contributions which "re-present the injustice in imperial legacies" (Cooking Sections 2018: 249). In other words, we approach the social meaning of empire as a historical and contemporary object of memory that is multifaceted and requires not only analytical engagement but re-presentation in a multiplicity of modes.

Our guiding, titular metaphor, sharpening the haze, captures our commitment to frame empire from different vantage points, seeking focus within its plural modes of power. We contend that one of empire's enduring effects, what Stoler describes as its "duress", is to obscure the very conditions of its own power. The omnipresence of imperial relations on political, economic, social, and cultural levels appears as a haze, a smokescreen that is difficult to peer through. Our task is not to dispel the haze entirely—an impossibility, at any rate—but to sharpen it. By sharpening the haze, we intend to trace empire's effects visually, and to re-present them in ways that subvert and pervert imperial power.

Sharpening the haze is necessarily a multiform task. With Salem (2019) and Benjamin (1969), we insist that images, like works of art, are also works of social production and reproduction. Visual cultures of empire register and speak to imperial power and its constitutive arrangements of bodies, selves, identities, communities, and materials. They are not mere reflections of imperialism, but inherent to the production of empire in the first instance. Like the forces of (re)production behind them, images of empire are manifold—they carry exploitation together with its contradictions, power marked by its limits. We therefore contend that critical scholarship on empires would benefit from more creative attempts to use photography, performance art, mapping, and site-specific interventions to reveal and confront empire.

Our goal is to reclaim a space for the visual in artistic, imaginative, and creative ways that challenge the resonance of empire in the present. As John Tagg has memorably remarked, "Photographs are never evidence of history, they are themselves historical" (1993: 247).[1] Treating images of empire in their genealogical and historical capacity demands attention to their ongoing effects

1 We thank Zeynep Gürsel for directing us to Tagg's *bon mot*.

of knowledge-power in the present. In this sense, our visual essays are partial archives of imperialism as an ideological project of image-making. By the same coin, through the creation of images and art works, we register the deeply asymmetrical relationships that constitute the sociopolitical fibres of empires with subversive intent. In visualizing moments of rupture, flash, and unanticipated uptake, the images we present marshal trenchant arguments against the very powers that produce(d) them. In this spirit, our contributions forward and constitute transgressive *re-inscriptions* of imperial legacies. By re-presenting the constitutive, frequently violent images of empire, we re-inscribe them with new, counter-hegemonic valences. For us, the question is not just how to "hate [the visual culture of empire] properly" (Jay and Ramaswamy 2014: 14) but also how to attend to the instances in which empire *already hates itself in its image*. Re-inscription is a means of cultivating attention to empire's latent contradictions. Therefore, it is a guiding conceptual and methodological principle of our collection as a whole, the means to sharpening the imperial haze.

The visual essay as a genre is crucial to our collective aspiration of re-presentation and re-inscription. With its multimodal, visual/verbal character, the visual essay is simultaneously diegetic and mimetic: It tells by showing and shows by telling (Wagner 1979; Grady 1991; Pauwels 1993). In the words of Luc Pauwels, the visual essay embodies "the irreducible expressive and informational power of images, their ability to almost incessantly generate new questions and views, the synergetic strength of combining images and texts … even in their most basic forms" (Pauwels 2012: 3). From this perspective, these essays constitute one (recent) moment of synergetic strength in the ongoing lives of the photographs, illustrations, stills, maps, and other visual materials that they assemble. Whatever we might say about them "diegetically", the mimetic capacities and effects of visual essays continue to speak for themselves.

Our authors were asked to assemble ten images and a brief text to illustrate how their art practice and/or academic scholarship might sharpen the imperial haze. As a result, some of the chapters engage empire by integrating images and text, while others allow text and images to work more independently and evocatively. Clearly, and considering the visual nature of this manuscript, texts never aspire to exhaustive description. In this sense, the book must be assessed as an experiment in capturing, disentangling, and undoing empire creatively through images.

Together, the essays engage both empire's power to produce images and images' hold on empire laterally, within the hazy contours of multiple meanings. We seek to *sharpen the haze* from multiple vantage points, calling upon the dialogic interplay of image and narrative to trouble fixed discourses of imperial pasts through unanticipated re-inscriptions in the present. The words of our contributors offer appropriate metaphors for the results of this method: from the "raw material" of imperial atmospheres we find "worlds in which many worlds fit", images that "activate memories", never fully recoverable in their "battered patinas". If our historicity is imperial and global, then it has also been "transmogrified", "transplanted", and "transformed". Perhaps we may embrace the "delirium" and "discomfort" of such subjectivities, to see the unintended consequences of power, the cataracts of empire's vision.

Sharpening the Haze develops over the course of three sections. We begin with "Representations of Empire", pause to "Dwell in the Haze", and conclude with "Acts of Re-inscription". Broadly, the essays track a course from interrogations of imperial pasts to subversive re-inscriptions of imperial images in the present, even as both projects inform each author's intervention. In "Representations of Empire", we ask how images of empire can reframe imperial pasts and their contemporary legacies. Here, the emphasis is on destabilizing the discourses that seek to legitimize and sanitize empire by offering "off-centre" images of imperial pasts.[2] "Dwelling in the Haze" extends the decolonial project of unsettling empire by pointing out how visual representations of imperial pasts are necessarily incomplete, even as they also shelter kernels of counter-imperial logics. Each of the authors in this section, in particular, are attuned to the ways in which a variety of visualizations in the present, ranging from the mimesis of re-enactment to aesthetic distaste for a poor photograph or the banal vistas of real estate brochures, offer hazy insight into imperial continuities, recapitulations, and displacements. Finally, the third section, "Acts of Re-inscription", foregrounds the counter-imperial effects of visual art and archives, ranging from interrogative performance pieces to the unanticipated subversions of colonial-era maps.

"Representations of Empire" offers three distinctive foci that accentuate the persistence of imperial pasts in the present. With Jeremy F. Walton's essay, we begin with an act of unearthing, in which the site of the cemetery serves as a metaphor for the contradictory relegation of empire to the "dead" past and the living force of its present materiality. By taking us on a photographic tour from Thessaloniki and Zagreb to Pula and Styria, Walton traces how, instead of being mere places of decomposition, imperial cemeteries are material archives of now-dead forms of imperial belonging that endure and haunt the present. Next, Nataša Mišković explores how pictorial representation through juxtaposition and intersection can resuscitate imperial commonalities from beyond the grasp of the homogenous nation state. Based

2 Some of the essays published in this volume emerge out of the conference "Empire Off-center", which was organized by the Max Planck Research Group "Empires of Memory: The Cultural Politics of Historicity in Former Habsburg and Ottoman Cities" in November 2018.

on a large research project at the University of Basel, Mišković's visual archive assembles photographs from large local daily newspapers into a public exhibit featuring the four cities of Sarajevo, Istanbul, Belgrade, and Ankara. Comparing them side by side destabilizes urban narratives of the nation state, while highlighting how the cities' post-Ottoman imperial past persists in the everyday. Finally, Annika Kirbis provokes us to interrogate the visual legacy of the Other as a constitutive figure of empire by contextualizing how "metanarratives of exclusionism" continue to operate in the nation state today. Tracing the persistence and nurturing of the enemy image of the 'Turk' in reference to the Ottoman siege of Vienna, Kirbis explores how certain visual markers still easily trigger and mobilize support for contemporary xenophobic agendas. However, the multiplicity of lived realities among Vienna's citizens increasingly disturbs and inverts such exclusive imaginaries of belonging. Together, these three essays represent empire in its "zombie-like" guise, as a resuscitated object whose enduring legacies can be seen not through individual symbols or acts but through the dialogic capacity of multiple images.

Our second section, "Dwelling in the Haze", contributes sets of images that re-engage with imperial narratives to allow for more capacious readings of empire. Guided by Giulia Carabelli, we begin by examining how a 2017 historical re-enactment of the Battle of Solferino (1859), fought between the Habsburgs and the Italian liberation front, can provoke reflections on the contested nature of Italian national identity and rising nationalism. Portraying the agency of atmosphere in charging the sentiments of the re-enactors, Carabelli explores how the after-*affects* of imperial power figure in the (re)making of collective subjectivities. Through the productive frictions emerging from immediacy, Carabelli traces the possibilities for participants to lay claim to new identities exceeding narratives mediated by both imperial and national pasts. Miloš Jovanović pushes us to continue thinking about imperial legacies and the production of subjectivities with a reflective piece on the impossibility of photographing empire in a satisfactory way. Engaging with a discarded visual archive of a research trip to the former Habsburg concession in Tianjin, Jovanović dwells on the discomfort of empire obfuscated in the obstructions, ruptures, and edges of these otherwise unseen photographic failures. Hence, Jovanović's auto-ethnography turns the impossibility of capturing empire into a productive failure, with its discomforting sentiments as a guiding force in the assemblage of a visual archive. Lastly, by tracing the history of Mangaluru tiles, Ian Cook dwells on the interstices and liminal spaces that escape the strict, neat logics of colonialism and urbanization. Amplifying the entanglements of urban space and exploring layers beyond the surface, Cook's visual essay complicates narratives of empire by portraying its dense, shifting textures. Combining visual archival material and personal photographs with poetry and interviews, Cook engages with assemblage as a method for sharpening imperial haze.

Finally, our third section, "Acts of Re-inscription", courageously pursues the task of re-inscribing imperial legacies through contemporary interventions in the visual field. Sharpening the discomfort of empire, these essays attest to how art practice can become a tool of engagement and resistance to what Ann Stoler has called "imperial duress" (2016). The first two essays by Carla Bobadilla and Deniz Sözen archive site-specific interventions that draw attention to the workings of empire in the everyday, asking us to stop and see what has been neutralized by the normalizing power of empire. In the mi(d)st of Vienna's tropical Butterfly House, Bobadilla turns our attention away from the photogenic butterflies chased by tourist crowds towards the sculptures of indigenous peoples of the Amazon, placed without comment in this staged setting of 'nature'. Critically reflecting on such forms of ancestor representation through historical analysis, visual documentation, and artistic intervention, Bobadilla emphasizes the role of performance in the deconstruction of (post)imperial subjects. Drawing on her practice-based research of coffee as a "trans-plant", Sözen further dwells on empire's lasting material and cultural effects on naturecultural worlds. By tracing the intimate connection between empire and coffee along vast (post-)imperial geographies of coffee production, trade, and consumption, Sözen grapples with its multilayered legacies of both rupture and connection, exploitation and exchange, violence and friendship. In the third essay, we accompany film-maker Nina Hoechtl in the process of accounting for her own work on the imperial entailments of race, subjectivity, and performance. Reflecting on Habsburg presence in Mexico, Hoechtl analyses (post-)imperial subjectivities as white delusion (*delirio güero*) articulated in today's performance of race and class. Hoechtl's visual essay, a set of screenshots from her film of the same name, *Delirio Güero*, is a tightly woven (audio-)visual assemblage that traces empire in subtle gestures or the consumption of a particular pineapple variety. Finally, in our concluding chapter, Ahmad Barclay confronts us with maps that simultaneously diagram the effects of empire in the past and exemplify how erstwhile empire-making tools can become instruments to condemn imperial desires for territorial expansion in the present. Formerly inaccessible, rare maps of British mandate Palestine that were recently made available for the public by the Israeli National Library serve Barclay as an archive of displacement, bearing witness to colonial domination and expulsion. Based on visual documents of imperial pasts, Barclay's Palestine Open Maps project intervenes in a colonial present offering a possibility for a reckoning *against empire*.

We envision our assemblage of essays as a point of orientation for future interventions, instead of a summary statement about empire and visual culture. We have gestured to a hazy formation of power and knowledge, which we can only sharpen through resolute refusal to draw univocal conclusions. Considering how the power of (and urge for) closure resonates with imperial logics and imperatives, the book is left intentionally without a concluding section. We do not claim to have demarcated and domesticated a discursive territory. Rather, the visual essays of *Sharpening the Haze* are an opening salvo and a continued call for re-inscription.

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Part 1:

REPRESENTATIONS OF EMPIRE

Figure 1: “Moss”.

Already Dead? Of Tombstones, Empire, and Photography

Jeremy F. Walton

Introduction: On Visualizing Empire

Across the segmented political space of central and south-east Europe, cemeteries speak eloquently of the foreclosed social, religious, and political pasts of empire to those attuned to their vocabulary and cadences. In this essay, I highlight neglected temporalities of past empires by foregrounding the ambivalent temporality of photography. I offer a collage of photographs from four post-imperial cemeteries: the Zeitenlik Allied War Cemetery in Thessaloniki, Greece; Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb, Croatia; the Imperial and Royal Habsburg Naval Cemetery in Pula, Croatia; and the Soldatenfriedhof in Styria, Austria. I do so with two aims. First, I explore how tombstones form a serendipitous archive of empire's social worlds in sepulchral form. Secondly, based on this consideration, I ruminate on the photography of tombstones generally. With Roland Barthes's famous aphorism on the deathly quality of photography in mind—"by attesting that the object has been real, the photograph surreptitiously induces belief that it is alive … but by shifting this reality to the past ('this-has-been'), the photograph suggests that it is already dead" (1981: 77)—I reflect on what effect photography might have on that which is "already dead", the grave. This investigation, in turn, inspires new metaphors for the representation of another object that is ostensibly "already dead": empire as a sociopolitical form.

Spirits

Figure 2: "Spirits".

A small table, draped in a cheap plastic tablecloth, abuts the rear of the Serbian Orthodox chapel in the Zeitenlik Allied War Cemetery in Thessaloniki, where some 20,000 Serbian, French, British, Italian, Russian, and Greek soldiers are interred, victims who fell on the Great War's Macedonian Front. Three bottles rest on the table, accompanied by several half-empty packs of cigarettes: offerings to the dead, to be consumed by the living. I pour a draught of *breskovača*, peach brandy, into a small glass and sip the stringent liquor.

The brandy is a potent metaphor, as well as a potent potable—many spirits haunt this cemetery. Affixed to one bottle is a paper tag depicting a rough drawing of the heraldic, double-headed Serbian eagle. The drawing salutes "The Kingdom of Serbia", a polity with imperial pretensions that perished soon after the soldiers beneath my feet, at the end of World War I. Yet, like the spirits in my glass, the spirit of the bygone kingdom remains strong—I think of "*Ovo je Srbija*" ("This is Serbia"), the pop nationalist hymn by Serbian crooner Aca Lukas, which features the lyrics "The flowers have blossomed in Zeitenlik … this is Serbia, the graves of soldiers speak of glorious times".[1]

Figure 3: "Mobility".

1 A YouTube video of the song, accompanied by images of Zeitenlik and photographs from the Macedonian Front, is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3ZR6A9qhCE (accessed 20 March 2019). More generally, Zeitenlik (Zejtinlik in Serbian) is a key site of memory in contemporary Serbia—for instance, see Rakocevic (1992).

Mobility and Stasis

Like *"Ovo je Srbija"*, the plot of graves surrounding the Serbian chapel suggests a homology between the past and the present: Through upkeep and pilgrimage, the dead soldiers of a kingdom that projected imperial might across the Balkans are equated with the nation-state of Serbia today. Elsewhere in Zeitenlik, such elisions are more difficult to uphold. A gravestone in the British section of the cemetery commemorates "A great benefactress of the Serbian people" in two languages, two scripts. Katherine Mary Harley was an English suffragette and nurse who, like Florence Nightingale before her, became an icon of selfless, heroic mercy far from home in the eastern Mediterranean. She was transferred to the Balkan theatre in 1915, where she conveyed wounded Allied soldiers away from the front in ambulance by the cover of night, often in violation of orders to the contrary. After her death in Monastir (Bitola) in 1917, the crown prince of Serbia and the highest-ranking British officer on the Macedonian Front were among the mourners in her funeral procession.[2]

Why is a Serbian memorial to an English nurse located in a Greek cemetery? To pose the question this way is to privilege nations and their states; an answer demands attention to the curious mobilities and geographic transpositions entailed by empires, especially empires at war. Such mobilities crystallize and endure in sepulchral spaces that resist the ebb and flow of time like boulders protruding from a cataract. The space of the cemetery is one of stasis and duress (Stoler 2016), which preserves the effects of imperial mobilities in concrete, marble, and granite forms.

2 Information about Katherine Harley is available on the website of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission at http://blog.cwgc.org/katherine-harley (accessed 20 March 2019).

Proximity I

Figure 4: "Proximity I".

Even more dramatic mobilities achieve sedimentation in another section of Zeitenlik. The largest plot in the necropolis is dedicated to some 8,000 French soldiers, whose identical tombstones register their occupants' fungibility as cannon fodder in life. Upon closer inspection, however, the French section reveals a principle of differentiation: the headstones of French colonial subjects, unlike soldiers from metropolitan France, display insignia that reveal the origins of their occupants. The cruciform graves of Muslim North African soldiers incongruently feature small, abstract crescent moons to denote their religious distinction. Cadets from South East Asia are commemorated with an "IC" (Indochina), those from Senegal with an "S", and those from Madagascar with an "M". The names on many headstones also unsettle Franco-Catholic mortuary symbolism. At one point, I encounter four incongruous graves, side by side: Ben Kalatti

Mohamed, a Maghrebi recruit; Rakotomanga, likely a Madagascan; Tientigny Dombellé, of Senegal; and Lamoine Pierre, probably from France itself.

Empires are not only mechanisms for mobility—they are also laboratories for proximity. Wartime entails violent, intimate closeness among individuals of disparate origins, languages, aspirations, and attitudes. Yet this proximity does not occur on a level political terrain. In Zeitenlik, only "French" soldiers, and thus the imperial power at large, are unmarked. The cemetery, like the Great War generally, must be understood in relation to the rapidly shifting political sands of its age, when imperial and national polities and identities underwent simultaneous fragmentation and concretization. Viewed in this light, Zeitenlik is not so much a fossil as a material archive of an era that uncannily refracts the concerns and dilemmas of the present.

Figure 5: "Proximity II".

Proximity II

Not all forms of imperial proximity were matters of warfare. Several months after my visit to Zeitenlik, I spent an afternoon beneath the picturesque arcades of Zagreb's Mirogoj Cemetery, designed in the late nineteenth century by the local "starchitect" of the time, Hermann Bollé (Bartolić 1972; Damjanović 2013). Mirogoj's groundbreaking was a moment of mortuary centralization and secularization in the city. With a steeply rising population of both living and dead, Zagreb's municipal government elected to eliminate all existing graveyards, attached principally to local Catholic parishes, and to mandate burial for all of the city's denizens, regardless of confession or surname, in the single expanse of Mirogoj.

As an interdenominational city of the dead, Mirogoj hosts curious constellations of social formations that are no longer extant in contemporary Zagreb. One plaque in the south arcades enunciates a sociality that is almost unimaginable in contemporary Croatia. Anka Tomić was likely Orthodox, or at least married to an Orthodox man, as evinced by the Cyrillic script in which her name was inscribed. Yet she was probably not born into an Orthodox family: her maiden name, Mašeg, is inscribed in Latin script, suggesting a Catholic background. Certainly, religious conversion and interreligious marriage remain social and political facts in Zagreb and throughout the Balkans. Yet the politics of language and script in the wake of the disintegration of Yugoslavia has made such a bi-scriptural memorial, in which Latin and Cyrillic do not contradict each other, unlikely today.

Figure 6: “Violence”.

Figure 7: “Erasure”.

Violence and Erasure

Violent death haunts Mirogoj. This is especially true in the Jewish section, where multiple memorials pay tribute to victims of the Holocaust. A funerary slab in the arcades records a legacy of violence: one member of the Freund family was murdered in Auschwitz, another in Jasenovac, the notorious concentration camp run by the fascist regime of the Ustaša during the brief wartime rule of the Independent State of Croatia, a Nazi auxiliary.

Mirogoj's Jewish graves are also the objects of a subtle form of material and symbolic violence: they are slowly disappearing. Just behind the marker that identifies the Jewish section of the cemetery are several unmistakably Catholic graves. Crosses have begun to replace the Star of David in Mirogoj for material reasons. The cemetery administration levies an annual fee to sustain each grave plot in Mirogoj; after several years of non-payment, a plot can be purchased anew. Most of the cemetery's Jewish graves entomb individuals whose descendants now reside far from Zagreb. They are therefore highly vulnerable to erasure due to financial delinquency.

Patina

Soon after my peregrinations in Mirogoj, I made a pilgrimage to another Habsburg-era cemetery in Croatia: the Imperial and Royal Naval Cemetery (*Kaiserlich und Königlich Marinefriedhof*) in Pula, once more commonly known as Pola, the principal military port for the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Habsburg multilingualism remains robust in the graveyard. The sign at the cemetery gates is trilingual, written in German, Croatian, and Italian; within are memorials in the languages of many of the inheritor nation-states of the empire. Wandering from these official

Figure 8: “Patina”.

commemorative sites, my gaze is arrested by an evocative photograph affixed to a headstone. A bearded man in formal attire stares back at me placidly; his companion, a young woman, casts her eyes downward. The small circle of marble upon which their photographs are mounted is beaten and scratched, its surface rendered gritty by the salty marine air. Its patina (Dawdy 2016) of weathering enhances the effect of time’s passage and heightens apperception of the gulf between eras and individuals alike.

If, as Barthes insists (1981: 77), photography renders that which it represents ‘already dead’, irrevocably past, an object rather than a subject, then what should one make of a photograph of a photograph that expresses the erosive, weathering processes of time? I would suggest an analogy: the photograph that I encountered in Pula is akin to memory of the empire in which the subjects it depicts lived. Far from “capturing” the history of bygone epochs in a quasi-objective fashion, we might seek out the battered patinas that their memories convey in the present, like the abrasions on a photograph of a dead couple whose very names have been expunged by a century of weathering.

At an Angle

Figure 9: “At an Angle”.

I had come to the Imperial and Royal Naval Cemetery to locate the graves of Bosnian Muslim sailors who died in the service of the Habsburgs, an aim that proved easier than I had expected: Geometry alone sufficed. The modest headstones of Bosniaks, small sandstone monuments overgrown by moss, are arranged in tidy rows pointing towards Mecca in the south-east. They stand at a sharp angle to the other tombstones in the cemetery, which are oriented along an east–west axis.

The Naval Cemetery, like Zeitenlik and Mirogoj, is a partial, mortuary archive of forms of proximity that empires fostered. Today's naturalized categories of difference do not fully apply in these sepulchral, post-imperial spaces. Yet we should not romanticize forms of erstwhile proximity. Distinctions persisted, and communities, living and dead, were often awkwardly situated in relation to one another, at an angle.

Figure 10: "Unknown".

Conclusion: Unknown

Located at the end of a dirt road that traverses corn and wheat fields, the Soldatenfriedhof in Lang, a hamlet in Austrian Styria, does not call attention to itself. The dead here resemble those in Pula in many ways—they embody the ethnolinguistic patchwork of the late Habsburg Empire. Here, one finds Bosniaks, Slovenes, Germans, Croats, Romanians, and others. Yet one common moniker on the wooden grave markers refuses the imperative of identification. It reads, simply, "*Soldat unbekannt*". Unknown soldier.

Tombs to unknown soldiers are, in fact, well known. Indeed, their proliferation after World War I enshrined a new figure of modern mass mourning (Wittman 2011). Nor should we assume that nothing can be known about "unknown" dead. The unknown soldiers in Lang's Soldatenfriedhof are unnamed in German and marked by crosses, gesturing to affiliations that the imagined national community of Austria today can easily absorb. Nonetheless, the grave of the unknown soldier might also point to the limits of knowledge in relation to histories of violence. Read in this manner, the graves of unknown soldiers in Styria offer powerful, salutary lessons to aggressive projects of memory, memorialization, and restorative nostalgia (Boym 2001). At a time when longing for former empires and neo-imperial adventures have grown more militant and robust, the unknown soldier insists on a measure of incommensurability between the past and the present, and recommends a strategically modest mode of historical consciousness based on this incommensurability.

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Why Are We So Similar? Post-Ottoman Urban Space in Turkey and Yugoslavia

Nataša Mišković

Why would I feel at home walking down Istanbul's nineteenth-century boulevard İstiklal Caddesi the very first time I visited the metropolis on the Bosphorus? How come it reminded me so much of Belgrade's Knez Mihailo Street? Growing up in Switzerland as the daughter of a Yugoslav (Serbian) father, I had always been fascinated when, on visits to Belgrade, my family would show me around and explain at certain instances that something looked this or that way "because of the Turks". Visiting Istanbul much later as a fully educated historian, I felt instantly at ease and enjoyed blending into the crowd, trying to communicate through the countless words which are identical in Serbian, Bosnian and Turkish because of their joint past in the millennia-old Byzantine-Ottoman space. Beyond the usual culprits such as language, food and crafts, similarities and common roots are not easily detectable. Memory contested by national master narratives, different gazes and an equally outdated and demanding administrative language—the Ottoman—obstruct access to further research with more or less intent (Kaser 2013, 2011).

A large research project at the University of Basel, financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation between 2013 and 2018, provided me the unique opportunity to study the above questions through an innovative visual approach.[1] The following offers a brief insight into this project and some reflections on its findings. Focusing on four cities in two Ottoman successor states founded after World War I, the Republic of Turkey and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (the Kingdom of Yugoslavia after 1929), we explored how once-Ottoman urban societies changed in the decades after the dissolution of the Empire: how did people reinvent life under their new national regimes? Which aspects of everyday life were visibly affected by the impacts of war and national modernity? And which aspects continued as before, or evolved at a much slower pace? Belgrade, the Serbian and later Yugoslav capital, and Sarajevo, the principal town of Bosnia, had belonged to the Ottoman Empire until 1878 and 1908, respectively. They retained their character against the large-scale modernizing goals of their pre-1918 authorities in different ways: in Belgrade, the authorities built a modern, European-style city centre on the ruins of the Ottoman old town (Mišković 2008). Knez Mihailo Street was constructed during the same period as elegant Grande Rue de Péra, the famous boulevard in the Greek-Levantine quarter of Istanbul, renamed İstiklal Caddesi after 1923.

Sarajevo, under Habsburg rule between 1878 and 1918, received a sanitized "čaršija" (trade quarter of an Ottoman town) next to a brand-new city centre around Marijin dvor (Marienhof). The Austrians did not touch the Muslim landlords' privileges, which enabled the latter to conserve their traditional Ottoman lifestyle. In Belgrade, as in Sarajevo, everyday life around the old market continued as ever, maintaining the "longue durée" of the

1 PP00P1_176983 – Exploring Post-Ottoman Cities through the Photoɵ graphic Lens: New Approaches to Lifeworld Research in Turkey and Yugoslavia, 1920s and 1930s (acronym: SIBA). See https://nahoststudien.philhist.unibas.ch/de/forschung/forschungsprojekte/siba.

Figure 1: Photographer Mr Halačević in Baščaršija, Sarajevo 1939.
Portrait by Alija M. Akšamija. Mehmed A. Akšamija Collection (siba.4854).

Byzantine-Ottoman trade micro-cosmos and contributing to the imperial phantom borders which inconspicuously continued to structure once-Ottoman space (Hirschhausen et al. 2019; Stoianovich 1967). In the new Republic of Turkey, secular leader Mustafa Kemal (later called Atatürk) invested huge amounts of money and manpower to turn Ankara, this ancient, impoverished "kasaba" (fortified market town) at the crossroads of the central Anatolian plain, into a model twentieth-century city (GIA 2010; Kezer 2015). Istanbul, the ancient metropole of the Byzantine-Ottoman empire, occupied by Allied forces between 1918 and 1923, was left defeated, dishonoured and neglected throughout the 1920s (Keyder 2008).

Figure 2: The Atatürk Monument in front of the Museum of Ethnography, Ankara, ca. 1927.
Cengiz Kahraman Photography Collection.
Digital intervention: Mehmed Akšamija (siba.1186).

The methodology of the SIBA project (SIBA is an acronym of Sarajevo, Istanbul, Belgrade, Ankara) builds on a database of photographs from large local daily newspapers which were able to afford their own photo reporters. In contrast to the United States of America and Britain, as well as France, Germany and Austria, the Republic of Turkey and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia boasted only a very limited number of governmental papers and private publicists who could afford the latest technology of the time: the rotary press, which was a precondition to producing modern newspapers illustrated by photographs (Holzer 2014).[2]

2 The technology was a huge investment even for Austrian publishing houses. See Holzer (2014, 70–76, especially 75–76).

In Belgrade, there were two such publishing houses: *Vreme (Time)*, close to the government, and *Politika (Politics)*, founded by liberal Belgrade publisher Vladislav Ribnikar (1871–1914) (Đorđević 2004). In Turkey, Yunus Nadi Abalıoğlu (1879–1945) was a publisher and journalist and a close friend of Mustafa Kemal. He founded the papers *Cumhuriyet* (*Republic*) and *Yeni Gün* (*New Day*) and the press agency *Anadolu Ajansı (Anatolian Agency)* in order to support his friend's regime (Köktener 2005). The database was completed with photographic material from other sources. This includes two outstanding private collections by distinguished Istanbul photo historian Cengiz Kahraman and Sarajevo photography specialist Mehmed A. Akšamija (Akšamija 2016; Kahraman 2015), who, moreover, both agreed to contribute with their local and technical expertise.

Figure 3: Mahalla fashion, Vratnik, Sarajevo 1939. Mehmed A. Akšamija Photography Collection. Photographer: Alija M. Akšamija (siba.4870).

Researching and analysing the photographs was the centrepiece of the SIBA project. The procedure focused on a close comparison between the material from the archives and the published newspapers. We specifically searched for everyday situations represented in pictures from all four cities. Selected photographs were edited and published on the online portal "Visual Archive Southeastern Europe" (VASE), along with the reconstructed metadata.[3] Much of this material was released to the public for the first time, notably Bosnian photographer Alija Akšamija's early work. On the basis of our analysis and editing work, we developed a travelling exhibition to present the findings and the beautiful material to a broader public.

Material quality is a decisive factor in the selection of photographs qualifying for historical analysis: if they are to serve as a basis to explore urban space of the past, they need to be clear and detailed. If they are, moreover, to serve as a foundation to narrate historical findings visually, the information they carry must be equally verifiable. The items in the SIBA database came in the form of digital scans of varying quality, depending on the materiality of the original and the skills and infrastructure of the person who had produced the scan.

Handling such diversity on an online portal required the adaptation of scan size and resolution. To produce an exhibition with enlarged photos, however, entailed digital enhancement. Sarajevo project partner Mehmed Akšamija cleaned, sharpened and enlarged roughly 250 items selected for presentation in the travelling historical exhibition.

3 Criteria for selection were copyright issues on the one hand and successful reconstruction of metadata on the other. See the Visual Archive Southeastern Europe: http://gams.uni-graz.at/vase/. For the section on the SIBA project see: http://gams.uni-graz.at/siba.

Figure 4: Rough "original" scan from a glass plate negative: unveiling of the Victor monument in Kalemegdan, Belgrade 1928. Borba fotodokumentacija. Photographer: Svetozar Grdijan (siba.4013).

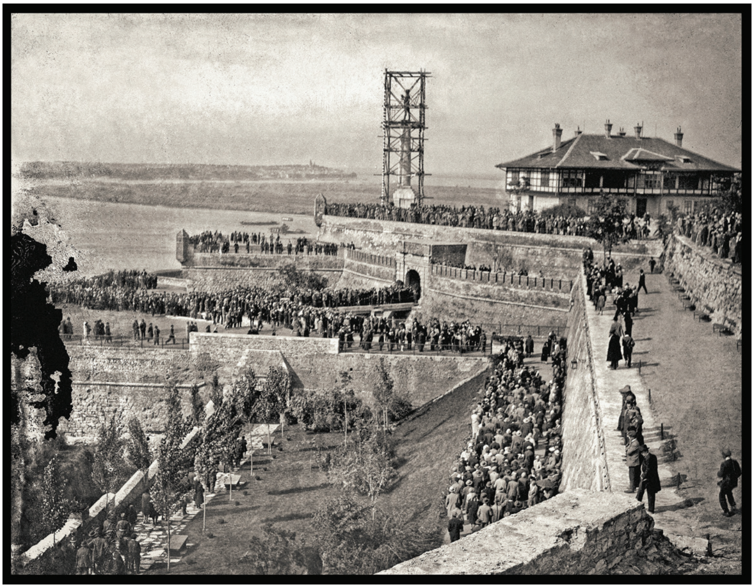

Figure 5: siba.4013 after digital restauration.

The exhibition “Cities on the Move – Post-Ottoman”, produced in cooperation with the Museum of Yugoslavia and Belgrade designers Igor and Irena Stepančić, presents the four cities—Istanbul, Ankara, Belgrade and Sarajevo—through five thematical units, which invite visitors to explore post-Ottoman legacies and national modernities as common Balkan-Anatolian urban phenomena rather than as contrasting landmark cities.

Figure 6: Exhibition Cities on the Move – Post-Ottoman at the Bosniak Institute, Sarajevo. SIBA project documentation. Photographer: Igor Stepančić.

Through the arrangement of the photographic reconstructions, which were carefully printed on “FineArt Baryta” photo paper mounted on “forex” and displayed on deep black “stadur” panels, a joint space of the past re-emerges before the visitor’s eye: market scenes evoke the urban heart of Ottoman cities, dressing habits, religious holidays and leisure activities point to the common (post-)Ottoman space. Visitors have to step close and refer to a separate guide in order to learn in which city a specific photograph had been taken. Their belief in contemporary national master narratives may be challenged when exploring how post-WWI monuments reinforced the divided space and new order of emerging national states.

The interactive riddle of rare, attractively presented photography proved a big success with the public and the press in Turkey, Serbia, Bosnia and beyond. Visitors readily engaged in the playful quizzing as to where a picture might come from — and

Figure 7: Visitors at the Bosniak Institute, Sarajevo. SIBA project documentation. Photograph: Bosniak Institute.

were fascinated if their guess proved wrong. Belgrade journalist Roman Jević (2017) wrote: "Sometimes you will be sure that you are looking at a building in the centre of Belgrade, then it turns out that it's Istanbul." Ljubisav Panić (2018) concluded that "each joyful, exhilarated or sorrowful face from the exhibition 'Cities on the Move' hides its own secret. Enlightened from a correct historical angle, however, the black and white actors of a past so difficult to grasp reveal that it is them alone who pulled our cities into the desired direction." Some of the pictures went viral, such as the image of two embracing beauty queens dressed in Serb and Croat national costume (Figure 8).

An isolated commentary in the exhibition guest book, which demands "improvements" according to a tunnel vision of Serbian history, underlines how much this exhibition challenges contemporary nationalist master narratives. As Panić confirms, the show enables visitors to explore their own city through the eyes and fortunes of their ancestors, but as part of a larger sphere.

Figure 8:
Belgrade Blic tabloid reporting on the Instagram hit Miss Serbia and Miss Croatia. Photograph: Borba fotodokumentacija, by Svetozar Grdijan, ca. 1930 (siba.4210). Report: *Blic*, 18 December 2018. https://www.blic.rs/vesti/drustvo/fotografija-zagrljene-misice-srbije-i-hrvatske-hit-na-drustvenim-mrezama-a-posebna/xktc7c7.


Ženstvenost se i nije promenila, osmeh i belo lice, ali sve ostalo jeste, i te kako - komentar je koji opisuje fotografiju od pre 90 godina na kojoj se nalaze mis Srbije i Hrvatske, a koju je na svom instagram profilu podelila poznata glumica Ljiljana Blagojević.

Fotografija je nastala tokom dvadesetih godina prošlog veka, a u Beogradu je bila izložena pre oko godinu dana, u okviru putujuće izložbe "Gradovi u pokretu - postotomansko nasleđe".


Figure 9: Visitors taking a “sibaselfie” in front of Mehmed Akšamija’s photo collage. SIBA project documentation. Photograph: Bosniak Institute.

Visitors engage with the visual sources in an emotional way, recognizing nothing less than their own family history in the pictures. In the words of another visitor, the exhibition offers "a return to the city of my birth, of my childhood" (Jelena, 22 November 2017). As Susan Sontag famously wrote, "photographs furnish evidence", and making photographs helps "people to take possession of space in which they are insecure" (Sontag 1977: 5, 9). The local press reporters' photos seem to activate memories of the visitors' own familiar past, memories which are all too often in contrast with the past as presented by national master narratives learnt at school. An excellent example of this contested past is the discussion which emerged around Figure 8: Miss Serbia and Miss Croatia, both with sashes in Cyrillic letters, were not official beauty queens but Belgrade students participating in the play "Greetings to Yugoslavia" at the royal court in 1930. Whereas most of today's commentators dwelt on the changing ideals of female beauty, others interpreted it in the context of the ongoing dispute on the use of Cyrillic letters in Croatia. Pressure to publish only pictures which are consistent with the self-image of a (national or local) society, however, exists on the institutional as much as on individual level: Photos in newspaper archives were stored in neglect rather than preserved with care. Photographer Alija Akšamija kept his Sarajevo album from 1938–1939 private, because local society rules did not allow him to expose members whose portrait he had taken, such as the ladies in Figure 3: The conservative interwar Muslim society of Bosnia still regarded photographing women as improper, the camera as bedevilled (Akšamija 2016: 20–21; Kaser 2013: 81–105). In view of all these obstacles, why should we wonder that so many visitors want to see this exhibition, engaging with it full of emotion, treating it as a sensation?

Figure 10: Holiday shopping at Mahmut Paşa, Istanbul. Cengiz Kahraman Photography Collection. Digital intervention: Mehmed Akšamija (siba.1151).

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Disrupting Visual Legacies of the ‘Eternal Enemy’

Annika Kirbis

Vienna’s urban heritage includes a plethora of references to the Sieges of Vienna by the Ottoman army in 1529 and 1683, and the figure of the ‘Turk’ as the enemy and exoticized ‘Other’ plays a key role in its commemoration. Over time, the everyday encounter with these manifold reminders, sometimes ‘warnings’, normalized their presence, turning them into a sort of background noise; as such, they are often not actively perceived in the present. It would be a fallacy, however, to disregard or diminish their meaning and impact. Underpinning today’s narratives of exclusion, this essay attempts to make explicit the visual legacies of the representation of the siege with the ‘Turk’ figured as an enemy.

The remembrance of the Siege occupies a prominent place in the memory narratives of the city of Vienna (Dallinger 2016; Rauscher 2010). Johannes Feichtinger and Johann Heiss (2013), two researchers at the Austrian Academy of Science, have outlined in detail how the remembrance of the Sieges evolved over time. Eventually, the narrative boiled down to two key elements of, on the one hand, the threat of the ‘eternal enemy’ and, on the other hand, feelings of triumph and superiority due to defeating the Ottoman army and ‘saving’ Christian Europe. This reductionism allowed for the narrative to be flexibly applied to any ‘undesired’ external influence, with the figure of the ‘Turk’ turning into a placeholder for, for example, Jewish people, socialists and, increasingly since 9/11, Muslims, Turkish people and immigrants (Heiss and Feichtinger 2013: 10).

Contemporary anti-Muslim, anti-Turkish and anti-immigrant resentment in Austria thereby becomes conflated with a meta-narrative of exclusionism and defence against an 'external enemy' that has been nurtured over centuries. Right-wing extremist parties and organizations make extensive use of these readily available, deeply entrenched narratives and motifs to spread their discriminatory, polarizing political ideologies and programmes. Their invocation is hence a mere reproduction of what is readily available and easy to refurbish in the context of Vienna.

For example, on 13 November 2018, the Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, FPÖ) – which had been part of the Austrian government coalition since December 2017 – released a video commenting on the new law that requires electronic insurance cards (e-card) to display a photograph of the owner. Celebrated as a triumph over the allegedly widespread abuse of social security systems by 'migrants', the cartoon tells the story of the racialized fictional character 'Ali', who can no longer use the e-card from his cousin 'Mustafa' to 'spruce up' his teeth at the dentist. The generalization of migrants as fraudulent and taking advantage of the national health system as well as the stereotypically racist representation of 'Ali' and 'Mustafa' sparked massive protest and public condemnation, and the video was taken down from the FPÖ YouTube channel on the same day it was released.

Especially in comparison to the condescending receptionist at the dentist examining the e-card as well as the gloating, pedantic tone of the narrator, the body language and proportions with which 'Ali' and 'Mustafa' are represented signify inferiority and childishness. Most noticeably, these caricatures of the 'Turk' are supplemented

Figure 1: Screenshot from FPÖ video. FPÖ e-card video. 2018.

with a fez, a visual marker employed to trigger a connection to the Ottoman Empire. The fez evolved into a traditional Ottoman headgear in the early nineteenth century in the course of modernization reforms (Shaw 2003: 16). Even after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, when the fez became banned in Turkey during Atatürk's reforms owing to its Ottoman religious and allegedly backward connotations, it remained rooted in Orientalist imaginaries (Baker 2018). Hence, when right-wing extremist parties and organizations reference signifiers like the fez, this invocation is supposed to transport and awaken memories of the Siege of Vienna.

Visually, the fez and more recently the hijab have become representative of the abstract 'Other': the invader and intruder; the one to be kept in check; the one attempting to undermine the system, whether social security provided by the welfare state or the health of the (national) body. This visual grammar has a much longer genealogy than the FPÖ video. Take, for instance, an advertisement for Zacherlin insecticide – a popular consumer good produced at the Zacherl factory in Vienna during the Habsburg monarchy from the 1870s until the fall of the empire in 1918. Annoying at best, but often also feared as the potential transmitter of diseases, one of the insects running loose is depicted wearing a fez.

Figure 2:
Zacherlin advertisement. Archive Zacherlfabrik, 2019.

Zacherlin powder was available at an affordable price because its target market was lower-income classes, who owing to poorer sanitary facilities and living conditions were often adversely affected by insect infestations. Hence, the fact that the simplistic narrative of the invading Ottoman was deemed an appropriate and effective communication strategy for this advertisement is quite telling. Conflating a caricature of the nuisance of unwanted insects to be eradicated with narratives about the Siege of Vienna further suggests both the availability and popularity of these memories, which were taken to be comprehensible by all parts of society. A military cartoon from World War I takes up the motif as well, depicting a presumably Prussian-German soldier chasing away a Kuban Cossack soldier with Zacherlin insecticide. Precisely because the Ottomans were allies with the Prussians and the Habsburgs during World War I, and hence not available for embodying the enemy figure of the 'Turk', the reductive narrative was as mentioned above simply adapted to another, contemporary enemy from the East – the Russian/Cossack army.

Of course, there are instances in which the fez can be encountered in contexts that are not primarily engaged with representing the Oriental 'Other' as threat – most famously probably in

Figure 3: Zacherlin military postcard. Annika Kirbis, 2019.

Julius Meinl's logo widely circulating in Vienna's urban space since 1924. Meinl's depiction of the fez being worn by an initially black – since 2004 whitewashed – infantile servant as part of the Orientalist branding for its coffee products, however, avails of a casual exoticism that ultimately upholds and reinforces a clear separation to the imagined 'Other'. Merged with feelings of superiority, this is a prerequisite for the maintenance of the enemy image.

Visual representations directly engaged with siege remembrance may also encompass this element of triumph and superiority, as with the depictions of the heads of captured 'Turks' (*Türkenköpfe*). Nevertheless, there is a clear emphasis on the notion of the Ottomans as a threat and enemy, which, in turn, registers a collective trauma and a perpetual defence mechanism. Consequently, the tropes employed in visual remembrance and representation of the siege gravitate towards the moment of the occupation, assault and (potential) invasion by the Ottoman army. The mosaic 'Turkish assault' (Türkensturm) by Karl Drexler from 1965 and the mosaic by Walter Behrens from 1955 depicting Ottoman tents at the outskirts of Vienna serve as examples of this.

Figure 4: Mosaic *Türkensturm* by Karl Drexler. Annika Kirbis, 2016.

Figure 5: Mosaic depicting Ottoman tents by Walter Behrens. Annika Kirbis, 2016.

As mentioned on the website of the project Türkengedächtnis by the Austrian Academy of Science under the direction of Feichtinger and Heiss, several artists who produced urban art like mosaics depicting the 'Turkish enemy' went to see the siege collections at the Museum of Military History (Heeresgeschichtliches Museum), the Vienna Museum (Wien Museum) and/or the Imperial Armoury at the Art History Museum (Hofjagd und Rüstkammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums) for 'inspiration'. Typical objects on display that constitute the visual representation of the Ottoman army in these museums include a variety of weapons, specifically sabres and cannon balls, turbans, flags and tents. Moreover, the monumental paintings depicting the Battle of Vienna by Franz Geffels at the Wien Museum and by a previously unknown painter at the Museum of Military History take on a central role in the exhibitions, usually serving as a gathering point for groups of visitors. This visual enmeshment and cross-referencing mutually reinforced the emergence and consolidation of specific images and visual markers representing the siege remembrance.

The persistence of the enemy image of the 'Turk' links to its reliability and usefulness in providing a sense of cohesion and continuity. Following Rainer Bauböck (1996) and his analysis of post-war Austria, the newly proclaimed Second Republic of Austria struggled to justify its existence as an independent nation state in terms of ethnicity or language. In this period of time also the amnesia and 'victim myth' concerning Austria's role during the Holocaust consolidated and attempts to trace the alleged long-standing origin of the Austrian nation blended with a nostalgic account of the Habsburg monarchy (Hanisch 1998). It might hence not be surprising that several artists invoked the old enemy image of the 'Turk' when commissioned to decorate the façades of residential buildings with new artworks under the municipal sponsoring programme Kunst-am-Bau, founded to address the widespread unemployment and precarious living conditions of local artists in post-war Austria (Nierhaus 1993). Thereby, these popular artworks were to further the sense of community and identity promoted by the buildings themselves, mainly *Gemeindebauten* (a specific form of municipal housing and social apartment construction in Vienna).

Above the entrance of the former headquarters of the building cooperative Frieden ('Peace') at Karlsgasse 14, a mosaic captures this rather empty vision of a post-war Austrian identity. Testifying to this lack of imagination, a white, able-bodied, Christian man stands braving the passage of time. His hand rests firmly on a brick wall, while the other upholds a flying red–white–red flag – and with it a version of history that neither tells us about those who made these bricks nor those who would sustain the process of reconstructing the city in the years to come.

Figure 6: Mosaic *Frieden*. Rodrigo Bandelj Ruiz, 2019.

Figure 7:
Print of *Mujer Fatale* by Shepard Fairey.
Annika Kirbis, 2018.

In 2018, just around the corner in the Argentinierstraße, an antithetical image emerged when street artist Shepard Fairey, presumably unknowingly, pasted a print of his *Mujer Fatale*. The print was also captioned with the word 'Peace', and thereby visually disrupted the prior, neighbouring vision of peace and societal order on the Frieden cooperative. Initially inspired by the indigenous women of the Zapatista movement, according to Fairey, the close-up of the half-veiled woman attempted to pay respect to women in their capacity of peacekeepers, holding families and communities together. In a context in which veiled women and peace do not usually go together, this is not decorative art but a potent intervention in public space. Directly opposite the street corner that has also often been used during the Saturday demonstrations of the Kurdish community, this poster reminds us that the choices made in visual language create realities.

When commenting on the rise of anti-Muslim and anti-Turkish resentment, it is crucial to simultaneously point out the increasing resistance against these currents, like the increased reporting of racist incidents and discrimination and the revitalized Thursday demonstrations (*Donnerstagsdemonstrationen*). Formed in 2000 as reaction to the first occasion on which the FPÖ became part of an Austrian government coalition, the tradition of weekly demonstrations on Thursdays was picked up again in October 2018 under the slogan 'It's Thursday again!' (*Es ist wieder Donnerstag!*) until May 2019, when the coalition fell apart.

Figure 8: Protesters with Fez during *Es ist wieder Donnerstag!* demonstration. Kevin Kada, 2018.

Bringing together people from across a diverse range of institutional affiliations, but united in their anti-racist struggle, the Thursday demonstrations gathered every week under changing themes, usually in reference to a topical issue. Hence, at the demonstration on Thursday, 15 November 2018, two days after the appearance of the racist FPÖ e-card video, some protesters followed the call by activist Muhammed Yüksek to wear a fez in solidarity with all 'Alis' and 'Mustafas'. By countering the common representation of a fez in Vienna's urban space as a visual marker of the Oriental 'Other' at best, historical 'enemy' at worst, they effectively turned it into a symbol of protest against anti-Muslim resentment and any form of racism. This intervention highlights the importance of reinterpreting and re-appropriating objects misused for centuries-old visual propaganda by re-inscribing them with new meanings. This task will require unlearning memories and language, ways of seeing and representing in order to decouple deterministic associations and the accompanying lack of imagination about forms and effects of difference.

The renovation and reconceptualization of museums hosting siege collections is a key part of this process. Temporary exhibitions already try to address the shortcomings of obsolete permanent displays, like the neglect of (hi)stories of migration. The landmark 'Gastarbajteri – 40 Years of Labour Migration' exhibition in 2004 and, more recently, 'Geteilte Geschichte. Viyana – Beč – Wien' ('Moving History. Viyana – Beč – Vienna') in 2017 at the Wien Museum address the memories of former 'guest workers' from Yugoslavia and Turkey.[1] Unfortunately, so far no dialogue between the new object collection on migration and the siege collection has been initiated, despite the fact that the discrimination faced by former 'guest workers' and the neglect of their memories are strongly linked to the metanarrative of exclusionism and the siege remembrance.

Hence, accounting for the multiplicity of lived realities among Vienna's inhabitants by moving towards inclusive historical narratives and politics requires to engage with the legacies of the

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1 Viyana and Beč are the Turkish and Serbo-Croatian translations for Vienna, respectively. These two languages were the main languages spoken by 'guest workers' in Vienna.

siege remembrance. Be it Vienna's material urban heritage, museum collections or school education – instead of simply adding what has been marginalized it is crucial to debunk the structuring power and entanglements of the siege narrative.

Recently a fresco depicting the 'History of Favoriten' (Favoritens Geschichte), a neighbourhood in Vienna's south, which featured the image of an Ottoman on horseback wielding a sabre, has been overpainted during façade renovations. With the remaining large yellow and brown squares it nearly seems as if 'history' has been turned into oversized pixels, rendering it beyond recognition. However, neither the removal of visual markers of the 'enemy' nor their shrugging dismissal as 'folkloric' remnants will do the work of problematizing them and creating a critical distance. Instead, narrating how the siege has been remembered and written into history, examining how it is mobilized today and where it still lingers on, may provide a path towards 'a world where many worlds fit'.[2]

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2 'El mundo que queremos es uno donde quepan muchos mundos.' Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, Cuarta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona, 1996.

Figure 9: Sgraffito *Favoritens Geschichte* before its removal. Annika Kirbis, 2016.

Figure 10: Sgraffito *Favoritens Geschichte* after its removal. Rodrigo Bandelj Ruiz, 2019.

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Part 2:

DWELLING IN THE HAZE

Re-territorializing Empire: Imperial Memories and Contested History in Forte Ardietti

Giulia Carabelli

In the summer of 2017, I attended Opera Sesta, an annual historical re-enactment event in Ponti sul Mincio near Lake Garda, in the north of Italy. In this chapter, I present a set of photographs taken on site and extracts of interviews with re-enactors to explore the meanings of "living history" and the implications of re-inhabiting the contested memories of the Austrian Empire. Overall, this chapter explores the ways in which reinhabiting history produces a space conducive to the renegotiation of local identities that are more capacious and able to accommodate – if not resolve – the contested legacies of imperial and anti-imperial struggles that so thoroughly forged the history of this place. The visual essay presented along with the chapter shows how Opera Sesta alters the landscape by re-setting history to the nineteenth century. These photographs were selected to provide a sense of what the fort looked like but also to evoke the atmosphere of the event as I experienced it. The text is not explicative of the images but rather a compendium to them. The images remain untitled to encourage and invite readers to produce their own associative stories.

Preamble

Ponti sul Mincio is a small town of 2,400 inhabitants. Here, between 1856 and 1861, the Habsburgs built Werk VI (Opera Sesta, in Italian). This fortress, also known as Forte Ardietti, was part of a series of sixteen, all built from 1815 onwards in the north-east of Italy between the cities of Peschiera del Garda, Mantova, Legnago and Verona (Rolf 2011; Weiss 2006). This defence system, remembered as the Quadrilatero (the Quadrilateral), was an armed fortress that formed a bastion against the forces of the Italian unification movement (Risorgimento). In fact, the construction of Forte Ardietti was halted (and then restarted) in 1859, during the second of three wars that would eventually free these territories from imperial control. After achieving independence, Forte Ardietti remained a military zone and operated as an ammunition depot until recently. It was only in 2014 that the municipality of Ponti sul Mincio gained full control of the site, opened it to the public and agreed to allow the Associazione Cultura e Rievocazione Imperi (a cultural association for the valorization of local history) to establish their headquarters there. Opera Sesta, which started in 2015, is their major annual event, whose goal is to re-enact the key events of the Risorgimento. The organization requires "commitment and sweat", I was told, but "it's totally worth it".

Opera Sesta

In 2017, Opera Sesta focused on the Battle of Solferino (1859) – fought between the Franco-Piedmont-Sardinian alliance and the Austrian Empire during the second war of independence. Famously commemorated at the beginning of Roth's Radetzky March (2002[1932]), the battle ended with the defeat of the Habsburgs and was crucial to advance the Italian unification project. Even though statistical data is not available, I can attest that the event was very well attended. There were families with young children, groups of friends, and curious visitors of all ages. Some came for the guided tours of the fortress, others for the evening concerts and balls or to join one of the many workshops on offer, such as nineteenth-century dance classes or sword training. During my time there, the atmosphere was charged with electric excitement. The sound of the battles outside the walls and duels inside shattered the warm summer air, sending shudders of excitement down the spines of all not in costume. On the second day, after a particularly tense armed confrontation, an injured soldier was brought to the medical room, where a surgeon attempted to save his life in front of a stunned and silent crowd. A young girl, towering over everyone from her father's shoulders, screamed, "Mummy! Will he survive?" In that moment, I suddenly realized that I too was watching impatiently to learn whether the poor soldier on the operating table would survive – the performance was entirely immersive. I was also impressed by the stoicism of the women wearing big gowns and soldiers in heavy uniforms despite the scorching temperature; the bar arranged inside the fortress offered the only respite from the unrelenting sun, and here I met several re-enactors taking breaks. There were Italian associations of re-enactors as well as groups from Czechia and Austria. I interviewed only Italian re-enactors because I wanted to understand their motivation to relive the key moments that led to the unification of Italy. Accordingly, I asked several questions about how they became involved in historical re-enactment, as well as their motivations for attending this specific event.

All my interlocutors became re-enactors because of their passion for history. In their words, this was strongly connected to the need to learn more about their roots – some had distant relatives who had fought for Italian independence, while others saw their participation as a celebration of their family heritage, which had roots in the local area. Many said that this historical period fascinates them because it was crucial for the building of Italy as a united nation state. For the sheer love of re-enacting the Risorgimento, they learnt new languages (such as German or French), travelled extensively to read archives, studied military treaties, and visited museums and collections to re-create costumes and accessories. Re-enactment, they all agreed, is a lifetime commitment – beyond being a very expensive hobby – so much so that it often impacts on the choice of partners and friends. The goal of each re-enactor is to reinhabit history in a way that is as close as possible to the original. In this sense, all my interlocutors aspired to know more about how the historical events they re-enact really *felt*, *looked* and *sounded*. Many remarked that their mission is educational; they want people to become "curious" about their past and to appreciate the value of their "territory". The organizers, in particular, embraced the hardship of setting up this event to share their acquired historical knowledge and educate people in a way that is also playful and exciting. What matters to them is that, by "living history", they add value to territory because they expose its uniqueness. Further, to reinhabit history reinforces existing emotional bonds with territory in a manner that strongly determines personal and group identities.

Territory

The importance of "territory" – knowing it, appreciating it, discovering it – was strongly emphasized during the interviews I conducted. The local councillor for tourism, Elisa Turcato, explained how tourism had been steadily growing for years in Ponti. At the beginning, people came to visit the medieval castle, but more recently they have been mainly attracted by events at Forte Ardietti. She said that what is important to her, as the person responsible for developing the tourism sector, is to implement plans that celebrate their local territory. And this is exactly what Opera Sesta does by supporting the wider process of community learning, or rediscovery, of the history of this territory. As Leonardo Danieli, president of the association behind Opera Sesta, emphasized,

> *We are interested in the 19th century and what remains of the Austrian empire here, physically, but also in the culture of the place because that history made our territory even if we don't see traces anymore or we don't remember what happened then.*

Territory, as Elden (2010) reminds us, is never simply a neutral space. Or, as Bertelsen and Murphie (2010) put it, territory is always existential because it allows movements and yet keeps everything in place. Territories are themselves "political technologies", or a series of techniques, signifiers and abstract concepts that control and organize space. Being neither "land/landscape" nor even "terrain", territory is composed of a bundle of practices that give affective resonance to a specific place and time. At Opera Sesta, history itself – or the act of remembering history as a means of (re)producing one's subjective identity – becomes the raw material through which this territory acquires its meaning and value, both cultural and economic.

Opera Sesta as Territory

To the uninformed traveller, Forte Ardietti is just a well-preserved military fortress immersed in the green fields of Ponti sul Mincio. Seen from above, the entire space harmonizes with the surrounding landscape, becoming integral to it. In the series of photographs that form part of this chapter, I attempted to capture the ways in which the Opera Sesta re-territorializes the landscape to transform it radically, giving it a new identity. There are weapons, tents, uniforms and attires styled to the fashion of the nineteenth century. These are the signs of human life that emerges from Forte Ardietti as it is reinhabited and dramatically transformed over the span of a weekend.

Locating the headquarters of the Associazione Imperi in the fortress was the first step in the process of reclaiming this space and its history. But what the actual re-enactment does is not simply teach the "history of the territory". Opera Sesta brings this territory to life, by occupying its space and making it anew. Yet this creation is not intended to bring forth a new place and time but a re-creation of a place and time long passed, yet always latently present within this fortress. Opera Sesta is surely a celebratory event that gathers the local community – heavily involved in the setting up and execution of the project – as well as an opportunity to gain additional revenue for the town's tourism sector. But Opera Sesta, for its more passionate participants, offers the unique opportunity to reinhabit the past in order to make the present more comprehensible. Opera Sesta is, in this sense, educational beyond its role of explaining history. For instance, all of the members of the Associazione Imperi I interviewed stressed the importance of knowing why German words remain in the local dialect, as well as certain ways of saying things. They are proud of being recognized as the heirs – if you like – of a history that intersected with the Austrian Empire. And yet, at Opera Sesta, there were no anti-Italian sentiments that I could sense, nor attachments to Austrian-ness. All considered, Opera Sesta is about the Risorgimento and the history that led to the unification of Italy. However, the local re-enactment group plays the part of the Austrians. Their uniforms are characteristically blue and their commands are in German. They hold tribunals for treason and execute spies and enemies of the empire. One of these soldiers confessed:

> *It's hard to always be the bad guys ... of course here everyone cheers for the Italians ... we are in Italy ... but if I were born at that time, I would not be Italian, I would be part of the empire so ... I don't choose to be who I am here, I am who I would have been if we turned back in history. There is nothing political about this.*

As Hayes (2016: 1202) explains, "performing historical events produces knowledge about time" but it also enables the "emblematizing of place". During Opera Sesta, Forte Ardietti becomes the emblem of a history negated and a history reclaimed. Crucial to this re-enactment event is not the celebration of empire but rather the re-enabling of the battles that destroyed it. And, yet, Opera Sesta is not about the celebration of Risorgimento either. What this historical re-enactment does is to amplify the moments in between empire and Italy when the boundaries of this area were transformed. By inhabiting this transitional history, Opera Sesta reclaims the existence of another territory – one that exists despite and because of history. It is the territory that holds the potential for a different identity to exist, one that is hybrid and without the need to choose between imperialism and nationalism. As Crang and Travlou (2001: 161) write, space and time relate through memory in the pursuit of spatialization: "the spatiality of memory links the social and the personal". In Forte Ardietti, empire is resurrected not to reclaim territory for the empire. Rather, Opera Sesta becomes the means to rediscover and reappropriate the traces that make this area Italian, yet whose past is so different from the rest of Italy. In this sense, to reclaim this territory means to reclaim a different identity. Surely, this process speaks volumes about the complexities of Italian national identities.

Crang and Tolia-Kelly (2010: 2316) propose to look at heritage sites as "occasions for doing and feeling of connecting representations and thoughts". They see these sites as "enablers in the traffic between places, things, identities and belongings" (Ibid.). In the same spirit, this chapter has offered a panoramic view of Forte Ardietti during Opera Sesta to document the process of remaking its territory at a crucial moment in time, when the flow of history has been paused in order to make way for old stories and the creation of new identities.

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

Figure 5.

Figure 6.

Figure 7.

Figure 8.

Figure 9.

Figure 10.

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Imperial Discomfort in Post-Habsburg Tianjin

Miloš Jovanović

This visual essay explores the incommensurability of imperial legacies by assembling photographs taken by an inexperienced researcher of Serb/Yugoslav origin in Tianjin (天津), northern China. The images were collected during a research trip in February 2017, as part of a research project on spaces of imperial historicity in former Habsburg cities. The essay represents a visual archive of my discomfort at encountering the intimate legacies of globally unequal colonial heritage.

I begin this intervention with an autoethnography, juxtaposing my memory and field notes to the cultural and social forces which construct my subjectivity as photographer/researcher (Fisher 2015). I focus on my recognition of the research space as "familiar", mediated by historical and personal narratives of imperial and socialist cityscapes. The essay proceeds to explore how such familiarity is broken, revealing how relations between (post-)imperial subjects remain incommensurable. Finally, I explore how imperial subjectivities inform transnational research practices, stressing the phenomenology of photographic practice. Ultimately, this essay interrogates the limits of visual research practices, as conducted by persons subjectivized by imperial legacies of hierarchized and territorialized difference.

Familiar Spaces

My arrival at Beijing Airport evokes other times and places. In the main hall, the sight of PRC flags transports me to Belgrade in 1999, the bomb shelter below my socialist-era high-rise. I recall being huddled over the only radio alongside our neighbours, listening to crackly reports of US Air Force missiles destroying the Chinese embassy.[1] A strong sense of righteous privilege comes over me as I pass Americans and West Europeans, standing in long visa lines. Owing to Serbia's close economic and political ties with China, its citizens enjoy visa-free travel. I am overwhelmed by feelings of socialist solidarity, anti-imperialism, and brotherhood.

My narrative echoes the internationalist discourse of my youth during the rule of Slobodan Milošević, when Yugoslavia sought to establish a counter-hegemonic bloc with China, North Korea, Libya, and Iraq. Sharing much of its developmentalist logic with Edvard Kardelj's visions for the Non-Aligned Movement, Milošević's anti-colonial internationalism masked internal violence and economic exploitation within the Yugoslav state.

Feelings of pride over the achievements of state socialism grow on the bus to Beijing South railway station. I feel at home looking out the window at modernist housing blocks, following the third and second ring roads. Even the high-speed bullet train to Tianjin, an unimaginable feat of technology in former Yugoslavia, *seems* fa-

1 On 7 May 1999, B-2 bombers flying out of Whiteman, Missouri, launched five missiles at the south end of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, located on Trešnjinog Cveta Street. The missiles killed Xinhua journalists Shao Yunhuan (邵云环), Xu Xinghu (许杏虎), and Zhu Ying (朱颖) and injured some twenty other embassy staff. The bombing was followed by massive protests in China, quelled by authorities after a formal apology and a multi-million-dollar indemnity payment by the United States.

miliar. In preparation for my research trip, I have read extensively about rising inequality in contemporary China. Yet, the passing architecture lulls me into a sense of comfort. I find socialist intimacy in the long tracts of modernist high-rises that pass by the window, knowing full well the domicide in which they originate.

Upon arrival in Tianjin, I rush impatiently to the site of my research, the Hébĕi district, a heritage space of nineteenth-century imperial globalization. Between 1901 and 1917 (*de jure* 1920), a central part of the city was an Austro-Hungarian concession. Split between eight imperialist powers after their suppression of the Boxer Rebellion, Tianjin was a *hypercolony* (Rogaski 2004), a place where empires positioned themselves *against* one another in close proximity. In the words of Austro-Hungarian vice-consul Karl Bernauer, the banks of the Hǎihe (Peiho) river were laden with potential for "profitable business".[2]

Motivated by profit and the need to affirm their status as a European power (Sauer 2012), the Habsburgs sought to create "civilized", industrial urban space in Tianjin. Between 1905 and 1917, the Austro-Hungarian concession was built up by the Hotung Baugesellschaft (奥界建造公司), a development company run by a navy officer, the Rijeka-born Hugo Accurti. The firm participated in the development of Baron von Czikanny Straße (today's Shengli Road, 胜利路), the construction of the city's tramway line, the quay and the International Bridge over the river. Imperial profit was facilitated by the presence of Habsburg navy officers and marines, many of them South Slavs.

Walking through the former concession area, I seek out Habsburg architecture, the buildings and streets produced after the violent

2 At-OeSTa. HHStA-Diplomatie und Außenpolitik 1848–1918 GsA Peking 103-1, 9.

suppression of the Boxers. They are not only objects of scholarly interest but also visual examples of a shared post-imperial subjectivity. I near the end of the former Habsburg quay, which today constitutes the "Austrian Style Riverfront" area of cultural preservation. Across the former International Bridge, the Art Nouveau consulate building and former concession headquarters immediately evoke memories of Zemun. I immediately notice the interplay of rounded and rectangular elements, the decorative cornice and window surrounds with stylized floral motifs, and a large figure of a violin player on the facade.

A Habsburg town incorporated into Yugoslav Belgrade in 1934, Zemun was my mother's home in the 1970s, my father's workplace in the early 2000s, and is my sister's today. The town's civilizational distinctiveness from the rest of Belgrade, its imperial cityscape, had long been part of our family discussions. In Tianjin, the straight-lined Shengli Road evokes memories of Ruma. Established by German settler colonists in 1746, the Syrmian home of my paternal family is laid out in long straight rows of single houses, akin to the Tianjin thoroughfare. Focusing on geographically distant but intimately familiar architecture, I *imagine* a shared post-imperial subjectivity. Any incommensurate differences become subsumed by feelings of relatability, and I rush to snap a few photographs. Yet I am frustrated with the resulting images, which fail to capture the sense of familiarity I share with the cityscape.

A Troubling Focus

In the Tianjin City Museum, I am confronted with my whiteness. A permanent exhibit features photographs of dead bodies, mangled by the bombs of the Eight Nations' Alliance, many launched by Croat and Serb sailors. Later, in the Viennese archives, my discomfort returns. I read the letter of a volunteer for navy service in Tianjin whose last name ends with -ić, just like mine. Within the Habsburg monarchy, Slavs, Romanians, and Roma, among others, were subjected to cultural subalternity, assimilative and civilizing projects as "ahistoric" peoples, including acts of mass indiscriminate violence during wartime (Reisenleitner 2002; Glajar 2004: 5–7; Okey 2007; Holzer 2008). Yet, on the global stage, those very same subalterns freely participated in the subjection of others (Baker 2018: 78–79, 167–169). In understanding the interplay between local and global constructions of whiteness, such histories reflect the incommensurability of (post-)imperial experiences.

Since my return from the field, I have continued to reflect on this tension between discomfort and familiarity. More than a relation between researcher and the object of their research, imperial discomfort is always situated within a broader global context of hierarchized difference. As Catherine Baker has noted, we cannot explain Yugoslav "position(s) within those global legacies of colonialism and slavery if we exempt [them] from global formations of race" (2018: 9). Serbs, especially light-skinned ones like myself, have not been subject to racialization in a global context. Conversely, the racialization and hyperexploitation of Chinese labour have played a historically constitutive role in global imperialism (Jung 2009). Mediated through architecture, my familiarity obscured uneven legacies of racialized subjectivities.

Visual archives of imperial architecture necessarily bring forth comprehension and occlusion, heightening the ambivalence of imperial legacies.[3] At their core is a double signifier of familiarity: the physical structure as a recognized object of historicity versus

3 See the special issue "Ambivalent Legacies: Political Cultures of Memory and Amnesia in Former Habsburg and Ottoman Lands", *History & Anthropology,* 30: 4 (2019).

the photographic image, an everyday form of disengaged representation. The Austrian-style cityscape of Tianjin obscures the conditions of its production, which in the early twentieth century bounded Škoda's weapons factories and Zhili warlords. The architectural photograph operates similarly – curated by the researcher's gaze, it privileges material legacies above the social relations that produced them. Discomfort thus necessarily emerges from any visual archive of imperial heritage, the costs of empire always unaccountable, its social legacies never fully comprehensible.

Transnational research practices emphasize scholars' ability to bridge or comprehend imperial difference through historiographical, linguistic, or cultural expertise. Individual competition within capitalist academia privileges such interpretations of success, in which researcher subjectivity is seen as secondary to mastering the archive.[4] Yet, embracing the discomfort I felt in Tianjin opens up a meaningful archive within of individual (post-)imperial subjectivity and my failure to grasp the research field. In photographing Austro-Hungarian architecture, my aesthetic concern for "proper" documentation came to be frustrated by other lived experiences and different post-imperial lives.

The rejected photographs of my visual archive offer an imprint of researcher subjectivity as it participates in the mediation of Tianjin's Austro-Hungarian past. Presented here as a visual essay, the following ten images fail to capture the city's imperial legacy as their intended subject. Such failure is reflected in "awkward" framing and composition, "misfired" timing, and "inappropriate" subject selection. These are not only technical glitches, nor do they testify to the researcher's lack of skill alone. Rather, they exemplify my own affective discomfort, an aspect of visual urban research generally obscured from publication.

4 For an important exception, see Burton and Kennedy (2016).

The captions describe why each image was rejected and note the subsequent action which produced a "proper" take. In doing so, this essay emphasizes discomfort as an intimate and curatorial experience, emerging out of a personal mediation of imperial pasts. Ultimately, the essay calls attention to the phenomenological aspects of incommensurate subjectivities, as they pertain to (post-)imperial research.

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Figure 1: The neo-historicist bank building, barren trees, and curious passers-by distract from the white and grey Austro-Hungarian consulate. In the next take, I walk closer to the Habsburg building, so that it fills the frame.

Figure 2: In the low light, I mistakenly focus on the back of the woman's head in the centre of the image instead of the museum map. The map shows Tianjin's division among eight colonial powers. In the next take, I zoom in on Austria-Hungary at the very top, leaving the museum visitors blurry.

Figure 3: I am frustrated by this framing of the former International Bridge (today's Jintang Bridge 金汤桥). The bridge joined the Austro-Hungarian concession to the Chinese town. Instead of dramatic contrast between skyscrapers and imperial heritage, the image is disturbed by a bland tar roof. In the next take, I change positions to crop the roof out.

Figure 4: There is not enough space behind me to capture both the historic Yuan Shikai Residence in the background and the mahjong players in front. I am forced to crop both the feet of passers-by and the top of the building. In the next take, I reposition myself so the whole building fits into the frame.

Figure 5: I rush to photograph the interior of the former Austro-Hungarian consulate, but measure the light incorrectly as its custodian enters the foyer. In the next take, I wait for him to leave the room.

Figure 6: Instead of framing the scene neatly, a streetlight and lamppost disturb the contrast I envisioned between skyscrapers and British imperial architecture. In the next take, I crop them out of the frame.

Figure 7: People having fun distract from the memorial spectacle of the Taku forts (大沽炮台), captured by an initial Austro-Hungarian and Russian onslaught in June 1900. I wait for them to look away, so the mood will appear more reflective.

Figure 8: A man bikes into frame as I rush to photograph Austro-Hungarian residences on Shengli Road, the former Baron von Czikanny Straße. I am frustrated by the traffic and wait for a red light before recomposing the shot to focus on the buildings.

Figure 9:
Dirt from street renovation, the white car bonnet and concrete additions on top disturb my composition of the former red-light district, situated behind the Chinese Theatre in the Austro-Hungarian concession. I turn 180 degrees for the next take, avoiding the scene.

Figure 10: The bright new cars and low contrast between various structures make the former Austrian Officers' Club, a grey building with orange windows, appear small and insignificant. I am unable to take a closer shot as the structure is fronted by an opaque fence. I abandon the effort to photograph it further.

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Mud Marine: The Rise and Fall of Mangalore Tiles

Ian M. Cook

If you climb atop a high-rise apartment in Mangaluru, India, and look down you will see a trickle of red-tiled roofs among the trees. Caressed by rivers to the north and south, the coastal city's red-tiled houses were once a characteristic visual marker of the region. And, if you are accompanied on your trip into the clouds by one of the city's elderly residents, then they might bemoan the loss of a distinctive cityscape. The concrete blocks that grow in number and size each year do not look much different from those in Bengaluru, Mumbai or Chennai.

Nostalgic locals might further point out that the red tiles made from clay gathered at the riverbanks bear the name of the city itself: Mangalore tiles. And, moreover, Mangalore tiles once had an international reputation that spoke to the bountiful offerings of land and the ordering promise of industrial modernization. But that was some time ago. Now, next to no one wants to live in a 'tiled house'.

I want to invite you down from atop the high-rise and into the mud of Tulu Nadu, the region of which Mangaluru is the largest city. An examination of the colonial and post-colonial buildings reveals the walls that serve as real barriers of exclusion, but also the in-between spatial structures of the built form: framed in-between material and representational planes, and in-between local and colonial cultural formations (Scriver and Prakash 2007). The specific histories produce a built environment that, while in a modern (global) city, also exhibit cultural logics that fall outside planetary urbanization (Jazeel 2018). The layers of overlapping, crumbling, moss-ridden tiles speak to the overlapping, crumbling and nature-reclaiming temporal and spatial frameworks of coloniality, post-coloniality and indigeneity. It is possible to see the straight lines of a 'civilizing' empire; neoliberalism's desire to produce global representations of sameness; land's material, economic and poetic instability; ghostly hauntings from the past and future; insecure masculine militaristic language; and the scattered remains left by the transmogrifications of empires.

Missionaries, Materials and Modernization

In Tulu Nadu, V-shaped roof tiles have been produced for centuries, utilizing the clay found on the banks of the Netravathi and Gurupura rivers, but the region's tiles rose to prominence after the production process was industrialized by the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society, which arrived in India in 1834, not long after the British captured Mangalore in 1799. The protestant missionaries needed both employment for their converts and funds for their activities and thus set up a printing press and a weaving shop, among other industries. If you peruse the mission archives at the Karnataka Theological College in Mangaluru, you will find numerous mentions of technical innovation including the introduction of the fly-shuttle into weaving, the (possible) invention of khaki cloth dye and the use of hand, bullock and stream power in tile factories. The first such factory was opened in Jeppu, south of the city proper, in 1865, and it was so successful that the mission opened two more factories in the region (Prabhu 1999), and other industrialists, such as British coffee trader Morgan, soon followed suit.

With the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the Swiss Germans were increasingly unwelcome. Holdings were transferred to a specially set up Commonwealth Trust Limited in 1920 (Raghaviah 1990), which, following independence in 1947, became an Indian company in the 1970s. After closing between 2006 and 2013, it is once again making tiles; however, as the manager of the factory told me, production is now at a much lower rate due to a longstanding manual labour shortage, dwindling supplies of clay and cheap competition from elsewhere. Many of the tile factories in and around this city have either closed or operate on a significantly smaller scale.

While the land around the Jeppu factory no longer offers much clay, it has acquired increased value owing to a real estate boom, accentuated in this part of the city by the promise of a riverside ring road. As a way of paying off debts, the Commonwealth Trust mortgaged its land. However, in the process it discovered it did not have full rights over all twelve acres in Jeppu. Two acres were held through the *mulageni* system, a locally unique form of perpetual renting.

This is where a local Swiss-British developer stepped in. Upon learning that the Commonwealth Trust could not sell the land, he tracked down the papers, found the family of the original landlord (or *mulagar*), purchased the land outright and started building a high-rise complex, the Aquamarine. Mangaluru has many such luxury high-rises, some populated, some left empty by investors or 'black money' launderers. It is not clear yet which of these the Aquamarine will become. The developer's father used to be a manager at a close-by factory owned by Peirce & Leslie, a colonial-era company. Peirce & Leslie bought the property from the Morgans, the above-mentioned British coffee traders and tile makers, who left India around the 1920s. The old Morgan property was sold by Peirce & Leslie to a subsidiary of the famous coffee chain Café Coffee Day, which was founded by the son-in-law of the former chief minister of the state of Karnataka, who studied at a college in the city.

These different historical threads are woven into the built environment, entangled with one another. In the following photo essay, I explore the colonial visual traces of missionaries, traders and luxury through depictions of *materials, walls* and *buildings* all gathered from within a few hundred square metres in Jeppu, Mangaluru. These are arranged across three groups of images: the Basel Mission works and Morgan property as depicted in photographs found in the Basel Mission Archives; the Commonwealth Tile Works and Morgan properties today; and, the upcoming luxury high-rise. The photographs are intertwined with excerpts from *interviews* with the developer, a night watchman and a housing agent; selections from *academic texts* that theoretically frame the essay relating to lines, land and representation; and *literary passages* from a colonial-era novel about a British tile maker in Mangalore, a contemporary Tulu poem about a family house, and a news site's puff piece on the Aquamarine. It is my aim to mix excerpts and photographs in a way that resonates with the entanglements found within Mangaluru's built environment; to highlight how both building materials and material photographic affordances coalesce around particular colour palettes and thus produce certain affective-aesthetic qualities; and to compare how vertical, diagonal and sloping lines can frame both the landscape and its photographic representations in ways that reveal the layered continuities in the material, abstract and creative production of in-betweenness during the British Raj, through the first decades of independence, and into the unabashedly hyper-capitalist contemporary period.

I

… the straight line has emerged as a virtual icon of modernity, an index of the triumph of rational, purposeful design over the vicissitudes of the natural world. The relentlessly dichotomizing dialectic of modern thought has…associated straightness with mind as against matter … with civilization as against primitiveness, and – on the most general level with culture as against nature.

Ingold (2007: 153).

At night I am accompanied by a guard until 11. Until 11 the guards will whistle, after 11 we'll sleep … There's ghosts here. Three dead bodies were found. I was afraid. No one is prepared to stay alone … we saw some of the dead bodies in this river. They were near the railway track.

Stani, Night Watchman at the Commonwealth Tile Factory.

Ross took the steep path up the side of … [the hill] There the immensity and the stillness were frightening; the moon was macabre; the constellations were all wrong; they stood on their heads, they were contorted into sinister malformations. But there was red now in the east. He walked to the edge, and seating himself on a laterite block looked down on … [the river]. At first he looked into a well of darkness; then the river began to shine, first silver, then grey, then steely blue. Then suddenly crowding from all sides the details of the landscape began to gather; they rushed into their places like an army forming on parade. The east reddened, reddened, burst into flame as the *sun suddenly swung himself over the distant crests of … [the hill]. The sinister constellations vanished, the macabre moon became a ghost; the sun came striding into his own.*

'That's my sun rising,' thought Ross. 'That's me'.

Brown (1936: 55–56).

Figure 1: From the muddy banks of the Netravathi river a tile factory stands. Unknown, Jeppu Tile Factory. 1 January 1901. BMA QC-30.007.0020. BMArchives.

Figure 2: The Garden of Mr Morgan, Jeppoo. 1 January 1901. QC-30.018.0028. BMArchives.

Figure 3: Mangalore Tile-Works at New Jeppu under Construction. Unknown. QU-30.016.0073. BMArchives.

II

Land is ... a variable category which can feed into, and be used by, different actors ... It moves, shifts and transforms in size as well as in other biophysical qualities whether intended for dwellings, agriculture or countless other purposes.

Kadfak and Oskarsson (2017: 41).

There used to be lots of clay here, now the tile manufactures have to go far – also its low quality. When we were young we used to get nice clay to play with, to mould in to things, you know?

Developer of the Aquamarine.

It is leaking! The roof of Tulu-Mother's ancestral house!
The quarrelling folks of the house do not care for the house
The main-hall, the ground and all
Are muddied badly... and hopelessly!
When everyone is haggling over partition
Who has time to fix the leaking roof with a piece of spathe?
No one cares for covering the holes with layers of dry grass!
The front-yard is all covered with moss – stand firmly you cannot!
But lady-guest from across the Seven Seas had strong, storied house!
And a golden cot too...!
The Tulu rivers were rich and bountiful
But children of our own Mother were tenants and serfs...

Alike (2017).

Figure 4: The garden of Mr Morgan.

Figure 5: A pile of tiles by one of the ‘Morgan Bungalows’.

Figure 6: The sun setting on the Commonwealth Trust’s Jeppu tile works.

III

For capitalism to work as a structure of representation, that is, as a way of appearing to distribute phenomena in terms of a distinction between a real world and its meaning, it must have an identity. There must be some characteristic that is the essence of capitalism, some element of sameness, so that as it develops and expands one can recognize its occurrence through different material and temporal manifestations and hold together its story.

Mitchell (1988: 245).

15 years back ours was an underdeveloped market. In South Canara, in Mangalore, it used to be 80% tiled houses, now it's 80% RCC [Reinforced Cement Concrete].

Ramesh, Housing Agent.

It is the only apartment complex where you have a breath-taking view of both the Nethravati River and Arabian Sea from your window. It is a sight to behold and can melt away many a hearts by just looking out of your bedroom window. And seeing the river frolic as it joins the sea ...

'Aquamarine' is geographically perfect in its location. Set right next to Mangalore Club, it is away from the hustle and bustle of city life, bringing peace and serenity into the residents' evenings yet not so far away as to make life inconvenient.

Daijiworld Media Network (2018).

Figure 7: Gateway to a resort-like experience.


Figure 8:
Constructing a representation.

Figure 9:
From behind the tile works, the future.

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Figure 10: Mangalore tiles.

Part 3:

ACTS OF RE-INSCRIPTION

The Butterfly House

Carla Bobadilla

In Vienna's first district, the historical centre of the city, between the National Library, the Government Palace and the Opera, is the Butterfly House. It is located in the Burggarten, the emperor's garden, where Emperor Franz Joseph I and his wife Elisabeth would take walks during their leisure time. In 1901, a modernist-style greenhouse designed by the architect Friedrich Ohmann was built there to serve as a private royal garden. Within this space, the royal family and especially Franz Joseph I himself spent time caring for and contemplating "exotic" vegetation brought to Vienna throughout different expeditions and famous discovery voyages carried out by scientists in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

During the 1990s, owing to a structural deterioration, the greenhouse underwent renovation works, which coincided with the need to relocate Schönbrunn's Butterfly House. After the relocation and renovation, in 1997 the use and purpose of the greenhouse was reconsidered and adapted to the new needs of the contemporary, progressive city of Vienna. At this time, the Butterfly House began operating as we know it today: a place where around forty different types of butterflies collected from various tropical regions of the planet live and reproduce, one of the most unique tourist attractions in the city of Vienna.

The environment necessary for the life and reproduction of the butterflies – heat, humidity and a characteristic smell, with "exotic" plants and decorations – creates an effect of a journey through time and space for the visitors. In such an environment visitors feel as if they are topographically transported to other, more southern, latitudes. This greenhouse, like many others of its kind scattered throughout Europe, is categorized as a palm house, *Palmenhaus*. This concept is historically rooted in the imperial need to collect and store exotic items from research journeys to the colonies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These trips were intended to discover regions not yet seen by European eyes, but they also had a purely scientific aim of collecting, cataloguing and naming the "new" species (Lack 2015: 26).

Figure 1: *The Butterfly House*. Carla Bobadilla, 2017.

Felipe Lettersten, Son of a Family of European Immigrants in Lima

Within the midst of the copious vegetation and butterfly spectacle, visitors can find four fibreglass figures, which represent members of a family of indigenous people from the Amazon. Each character plays a role: the mother suckles a baby, the father hunts, the young man and the girl watch. Immersed among the tropical vegetation in the space and together with other elements such as fake trunks and plastic flowers, the figures fulfil the mission of "decorating" and "embellishing" the site, conferring it an even more "exotic" flair characteristic of the Amazon environment.

The fibreglass sculptures were made from plaster models taken directly from the bodies of inhabitants of the Amazon by the Swedish-Peruvian artist Felipe Lettersten (1957–2003). At the end of the 1980s, Lettersten began a trip on a double-decker steamboat, in the style of Fitzcarraldo (Herzog 1982). He sailed the rivers of the Amazon to "collect" materials and as an inspiration for his artistic work, justifying it with the motivation to preserve an image of indigenous peoples whom he considered in danger of extinction. During this voyage, he collected samples for what, in the framework of his travelling exhibitions around Europe, he called "indigenous hyperrealism".

Lettersten grew up in Lima as the son of a Swedish immigrant family. After finishing high school studies in Peru, he visited several art schools in Europe. The years he spent in Florence studying sculpture were particularly formative for his artistic career. As a development of his artistic practice, he championed the idea of portraying living bodies through the use of plaster. According to him, this method was the closest to an objective copy, and its use served the purpose of safeguarding both the integrity and the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples. Through this "artistic" gesture, he wanted to call attention from both local authorities and international organizations (Brooks 1991).

Lettersten was a gentle person with an extravagant appearance, complemented by his long, curly blond hair. He spoke the Quechua language, which he learned from the maids in his family home in Lima. These personal characteristics, together with the innovative artistic techniques that he used, helped him to facilitate encounters with indigenous communities, whose members offered themselves as models for free. Lettersten completed a series of sculptures out of direct plaster moulds, some of which were sent back to the communities from which the moulds were taken as a form of compensation.

As his artistic production advanced, his voyages became more frequent and his interest in sculpture proliferated. Lettersten managed to finish more than 230 bronze sculptures, of which he created copies in fibreglass. They are now distributed in various museums and archaeological sites in Latin America. Some of them came to Europe in the form of travelling exhibitions. We can still find four of them today in the Butterfly House in Vienna. The sculptures were acquired as a result of the friendship between the Butterfly House manager, Stephen A. Fried, and Lettersten, who offered the sculptures as a gift, but only if they would be permanently exhibited in the space.

The Sculptures and the Problem that Their Decontextualization Implies

Today the Butterfly House is visited daily by hundreds of tourists, who along with curiosity about the city's history are attracted to the idea of a place located in the middle of Vienna where five hundred living butterflies of multiple sizes and colours flutter in the air.[1] At the same time, the place is also frequented by Viennese locals: families, primary schools and kindergartens go there to observe and immerse themselves in the imperial past of their own country and/or their country of residence. In doing so, the visitors become part of a tacit educational process through which they accept "the exotic" – the butterflies, the vegetation and therefore the sculptures – as an implicit and constituent part of their cultural heritage. In this context, the relationship to "the Other" becomes problematic, especially when some of these visitors share the same cultural origin as those portrayed in the sculptures. Families of ethnic immigrants from the Amazon region, in particular, observe their countrymen transformed into sculptures and condemned to serve as decorations in a place that aims to deliver values about the cultural heritage of the country where they currently reside and where their future descendants will probably live.

What can a girl, the daughter of Peruvian immigrants, think when she sees that her "ancestors" have been transformed into sculptures and are located in such a prominent place in the city, while their anonymity, owing to a lack of explanation, has left them without a voice and therefore without a history?

From Representation to Deconstruction of the Image

In the artistic research project "Österreichs kulturelles Erbe" I suggest that many places create and sustain a differentiated perspective on who the "others" are and the place that these others "should" occupy in both the past and the present history of Austria – be it the National History Museum and its collection, traditional products such as Meinl Coffee and its characteristic logo, or the Butterfly House with its sculptures of indigenous peoples.

1 More Information at: http://www.schmetterlinghaus.at/en/our-butterflies.

Figure 2, Figure 3 and Figure 4:
From the series “Without our History”.
Carla Bobadilla, 2017.

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

In 2016, I began a photography series intended to document places in Vienna where this contestable concept of cultural heritage can be witnessed. These photographs will serve in some cases as archival material, and in others as the first part of a process of analysis and deconstruction.

Figure 5: From the series "Austrian Cultural Heritage". Julius Meinl. Carla Bobadilla, 2016.

Figure 6:
From the series
“Austrian Cultural
Heritage”. NHM.
Carla Bobadilla,
2017.

Figure 7:
From the series
“Austrian
Cultural
Heritage”.
Butterfly House.
Carla Bobadilla,
2017.

"The Walk as a Collective Method of Unlearning" was a project realized in the framework of the exhibition *"Experimental Arrangement of Acting Unruly, Collective Forms of Exchanging Views on Emancipatory Strategies and Alliances of Solidarity"*[2] in 2017. This invitation gave me the chance to apply this method to question some places I discovered in my recent research.

By using the format of the collective walk, we invited a group of people, mainly adults, to the Butterfly House. We stopped at the entrance to tell the story of the origin of the sculptures. After that, we recited the list of the names of indigenous communities that were portrayed by Felipe Lettersten during his travels through the Amazonian rivers in the 1990s.

> *Yanomami, Parakanas, Araras, Orejones, Huitoto, Bora, Yahua, Aguarunas, Shipibos, Campas, Quechuas, Cashinahuas, Yaninahuas and Huarayos.*

Along with this, we gave the group photographs of the four figures located inside the greenhouse, mounted on a piece of cardboard.[3]

The third element of this intervention was a live reading of a poem composed of four words and created by the writer and activist Vlatka Frketić, who was also part of the exhibition and participated in the process of creating the performance.

The poem reads:

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2 Exhibition curated by Elke Smodić in the IG Gallery Bildende Kunst. http://www.igbildendekunst.at/kunst/programm-2017/versuchsanordnung-widerspenstigen-handelns.htm.

3 This technique has been used by the Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn, among others, for installations in public space.

WER HAT WAS DAVON
[who takes advantage of this]

WER HAT WAS DAVON questions who benefits from these figures being in this space, without a voice and without a proper story that explains their origin.

The words were repeated by the public in multiple variations, by changing the order of the words and reciting them all together.

Not only did the collective walk help us to understand the role of such places within the city; it also highlighted the importance for the artist or collective work of taking responsibility to engage critically with those modes of representation in urban space. By joining our voices in unison, we were able to experience the strength of activism as an instrument of social transformation.

Figure 8

Figure 8, Figure 9 and Figure 10: Documentation of “The Walk as a Collective Method of Unlearning”. Marian Essl, 2017.

Figure 9

Figure 10

What Remains to Be Done

The experiences collected during the three occasions on which we offered these walks and presented them to the public opened up questions about what might be the most appropriate artistic method to achieve an emancipatory "transformation" in public space (Mörsch 2009: 27). We recognized our walks as a starting point for developing a process of "un-learning" and rewriting official accounts (Castro Varela 2010: 236).

It is important that the figures in the Butterfly House are not removed and that they remain in place. Their presence offers the opportunity to engage in critical reflection on new and more appropriate ways of presenting and contextualizing both ethnological objects in museums in the city and artistic representations like them. There is a colonial history that we cannot erase, but that we can correct. We are part of this history and it is in our hands to question it and offer new possible answers.

As a future project and continuation of this one, we have planned a permanent artistic intervention both inside and outside the space. Ideally, the history of the origin of the sculpture figures would be rendered visible to everyone who visits the Butterfly House. This intervention could be accompanied by an educational programme, aimed at young audiences like primary schools and kindergartens. In this way, the work "Österreichs kulturelles Erbe" would not be confined to "denouncing" a fact by documenting it through photography, but would also turn it into an exercise of deconstruction through a permanent on-site intervention.

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Trans Plantations

Deniz Sözen

K-a-f-f-e-e
K-a-f-f-e-e
trink nicht so viel Kaffee!
Nicht für Kinder ist der Türkentrank
schwächt die Nerven, macht dich blass und krank
Sei doch kein Muselmann,
der ihn nicht lassen kann!

C-o-f-f-e-e
C-o-f-f-e-e
Don't drink so much coffee!
The Turk's Drink is not for children,
It weakens the nerves and makes you pale and sick.
Don't be a Muslim
Who can't help it![1]

Karl Gottlieb Hering (1766–1853).

This German folk song about coffee, which three generations of the maternal side in my family, including myself, were taught in music education at school, issues an explicit warning against the consumption of coffee, which is denounced as the "Turk's drink". According to the song, Muslims cannot help but drink

1 For a more detailed discussion and English translation of the lyrics see Anidjar (2007).

Figure 1: *Kahvehane Kongresspark* (2016). Lecture-performance. Photo: Alex Simmel.

coffee and one should be careful not to drink too much of it, as it "makes you pale and sick" – attributes of weakness assigned to the Ottoman Turks, who had tried but failed to conquer Europe in the seventeenth century. The Turks were defeated at the gates of Vienna in 1683 but coffee, which they left behind when they fled the battlefield (Koz and Kuzucu 2013), was to become the most popular drink in the world. Today the demand for coffee beans is increasing worldwide. How does the consumption of coffee position us in relation to empire, colonial history and notions of the local and the global? Or, to return to the German folk song, how "Turkish" is your coffee?

These were some of the central questions that arose from two discrete, yet interrelated projects which formed part of the practice element of my doctoral research *The Art of Un-belonging*: *Kahvehane Kongresspark* (2016), a temporary café featuring specially designed ceramic cups/saucers and a site-specific performance in public space, and *Trans Plantations* (2018), an installation of cups/saucers and coffee beans cast in porcelain in combination

Figure 2: *Kahvehane Kongresspark* (2016). Temporary coffeehouse. Ceramic coffee cup and saucer (decal design: Ottoman). Photo: Deniz Sözen.

with an audio-visual element. Experimenting with transcultural performance, multilingual storytelling and collaborative processes of creative writing and artmaking, both projects present a multiplicity of viewpoints and voices that question the Eurocentric imaginary and explore the colonial history of and human entanglements with coffee.

Honduras, Brazil, Java, Columbia?
The label says coffee comes from Latin America.
Is coffee a she, like the plant in German: die Pflanze, die Bohne.
Or a he? As, der Samen.
Is coffee a seed or a fruit?
A cherry, a berry or a bean?
Where does coffee come from?
Africa? Mocha? India?
Peru? Guatemala? Nicaragua?
The label says: Latin America.
If coffee is Brazilian, why is she called Arabica?
Is coffee a migrant? A Muslim? A trans-plant?

As we follow the path of coffee, we embark on a journey that takes us around the world, travelling through time and space. The lecture-performance as part of *Kahvehane Kongresspark* does not tell a linear story of coffee. It starts in the here and now: in the middle or perhaps towards the end of the "Anthropocene" or, in Haraway's (et al. 2016) words, the "Plantationocene". Aiming to bring awareness to this relation, the narration of coffee's transplantation trajectory begins at a coffee plantation in Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Figure 3: *Kahvehane Kongresspark* (2016). Lecture-performance. Photo: Alex Simmel.

This scene, which is set in Brazil, aims to shed light to the entanglement of coffee and colonialism, i.e. the history of slavery and plantations as part of the colonial enterprise. Bharatanatyam artist and actor Shane Shambhu plays a coffee plantation worker named Ramiro, while I impersonate the plantation owner and CEO of a multinational coffee company exploiting its coffee workers in Brazil. The script is based on factual information: numerous scandals have exposed the exploitation and abuse of coffee workers in Brazil (Hodal 2016). Owing to the legacy of slavery and colonialism, today Brazil is the largest exporter of coffee, accounting for about one-third of the global market.[2]

Figure 4: *Kahvehane Kongresspark* (2016). Temporary coffeehouse. Ceramic coffee cup and saucer (decal design: Port of Mocha). Photo: Deniz Sözen.

Starting with the cultivation of sugarcane (which proved to be one of the most profitable crops) in the Caribbean from the late seventeenth century onwards, the plantation was a system that was replicated widely throughout the Americas. In her insightful book *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization*, the art historian Jill H. Casid (2005) reminds us that the construction of the (monocultural) plantation required the clearing and removal of native, biodiverse forests in order to make room for the colonizers to cultivate transplanted cash crops, such as sugar cane or coffee. As she states, "ideologically and discursively, *plantation* was often used as a synonym for *colony*" (Casid 2005: 7).

2 An excerpt of the performance can be watched here: https://vimeo.com/175368263.

The plantation system is constitutive of coloniality, which Mignolo (2011) describes as a complex matrix of power which serves to dominate and control through the fabrication and management of knowledge, driven by imperialism, Christianity and capitalism. According to him, modernity and coloniality – as "the darker side of Western Modernity" – are inextricably linked. As he points out, it was through the development of the colonial matrix of power and the Industrial Revolution that the meaning of nature transformed into "natural resources" (Mignolo 2011: 12). The plantation system was based on the transplantation of plants,[3] humans and animals, who were uprooted and exploited as profitable "resources", generating a new global market. As Mignolo (2011: 12) observes, "this transformation resulted in extensive enslaved trade that transformed human life into a commodity – for the owner of the plantation, of the mine, and, later on, of the industry". In this sense, the plantation could

Figure 5: *Kahvehane Kongresspark* (2016). Edition of 100 glazed Kütahya ceramic cups and saucers and nine ceramic decal designs. Photo: Deniz Sözen.

3 To give an example of the colonial practice of transplantation, a specific type of sugar cane from Tahiti that had been transferred to the royal botanical garden in Paris in the late 1800s was subsequently transplanted and cultivated as a cash crop in the French colonies of Mauritius, the Réunion islands, French Guiana, Martinique etc. (see Casid 2005: 33).

be seen as a precursor to industrial capitalism – an observation that is shared by Haraway (et al. 2016) and expressed in the concept of the “Plantationocene”.

According to the herbalist and anthropologist Jason T.W. Irving (2018: 131), the search for new biological resources, such as crops or plants and the appropriation of local and indigenous knowledge, which could be commodified (a practice which is called bioprospecting), was “a fundamental part of European colonial expansion”. Through the economic promise of lucrative trade in plants, botanists became “the agents of empire” (David Mackay, as quoted in Schiebinger 2004: 11) and, as Sita Balani (2018: 231) states in her essay “From Botany to Community: A Legacy of Classification”, the imperial science of botany became key to the development of “a taxonomic imagination” in Europe.

Figure 6: Ethiopian coffee ceremony at Mesfin Ali’s home in London, 2018.

Wrongly assuming that the coffee plant was indigenous to the Arabian Peninsula, the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778) classified the plant as *Coffea arabica*.[4] However, genetically coffee's *arabica* variety can be traced back to a small tree or scrub growing in the rainforest canopies of a region that today is known as Ethiopia (formerly Abyssinia). Even though exact dates and circumstances remain obscure, it is now widely agreed that from there coffee was transported across the Red Sea to Yemen, where its cultivation is well documented. In Yemen, Sufi monks, who discovered that drinking coffee helped them to stay

Figure 7: Scan of a handful of green, unroasted coffee beans from Ethiopia.

4 Linnaeus's binominal nomenclature established the principles of modern botanical taxonomy and is regarded as an important mechanism of the colonial enterprise (Schiebinger and Swan 2005).

up for their midnight prayers, quickly appropriated the "African drink", naming it *al-qahwa* after an Arabic word for wine (Pendergrast 2010: 6). It is likely that the name "coffee" derives from Arabic *al-qahwa*,[5] which later transformed to *kahve* in Turkish.

The temporary *Kahvehane* (coffeehouse) at the Vienna Kongresspark provided the open-air stage for the lecture-performance which explored the many legends about the origins of coffee, tracing its journey from Ethiopia, through the Arabian Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire, and its transplantation across the entire globe. Out of this project grew another incarnation of my artistic exploration of coffee: the multi-part installation *Trans Plantations* (2018), which combines an installation of unglazed "Turkish" coffee cups and saucers with a silent video of colonial maps that are projected onto the cups alongside a discrete, yet related, installation of coffee beans cast in porcelain, accompanied by a multilingual soundtrack. Unlike *Kahvehane Kongresspark*, this project was conceived for an interior space, although not necessarily for a gallery environment. Approaching the heap of white coffee beans cast in porcelain placed at the centre of a dark cubic plinth, the onlooker hears voices murmuring in multiple languages. This is the voice of coffee – of the plant and the bean – speaking in the first person, in his or her respective mother tongue, evoking memories of the plantation, his or her relation to the soil and climate (change), interactions with humans, observations about conditions of labour, trade, transportation and different culturally specific ways of production and consumption.[6]

5 As the coffee historian Mark Pendergrast (2010) points out, amongst other possibilities, it has also been suggested that the name "coffee" could equally be connected to Kaffa, a region in Ethiopia, or quwwa, Arabic for power.

6 Link to the multilingual soundtrack: https://soundcloud.com/user-530978425/trans-plantations-version-june-2018.

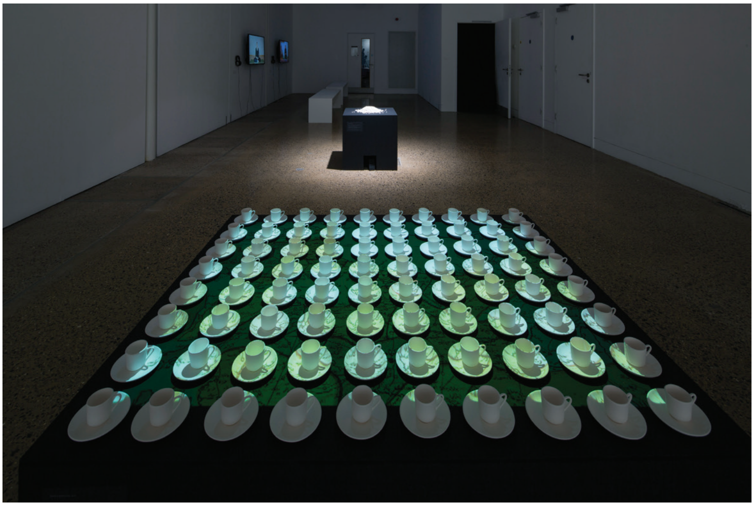

Figure 8: *Trans Plantations* (2018). Installation shot, London Gallery West, 2018. Photo: David Freeman.

Figure 9: *Trans Plantations* (2018). Coffee beans cast in porcelain. Photo: Deniz Sözen.

If we return to the aforementioned German folk song and associations of coffee with Turkish-ness (and the appropriation of coffee by Turkish nationalism), it seems ironic that currently most "Turkish" coffee brands are in fact made from coffee beans grown in Brazil. This phenomenon of long-distance relationships between localities of production and consumption is characteristic of the impact of globalization, which according to John Tomlinson (1999: 123) "does clearly undermine a close *material* relationship between the provenance of food and locality". Our sense of connection to the local and global has been altered significantly through the availability of food from distant regions in our supermarket shelves. It is precisely the connection between food, identity and belonging which had triggered my interest in coffee.

Figure 10:
Kahvehane Kongresspark (2016).
Poster. Photo: Deniz Sözen.

Coffee is intensely linked to memory and identity – individual and collective. As a popular Turkish folk saying goes, "a cup of coffee will be remembered for forty years". Clearly, it is not the coffee per se which will be remembered, but rather the relation to those we are sharing the coffee with. And yet, despite this relational aspect, the conditions of labour of those who planted, picked and processed the coffee will rarely enter our consciousness.

Embarking on research about coffee's colonial and naturecultural history, which informed the writing of the scripts for the lecture-performance *Kahvehane Kongresspark* and the soundtrack of *Trans Plantations*, made me aware of coffee's agency as a global trans-plant and instigated further research in relation to colonial practices of transplantation and labour exploitation. By serving coffee to the public, the temporary coffeehouse and public art intervention *Kahvehane Kongresspark* aimed to shift the focus to our interconnectedness and entanglement with matter – coffee and ceramics. In contrast to the ceramic cups and saucers specially designed for *Kahvehane Kongresspark*, the porcelain cups and saucers that formed part of the installation *Trans Plantations* were unglazed and therefore not functional. Only fired once, the slip cast white porcelain cups and saucers form a canvas onto which fragmented images of colonial maps are projected. The porcelain coffee beans are made of the same material, unglazed porcelain, yet fired at a slightly higher temperature. In *Trans Plantations*, the objects and matter become "theatrical" elements that immerse the viewer into a sensory experience, which is further enhanced through a video projection and a multilingual narrative/soundtrack. The voice recordings of "coffee" speaking in various languages would be mostly unintelligible to a monolingual English audience, challenging the universal standardization of Anglo-American English as the global *lingua franca* of contemporary art. By tracing coffee's imperial history marked by processes of alienation and deterritorialization – as the multilayered story of a trans-plant – my artworks make the viewer appreciate that we are all entangled in a web of relations: in order to acknowledge that we all belong to the earth, yet the earth does not belong to us.

This essay is based on my doctoral thesis *The Art of Un-belonging* (University of Westminster, 2019).

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A Visual Glossary: *Delirio Güero* (White Delusion)

Nina Hoechtl

> *Besides collective denials of the past (such as brutalities against indigenous peoples), people may be encouraged to act as if they don't know about the present. Whole societies are based on forms of cruelty, discrimination, repression or exclusion which are "known" about but never openly acknowledged … Indeed, distortions and self-delusions are most often synchronized … Whole societies have unmentioned and unmentionable rules about what should not be openly talked about. You are subject to a rule about obeying these rules, but bound also by a meta-rule which dictates that you deny your knowledge of the original rule.*
>
> Stanley Cohen (2001: 10–11, 45).

In this chapter I propose a visual glossary of what I have conceived as *delirio güero* (white delusion). It derives from my essay film/video performance/fake history show/future re-enactment titled *DELIRIO GÜERO WHITE DELUSION 1825, 2018, 2211 and back* (2019/2211).

The film takes a deep dive into the nitty-gritty of the outlandish acts of nineteenth-century self-appointed discoverer/artist Jean-Friedrich Waldeck, and architect/researcher/photographer

Teobert Maler, and the colonial imperial undertakings of the monarchs Charlotte of Belgium and Maximilian of Habsburg in Mexico, along with his follower, the *Früchterl* [swindler] Anton "Toni" Mayr, a distant relative of the *güera* film-maker/artist. My intention is to articulate three keywords that enable a necessarily incomplete dialogue around *delirio güero*—a dialogue that does not reduce this concept to my audio-visual assemblage but engages it as a complex practice of entanglement and entitlement, implication and aspiration, innocence and ignorance, denial and delusion.

Whitey
Mask/ing
Blanquitud

> *I have ceaselessly driven ... to show the white man that he is at once the perpetrator and the victim of a delusion.*
>
> Frantz Fanon (1986: 225).
>
> *I will take off my ski mask when Mexican society takes off its own mask, the one it uses to cover up the real Mexico ... And once they have seen the real Mexico—as we have seen it—they will be more determined to change it.*
>
> Subcomandante Marcos (1995: 70).

While watching (or fast forwarding) the film, the latex face and/or hand masks are always present: they announce the artifice of identity by emphasizing the host's *blanquitud* (whiteyness).[1]

1 Echeverría (2018: 26) differentiates between *blanquitud* (whiteyness) and *blancura* (whiteness): "We can call *blanquitud* the visibility of an ethical

Figure 1.

Bolívar Echeverría (2009, 2010, 2018) coined the term *blanquitud* and its translation, whiteyness, after Rainer Werner Fassbinder's movie *Whity* (1971), in reference to the figure of the illegitimate son of the white rancher born from the Black cook acting as the obedient butler Whity in the movie. Echeverría (2009, 2010, 2018) introduces *blanquitud* to grasp an identity that is brought into being by the homogenizing mandates of capitalism. While *blanquitud* includes certain ethnic white features and behaviours, it is not so much an ethnic category but an ethical and cultural one, directly linked to the *homo capitalisticus*, which threatens to spread throughout the world, overcoming, incorporating and co-opting identities that might otherwise resist it. Like Whity, it is through *blanquitud* that people of colour could obtain the whitey identity, an abstract-universal identity needed to be part of and serve the capitalist modern system as *homo capitalisticus*

capitalist identity insofar as it is overdetermined by the racial *blancura*, but by a racial *blancura* that relativizes itself through exercising its overdetermination" (translation by the author).

without having to "whiten" completely (Echeverría 2018: 26). In Fassbinder's film, as soon as Whity pulls out money and performs masculinity by drinking half a bottle of whiskey, he is accepted by the white cowboys who had earlier denied him access to the saloon. Whity's acceptance is achieved through his individual acts but the cowboys' racist views are not shattered, nor is the racist structure in place challenged.[2] Modern racism—the racism defined in relation to *blanquitud*—as Echeverría (2009) explains, "remains generally in the stage of scorn or contempt, of distrust and suspicious fear. Apparently harmless, this radical discrimination condemn[s] as no[n]-human (as *un-menschen*) everyone who has not found the way to success. And 'non-human' means dispensable, ready to be eliminated if the circumstances require." Given such a threat, let's all employ a whitey mask to become *homo capitalisticus*, and, if you don't, it's your own doing! (Nothing more distressing than that.)

Figure 2.

2 For a close reading of *Whity*, see Prisciall D. Layne, "Lessons in Liberation: Fassbinder's Whity at the Crossroads of Hollywood Melodrama and Blaxploitation". *Companion to German Cinema*. Terri Ginsberg and Andrea Mensch (eds). Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell Press, 2012, 260–286.

The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) considers a delusion to be "fixed beliefs that are not amenable to change in light of conflicting evidence" (APA 2013: 87). The *delirio güero* is characterized by the tendency not to see nor understand—even to deny—racism even though—or, more accurately, precisely because—the whitey identity fully benefits from its ongoing racial, economic and socio-ecological inequalities. Consequently, the *delirio güero* plays a crucial role in the construction and maintenance of white privilege, entitlement and violence including the knowledge and images that it has generated, in the case of the film, about cultures and peoples in Mexico. In the film, the deployment of the masks points to the intimate relationship—the latex material rubbing against the skin, making it sweat—between power, knowledge, entitlement, (audio-visual) image production, and processes of colonial imperialism. I am less interested here in a simple opposition between delirium and knowledge than I am in *delirio güero* as a wilful production of particular kinds of knowledge and (audio-)visual assemblages: Rather than being antithetical, delirium and knowledge are mutually constitutive and better understood and tackled as masking processes.

Mugs and Güero Gestures

> **güero/a**
> *adjective, noun*
> *[ˈgwero/a]*
> *Méx. Dicho de una persona: Que tiene los cabellos rubios.*
> *[1. Mex. Said about a person: that has blond hair.]*
>
> Diccionario de la lengua española.

Only when the strutting takes place over corpses do we get the social gest of Fascism. This means that the artist has to adopt a definite attitude towards the fact of pomp; [they] cannot let it just speak only for itself, simply expressing it as the fact dictates.

Bertold Brecht (2014: 169).

How do you make a body accountable for its language, its positioning?
Why not make a body accountable for its language?

Claudia Rankine (2014).

Figure 3.

In the common use of Mexican Spanish the word *güero/a* refers to what whiteyness stands for: street or market vendors call (loudly and wheedlingly!) a potential costumer "*güero/a*" or "*güerito/a*" even when the person is not light-skinned as (what comes now as no surprise!) *güero/a* is associated with higher social class, power and money. At the market, one can buy mugs (or T-shirts) with the slogan *En el tianguis todos somos güeritos* [At the market we're all *güeritos*].

Figure 4.

Figure 5.

In the film, *La güera* uses mugs to introduce and, if possible, show portraits of the key characters: Maximilian of Habsburg, Charlotte of Belgium, Jean-Friedrich Waldeck, Teobert Maler and Anton "Toni" Mayr—all of them *güerxs* and, somehow, related to the contemporary Republic of Austria. A mysterious know-it-all figure from the early years of the twenty-third century, who disrupts *La güera*'s narrations time and again, does the same when introducing the maker of the film from 2018: Nina Hoechtl—a *güera* too, and an Austrian citizen who holds a permanent resident card in Mexico. (Yes, me!)

Figure 6.

Alongside the latex face and hand masks it is through the performance of *güero* gestures that the host, *La güera*, takes on her whitey identity. "[G]estures have to be considered as *events*, singular performances", according to Carrie Noland (2008: xxiv). These events "draw … on culture-specific (as well as gender-, race-, sexuality-, and class specific) conventional vocabularies" (Noland 2008: xxiv), while the repetition remains central to the gestural formation. Through repetitions *güero* gestures become recognizable. They show how much one has compromised and mastered to perform the abstract-universal identity of *blanquitud* that *La güera* undoubtedly displays.

Let's take a look at the most recurrent *güero* gesture in the film, the self-feeding gesture: *La güera* satisfies herself time and again by grabbing the—for her—always available, sweet hybrid MD2 pineapple, bringing it to her mouth and eating it. Like the majority of the world with an ever-growing greed for an all seasons long access to pineapples, since the early 2000s she has neglected the other six major types of pineapple, the ones that are less sweet and durable, smaller, more tender and cannot withstand commercial handling as easily. "By ignoring the fruit's genetic base in the wild, we risk losing the genes they contain and undermining the future of the fruit" (Pearce 2008).

If "the politics of 'what gets eaten' or consumed is bound up with histories of imperialism" (Ahmed 2004: 83) and the abstract-universal identity of *blanquitud* is operating as hierarchically and economically superior and as such it is still deemed the desired identity (with an unfettered access to any fruit, vegetable, plant, creature, soil, practice and knowledge production at anytime, anywhere serving the rapacious appetite for consumption, study, accumulation, appropriation, (genetic) manipulation, commodification, profit), there is an urgent sociopolitical need to comprehend why it is so—to comprehend its power through the lens of colonial imperial histories.

It is the complex interplay between identity as immaterial—a concept—and identity as material—fleshy, and, in the case of the film, latex—that the *güero* gestures express, (re)enact and (re)cite. In the film, each (hi)story is the future of the other, or perhaps each (hi)story is the premonition of the other while being its past. Only the constant process of debunking how, when, where and why *blanquitud* works and is performed, and how it informs and is informed by images, might give some common ground, some understanding, from which some agency can emerge.[3]

Haunted Assemblages Disrupted

> *I [use] the term haunting to describe those singular yet repetitive instances when home becomes unfamiliar, when your bearings on the world lose direction, when the over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's been in your blind spot comes into view.*
>
> Avery F. Gordon (2008: xvi).

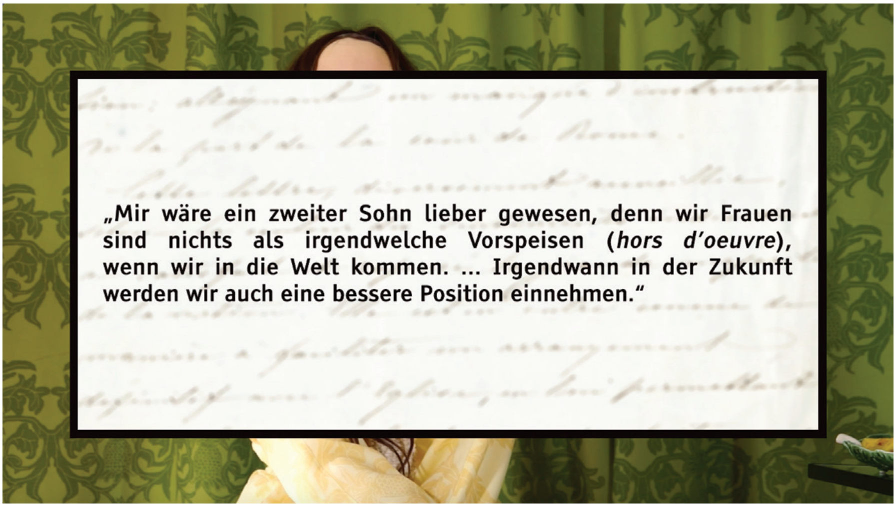

Figure 7.

3 In *Modernidad y blanquitud* (*Modernity and Blanquitud*), Echeverría (2010) shows how images by Hans Holbein, Grant Wood and Adolf Ziegler, among others, feed into *blanquitud*.

Figure 8.

The film assembles a repertoire of archival images, texts and acts left behind by colonial imperial practices. They all relate to the construction of the *delirio güero* that entangles with race, ethnicity, gender, class, entitlement, nationality or peoplehood, and violence in Mexico. The themes of the repertoire are haunted. They are repetitive to a degree that would be bromidic and ridiculous were these tropes not so devastating in their effects. In the film, *La güera* dives into and moves through some of these effects in assemblages of objects and props specifically made for the film (such as the mugs), archival images that are framed within the frame as a (form of) quotation (mark), the performative form of *güero* gestures, and narratives in two versions: in German and in Spanish spoken in foreign accents by two different voice-overs: Mariel Rodríguez, a visual artist from Mexico currently living and working in Vienna, and myself, respectively. (And, for the English-speaking audience, available with English subtitles.) Let's pause for a moment.

Figure 9.

Let's pause in a scene when the mysterious know-it-all figure disrupts *La güera*'s narrations of effects that she (so readily!) casts off by telling what substances might have been consumed—*ololiúqui* seeds—that led to such doings—the making of the portrait of Charlotte and Maximilian with the Lady of Guadalupe. This *carte-de-visite* is haunted. It is haunted by what Ariella Azoulay (2018) proposes to unlearn: the origins of photography. Azoulay invites us to imagine that these origins go back to 1492, the year when the Spanish Empire began its conquest and colonization of the "New World". It is sometime in the early nineteenth century that common theories and histories locate photography's moment of emergence around technological development and men inventors. In a world that had already been colonized, enabling the reproduction of imperial rights and violence, Azoulay (2018) argues, photography was institutionalized as a visual and communicative practice. It articulates in images what Azoulay (2018) describes as "**the right to destroy**", to accumulate, to appropriate, to differentiate, to record what had been destroyed or appropriated, to study, rescue, salvage/plunder and exhibit it.

Figure 10.

In the film, the *carte-de-visite* titled *Our Lady of Guadalupe appearing to the Emperor and Empress in the Clouds above the Cerro de las Campanas* (1860s) shows how the right to destroy, appropriate and differentiate by the Second Mexican Empire of Maximilian and Charlotte was masked by the appropriation and exhibition of the Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531, this right to destroy, appropriate and differentiate had already been applied when one of *Mexica*[4] sacred sites, the Tepeyac hill north of Mexico City, was

4 I use the term "Mexica" instead of "Aztec". The Nahuatl-speaking group, who settled on an islet in Lake Texcoco in 1325, founding the cities of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco—known today as Mexico City—referred to themselves as the "Mexihcah". In addition to the Mexihcah, however, there were quite a few other groups that spoke roughly the same language (Nahuatl) living near those highland lakes: the Xochimilcah, the Tlaxcaltecah, the Tepanecah, the Tetzcohcah, the Tlacopanecah etc. Those last two groups joined with the Mexihcah to form the Ēxcān Tlahtōlōyān (the Triple Alliance)—known today as the Aztec Empire. Aztec is therefore a misnomer if one refers to the culture and inhabitants of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco. For more on the use of "Mexica" and

appropriated for the appearance of the Lady of Guadalupe to Juan Diego. Before conquest this very same site had been used by *Mexicas* to worship Tonantzin. In *Mexica* culture and mythology, Tonantzin is a term used to designate different female deities (not just one!), such as Coatlicue, Cihuacóatl and Teteoinan. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, this site had been further appropriated and differentiated by building a church. By the middle of the nineteenth century the image of the Lady of Guadalupe purposefully ended up in Maximilian and Charlotte's *carte-de-visite*. Without a doubt, this *carte-de-visite* is but one example of being part of the imperial world, which Azoulay (2018) advocates to explore: "unlearn the expertise and knowledge that call upon us to account for photography as having its own origins, histories, practices, or futures, and to explore it as part of the imperial world in which we, as scholars, photographers … curators [or film-makers] operate".

Haunted materials concern the disruption of the familiar affordances of images (for example, how they enable and constrain "taken-for-granted" modes of their origin and making meaning). Haunted assemblages disrupted are concerned with how practices with images as part of the imperial world can be shifted and the habitual sense we make of them can be disrupted such that the configuration of materiality, narratives, space, subjects and the past as it was produced show up and are enabled: the challenge of how to work with images that wear the invisible mask of history yet largely denied historicity to their subjects keeps necessarily resonating in (between) all of it.

"Aztec", see Miguel León-Portilla, "Los Aztecas. Disquisiciones sobre un Gentilicio," [The Aztecs. Disquisitions on a Demonym]. *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* 31, 2000: 307–313.

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Figures 1–10: Nina Hoechtl. 2019. *DELIRIO GÜERO WHITE DELUSION 1825, 2018, 2211 and back. Video. Still: Rafael Ortega.*

If you would like to watch the video do not hesitate to drop a line: nina.hoechtl@gmail.com

Mapping Palestine: Erasure and Unerasure

Ahmad Barclay

> *Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You don't even know the names of these Arab villages, and I don't blame you, because these geography books no longer exist … Nahalal arose in the place of Mahlul, Gvat in the place of Jibta, Sarid in the place of Haneifa, and Kfar-Yehoshua in the place of Tel-Shaman. There is not one single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population.*
>
> Moshe Dayan, Israeli defence minister (*quoted in Ha'aretz, 4 April 1969*).

Contrary to Dayan's words, the geography books continue to exist. A couple of years ago I discovered that the Israeli national library had made available a series of highly detailed 1940s maps—at 1:20,000 scale—from the British Mandate "Survey of Palestine" through a map viewer on its website. I had known about the existence of such maps, and that copies could be found in various Israeli archives. But, knowing also how difficult it can be for non-Israelis—and even for Palestinian citizens of Israel—to gain unfettered access to such maps in the archives themselves, I was somewhat surprised by the fact that an Israeli government institution would make them available in such a way, and under the bold title "Palestine", no less.

While these maps could be viewed on the library website, they could not easily be downloaded. And, further, they could not be viewed, searched or otherwise navigated as a continuous map of the territory, thus limiting their meaningful value to a typical user. In total, there are 155 unique map sheets in the 1:20,000 series, covering the most populous part of the country, from Beersheba in the south to the northern borders with Lebanon and Syria. Alongside these, the library website hosts less detailed—and less rare—1:100,000 and 1:250,000 maps that together cover the whole country, and various larger-scale maps covering at least twenty major towns and cities in building-by-building detail. Together these are still just a fraction of the survey maps produced under British rule.

The Significance of the Maps

The significance of these maps will be obvious to anyone familiar with the history of Palestine/Israel. The maps capture, in impressive detail, a snapshot of the country just years—in some cases even just months—before 750,000 Palestinians were ethnically cleansed (Pappe 2006: 1–9) from over 500 towns and villages across the part of Mandate Palestine that in 1948 would come under the rule of the new State of Israel. This series of events is known in Palestinian collective memory as the Nakba (meaning "catastrophe" in Arabic).

The maps do not just plot and name each of these depopulated and destroyed communities; they name literally tens of thousands of landmarks, from mountains, valleys and rivers to orchards, water cisterns and wayside shrines. In fact, they also demarcate and name every rural parcel of land across much of the country. And each and every name is systematically transliterated from Arabic (an official transliteration schema was published in *The Palestine Gazette*, 2 October 1941).

Names are important. From the first days of its existence, the State of Israel enlisted "naming committees" to create a new Hebrew map of the new country, systematically renaming every possible landmark, natural and man-made, using the very maps and gazetteers that had been produced under the British as their guide (Benvenisti 2000: 11–54). In its first decades, official Israeli maps changed faster than the facts on the ground. Depopulated Palestinian villages had vanished from new "Survey of Israel" maps by 1951, and were over-printed with the Hebrew word *harus* (meaning "destroyed") on updates of British maps (Benvenisti 2000: 41). In reality, the many of them would not be destroyed by Israeli authorities for some years (Rapoport 2007), and a handful—including Lifta, Iqrit and Kfar Bir'im—even remain largely intact today.

A Prelude to Erasure

> *[T]he roots of the modern survey system of Palestine set up by the military government are to be sought in the Balfour Declaration and its implications regarding land. The system was formally established in July 1920 with only one objective: to survey and map the lands of the country as demanded by the Zionist Organisation, in order to implement legally binding land settlement and registration of tenure rights.*
>
> Dov Gavish (2005: xiii).

It is important to note that, although the British maps vividly capture the historical moment before the Nakba, they are not a neutral artefact. Their primary purpose was not to stand testament to the national claims of Palestinians. Rather, they were intended as a blueprint for colonization. As Israeli geographer Dov Gavish describes, by mapping the land in such detail, the British had in fact sought to facilitate the Zionist colonization of Palestine. The aim was to formalize the ownership claims over every square metre of the territory in order that lands could be sold or otherwise transferred to Zionist organizations such as the Jewish National Fund or Palestine Jewish Colonization Association. Within the first decade of the Mandate, the British also enacted a raft of ordinances and regulations designed to support this endeavour (Gavish 2005: 95–136). The Zionist imperative to map land ownership in this comprehensive and systematic way stands in stark contrast, of course, to narratives of Palestine as an "empty land" or "a land without a people" prior to its Zionist colonization.

From another perspective, the British maps—as with any maps—come with their own biases and selectivity. For example, every sheet is dotted with scores of water cisterns, which one can reasonably assume was due to a belief in the strategic importance of water resources in the region. Likewise, every ruin of potential biblical significance seems to find its way onto the maps, likely owing to earlier maps by the Palestine Exploration Fund, a British society that had extensively surveyed Palestine for evidence of biblical remains during the 1870s.

Resurrecting the Maps, Reanimating Palestine

> *Salmon emphasised the human aspect of carto-topography. No matter how accurate the map, Salmon wrote, people would never trust it if it were not pleasant and attractive to the eye, for it was impossible not to be affected by its external appearance.*
>
> Gavish (2005: 192), describing the writings of F.J. Salmon, director of the Survey of Palestine from 1933 to 1938.

> *I couldn't have done anything without the marvelous detailed maps (scale 1:20,000) compiled by the Mandatory authorities and updated just before the 1948 War. I would spread the relevant map on the ground, and suddenly the old landscape arose like an apparition: village houses, mosques, school buildings, paths, stone hedges marking plot boundaries, limekilns, threshing floors, holy tombs, sacred oak trees, springs and cisterns, caves, fruit trees, patches of cultivation. And each plot and every prominent feature had its Arabic name marked on the map, so poetic and so apt ... that my heart ached.*
>
> Benvenisti (2000: 8), describing the role of the maps during his efforts to uncover a Palestinian landscape erased by Israeli cartographers.

On discovering these maps and noting that their copyright had expired under UK law, I set about working with Visualizing Palestine (VP) to make them available to as wide an audience as possible. VP is an organization engaged in visual storytelling projects on Palestine and Palestinians using data visualizations, mapping and infographics—and with which I have been working over the past seven years—so it seemed like a fitting home for the project.

It should be noted that, although many digital maps exist reconstructing Palestine before the Nakba—including Salman Abu Sitta's Atlas of Palestine (2010) and Zochrot's iNakba app—we saw a power in making the historic maps themselves available, as they seemed to offer a raw testimony that digital reproductions simply cannot. The quotes of J.F. Salmon and Meron Benvenisti help to capture the aesthetic and even emotive power of these particular maps, while there is also an undeniable sense of "truth" to historical maps, regardless of the original intent in their creation.

The objective of our project was to build an intuitive Google Maps-style platform that would allow users to navigate, search and download the maps. Realizing this project, eventually named Palestine Open Maps (POM)—palopenmaps.org—involved four stages. Firstly, finding a way to download the maps from the Israeli National Library website. Secondly, piecing together these maps into a continuous digital base map geo-referenced to real-world coordinates. Thirdly, compiling data on the geographic locations of hundreds of towns and villages to make the maps searchable. And, fourthly, developing the web platform itself.

We see the present version of the POM platform only as a starting point. Our intention is to fully digitize the information contained within the maps, and to geographically catalogue many other open resources that already exist online, including historic photographs and oral histories. We also intend to make our source code for the platform freely available to others who would like to start similar projects in other parts of the world.

Past as Present, the Sustained Power of Maps

> *They show a map, with dots. Dots, dots, dots ... Dots, from the north of the country to the south, south of Beersheva. And these dots, which are the villages they're referring to, these dots are located everywhere in the state of Israel ... Here, in Tel Aviv. I found them in the Tel Aviv area, dozens of dots. In Bat Yam, in Rishon LeZion, in Rehovot – they're everywere [sic].*
>
> Limor Livnat, an Israeli minister, speaking in the Knesset on 5 February 2012 (translated by Kamen 2012).

In the above excerpt from a debate in the Israeli Knesset, Livnat is describing her experience of iNakba, a smartphone app produced by Zochrot, an Israeli NGO working to educate Jewish Israelis about the Palestinian Nakba and advocating for the right of Palestinian refugees to return. The "dots" she describes are markers locating the 500+ destroyed Palestinian villages that are scattered across present-day Israel. Her reaction to the app—which goes on to sway between implying that the maps are false and declaring that discussion of Palestinian return should be outside of "the political argument"—mirrors a wider Israeli discourse described by Zochrot co-founder Eitan Bronstein (2009) in which the Nakba is "something that did not occur (although it had to occur)".

Whereas in the past cartography was the exclusive preserve of those who commanded the necessary power and resources, today anyone with access to a computer and the internet has the tools at their disposal to challenge official historical records and cartographies by mapping their own narrative. It is no longer possible to maintain Moshe Dayan's implied "ignorance" defence for historical denial that "these geography books no longer exist" when their contents become omnipresent online. With overwhelming historical evidence in the public domain, the limits of "the political argument" must surely eventually shift.

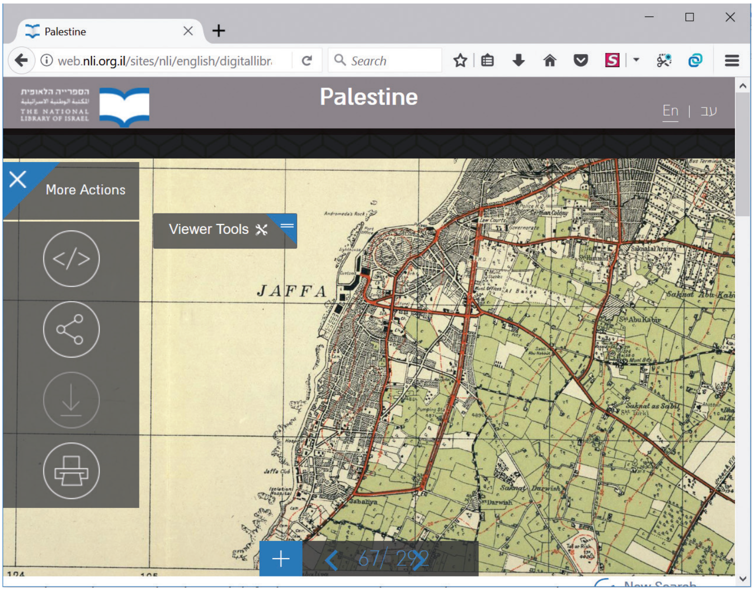

Figure 1: Screenshot from Israeli National Library online map viewer.

Figure 2: 1:250,000 Palestine (1946), north sheet (1 of 3 sheets).

Figure 3:
1:250,000 Israel (1951), north sheet (1 of 3 sheets).

Figure 4:
Detail from 1:250,000 Palestine (1946), north sheet (1 of 3 sheets).

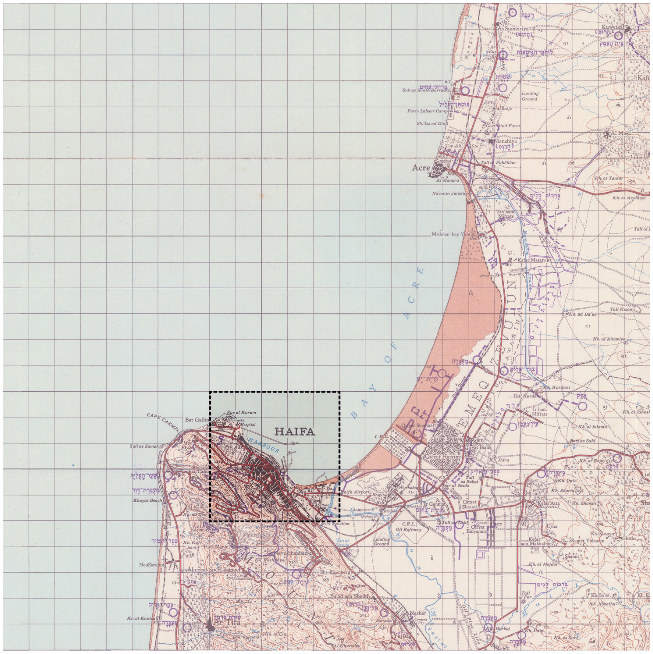

Figure 5: Detail from
1:100,000 Palestine (1942),
Haifa (1 of 16 sheets).

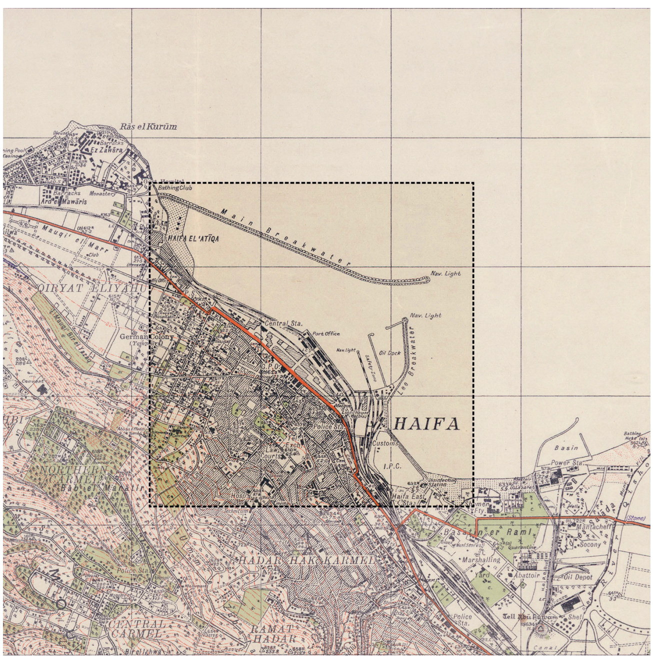

Figure 6: Detail from
1:20,000 Palestine (1942),
Haifa (1 of 155 sheets).

Figure 7: Detail from 1:10,000 Haifa (1943), Sheet 1 (of 4).

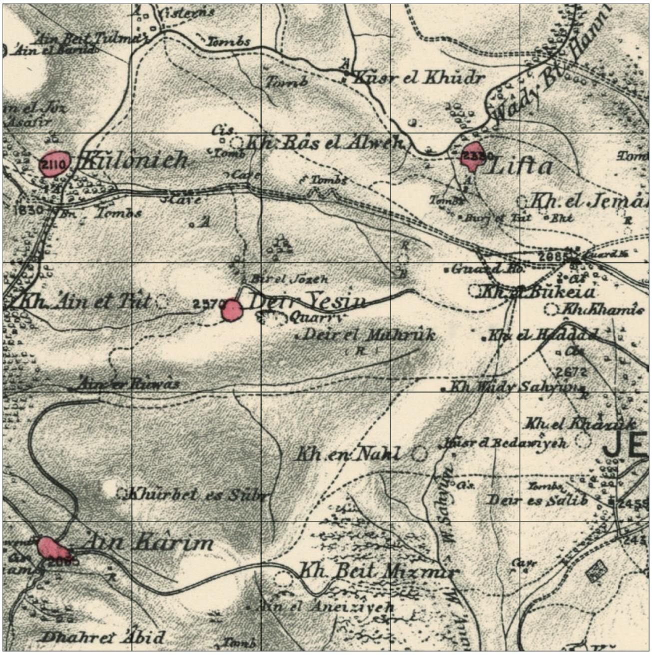

Figure 8: Detail from Palestine Exploration Map (1880) showing region west of Jerusalem.

Figure 9: Detail from Palestine 1:20,000 (1942) showing region west of Jerusalem.

Figure 10: Aerial photography (Mapbox/ OpenStreetMap 2019) showing region west of Jerusalem.

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This volume presents ten visual essays that reflect on the historical, cultural and socio-political legacies of empires. Drawing on a variety of visual genres and forms, including photographs, illustrated advertisements, stills from site-specific art performances and films, and maps, the book illuminates the contours of empire's social worlds and its political legacies through the visual essay. The guiding, titular metaphor, sharpening the haze, captures our commitment to frame empire from different vantage points, seeking focus within its plural modes of power. We contend that critical scholarship on empires would benefit from more creative attempts to reveal and confront empire. Broadly, the essays track a course from interrogations of imperial pasts to subversive reinscriptions of imperial images in the present, even as both projects inform each author's intervention.

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