Political Violence and Networks in the 21ˢᵗ Century Media Art From the Mediterranean: 4 Case Studies from 2000-2015

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I, Özden Şahin, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own.

Signed: _____   Date: 10/04/2018

Acknowledgements

Thesis Abstract

Despite the high number of cases of overt political violence in the Mediterranean and the richness of media art in the region, there has been no comprehensive research about political violence and contemporary media art production in the region. Departing from the question of networks in media art from the Mediterranean, this research looks at the artists' imagination of the region informed by practices of various forms of violence through critical outlook on the issues of visibility. In doing so, it inquires into treating the Mediterranean itself as a medium. It conducts four case studies whose common focus is on the networks of relations that reproduce, strengthen, and reinforce models of political violence at various levels, using anecdotal evidence and content analysis methods. The case studies give a a) microscopic view of a computer virus; b) life-size view of an individual human body; c) landscape view of urban transformation; and d) bird's eye view of occupation, consumption and destruction. Taking Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics as its theoretical framework, the study analyses the contemporary blend of disciplinary, sovereign, biopolitical, and necropolitical practices within granular and grand levels across the region and claims that temporality is the key element in the transformation and survival of forms of violence.

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Chapter 1 Introduction and Methods

1. Introduction

There have been many incidents of political unrest in the recent history of the Mediterranean region. Although there is a vast literature on the historical, social or psychological implications of the conflicts and wars analysed from ethnographic, political, economic and criminological points of view, there is a lack of original research in the area of political violence in the Mediterranean region in relation to media art. In order to address this problem, this study focuses on the manifestations of political violence in media art from the Mediterranean region since the beginning of the twenty first century through an analysis of four artworks as case studies.

This project started off as a thematic mapping of political violence in a specific context of media art, but shortly took another direction as the questions that emerged from the literature review —particularly those related to the conceptual debates on violence— led to an incorporation of the non-conventional definitions of violence (e.g. those that have to do with covert forms of violence) into discussions around media art. Adopting the theoretical framework of biopolitics, this research analyses the relationship of overt and covert forms of violence to the contemporary workings of biopolitics through four case studies of artworks that centre around the idea of networks.

The vast array of approaches to the study of violence can be broadly categorised as functional methods where physical or overt violence is the mainly recognised form of violence (as in the likes of conflict resolution approach) versus more cultural analytical or philosophical terrains where violence is discussed in its ontological, epistemological, and phenomenological capacities. While the former may aim at, say, "the elimination of violence", the latter recognises the impossibility of this task and focuses on human encounters with it across different stages of its formations. This impossibility stems from the extension of the definition of violence from the physical realm to a more conceptual one, which expands its scope and traces its existence in less highlighted forms. This study

aligns with the latter approach and using an understanding of violence beyond the pre-existing frameworks of the likes of (chiefly) armed physical conflict. It further aims to propose a time-based approach integrated with the biopolitical framework in order to trace the temporal factors in violence's transformations.

While it is impossible to completely eliminate violence due to its extraordinary ontological complexity, one should be equally wary of extending its scope to negate anything that is not pleasant for the human experience. Even though the negation of pleasantness can be violent, violence *per se* does not necessarily equate to it.
A second aspect to consider while analysing violence is its use for defining another concept. To give an example, cultural theorist Paul Virilio states: 'Speed is violence.'[1] Other approaches include defining the likes of language, media and capitalism as being inherently violent. It is argued here that such analogies cover the necessary groundwork to conceptualise the *workings* of violence, but are not in themselves enough to provide definitions of their own accord. Aspects of violence found in other concepts and processes do not mean that violence transforms these to become one with itself, like a mythical embodiment of the evil in the person it touches upon.

On the other end of the spectrum lies the complete separation of violence from what it relates to in order to justify its legitimisation and legalisation. A prime example for this is the waging of wars in the 21st century in the name of "democracy". A blend of sovereign and biopolitical violence countered with the opposite forces of protest marks the early histories of the 21st century, a practice that has regional characteristics.

The questions around regionality emerge in tandem with the umbrella definitions of violence and the nature of its pervasiveness. If violence cannot be explained via the rigid structures of its physical and overt confines, then as a human experience, it should have universal characteristics embedded in it (for example, capitalist violence). Inquiries into

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[1] Paul Virilio, *Pure War* (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2008), 37. 'In technical terms, speed is a transfer of energy. We can summarize this in two words: "stability-movement" and "movement-of-movement." Stability: I don't move, I am still. Movement-movement: I am in motion. I speed up: movement-of-movement. The passage from "movement" to "movement-of-movement" is a transfer of energy, what we also call an "accident of transfer." Once you start thinking in terms of energy, the problem of violence is immediately present.' Virilio, *Pure War*, 38-39.

what constitutes, surrounds, defines, and characterises violence collide with the regional characteristics in its biopolitical facets. Even though the Mediterranean is the geographical space where the selected artworks for this study are produced, hence the confines of the study are to a large extent spatial, the focus on violence in its different formations that are ordered in terms of the scale of the body upon/through which it is inflicted in the four case studies is ultimately temporal. Thus, what will follow will look into the contribution of media artworks from the region to larger discussions on violence, particularly its pervasive nature on a large scale such as on the environment while at the same time inquiring into the roots of how it is constituted across agents at a micro level through biopolitical means and tools.

Among all the possible variables for a thematic thread that bind together cases on violence from the considerable corpus of media art from the Mediterranean region, contemporary networks emerged as the most suitable for this research due to their fundamentally biopolitical nature that is highly reliant on time. This goes in line with the emergence of the Mediterranean region that has historically been through formations of networks such as maritime routes, trade and migrations.

The question of the existence of the Mediterranean has been an oft-debated issue, especially in the discipline of history.[2] The Mediterranean's persistent existence and comeback in scholarly literature mirrors the dynamism of its borders impossible to designate. The Mediterranean presents not only geographical but also conceptual challenges by encouraging a non-conventional point of view of nation-states as our century's reality inherited from the previous one. If this research were about media art from a particular nation-state, its borders and limits would not be subject to such a close scrutiny as to what the geographical area meant. Nonetheless, the formations of that geographical area, albeit a product of historical processes, would be to a certain extent still arbitrary and time-based.

The problems that the Mediterranean poses present both a microcosm of the deep global political formations and a reminder that the superfluous use of the term globalisation

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[2] Some of these are discussed in this study in the contextual section on the Mediterranean that follows the case studies.

may at times tend to overlook the inheritance from the nation-state realities. One should clarify, however, that the positioning of the Mediterranean region for a discussion on formations and transformations of violence does not aim to perpetuate a nostalgic empire (such as the Ottoman Empire that ruled the basin until the beginning of the 20th century) or a Euro-centric political union stance. Rather, the area is treated as a sampling of how contemporary artistic relations bring forth a question of public media art space that is informed by the questions of political violence in the region. However, these relations within the public media art space are neither aimed to prove the perpetual existence of victimhood in the face of oppressive regimes nor a utopia at the supra-nationalist level. The aim is to investigate the manifestation of political violence within its specific formations in the region as reflected in examples of media art and what these offer for the discussions about the contemporary networked nature of the biopolitical violence.

Violence and mediation processes are intricately related. It could be argued that like mediation,[3] violence is the by-product of an encounter and a relation. This is not only due to the violent nature of mediation, puncturing the boundaries between at least two sides but also due to the relationships of both processes with the external factors that they are reliant on in order to operate. Mediation of violence in the context of art may manifest itself through the medium, the potential self-reflexive nature of the artwork, the artists' political positioning as well as the existing artistic traditions.

As a practice to a large extent reliant on the technologies, contemporary new media art shows uneven patterns across the world and the Mediterranean region, an attribute also to be found in networks of artwork dissemination and visibility. As a practice whose archival possibilities are still being investigated, the study of media art from the region has been challenging in the sense that connectedness and fragility are in constant interplay in terms of violence within biopolitical space and time.

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[3] The terms "mediation" and "communication" here are distinguished on the basis of Sean Cubitt's distinction between the two whereby communication is a specific form of mediation. This is further explained in the literature review. Also see: Sean Cubitt, "Thinking filming thinking filming," *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 1 (2009), https://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v1i0.2122.

The selection of specific types of media art for this study has been informed by their networked character and possibilities they offer to examine temporal as well as spatial dimensions of political violence. Experiencing media art in the present time is reliant on factors – display screens, processing powers, coding platforms, to name a few. These components and the like bring forth unpredictable and uneven possibilities of production, display and dissemination.[4]

Such can be said for violence as well: temporal, selectively visible and transformative. Nonetheless, violence is embodied in metaphorical "archives" of human and non-human entities. Violent histories are written over human bodies (work suicides, occupational hazards, rape, domestic violence, gendered violence, psychological repercussions, military violence, intra-gang violence, etc.), over cities (destruction, demolition, damage, chemical fallouts), geographical formations (natural catastrophes informed by human activities, dead bodies beneath the Mediterranean and other oceans) and nature at large (violence towards environment in general). All of these effects are staged and spread across time, and the timing of their spread and legacies are what count towards our contemporary biopolitical realities.

Within this context, the idea of the Mediterranean is situated as a medium rather than a mere geographical entity. The physical aspects of the sea and the natural components that encircle it give the medium its characteristics: separating while at the same time connecting, unifying while fragmenting, enabling while hindering flow, and being congenial while encapsulating violence. Its malleability and simultaneous shapelessness do not embody a contradiction, but a structure through which differences find their paths. Mediterranean as a medium mediates both spatial topographies of networks and temporal realities of violence by going through changes over its longue durée. As such, I believe it gives an outstanding opportunity to move from the confines of historically defined fatherlands better known as nation-states today to a transversal approach for illustrating

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[4] When it comes to contemporary media in general, discourse about it often revolves around an idea of the future. Compact and accessible, media are presented to be the lead actors in bringing the future to the present. What is the reason behind the attraction to reversing the temporal relations of the future and the present? Does an attribute of the future not become present when it is presented now but not in the future? The answer, albeit context-dependent, tends to be based on speciality – a speciality that signals potential desirability by large masses of people in the future. In that sense, the promise of the future is seldom about the future experience; it is about present commodification (f)or future exploitation.

mediation as embodied within the sea and its surroundings. The resulting structure is not a familiar domain composed of strict structures, but a rich source for observation on how to expand the scope of media to encompass non-conventional typologies.

1.1. The Structure of the Thesis

The very first questions that arose after a critical analysis of the notion of violence had to do with challenging the norms in relation to often taken-for-granted structures, specifically those around legality and legitimacy. Therefore, the research developed into an inquiry into preconceptions, whether these are about violence or regionality. Biopolitics as the structural backbone of the theoretical framework in this sense is outside of this concern for challenging as, unlike the former two, it is an inquiry at the analytical level rather than the definitive level. This is to say, the problematisation of violence and regionality are necessary elements to set out the research while a definition of biopolitics[5] does not serve the purposes of this groundwork.

The methods section lays out the bases for the selection of the four case studies and their ordering according to the physical scale that they cover, from a cellular level to bird's eye view. The rationale and criteria behind the choice of specific artwork cases in terms of their relationship to the idea of networks and violence are explained. Example models for scaling violence are critically analysed in order to justify the reasons behind the understanding of violence that lies at the basis of the whole research. Sean Cubitt's anecdotal evidence method[6] is advocated against statistical methods that fail to engage with singular textual encounters.

The literature review includes first a discussion of violence in relation to notions such as class, colonialism, race, and the relationship between media, language and symbolic violence. The second part is about sovereignity and the theoretical framework of biopolitics. Biopolitics is read in relation to the concepts of belonging and ownership,

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[5] This is not to say that biopolitics is taken as an all inclusive recipe for analysis, hence a contextual section on the problematics of some of theories of biopolitics.
[6] Sean Cubitt, "Anectodal Evidence," *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies* (2013), http://www.necsus-ejms.org/anecdotal-evidence/#_edn1.

which is hoped to contribute to biopolitical discussions at large. These concepts' specificity lies in their potential to be versatile in relation to the regionality in question. The challenges of outlining debates on Mediterranean's regionality vis-à-vis the biopolitics' regionality itself have required a double-layered approach. Within the remit of this study, it is hoped that these are achieved through the treatment of case studies. Due to the nature of the some of the artworks analysed, the formulation of necropolitics by Achille Mbembe and the immunity/community divide by Roberto Esposito have been given particular emphasis in this section. The third part of the literature review is about media art and networks, and how these are treated in the specific context of the Mediterranean.

The four case studies are ordered from micro to macro scale in terms of the size of the body violence is inflicted on or operates through. Besides textual analysis, the selected artworks' potential to contribute to the discussion of biopolitics of violence from the region are explicated. The artworks are at times used as springboards in order to delve into larger theoretical considerations where they are considered important political indicators.

Conclusions incorporate a contextual section that emerge from the case studies, mainly focusing on the idea of the Mediterranean, what it means from a contemporary media point of view, and what are the implications of these meanings for an extended study of violence. This section is structured departing from the dialectical opposition between connection and separation, and how these manifest themselves in the contemporary role of the Mediterranean.

Conceptually, this goes inline with the biopolitical violence's operations through interplays of exclusion and inclusion. The violence of exclusion may surface in denial of access to resources, or of movement. The violence of inclusion, on the other hand, imposes violence through the circumstances under which it is included, such as in the case of war. The historical processes by which exclusion and inclusion work culminate in a temporality that becomes a central factor in the operations of violence. The inclusion and exclusion dichotomy inevitably leads to spatial borders as entities that generate, feed into, and get fed by various mobility regimes.

Iain Chambers's *Migrancy, Culture, Identity* (1994) –which precedes his *Mediterranean Crossings* (2007)— begins the story of migration with the challenge and incompleteness of translation, a feeling of loss, being elsewhere, and otherness.[7] Chambers speaks of a violence of alterity, 'of other worlds, languages and identities, and there finally discover my dwelling to be sustained across encounters, dialogues and clashes with other histories, other places, other people.'[8] He conveys the notion of writing about this otherness as a way to take back to the centre the violence that laid the foundations to the construction of the world he is speaking from. The question of translation of abstractions into images and mediation of thought processes involved in between surely occupies stages of encounter with alterity. The colonial histories, and histories of exploitation and violence Chambers refers to in the making of the new world order is, nonetheless, is getting more complex, precisely due to the question of networks and what they introduce into the dialogue of the in between.

Borders not only pose problems of inclusion/exclusion. They pose major challenges for regionality in general and the regionality of biopolitics in particular. These concerns have been addressed through the case studies. How do viral and human movement, urban transformation, and trade networks form a dialogue with the political as well as the social realities of time? To answer is challenging, for the mere reason that the focus on time itself, and the speed of transformations, of mediation processes, and violent eruptions are factors within which distinct biopolitics from the region manifests itself.

The conclusion seeks to situate the idea of the Mediterranean in a 21st century context and addresses what the case studies tell us about the existence of a public media art space from the region. It also proposes what the theoretical backbone of biopolitical violence may potentially offer in terms of a further study of violence not only through its intensity, but also through its temporality.

Even though this study tackles questions that surround the idea of violence and the implications of those, it does not focus on the kind of violence that is presented by the

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[7] Iain Chambers, "An Impossible Homecoming," in *Migrancy, Culture, Identity* (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 1994), 1-8.
[8] Ibid.

media themselves. This does not have to do with a hierarchical reasoning whereby certain forms of violence are deemed to be lesser than the others, but with the focus of the study based on regional problematics. This study also does not consider the audience reception of the artworks as such a kind of research would be more suited to an ethnographic approach, which is not adopted here.

The apotheosis of the visibility of violence is where its mediation becomes visible. The way mediation of violence and politics of visibility feed into each other is biopolitical. If there was one metaphor that I had to use explain this research, I would pick the dark bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, where the network cables and the dead bodies of immigrants lie.

2. Methods

2.1. Methods Overview

Despite the high number of cases of overt political violence in the Mediterranean and the richness of media art in the region, there has been no comprehensive research about political violence and media art production in the Mediterranean. Departing from the question of networks in media art from the Mediterranean, this research poses the question of a possibility of a public media art scene in the region. It conducts case studies whose common focus is on the networks of relations that reproduce, strengthen, and reinforce models of political violence at various levels of visibility.

Any claim about regional definitions is a problematic one, and the Mediterranean case is no exception.[9] The question of the possibility of a public media art scene in the Mediterranean is an attempt to capture the historical formation of the media art since the beginning of the 21st century in a transnational context that offers variety in both violence and artistic reactions to it. The 21st century saw the Arab uprisings in 2011 just before the Gezi Parkı protests in Turkey in 2013 and the utopian rise of Podemas in Spain and Syriza

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[9] Please see the literature review chapter for a brief discussion on the Mediterranean context as found across (especially historical) literature. This will be further elaborated on in the first part of conclusions.

in Greece in 2015 as well as the crises of all of these, making the Mediterranean a critical focus. In this sense, the dynamic formations and re-formations of the Mediterranean could be considered as an advantageous challenge since these are studied through the central question of connectivity and networks through media art, which mark a regional section of the wider question. What are the conditions of violence in the networks of the Mediterranean? How does it constitute the region as problematic?

Four case studies conducted for this research are *Biennale.py* (2001) by Eva and Franco Mattes (with hackers group Epidemic), *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011) by Bouchra Khalili, *Networks of Dispossession* (2013) by Burak Arıkan et al. and *The Zone* (2011) by Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme. Each case study works to highlight one particular aspect of the networked and biopolitical nature of violence as manifested through media art from the region. The artworks are selected based on the production place being within the Mediterranean rim rather than the nationalities of the artists.

The main focuses of the four case studies are evenly distributed: For computer virus *Biennale.py* (2001) and the data visualisation project *Networks of Dispossession* (2013), computational networks are also an essential component of the physical structures of the artworks. For the video installations on illegal immigrants' journeys *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011) and Palestinian consumption networks *The Zone* (2011), networks mark the physical correlations that substitute, improve or aggrandise the effects of violence through overt and covert means.[10]

Each case study works to develop a partial understanding of artistic responses in relation to the epistemological questions on violence and networks. It is expected that these case studies will give contradictory answers to the questions, which will be discussed later in the study in a contextual section on the Mediterranean that will emerge from the case studies.

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[10] That being said, these two separate focuses are osmotic due to the inseparability of the themes of violence and the presence of networks in these works. For example, even though *The Zone* does not openly discuss networks as *Networks of Dispossession* does, it still operates via networks and implies networked relations.

The analysed artworks are selected from a series of works collected from artists' websites, online archives and databases, artists, curators, and other cultural operators, where needed. There is one challenge to the collection of data for this research, stemming from both the difficulties with the archiving of the media art in general and the lack of online and physical archives dedicated to the digital/media art in the Mediterranean region in particular. This challenge has been partly overcome by individually reaching out to the artists and curators operating in the area[11] in order to inquire about their work and obtain documentation of the work where applicable. The material for the research includes digital copies of artworks as well as artwork documentations, where applicable. The artwork review has been simultaneously carried out with research on the numerical data on overt political violence, collected from various databases.[12]

The four case studies selected for this research reveal networks of political violence from the micro level to macro level. "Micro" and "macro" here does not refer to the severity of the kinds of violence analysed but rather, on the scope of the body that is thematised.

The case studies will be on four works that give a:

- Microscopic view of a computer virus,
- Life-size view of an individual human body,
- Landscape view of urban transformation,
- Bird's eye view of occupation, consumption and destruction.

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[11] In 2011, I was the Conference and Programme Director of the 17th International Symposium on Electronic Art (ISEA2011) in Istanbul, a major international nomadic media art festival with a conference and an exhibition component. One of the forums we organised as part of this the Southern Mediterranean Forum. For my research, I requested data from artists, curators, forum participants, and collaborators from the region. Also see: ISEA2011 Istanbul, "Revolutions in the Digital Mediterranean: The Southern Mediterranean Forum," http://isea2011.sabanciuniv.edu/other-event/revolutions-digital-mediterranean-southern-mediterranean-forum (accessed September 2017).

[12] Key data sources include international bodies such as World Health Organisation reports of United Nations, The World Bank Datasets on Conflict and Violence, Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP).

These four different viewpoints are used to describe the physical scale of the artworks' thematic focus in their involvement with networks.[13] The methodological contribution of conducting case studies lies in the fact that each case can highlight networked patterns of political violence and imagination of the Mediterranean while at the same time enabling a deeper analysis of networked biopolitics discussed in the literature review and the contextual chapter that precedes the case studies.

The artworks in the case studies are analysed through anecdotal evidence, a technique that emphasises the grounding of specific kind of information not necessarily through statistical, causal, and expert evidence methods, but rather, through its unique specificity. In proposing anecdotal evidence as an alternative method to students, Sean Cubitt emphasises this uniqueness in its nature.

> The anecdote has been nurtured in the disciplinary field known as the humanities for more than a century. Its principle is that the unique instance can teach researchers as much as statistical samples or those abstractions that arrive either as axioms (there exists an X such that…) or hypotheses, maps or diagrams. The word 'unique' requires stressing. The core of the anecdote is not its typicality but its specificity; its ur-text is Clifford Geertz's *Thick Description* (1973) but its history includes the tradition of close reading.[14]

This form of close reading, according to Cubitt, can employ other tools of analysis. Anecdotes can be employed to test 'large hypotheses against the unique qualities of artworks and experiences. The anecdotal method does not abandon the project of making statements about larger, more abstract formations like 'society' or 'cinema' – it grounds them in the specific instance.'[15]

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[13] It is indeed argued here that it is not possible to give a general ranking on the severity of violence without contextualising it since violence embeds different forms of dynamics. Please see the section on model for definition of violence in this chapter.

[14] Sean Cubitt, "Anectodal Evidence," *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies* (2013), http://www.necsus-ejms.org/anecdotal-evidence/#_edn1 (accessed October 2016).

[15] Ibid.

This approach is a more expanded understanding of anecdotal evidence; contrary to other approaches by communications scholars who, comparing statistical, anecdotal, causal, expert evidence, or combinations through statistical means, concluded it was a less effective method of persuasion compared to others such as statistical and causal evidence.[16] In the context of the way anecdotal evidence is framed in this study, this approach is problematic in the sense that it employs the tools of one method (i.e. statistics) in comparing that very same method against others.[17] The anecdotal method in its expanded form as Cubitt frames it will not only allow a study departing from particularities of the artworks, but will also implicitly acknowledge the inevitable subjective standpoint of the researcher conducting research about the themes of connectivity in media art with regards to political violence.

This study takes up each individual case of the artwork, and provides a framework for a close reading of each study based on the material at hand has been treated. '[I]f we are to gain the most from an anecdote we require the maximum of data that it can yield.'[18] In the case of video works, for example, this at times involves scene breakdowns and an interpretation of how each scene is related to each other as well as to the political realities of the context they are produced in. In the case of data networks, this is through looking at the infrastructures of the custom-made platform upon which the artwork is created. These enable a partial understanding and an analysis of aspects of the production process of the artwork.

Content analysis methods for videos previously have involved development of computer programs to facilitate the coding of data about various variables of videos' technical aspects.[19] While it is a useful way to create and manage numeric data, it does not yield to much analysis in this type of research. Therefore, the emphases on numbers for this

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[16] Josh Hornikx, "A review of experimental research on the relative persuasiveness of anecdotal, statistical, causal, and expert evidence," *Studies in Communication Sciences* 5, no: 1 (2005): 205-216.

[17] This holds true even when anecdotal evidence is found to be more effective than others, such as in case studies. For a study with Educational Studies perspective, see: Thomas R. Koballa JR., "Persuading teachers to reexamine the innovative elementary science programs of yesterday: The effect of anecdotal versus data-summary communications," *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 23, no. 5 (1986): 437-449, http://doi.org/10.1002/tea.3660230506.

[18] Sean Cubitt, "Anectodal Evidence."

[19] I am specifically referring to: Robert Tiemens, "A Content Analysis of Political Speeches on Television," in *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods and Media*, ed. Kenneth L. Smith (London: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 385-404.

study are restricted to those providing a content analysis for the possible methods of dealing with the subject matter. The departing point, therefore, is the anecdotal evidence with an acknowledgement of the subjectivity of much of the analyses, and the visual analyses, where applicable, are supported with data gathered on the artworks in question.

The Mediterranean has not been a fixed quantity but is constantly reformulated as "imagination." Statistical knowledge, based on existing imagination, reproduces the existing Mediterranean. The contemporary construction of the Mediterranean is typically violent, marked with wars, ethnic and religious conflicts, problems surrounding immigration (such as people smugglers, epidemics, and related social crises), and economic crises. Therefore, even though Cubitt's anecdotal method is an alternative to statistical "god's eye view" panoramas, it is restricted to encounters with single texts or events. This study aims to extend this method by working to connect the encounters and texts selected. The selection from a larger corpus of media art is based on the author's prior curatorial experience and collaborative work. As methods inspired from curatorial experience are applied to the selection of the cases for the research, curation has partially become the method. This methodological adoption is situated between selecting (from a larger corpus of media art) and curating for a physical or online exhibition in the sense that the way the cases connect to each other and highlight different aspects of the media art experience from the region.

2.2. Research Questions

With a view to understand how media art responds to and is shaped by the circumstances of the Mediterranean and how this plays a role in imagination of the region, this study poses the following questions:

How does the networked nature of political violence manifest itself in media art from the Mediterranean region in varying scales starting from microscopic to larger landscapes since the beginning of 21st century?

How do (media) artists in the Mediterranean engage with the overt forms of political violence and make visible the covert forms of political violence through looking at networks?

Can one talk about a 21st century Mediterranean public media art space? If so, how is the imagination of the region marked with networks of political violence?

What does the Mediterranean offer for a study on the temporal aspects of violence if it is considered as a medium rather than a geographical entity only?

2.3. Basis for the Selection of Case Studies

2.3.1. Model for the Definition of Political Violence

The literature on political violence and the methods employed for its study show that there is a clear methodological dilemma of the concept's scope. If every human act encompasses one form of violence or another, and if the current political and economic structures that surround humans are violent by their nature, then what would be the parameters for a study of political violence and art to identify cases of violence? If the research considered the concept's physical aspects only, would it not merely reduce it to overt forms of damage, excluding the very subtleties upon which many practices of violence rest? If, instead, to avoid facing this problem the research considered all of the covert forms of violence deemed to have woven to the fabric of political realities, then how would the types of relationalities have an impact on the rationale for selection?

One of the most comprehensive works on the methodologies adopted while studying political violence is Willem Schinkel's book *Aspects of Violence: A Critical Theory* (2010). Departing from epistemological definitions of violence as found in different social science studies, Schinkel proposes that these definitions mostly leave out one aspect of violence or the other, most commonly the non-physical ones.[20]

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[20] Willem Schinkel, *Aspects of Violence: A Critical Theory* (Basingstoke; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Schinkel points out three ways of defining violence found in existing literature on violence. The first is purpose-oriented for conducting a particular empirical research. He adds this strategy is useful in conducting a specific research project but cannot take on a universal form. The second strategy is to work with the number of violent cases based on an implicit understanding of violence, such as that implied in definitions of criminal violence. He points out to three disadvantages with this strategy: 1) it neglects non-physical violence; 2) it neglects forms of violence other than non-legitimate violence; 3) it neglects the productive power of violence.[21] The third strategy used in the study of violence is to proceed with a non-definition, basing the research on commonsensical notion of what could be counted as violence.[22]

Following the shortcomings of each approach[23], Schinkel sets out to come up with an ontological definition of violence that would embrace diverse forms such as non-physical or legitimate violence while at the same time providing a framework to understand why certain forms of violence are highlighted more than others. He concludes: '*Violence is precisely that aspect of human interaction which consists of a reduction of being, of selection of ontological aspects and simultaneous non-selection of others.*'[24] Therefore, violence is a reduction of being and it is 'relatively little present in interaction so long as the interacting actors are prepared to "change the aspect" of the other.'[25] When the "change of aspect of

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[21] Schinkel instead emphasises its productive potential. He argues 'the destructivenes of violence is but one aspect of violence' and 'destructiveness and productivity are not mutually exclusive, but rather observer-relative. The most obvious example of this is the inter-state violence of war. War destroys as well as produces, establishes.' Ibid. 80. Although Schinkel criticises the humanistic tradition of focusing on the destructive aspects of violence as a negative phenomenon, it is also important to make a qualitative distinction between what war destroys and what it produces, when it comes to explain the productivity of violence. Schinkel may be right in criticising Paul Ricoeur's claim that 'violence is the last resort once the communication has failed' (see: Paul Ricoeur, "Violence et langage," *Recherches et Débats: La Violence* 16, no 9 (1967): 87 quoted in Schinkel, *Aspects of Violence*). However, it is yet another issue to assess such a phenomenon as war on the basis of the positive aspect of violence.

[22] Schinkel, *Aspects of Violence*, 33-34.

[23] Schinkel indeed cites Johan Galtung's extended definition of violence as "the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual" has overcome many of the problems found in empirical definitions. However, he criticises some aspects of Galtung's concept of violence because 1) it poses a hierarchy between a lower actual and a higher potential 2) it bases "potential realisation" on consensual basis, i.e. on what is valued in a particular context 3) it talks about avoiding the difference between the potential and the actual, which means there has to be a subject present all the time 4) considers violence as avoidable. See: Schinkel, *Aspects of Violence: A Critical Theory*, 41-43.

[24] Schinkel, *Aspects of Violence*, 49. Emphases belong to the original text.

[25] Ibid., 51.

the other" is reduced more, violence is more highlighted. Therefore, in a social interaction, violence still exists, but it is less highlighted when the actors perceive each other according to a particular role and are open to do otherwise. If one person kills another, then the possibility of "change of aspect" is reduced to none, therefore, violence is the most highlighted. This definition accepts that our everyday lives are permeated with violence and its visibility can be somehow measured.

Schinkel's elaborate definition of violence has two problematic aspects. The first one is about the measurement of violence. He says: 'The ontological definition of violence regards it as a *sliding scale*: violence is as severe as the reduction of an ontological horizon that entails a reduction of the possibility of changing the aspect within that horizon. Therefore, to call someone a name constitutes a lesser violence than to throw sticks and stones at him or her.'[26] Although this may be a useful guide for relatively simple acts of interpersonal violence, it is not always possible to come up with straightforward comparisons regarding the degree of covert or structural violence as it is experienced from a particular historical standpoint operating within a set of political, legal, and economic norms. Indeed, Schinkel himself emphasises elsewhere in his book that one cannot rank violence according to its severity, but the "sliding scale" that he proposes contradicts that idea. Secondly, Schinkel proposes that intentional violence is more severe than unintentional violence and he points to the fact that one cannot include structural violence when talking about intentionality. Also, he mentions that structural violence that is avoidable is more severe than structural violence that is not avoidable. This is another problematic point whereby the conditions of avoiding a particular form of violence are dependent on the structure itself. The destruction of a particular structure would allow avoiding a form of violence that would have otherwise been described as unavoidable.

These two points pose questions about Schinkel's quest to create a social scientific categorisation of the severity of violence. However, his idea of "violence as reduction of being" is by far the most comprehensive account of violence and includes a consistent methodological approach for pinpointing overt and covert as well as legitimate and

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[26] Ibid., 70. Emphases belong to the original text.

illegitimate forms of violence. His distinction between the more and less highlighted[27] forms of violence according to the degree of reduction of being will be adopted here to mark different cases of violence. However, his conceptualisation about the degree of severity of violence is not going to be reflected in the selection of cases.

This research suggests the term "latent violence" to describe that aspect of any given case of violence that connects it to other different forms of violence preceding it. This may be in terms of the form of the violence, e.g. the military violence constructing a particular form of masculinity that feeds into domestic violence. Essentially, however, the bond between these different forms of violence is not necessarily openly causal, but always temporal: quite often one event, an event of violence, or an invisible form of violence leads to another form of violence that may be visible, invisible, or an event in itself.[28]

The aim of introducing the concept of latent violence is to bring together the oppositional categories of violence that are found across the literature and how they interact. The main categories of violence, albeit worded differently by different theorists, are those that relate to an opposition between subjective and systemic, physical and symbolic, overt and covert, legitimate and legal, abrupt and slow. What this study proposes is that it is not sufficient to make categorical distinctions about types of violence. Rather, it is necessary to formulate ways in which these different types work to sustain political violence's functioning. In this respect, latent violence proposes to analyse a given case of violence (whether it be on the personal or collective level) and see the more straightforward or peripheral levels of other forms of violence that feed into it. Violence transforms, evolves, and operates through visible and less visible ways to survive in human systems. In this respect, the theme of networks is a most relevant one to see the nodes and connections of violence as manifested in art.

Latent violence embeds in itself a potential, in the sense of "potentia" that Hannah Arendt talks about in her book *The Human Condition* (1958). Potentia 'indicates its

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[27] "Highlighted" is the adjective used by Schinkel himself to describe those cases of violence which stands out more and visible to the observer.

[28] It is also possible to reverse the temporal relation and look how the political violence of today can effect the perceptions of the past. As historian Fernand Braudel said: "Past and present illuminate each other reciprocally," and thus, violence on the past is a legitimate concept albeit outside of the confines of this study.

[power's] "potential" character. Power is always, as we would say, a power potential and not an unchangeable, measurable, and reliable entity like force or strength."[29] In a similar vein, latent violence could be described as a kind of violence that in itself carries the potentia that transforms into a particular form of violence among all the other potential types of violence that it could have resulted in.

The relationship between different forms of violence in terms of their latent effects cannot be formulated without taking into consideration the particular cases of violence in question. Latent violence may become visible immediately, or after a delay. It may come as a response to an original set of violent events or it may be a repetition of them. It may assume the same form of violence as the original violent event, or can come in different forms. It may surface as an identifiable event (in the sense that it could be pictured in the image of an event) or it may be something more general or structural. The nature and manifestations of latent violence is highly dependent on everyday situations, larger structural concerns, and symbolic communications.

As the connectivity of violence is evident and temporal, it has been imperative to mark a boundary around the description of what constitutes political violence for the purposes of this research.

1) The political violence that is analysed in this research is *a form of networked violence that may have both physical and non-physical aspects*. These aspects feed into each other in a temporal manner, which defines the term latent violence. There may be causality between the symbolic and physical, overt and covert forms of violence in any given case of networked violence. The study recognises various forms of political violence exist, and not all of them are equal in terms of their impact at any given time. This is to say, symbolic violence may be less harmful on a human body at the time it has been executed than physical violence that leads to death (nonetheless, sometimes symbolic violence leads to death, too). However, this study is primarily interested not in a ranking in the severity of violence at any given case, but rather, in how media arts from the Mediterranean region

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[29] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 200.

make visible the more covert forms of violence, whether physical or non-physical, and unravel the networked nature of violence via a discussion of networks.

2) This research is concerned with conceptions of networked political violence exercised on humans by humans. Thus, for example, although a particular case of violence on animals may be exercised by political motivations, it will not constitute part of this research. Nonetheless, this does not mean human life is isolated from its natural being or surroundings since networked violence is part of one of the most comprehensive of all types of violence: slow violence (in Rob Nixon's terms) on the environment.

3) This research deals with both legitimate and non-legitimate forms of political violence. The word legitimacy is taken in its broader sense, i.e. both constituting what law allows, hence legal and legitimate, and what is acceptable by norms created on political, social, and economic bases.

4) The violence on one-to-one personal level will not be covered in the scope of this thesis even though personal violence is most of the time informed by political circumstances (as the feminist movement has taught us the personal is political). Manifestations of overt and covert forms of interpersonal violence in art will not be traced on an individual level but on a collective level where the personal operates at the political terrain. There are two reasons for the improbability of analysing cases of individual violence with the attention they deserve: a) It may not be possible to fully trace how symbolic power works although it is quite often intertwined in political dynamics. For example, a person may be obliged to feel "inferior" to the other because of the constructed values associated on macro level with nationality, gender, race, class, etc. (most of the time through combinations of these factors) and on a micro level with education (which could be either as a result of a class positioning or simply a demonstration of "intelligence" accepted as given by "nature"), physical appearance, etc. All of these social constructions operate and feed into each other in complex ways and are experienced by persons. The focus of analysis in this research, however, is rather based on textual materials rather than experiences or feelings of persons that are the subjects of these. b) An analysis of violence on a personal domain would require some critical insight into psychological or possibly psychoanalytical dimensions at the

conscious and subconscious levels. However, the scope of this research does not cover an analysis of violence on that level.

These sets of criteria, which surround the conception of violence, work to define the scope of the present research. However, they also map an area within which a lot of other forms of political violence happen —whether they are legitimate or illegitimate, visible or invisible. Therefore, a very important task of the researcher is to be aware of the social constructions by which an understanding of political violence is shaped. For example, one may consider the hypothetical case of workers who, fired from a factory because they are protesting against their pay, riot and cause physical harm to the factory. One has to think about this in different layers: a) The fact that the workers are exploited would not be considered as an act of political violence by legitimate standards because it is the duty of the factory owner to deliver goods to the market regardless of the circumstances under which they are produced. Therefore, although the exploitation of workers is a form of violence and it is certainly a political act through its relations with the market, its legitimacy shadows its conception as violence. b) The factory may have the legal right to fire the workers who protest and they use this right, which would, again, not be considered as violence although it does visible economic and psychological damage to the lives of the workers. c) The fact that the workers cause physical damage to the property of the factory, though, will constitute an act of political violence because it disrupts the "normal" course of the production process.

Examples such as this can easily be found in other realms of life, e.g. violence based on gender, religion, race, and ethnicity. Different forms of violence targeting any of these identities are layered over different psychological, social, political, and economic terrains. What makes power relations within acts of political violence more complex is the combination of different forms of violence and their prioritisation in the realm of visibility. To give an example, in 1942, "wealth tax" was introduced in Turkey. Officially it was declared that the aim of this tax was to accumulate money for the crisis brought about by WWII. On the other hand, the real aim of the tax was to ensure a change in the ownership of the capital in Turkey since the minority property holders were taxed in such high amounts that many of them had to end their businesses and were exiled to Anatolia, where

some of them died. One can identify several visible practices of violence here by saying it is an instance of biopolitical state violence[30] and structural economic violence based on ethnicity. The more invisible part is the inherent violence that the property brings with it (even before it changed owners, i.e. when it belonged to members of minorities in this case) and the symbolic violence upon those who did not have that very property.

Therefore, these examples of violence have to be read in light of different political and historical assumptions. This research will be about how the existence of networks in political violence within the set criteria above manifests itself in the digital/media and video artworks, with a critical view on the legitimacy of the violence exercised.

The overt, more highlighted forms of political violence that are studied in this research are: war, conflict, institutional and state violence, torture, collective discrimination, terrorism, rebellions, non-state armed struggle, and one-sided violence. These exclude interpersonal violence even though a political background may inform them. The case studies aim to demonstrate how media art makes visible less highlighted forms of political violence as well as researching how media art displays more highlighted forms of violence. There are three reasons for this approach: Firstly, embracing a broader, ontological definition of violence will avoid reducing violence to illegitimate physical harm and help to analyse how it operates at various other levels, which will enrich the literature on political violence. Secondly, it will help to avoid falling into the trap of portraying the Mediterranean as a region with many political conflicts in a limited way, divided between the active agents of political violence, e.g. states, religious and paramilitary groups, etc., and the passive "victims" of violence when the dynamics of political violence and the region are more complicated than this dichotomy. Thirdly, it will place emphasis on the role and use of media in the process of making less highlighted forms of violence more highlighted, thus emphasising the potentialities and productive aspects of media in this specific context.

2.4. Cases

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[30] The notion of biopolitics is further discussed in the literature review.

The cases are selected to present a variety, both in terms of aesthetics and the media used.[31] When issues about political violence, trauma, and pain in relation to media and imagery are considered, there is a tendency to talk about dramatic images. It has been a conscious choice to avoid choosing artworks that create a shock effect through imagery of pain as case studies. There are three reasons for this: one is related to an attempt to highlight various forms of political violence that are not necessarily visible. The second reason is to show the productive potentials of media art in encountering violence via making use of the idea of networks in bringing visibility to various forms of violence. The third is related to the use of the medium: the nodes of networks and potentials of new media art spreading from a region, whose modernity has not been sufficiently discussed, in the 21st century.

2.4.1. Case 1: *Biennale.py* (2001)

'Computer viruses or self-reproducing programs behave according to the same modus operandi of biological viruses: they attack an "organism", that is a file, sometimes to settle and install their own habitat, and in other more rare cases, to destroy it.'[32]

The first case study for this research is *Biennale.py* (2001) a computer virus created for the Python environment by artists Eva and Franco Mattes (as a collaboration between 0100101110101101.ORG and [epidemiC]).[33] *Biennale.py* was disseminated from and exhibited at the Slovenian Pavilion in the 49th Venice Biennale in 2001. The artists see their artworks as a statement against global powers.

The creation of a virus tout court, free and without an end or a goal, is in the worst case a test, a survey on the limits of the Net, but in the best case is a form of global

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[31] The cases for this research are not based on their potential to represent the media art production in the Mediterranean region. Therefore, the thesis does not aim to present an overview of media arts and political violence in the area by taking one case from the Balkans and Europe, one from the Middle East, one from North Africa. Rather, the cases are selected according to the scale of the area that they cover (i.e. microscopic level, human body, city landscape, etc.)

[32] [epidemiC], "Press Release, June 1st 2001," [epidemiC] official website, http://epidemic.ws/prelease.txt (accessed September 2017).

[33] Eva and Franco Mattes, "Biennale.py (2001)," http://0100101110101101.org/biennale-py/ (accessed September 2017).

counterpower, generally a pre-political form, but that resists the strong powers, it puts them under a new balance, it shakes and reassembles them. A new idea of a "virus that is not just a virus" is gaining acceptance, and that it can represent the outbreak of the social into the most social thing of all: the Net.[34]

Biennale.py is selected as a case study for this research because among the media artworks that fell into the scope of this research, it has been the earliest artwork made with computer virus, which makes it unique in providing a variety of points of view when talking about violence as revealed at a microscopic level. It is also selected as the first case study not only because of the scale of the body through which it puts into question the power structures, but also because of the emphasis on the use of media as a tool that conveys political messages. It discusses and problematises the contemporary dynamics of networks, opening up debates about the dissemination of works as well as hacking as a form of resistance.

The case study of a virus initiates debates about the nature and role of a computer virus in contemporary media art. This is especially essential given the media theory's great focus on merging of human with machine.[35] The virus case will be used as a departing point for how at the microscopic level media assume metaphors and analogies, making a political statement.

Media theorist Jussi Parikka, who wrote a book named *Digital Contagions* (2007) on the media archaeology of computer viruses, extensively discusses how we have come to metaphorically attribute the characteristics of human viruses to computer viruses and created a discourse around it.

[T]he discourse of computer viruses mobilizes a whole field of references to biology and nature. CPUs are referred to as brains; system networks are environments; computers get infected and sick; and these disasters are countered with vaccines. Consequently, as the perception of biological viruses has never been "innocent",

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[34] [epidemiC], "Press Release, June 1st 2001."
[35] Human evolution has involved communication via transmission of biological entities (e.g. genes, diseases) as well as communication via mechanical and electronic means.

outside of the power/knowledge relations of society, technological viruses are perceived, valorized, and signified similarly in complex fields of culture.[36]

Biennale.py could be read as a work that responds to these discourses. The purity of the computer systems and networks are threatened by the existence of impure viruses. These discussions on the purity and impurity is directly linked to the discussions on the notion of biopolitics as conceptualised by Michel Foucault and immunity as conceptualised by Roberto Esposito.

2.4.2. Case 2: *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008 – 2011)

The Mapping Journey Project (2008-2011) is a mixed-media installation that combines eight video works and a printed map by Bouchra Khalili. 'It proposes to draw an alternative map of the Mediterranean area, spanning from Marseille to Ramallah, Ramallah to Bari, Bari to Rome, Rome to Barcelona and Barcelona to Istanbul, based on eight clandestine journeys. It challenges the normativity of cartography, to reveal underground and hidden geographies.'[37] The work was commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation.

The Mapping Journey Project deals with political violence as well as aiming to draw an alternative Mediterranean cartography, focusing on the clandestine human flow around the sea. The overall focus of the research is on the creation of an imagination of the Mediterranean through artistic practice in relation to political violence and in no other artwork has this relationship been expressed more clearly. This particular case study will work to highlight geographical imagination of the space, which points back to Braudel's statement about how Mediterranean is composed of not only lands and people, but also people's imagination of the space.

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[36] Jussi Parikka, *Digital Contagions* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2007), 120.
[37] Bouchra Khalili, "The Mapping Journey Project. Video Installation. 2008-2011," Bouchra Khalili official website, http://www.bouchrakhalili.com/the-mapping-journey-project/ (accessed September 2017).

Khalili in her project takes up individual stories of illegal immigrants and asks them to narrate their trajectories, drawing on a map.[38] Enabling the flow of goods has historically been essential role of the Mediterranean Sea. The sea is a central space for the flow of goods and trade, but at the same time it marks the limits of human flow. The Mediterranean Sea unites the lands and the continents around it while at the same time separating them, which is problematised in the artwork.

A body in its social existence is associated with particular sets of norms based on racial, nationalistic, ethnic, religious, and sexual identities. The movement of a body is affected by institutionalisation of social constructions that work in parallel legal, political and financial factors. This case will be read in light of Giorgio Agamben's definition of *homo sacer*. The subjects whose stories are narrated in *The Mapping Journey Project* can be read via the distinction between *bios* and *zoe* that Agamben theorises.[39]

This case study puts forward the questions: Are there specific criteria by which human bodies are reduced to bare biological beings by the economic and political system that we are in? What does an attempt to create alternative maps via art tell us about the reduction of humans to bare life? These will result in an understanding how media art can be used to re-imagine the public space of the Mediterranean through the violence of illegality that is biopolitically associated with certain bodies. Therefore, the initial questions will lead to additional questions of biopolitical and necropolitical routes. Are the migration routes in the Mediterranean linked to the colonial histories of the region and what does this tell us in terms of production and circulation of media art from the region?

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[38] Another art project where movement of the bodies was put into question was *Where We Come From (Nezar)* (2001-2003) by renowned artist Emily Jacir, who asked Palestinians around the world to give her tasks that she could carry out in Palestine, where she could go with her passport issued in the USA. The artist's question to the Palestinian people in exile was: "If I could do anything for you, anywhere in Palestine, what would it be?" After collecting the requests, ranging from physically meeting people whom the task givers knew to carrying out random mundane tasks, she was acting as a body that could remotely do what the others were not able to. Emily Jacir, "Where We Come From (Nezar)," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art website, https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/2008.20.20.A-B (accessed September 2017).

[39] Please refer to the literature review for a discussion. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Departing from the migration routes, traits, and the positioning of human bodies within the current political system, the research will provide an analysis of the contribution of alternative cartographies to the imagination of the Mediterranean.

2.4.3. Case 3: *Networks of Dispossession* (2013)

The third case study is *Networks of Dispossession* (2013)[40], a 'collective data compiling and mapping on the relations of capital and power within urban transformation in Turkey'[41] developed with the Graph Commons infrastructure by Yaşar Adanalı, Burak Arıkan, Özgül Şen, Zeyno Üstün, Özlem Zıngıl and anonymous participants. *Networks of Dispossession* was exhibited at the 13th Istanbul Biennial at Galata Greek Primary School in 2013.

The work consists of three parts entitled "Projects of Dispossession," "Partners of Dispossession," and "Dispossessed Minorities." Each part has its own maps (in jpeg and interactive formats) and data table. The Turkish version of the project website features a FAQ section, which is missing in the English version, that responds to questions such as why they use the title of "Networks of Dispossession," how they have been developing the projects, technical aspects, and how it can be used.

Networks of Dispossession is both and art and an activist project.[42] The project also runs a Twitter account that provides updated information and news on the issues related to those laid out in the project.

This case study will contribute to the research because it makes visible a slow process of invisible political violence that operates on a variety of levels: the violence that happens on economic, environmental, historical, and ethnic levels through urban transformation.

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[40] "Networks of Dispossession: Mapping the relations of capital and power in Turkey," Networks of Dispossession website, http://mulksuzlestirme.org/index.en/ (accessed September 2017).
[41] Ibid.
[42] As of April 2014, Istanbul Independent Architects Association launched another major website on Istanbul's mega urban transformation projects, which, in some aspects, is complementary to *Networks of Dispossession*. Istanbul SMD, "MegaIstanbul," http://en.megaprojeleristanbul.com/# (accessed September 2017).

The starting point of the project is linked to violent political events that took place in Turkey, chiefly in Istanbul's Gezi Park in 2013. The group of artists and researchers met at Gezi Park and came up with the idea of creating this work during the times of protest. This work has been shared and disseminated across many media platforms that enabled people to contribute to the project by submitting the relevant data that was originally missing from the project.

Networks of Dispossession is complementary to the previous case study on the *Mapping Journey Project* by Bouchra Khalili in the sense that both of the artworks focus on the Mediterranean public space and the violence of political and economic networks from two different viewpoints: one on the basis of human stories, the other on the basis of the change of the cityscape.

How can a data compiling and mapping project presented in the form of an artwork help understand the economic and political aspect of urban transformation and the systemic political violence that comes with it? How is the use of new media tools changing the nature of making art and merging art with activism? What do the media used in the artwork tell us about the collective methods of organisation against the less visible violence, which operates through legal or legitimised means by states and corporations?

Aiming to analyse the process of making visible the systemic objective violence through collaborative media art, the case study on *Networks of Disposession* will discuss capital flows and its role in the erasure of the public space commons by transformative urban reconstruction.

The case study analyses media art's taking a position against political violence and compares it with the use of media tools as a justification of political violence. To give an example, the tradition of corruption (that is an overarching problematic in the work) is a political one and, like overt political violence, it is justified through a variety of media. The difference between the justification of political violence and corruption lies in the degree of rationality in the justifying mechanisms. Political violence in the form of war, for example,

has been justified by nation-states with a claim of counterterrorism or of democracy, which are assumed to signify with positive values. Corruption, however, even when the broadcast media condemns it, becomes "too familiar." Even though the justification of corruption may not be the goal of media discourse, it is an unintentional result, leading to a possible collective acceptance of its practice. A project such as *Networks of Disposession* operates on the basis of interaction: not only at the level of engaging with the artwork, but also at the level of creation of the artwork. Therefore, interactivity in this respect differs from the interactivity of engaging with the finished work and works to challenge the notion of a normalised corruption.

2.4.4. Case 4: *The Zone (2011)*

The Zone (2011) is a video installation by Ramallah-based artists Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme. The main video component is a 15-minute video diptych with four channel sound. 4 to 8-minute video clips are played on 15 LCD screens with variable dimensions.[43]

The video displays landscapes from "dystopian" landscapes of contemporary Palestine where the artists argue that revolutionary ideas of a free Palestine confront desires informed by consumption networks. The installation is 'constructed as an immersive environment, a site of ruin and dream, a physical reflection on a subjectivity marked by a double moment of colonial expansion/political defeat and impending statehood/consumptive regime.'[44] This case shows how networks of capitalist relations complement physical forms of occupation and destruction in an attempt to create consumerist desires while at the same time creating a façade of normality with endeavours to mask the existence of a longstanding history of struggle.

The Zone brings visibility to the levels of violence that operate together in a networked manner to suppress the Palestinian people's struggles against the Israeli

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[43] A full version of the video (password-protected) can be found at: https://vimeo.com/65124871 (accessed December 2016).
[44] "The Zone," Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme official website, http://baselandruanne.com/TheZone (accessed September 2017).

occupation. The imagery of the video juxtaposes images of historical and current revolutionary ideals with those of commercial interest. The contribution of this case to the dissertation is its dealing with violence through different temporal realms in relation to the other cases: *biennale.py*, for example, mainly deals with the quick spread of viruses across networks of contagion. *The Mapping Journey Project* presents a human pace to the question of political violence and how it affects the rhythms of human movements. *Networks of Dispossession* contrasts relatively slow violence of urban transformation (through legal procedures) with the pace of connecting the data nodes through networks. In this sense, *The Zone*'s pace is slow (a feature that reflects itself in the imagery) and historical. Looking at the past through archival imagery and revolutionary posters found across Palestine, the work contrasts two visions of the future. In this respect, its focus on the temporal aspect of violence constitutes an essential component for the construction of the idea of latent violence.

2.5. Methods: Conclusions

The case studies selected for this study highlight particular aspects of political violence in the Mediterranean region by tracing the scale of the body where violence is manifested: the cellular level of a virus, an illegal immigrant's body, a nation's citizens, the landscape of a city, and a war-torn country. The selection of case studies is based on certain criteria that provide an analysis using specific theoretical frameworks.

How does the variety in the media create a change in the artworks' visual language? What do patterns of media use in artworks from the region say about the region and the possibility of creating an imagination of the region through media art, leading to questions of capacity of media art in general to creating new forms of regional public imaginaries?

The artworks that fall in the scope of this study are considered with a focus on the following aspects:

Imagery:
- Images of conflict and war

- Images that do not contain any conflict, but convey a sense of violence (through the lack of violent imagery)
- Voyeurism of witnessing the images of atrocities
- Passivity of encountering the images
- Images as symbols of violent resistance

Visibility of Violence:
- Artworks that demonstrate overt political violence
- Artworks that make everyday political violence visible
- Artworks that call for action by making violence (more) visible
- Artworks that problematise visibility

Geographies of the Artworks:
- Concentration of artworks in certain cities
- Online representation and visibility of artworks
- Artworks showing legitimate/illegitimate and transparent/hidden networks connecting and constructing the region

Medium:
- Violence of the language, of the image, and of the medium.
- Media as resistance, as activism, and as counter-violence.

Of these different selection parameters, the works that are chosen as a case study have a common thread of networks as the subject matter. In discussing the networks of violence, the case studies depart from less overt ways of political violence that are imposed on bodies at various levels, and attempt to make these visible while at the same time keeping a critical look on an excessive commitment to visibility. The rational behind this selection is to provide an alternative sphere of analysis to the sentimentality of images of pain and violence while at the same time investigating how media are used productively to discuss political violence. The case studies are made up of artworks that are self-reflective in the sense that they either reflect on the idea and nature of networks in the 21st century, or

on the idea of covering up networks of consumption, occupation, or overt physical destruction through systemic means of war.

The research maps the frameworks created by different dynamics related to the production of artworks, geographical issues, scale and visibility of political violence, and the narratives that are created around the issues in question. In artworks produced in the region, making visible different forms of covert political violence reveals the productive potentials of the media art. These productive potentials are also directly related to the production and circulation of media tools, which impact the works' aesthetics.

The presence of media art from the region in Internet archives indicates the asymmetry of production and preservation of media art from the region. While many works are accessible through artists' websites, online databases, or exhibition websites, there is a visible pattern in the online presence of geographical concentration of media art from the region. That is to say, media artworks which are more easily reachable online are mainly from the cultural hubs of the countries where they are produced.

The initial phase of the collection of information on media art from the Mediterranean also showed that a significant amount of work dealing with the issue of political violence is video art, which is cheaper to create than other more technically complicated forms of media art, such as robotics. The more technological literacy needed for the creation of an artwork, the more the playful aspect is emphasised and the less political in content the artwork becomes. Media artworks from the Mediterranean aesthetically differ from many of those from Western and Northern Europe, Australia, Japan, or the United States, where technological tools are created and used, where design elements are much more overtly visible. That being said, potentially, the more visible the design and a celebration of the technological, the less emphasised the political nature of the work may be.

Media art from the Mediterranean responds to overt and covert political violence (including war, corruption, gendered violence, revolutionary violence, religious violence, and systemic capitalist violence) in a multitude of creative ways. There are three basic

stances which the artists (whether consciously or unconsciously) take: artist producing art as a gesture where political violence is a theme; artist as an agent that contributes to the visibility of overt political violence; artist taking an active role in highlighting less overt forms of political violence, which has a direct link to bringing about social change. This eventually relates violence to media and networks through biopolitics.

One of the main focus points of the selection of the cases has been to escape the victim/perpetrator story that dominates the contemporary construction of the Mediterranean. In a similar vein, Orientalist othering or constructions of the artists from the Mediterranean as visionaries of romantic ideals are consciously avoided, and so was the essentialist claims about a regional/national art.[45] Specifically this approach allows to work directly on the networked nature of violence from virus to consumerism in order to create an alternative story about the imagination of the region, the nature and workings of violence in the region, and therefore a new set of futures beyond the fatalism of Eurocentric views that see the whole region as an ongoing catastrophe without solution.

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[45] For a critique of labelling contemporary art within national and regional confines with a view to claim identity characteristics, see: Timo Kaabi-Linke, "Geo-coding Contemporary Art?" *Contemporary Practices* IX (date unknown): 102-105, http://www.contemporarypractices.net/essays/VolumeIX/geocodingcontemporaryart.pdf (accessed September 2017).

Chapter 2 Literature Review

As this study focuses on the manifestations of political violence in media art from the Mediterranean region since the beginning of the 21st century, one of its main underlying components is how the notion of political violence has been defined and categorised across modern and contemporary thought. This chapter provides a framework within which this has been done in relation to such concepts as legitimacy, legality, power and sovereignty. Different forms of violence in terms of form, goal and definition are laid out as a basis for discussions in the following chapters while class and race as questions pertinent to the current histories of the Mediterranean are analysed as examples of the groundings of political violence. The chapter then goes on to delineate media art and Mediterranean in the context of this research from the point of view of networks and their biopolitical nature.

It can be seen that throughout the existing literature on political violence, a lot of its definitions emphasise oppositions such as structural/personal, overt/covert, and subjective/objective violence. Furthermore, these definitions often oscillate between metaphors of visibility and invisibility. This study argues that while such distinctions are useful tools to categorise political violence, they are not sufficient to explain the relational formations between these opposing categories as well as their temporal aspects and relations. In its attempt to explain how multiple forms of violence may act simultaneously, consequentially or relationally in any given act of political aggression, this study puts forward the idea of latent violence, which denotes the interconnections between the physical and symbolic, overt and covert, subjective and structural through an observation of networks from a temporal point of view. In this respect, it argues that every form of political violence bears with it latent components (whereby, for example, symbolic acts may have physically destructive results and vice versa) that have the potential to assume different formations over time, and that contemporary political violence is both biopolitical and networked.

The study then poses the question of these relations through themes or presence of various kinds of networks as they manifest themselves across the media art from the Mediterranean: namely virus, immigration, dispossession, and consumption networks. As a response to the problematics of defining regionality, it benefits from methodological concerns of particularly historical literature related to the region. It questions why and how (not) to define the Mediterranean and why studying it resonates with aspects of media and networks while at the same time contributing to the discussions on media art and political violence.

1. What Constitutes Political Violence?

Across modern and contemporary theory of violence, a considerable amount of emphasis is given on the nature of violence with respect to its structural nature and its visibility. These most often categorise violence with regard to either its intentions or its outcomes.

Defining violence and analysing cases of violence in the changing dynamics of the contemporary cultures requires a focus on the historical, political and economic paradigms that inevitably create, feed into, transform, and reproduce violence in multiple forms even for the same social agents across different times. To structure approaches to the analysis of violence in changing social and cultural settings, below is a classification that sets out various types of visible and invisible violence according to its forms, goals, and definitions. The forms and goals of violence tend to emphasise its intentions and reasons whereas definitions of violence are usually based on the outcomes.

in terms of form	*in terms of goal*	*in terms of definition*
interstate	nationalistic	subjective (S. Žižek)
repressive	ethnocentric	objective (S. Žižek)
riot	religious	symbolic
(trans-)border	racist	systemic
physical	gender-based	structural (J. Galtung)
psychological	revolutionary	personal (J. Galtung)
street	corporate	cultural (J. Galtung)

domestic	environmental	everyday (N. Schepher-Hughes)
legal/illegal	imperialistic	symbolic (P. Bourdieu)
legitimate/illegitimate	colonial	that posits law (W. Benjamin)
ideological		that preserves law (W. Benjamin)
threatening		divine (W. Benjamin)
overt/covert		mythic (W. Benjamin)
		benign aggression (E. Fromm)
		malignant aggression (E. Fromm)
		syndicalist/strike[1] (G. Sorel)
		slow (R. Nixon)
		spectacular (A. Azoulay & A. Ophir)
		suspended (A. Azoulay & A. Ophir)

Table 1: Some types of violence according to its forms, goals, and definitions.

Looking at the philosophical, political, and sociological literature of violence, philosopher C. A. J. Coady identifies three main types of definitions, namely "wide," "restricted," and "legitimate".'[2] Wide definitions include concepts based on the injustices and inequalities in the social realm (for example, structural violence). The focus of the restricted definitions, however, is more specific, being the interpersonal acts of force typically involving physical damage. The definitions of violence based on its legitimation —generally adopted by right-wing liberal political thought— reference it as the legitimate or illegitimate use of force (thus, excluding police or military).[3]

The types of violence presented above fit in Coady's categorisation in their conventional outlines while at the same time overlapping in each other's realms through the practices that create and sustain them. The following section endeavours to introduce the definitions laid out above while at the same time arguing for a perspective on violence that

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[1] The term "syndicalist violence" *per se* is not used by Georges Sorel himself, and it is used to denote a general description of the type of violence Sorel wrote about.

[2] C. A. J. Coady, "The Idea of Violence," *Morality and Political Violence* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 22.

[3] Ibid, 22-23. Similarly, Robert Paul Wolff in his essay entitled "On Violence," 'develops his propositions about violence in three stages, focusing on the relationship between power and authority, the unfounded distinction between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" political authority, and the ideological use of violence as a rhetorical device for domination.' See: "Introduction," *Violence and Its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Manfred B. Steger and Nancy S. Lind (London: McMillan, 1999), xv.

takes into account a biopolitics in both spatial and temporal respect by posing the question of a Mediterranean of the 21st century.

The study introduces the concept of "latent violence"[4], which aims to bring together structural/personal, objective/subjective, visible/invisible and legal/legitimate perspectives on violence through an emphasis on the temporal biopolitics of violence. It will problematise limiting violence to metaphors of visibility and invisibility through an analysis of media art's take on the subject in the 21st century in the context of an imagined Mediterranean.

1.1. Definitions and Categorisations of Violence

Philosopher Slavoj Žižek in his book entitled *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (2008) identifies two main categories of violence: subjective and objective.[5] Subjective violence is a more visible form of violence performed by an agent who can be clearly identified. Objective violence, however, is the covert violence inherent in the structure of current political and economic systems.[6] According to Žižek, objective violence includes two different kinds of violence, namely symbolic violence, embodied in the language and systemic violence, a result of the smooth functioning of the capitalist society.[7]

Žižek claims that it will be a mistake to perceive subjective and objective violence from the same standpoint since subjective violence is visible, easily identifiable and it is perceived as happening in a non-violent, "normal" environment, disrupting the smooth functioning of societal structures. Objective violence, however, is a more invisible and

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[4] My definition differs from Galtung's use of the term latent violence in the sense that his formulation of latent violence points to a potential while mine is about a temporal, and sometimes causal, relation between different forms of violence.

[5] Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Picador, 2008).

[6] Žižek divides the phenomenon of violence in two main categories but he also mentions other forms of violence such as "direct, physical violence (mass murder, terror)" or "ideological violence (racism, incitement, sexual discrimination)." Additionally, he talks about "pure, divine violence" quoting Walter Benjamin's essay "Critique of Violence." See: Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*, 10 and Walter Benjamin "Critique of Violence," in *Selected Writings*, Vol. 1, 1913 – 1926 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

[7] Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*, 1-2.

covert form and this has to be considered in order to understand subjective violence.[8] Žižek argues that the focus on subjective violence works to distract the individual's attention from objective violence.

The differentiation between subjective and objective violence in certain respects can be comparable to Louis Althusser's distinction between ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses.[9] To add to Žižek's formulation of objective violence, it could be noted that the coercion through which the repressive state apparatuses work is the only visible side of objective violence whereas the invisibility of objective violence (which endows it with its defining character) is ensured by the use of ideological state apparatuses.

The point that Žižek raises regarding the visibility of subjective violence and the invisibility of objective violence in certain ways echoes sociologist Johan Galtung's definition of structural violence vis-à-vis personal violence in his seminal article "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" published in 1969. Galtung, who is largely considered to be the formulator of an expanded definition of violence, refers to 'the type of violence where there is an actor that commits the violence as *personal* or *direct*, and to violence where there is no such actor as *structural* or *indirect*.'[10] In personal violence, the source of the violent act can be traced back to persons whereas in structural violence, this is not possible since violence is embedded in the structure. 'In contrast to personal violence, which "shows," structural violence is often invisible; "it does not show," at least not in the spectacular terms in which subjective violence often does. It is silent, silenced, and silencing. And thus it is ordered.'[11]

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[8] One of the many examples of the covert, systemic workings of the objective violence could be the deportation of Leonarda Dibrani, a Roma schoolgirl from France, which happened as this section was being written. Dibrani was taken away by the police from her schoolbus during a field trip before she was deported. Following student protests in response to this, the focus shifted from the state's systemic authority on the individual to the "way" in which this authority is exercised. See: Mark Memmott, "Girl's Deportation Was Mishandled, But Legal, French Say," NPR: National Public Radio, October 19, 2013, http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/10/19/237636824/girls-deportation-was-mishandled-but-legal-french-say. (accessed October 2013)

[9] See: Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971).

[10] Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 170, http://www.jstor.org/stable/422690. Emphases are from the original text.

[11] Ibid.

But underneath this obliqueness, what Galtung calls "the 'tranquil waters'" of normalised structural violence, is where brutal forms of violence reside.[12]

Twenty years after the publication of his article on structural violence, Galtung also developed the notion of "cultural violence," which he defines as 'those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence –exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics)– that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence.'[13] For some theorists, Galtung's broad categorisation of violence is itself —significant and relevant though it still is— what limited the concept and made it lose its appeal since the 1970s for a variety of reasons. Galtung's concept has been critiqued by Yves Winter, for example, for putting different forms of dominations and forces, such as discrimination (for example based on gender, class or race), and issues of slavery and decolonisation, under a single concept of structural violence. Another major problematisation by Winter has been through Galtung's assumption that the survival of structural violence is a product of continued invisibility whereas this approach omits the fact that structural violence's being out in the open is what ensures its persistence.[14] In a similar vein, Joan Cocks categorises the violence of the seemingly peaceful processes such as treaties and agreements under the term "foundational violence": 'foundational violence entails not only the negative power of destruction but also the positive power involved in creating something new, and because the destructive power of foundational violence sometimes occurs in "peaceful" guise.'[15]

Further elaborations on violence that works through normalised structures emphasise its permeation through everyday life, via systematic deprivation of access to basic

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[12] Antonio Y. Vázquez-Arroyo, "The Antinomies of Violence and Catastrophe: Structures, Orders, and Agents," *New Political Science* 34, no. 2 (June 2012): 214, http://doi.org/10.1080/07393148.2012.676399.

[13] Johan Galtung, "Cultural Violence," in *Violence and Its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Manfred B. Steger and Nancy S. Lind (London: McMillan, 1999), 39.

[14] Yves Winter, "Violence and Visibility," *New Political Science* 34, no. 2 (2012): 195-202, http://doi.org/10.1080/07393148.2012.676397. Also, Loïc Wacquant's response to Paul Farmer's "An Anthropology of Structural Violence" raises similar concerns around merging violence and different structures of domination "into one catchall category." See: Paul Farmer, "An Anthropology of Structural Violence," *Current Anthropology* 45, No. 3 (2004): 305-325. See Wacquant's "Comment" on p. 322, http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.1086/382250.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A6b8f4d874e8f6f9ede32333a5a7 3b44c.

[15] "Joan Cocks, The Violence of Structures and the Violence of Foundings," *New Political Science* 34, no. 2 (2012): 224.

human needs in the present day, and via systematic destruction of nature that has future reverberations. Nancy Scheper-Hughes names routine physical and psychological violence as everyday violence: 'The *everyday* violence of infant mortality, slow starvation, disease, despair, and humiliation that destroys socially marginalized humans with even greater frequency are usually invisible or misrecognized.'[16] Rob Nixon in his book *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011) describes the process of environmental destruction as "slow violence", which is a form of invisible violence with that spans over a period of time.[17] Scheper-Hughes's conception of violence is about its covert nature, but is addressed towards the normalisation of violence perpetrated on a specific group of people, i.e. the socially and economically marginalised. Nixon's theorisation, on the other hand, moves away the static structuralist conceptualisation of Galtung's theory and discusses specific forms of violence (environmental, political and economic) in a temporally dynamic way. Nonetheless, it does not cover transformations of different forms of violence into each other both in the short and in the long term.

What are then, the common premises that various structural and personal types of violence stand on? In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973), psychoanalyst and philosopher Eric Fromm answers this question by making a distinction between two separate kinds of aggression: benign and malignant.[18] Benign aggression is defensive and a component for survival whereas malignant aggression is destructive. In explaining these forms aggression, Fromm looks at humans' psychological drives and separates human instincts[19] from passions. Instincts are answers to man's physiological needs whereas passions are addressed towards existential needs and hence, specifically human – just as killing its own kind in masses is. As with many other theorists, Fromm also points to the

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[16] Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, "Introduction: Making Sense of Violence," in *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (Malden, MA; Oxford; Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 2. Also see: Nancy Schepher-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[17] See: Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[18] Eric Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 13-32.

[19] Fromm compares the work of Sigmund Freud and Konrad Lorenz on instincts in justifying his separation between instincts and passions. Lorenz sees human aggressiveness as a result of accumulated energy, and not as a response to external stimuli. His hydraulic model looks at the levels of aggression in identifying its degree of harmfulness. According to Lorenz, aggressive desire serves life when it is in moderate levels. According to Freud, it is a "servant to death". Both Lorenz and Freud look at the innate characteristics of destructive force, placing love at opposite ends of the equilibrium (for Freud aggressive desire is opposed by sex whereas for Lorenz it reinforces life).

covert workings of violence: 'No dictator calls himself a dictator, and every system claims that it expresses the will of the people. In the countries of the "free world", on the other hand, "anonymous authority" and manipulation have replaced overt authority in education, work and politics.'[20]

As with many of the descriptions of violence, Fromm points to the immaterial workings of political violence through those aspects of life that populations engage in everyday. I contend that what Fromm calls "anonymous authority" and manipulation of the "free world" is a pattern observable in other areas of the world, albeit in varying degrees. It is argued here that it is the *dynamism* in the dialogue between the two main facets of violence that reinforces it and makes its existence possible. The relation is a temporal as well as a geographical one: the "anonymous authority" and manipulation of the "free world" can turn into an oppressive regime in short amounts of time. The existence of the likes of army and police forces denote internal as well as external regimes of potentiality.

The role of time in the dynamic management of political violence has been addressed with a distinction between "spectacular" versus "suspended" violence by Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir in a chapter published in *Against the Wall* (2005), an edited volume on the Separation Wall in Palestine. Azoulay and Ophir formulate spectacular violence as a kind of violence that results in an event to be seen (even if no one is watching at the time the violent event has happened) while suspended violence happens when the physical force is suspended and non-physical elements replace the physical contact. 'Violence is always exercised through the interplay between spectacular outburst and suspension, and its efficiency depends on maintaining a gap between these two poles.'[21] Spectacular and suspended violence, Azoulay and Ophir argue, transform into each other through eruptions of physical destruction and the presence of visible and invisible threat elements.[22]

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[20] Fromm, 68. In some countries such as occupied Palestine, the simultaneous operation of these two different levels of violence are obvious. That is to say, the violence of the land's physical occupation is combined with technologised checkpoints that are so-called "terminals" which serve as a statement about Israel's authority as well as being tools of control. For an article on terminals, see: Daniela Mansbach, "Normalizing Violence: From Military Checkpoint to 'Terminals' in the Occupied Territories," *Journal of Political Power* 2 (2009): 255–73, http://doi.org/10.1080/17540290903072591.

[21] Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir, "The Monster's Tail," in *Against the Wall: Israel's Barrier to Peace*, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York, NY; London: New Press, 2005), 4.

[22] Ibid., 5.

Central to the question of political violence, then is the matter of looking at the specific workings of overt and covert violence to see how political, legal or economic systems produce a mesh of relations that lead to world systems whereby the poor, the underprivileged, and the marginalised suffer and various symbolic forms of violence have personal (and potentially physical) resonances while at the same time segments of populations at large are administered through a networked biopolitical violence that is both grand and granular, extended over longer periods of time, and transformative. In order to address this question, one can turn to examples of historical groundings while turning to contemporary dynamics.

1.2. Violence, Class and Race: The Case of Decolonisation

Among the different types of violence, the most difficult one to pinpoint could be said to be the umbrella terms covert, objective, structural violence that signify different kinds of violence without identifiable perpetrators for the act of violence. The concept of an objective violence that runs systematically in day-to-day interactions of persons, and thus, permeating in everyday life in the contemporary world, would benefit from a theoretical model of analysis whereby the capitalist structures and mode of production are treated as inherently violent. However, as critiques of Galtung pointed out, in order to provide a more thorough understanding of the phenomenon of violence, it needs to be analysed in its specific manifestations in relation to issues such as gender, ethnicity and race as well.

From contemporary back into modern thought, a most relevant work by a thinker writing on the Mediterranean region is Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) where an account of violence in relation to the decolonisation process is given.[23] According to Fanon, the decolonisation process is historically, inevitably, violent since the coloniser introduces violence to the native's life and the native's ultimate aim is to take the coloniser out of the picture by responding to violence with violence. This is the point Coady emphasises when he opposes a general classification of the notion of violence. According to

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[23] Frantz Fanon, "Concerning Violence," *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 1990), 27 - 84.

Coady, the extension of the term "violence" to include social inequalities and injustices gives the possibility to revolutionaries to justify their violent acts by stating that they are responding to violence with violence.[24] However, as we see from reading Antonio Gramsci, typologies of this kind are not so clear-cut and depend to a large extent on the political context. Gramsci identifies Gandhi's passive resistance as 'a war of position, which at certain moments becomes a war of movements, and at others underground warfare.'[25] Therefore, a passive resistance that changes shapes in the specific political context is defined as "war" in Gramsci's terms. Hannah Arendt, on the other hand, puts forward a different claim that (perceiving Gandhi's resistance in a more static way than Gramsci does) 'if Gandhi's enormously powerful and successful strategy of nonviolent resistance had met with a different enemy —Stalin's Russia, Hitler's Germany, even prewar Japan, instead of England— the outcome would not have been decolonization, but massacre and submission.'[26] In evaluating the typologies and classifications of the concept of violence, political conjuncture as well as the attributes given to the naming effect the way within which its histories are discussed.

Fanon, in his specific historical positioning regarding decolonisation, claims that the settler-native relation embodies the Aristotelian logic of reciprocal exclusivity.[27] He builds up his essay mainly on dualisms between the native and the settler, at times distinguishing between the different strata of societies he takes into account, which helps demonstrate the workings of objective violence. He draws, for example, a line between the élite or liberals of the colonised societies as opposed to the majority of native peoples in terms of their outlook on co-existence and the peoples of Europe as opposed to Europe's coloniser governments in terms of building a new, just society.

Fanon's reading of decolonisation also presents certain cultural and social characteristics of the colonised countries, which should be considered in order to understand the process of decolonisation he traces. An example that he gives is how the native intellectual who, deep down in his brain, 'is ready to defend the Greco-Latin

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[24] Coady, *Morality and Political Violence*, 22.
[25] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Q. Hoare and G. N. Smith (London: Lawrence Wishart, 1971), 159.
[26] Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1970), 53.
[27] Fanon, *The Wretched of The Earth*, 30.

pedestal'[28] comes back in touch with his native people during the liberation process and experiences the end of an artificial relationship with the Western ideas. 'Individualism is the first to disappear. The native intellectual had learnt from his masters that the individual ought to express himself fully…. Now the native who has the opportunity to return to the people during the struggle for freedom will discover the falseness of this theory. The very forms of organization of the struggle will suggest to him a different vocabulary.'[29] Fanon's other examples of culture-specific attributes for the colonised countries include *djemaas* (village assemblies of North Africa where conflicts are settled in public), the native societies' relationship to the unconscious through dance, possession, muscular orgy, supernatural beings, etc. These values are not immune to change and are also affected by the decolonisation processes since, Fanon notes, during the struggle for freedom, there is a marked alienation from these practices.

Fanon in his examples above points to certain (particularly North African) attributes of colonised societies. In identifying the forms of structural violence in its colonialist form, Fanon not only touches upon individual subjects' positioning within societal systems which bear distinctive characteristics, but also evaluates the whole issue of colonisation in the light of class relations.

Violence in relation to class is a major theme in the writings of Hannah Arendt who notes, 'Violence —as distinct from power, force, or strength— always needs implements (as [Friedrich] Engels pointed out long ago).'[30] Arendt emphasises that the distinguishing character of violence is its instrumentality. Even earlier, Engels explains in his book *Anti-Dühring* the dialectical relationship between the economic infrastructure and political superstructure in relation to slavery by giving the example of Robinson Crusoe, who enslaves Friday with "sword in hand." 'Therefore, before slavery becomes possible, a

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[28] Ibid., 36. This becomes particularly relevant in the context of characteristics of media art from the Mediterranean, which, in dealing with the idea of networks, can take directions of mimicking the dominant Western European or American media art discourses, or create alternative languages of regionality in its forms, discourses, and contents. Media art inherently as a genre bears in it the potentials to uncover the production of media networks and turn them into tools to talk about violence, and yet the implementation of this is yet to be uncovered.

[29] Ibidem.

[30] Arendt, *On Violence*, 4.

certain level of production must already have been reached and a certain inequality of distribution must already have appeared.'[31]

Karl Marx's statement about the fundamental violence underlying the means of production raises a most definitive point: 'If money, according to Augier,[32] 'comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek,' capital comes dripping from head to toe, from every pore, with blood and dirt.'[33] Thus, capital in itself is the source of violence.

In his class-based evaluation of the relations of production under colonialism, Fanon adopts an idiosyncratic approach to Marxist analysis when he argues that the terms "infrastructure" and "superstructure" should be slightly stretched while analysing the colonial context. He argues 'in the colonies, the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich.'[34] He does not elaborate further on the issue as to what will come out as a result of this new conception of superstructure.

Fanon is, rather, more interested in the larger picture of the effects of economic substructure on the colonising countries' hegemonic politics in the process of decolonisation. This is where he calls upon Europe's working class to collaborate with the native peoples. Even though it may seem like a solidarity call for the setup of a socialist state structure, Fanon's call does not encompass the idea of a socialist future because he argues for values and methods specific to the under-developed countries. 'The concrete problem we find ourselves up against is not that of a choice, cost what it may, between socialism and capitalism as they have been defined by men of other continents and other ages.'[35] The question, then, is the formulation of political structures in relation to the "values" that Fanon mentions and how these values can be constructed, if they can be constructed at all, in relation to geographies.

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[31] Friedrich Engels, "Anti-Dühring," in *On Violence: A Reader*, ed. Bruce B. Lawrence and Aisha Karim (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 42.
[32] Marie Augier, *Du credit public*, Paris, 1842, p. 265 quoted in Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* Vol 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin Books in assoc. with New Left Review, 1990), 726.
[33] Marx, *Capital* Vol 1, 725-726.
[34] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 31.
[35] Ibid., 78.

The class aspect of political violence most extensively was taken up by Georges Sorel, who, in his book *Reflections on Violence* (1908) argued for a constructive collective violence present in the strikes, rather than destructive forces of terrorism, in the context of French syndicalist movement of the late 19ᵗʰ and early 20ᵗʰ centuries. For some, '[o]ver all, Sorel said much the same thing as Frantz Fanon was to develop in more detail (in *The Wretched of The Earth*) about the uplifting psychological effects of working class aggression.'[36] Besides delineating the legitimacy of certain types of working class violence (which *de facto* had been classified as barbaric by the bourgeoisie), Sorel was among the few theorists (along with Rob Nixon, Ariella Azoulay & Adi Ophir, and Yves Winter) who specifically emphasised the temporal nature of violence by arguing that "[t]o examine the effects of violence it is necessary to start from its distant consequences and not from its immediate results."[37] Sorel's argument about the consequential nature of violence is what will allow its analysis in historical and prospective respects. In addition to this formulation, however, it is necessary to bear in mind those aspects of violence that are not connected through nodes through a first level connection, but temporally related.

1.3. Legitimacy and Power

How do the similar concepts of violence and power relate? Does power fuel violence and vice versa? In her book *On Violence* published in 1969, Hannah Arendt claims that violence comes into play when power is being lost. 'Violence can always destroy power; out of the barrel of a gun grows the most effective command, resulting in the most instant and perfect obedience. What can never grow out of it is power.'[38]

As opposed to Arendt, who dismisses any possibility of power born out of violence, philosopher Michel Foucault in his essay "The Subject and Power" (1983) draws a triangle of relations between power, violence, and consent. According to Foucault, for the exercise of power, using violence and obtaining consent are two essential components, both of which power often needs at the same time. However, 'in itself, the exercise of power is not

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[36] Larry Portis, *Georges Sorel* (London: Pluto Press, 1980), 103.

[37] Georges Sorel, *Reflections On Violence*, trans. T. E. Hulme (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1916), 47.

[38] Arendt, *On Violence*, 53.

a violence that sometimes hides, or an implicitly renewed consent. It operates on the field of possibilities in which the behavior of active subjects is able to inscribe itself.'[39]

In analysing the historical aspects of power relations, Foucault mentions two modes of practices in disciplining bodies: the first one which formed in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, using surveillance and training tools through institutions such as schools and hospitals; the second one which came to being at the end of the 18th century targeting population's biosociological processes. Foucault outlines these modes by saying: 'So we have two series: the body-organism-discipline-institutions series, and the population-biological processes-regulatory mechanisms-State.'[40] Foucault does not position these two series in a binary opposition and makes it clear that they are not mutually exclusive. The development and organisation of these two series of differ from each other but they at times complement each other in complex social relations.

Foucault traces the transformation in forms of governance and subjectivity and introduces the concept of biopolitics, emphasising that the state used to assert its authority on people's lives by claiming the right to decide on life and death. However, this practice shifted towards a different form of governmentality where the state assumes the role of fostering people's lives through regulatory forces. Thus, 'the sovereign form of power (the right over death and to let live) gives way to a newer "regulative power" (the right to make live and let die).'[41]

The change towards and in biopolitical governance can historically be related to the dynamics of relations of production. 'The original accumulation of capital during late medieval times in Europe, entailed violence, predation, thievery, fraud and robbery.'[42] After

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[39] Michel Foucault, "Afterword: The Subject and Power," in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 220.

[40] Michel Foucault, *"Society Must be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-1976* (New York, NY: Picador, 2003), 250.

[41] Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 74.

[42] David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 47.

this phase of earlier capitalism, development of technologies that enabled the accumulation of capital had an impact on modes of exercising power:

> If the economic take-off of the West began with the techniques that made possible the accumulation of capital, it might perhaps be said that the methods for administering the accumulation of men made possible a political take-off in relation to the traditional, ritual, costly, violent forms of power, which soon fell into disuse and were superseded by a subtle, calculated technology of subjection.[43]

These technologies of subjection have been adjusted in relation to the changing characteristics of advanced capitalism. Christian Marazzi, who names the change in the nature of production systems after the post-Fordist era as "biocapitalism" in his book *The Violence of Financial Capitalism* dated 2011, claims that the accumulation of capital has gone through a change with biocapitalism. 'It no longer consists, as in the Fordist period, of investment in constant and variable capital (wage), but rather of investment in apparatuses of producing and capturing value produced outside directly productive processes.'[44]

Marazzi goes on to note that in contemporary capitalism, the financial surplus is obtained not only through products themselves but also through people's emotional expressions and social communications, thus making the sale of data or publicity more important than in earlier stages of capitalism. Taking the workings of data as the basis for his concept of how protocological control operates through networks, Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker state in their book *The Exploit* (2007) that: 'Biopolitics also remains consonant with neoliberalism in its notion of humanitarian security in the form of health insurance, home care, outpatient services, and the development of biological "banking" institutions (sperm and ova banks, blood banks, tissue banks, etc.).'[45]

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[43] Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1984), 210.
[44] Christian Marazzi, *The Violence of Financial Capitalism* (Bellinzona: Semiotext(e), 2011), 54.
[45] Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks*, 75.

Biopolitcs targets the life of a population and in this sense, the word "life" does not refer to people's lives individually but to population as an organic, biological being that can be governed. However, the practice of fostering and ameliorating life through controls also contain paradoxes since the betterment of life is partly defined by its opposite: the impure, unhealthy, and the enemy.

'The paradox of biopolitics is that to the same degree to which the security and the amelioration of life became an issue for political authorities, life is threatened by hitherto unimaginable technical and political means of destruction.'[46] It is argued here that biopolitical governance is violent by its very nature, in overt and covert ways. 'The idea of society as a biological whole assumes the provision of a central authority that governs and controls it, watches over its purity, and is strong enough to confront "enemies" within its borders and beyond: the modern state.'[47] An example for the biopolitical practices during the formation of modern nation-states from around the Mediterranean could be the compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923, when the ethnic minorities in the two countries were forced to migrate. This visible act of political violence the ultimate aim of which can be said to create "purity" in ethnicity caused physical and psychological damage as well as death within the mobilised groups. Israel's recent attempt for a new population transfer in Palestine (2017) has been criticised for being a euphemism for ethnic cleansing. 'So-called population exchanges have an ugly history; they were practiced before the modern era, when it was accepted that rulers treated people like property.'[48] Violence mandates different temporalities.

Arguing that the notion of biopolitics is not sufficient to explain contemporary aspects of extermination of bodies, Achille Mbembe puts forward the notion of necropolitics and necropower 'to account for the various ways in which, in our contemporary world, weapons are deployed in the interest of maximum destruction of persons and the creation of *death-worlds*, new and unique forms of social existence in which

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[46] Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, trans. Eric Frederick Trump (New York, NY; London: New York University Press, 2011), 39.
[47] Ibid., 42.
[48] Ali Abunimah, "New Netanyahu "peace" plan is straight out of apartheid South Africa," *Electronic Intifada*, 28 July 2017, https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/new-netanyahu-peace-plan-straight-out-apartheid-south-africa (accessed September 2017).

vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of *living dead*.[49] Mbembe's notion of necropolitics takes the focus from the particular functional role of death's administration in the society as an instrument for the powerful to designate the life/death axiom towards the impending death's influence on social life as a narrative changer. Mbembe's perspective expands the role of biopolitics from an administration of decisions on death to a creation scenarios as followed by the social roles through the various forms of death's possibility. The question becomes how the politics of death haunts the living beyond the time of its actualisation. As an indicator of the impact of the various forms of death on the government of the living, Mbembe's necropolitics may be used to expose the biopolitical paradox of legality and legitimacy. This is not only because law holds the power to decide whether death can be implemented by law itself (as in the case of capital punishment), but also it again ties into legality and its semantically close yet fundamentally different relative legitimacy, in the case of a death outside the legal domain.

Galloway and Thacker regard the ability of the sovereign ruler to change the law that he is also subject to as a paradox of sovereignty.[50] One of the fundamental bases on which this paradoxical position stands is the legitimation of the sovereign structures through the use of economic, political, ideological and cultural tools and strategically intertwining these tools. In analysing the dominating forces' need for legitimacy, Max Weber states in a chapter entitled "The Types of Legitimate Domination" in his book *Economy and Society* (1922) that:

> Experience shows that in no instance does domination voluntarily limit itself to the appeal to material or affectual or ideal motives as a basis for its continuance. In addition every such system attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its legitimacy. But according to the kind of legitimacy which is claimed, the type of obedience, the kind of administrative staff developed to guarantee it, and the mode of exercising authority,' will all differ fundamentally.[51]

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[49] Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," trans. Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 40, http://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-15-1-11. Emphases are original.
[50] Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks*, 38.
[51] Max Weber, "The Types of Legitimate Domination," in *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* Vol. 1 (Berkeley, CA; Los Angeles, CA; London: University of California Press, 1978), 213.

Weber goes on to classify three types of legitimate domination according to the grounds they are based on: rational (belief in legality), traditional (belief in righteousness of the long-standing traditions), and charismatic (devotion to the character of one individual person).[52] Weber shows us that these bases of legitimate dominations work through administrative organisations and they assume an impersonal character even though the order works through persons in authority in relation to their ranks within administrative systems. It could be argued, however, that some major sources for money circulation within current capitalist economic system do not necessarily have to be legitimised. David Harvey claims 'a serious case can be made that the extra-legal forms are fundamental rather than peripheral to capitalism (the three largest sectors of global foreign trade are in drugs, illegal guns and human trafficking).'[53] Therefore, there must be an internal logic to what is a priority for legitimation under different phases of capitalism.

Jürgen Habermas gives as an example the need for legitimation for the inequality in distribution of surplus wealth, which constitutes an illuminating example of means of capitalist legitimation. According to Habermas, societies solve this problem of legitimation through the establishment of certain norms that justify the asymmetrical distribution of wealth. However, belief in the legitimacy of these norms alone is not sufficient for their recognition; there are additional elements of fear of punishment by laws and the person's belief in their own powerlessness.[54]

The legitimacy of such power relations, therefore, rests upon the key factors of emotions (fear) and beliefs (powerlessness). How could a person's belief in his/her own powerlessness be constructed? It is perhaps necessary at this point to refer to Foucault, who makes a very essential remark on the ways in which domination is asserted on bodies through establishment of a direct relation between the body's capability to be useful for economic ends and its inability to channel this energy to fight subjection. 'Discipline

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[52] Ibid., 215.

[53] Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism*, 44. Foucault elaborates upon the relationship between drugs, economics, and criminality in a lecture he delivered at Collège de France on 21 March 1979 by giving an account of how drug consumption is targeted in law enforcement policies. See: Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 239-267.

[54] Jürgen Habermas, "Introduction to Part III: On the Logic of Legitimation Problems," in *Legitimation Crisis*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (London: Heinemann, 1976), 96.

increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience).'[55]

It could therefore be concluded that systemic violence is inherent in legitimation processes, which are based on beliefs constructed by disciplinary forces operating on bodies to increase their subjection.

However grim this picture may look, one has to also take into consideration the role of resistance, Foucault's significant concept. Resistance of bodies to power imposed upon them is bound to have an impact on belief in legitimacy. 'As soon, however, as belief in the legitimacy of an existing order vanishes, the latent force embedded in the system of institutions is released —either as manifest force from above (which is only a temporary possibility) or in the form of expansion of the scope for participation (in which case the key to the distribution of chances to legitimately satisfy needs, that is, the degree of repression, also changes).'[56] Thus, the disbelief in legitimacy results in either a visible manifestation of force or a rearrangement of legitimate zones. In order to legitimise the unjust practices within capitalist system, norms are established and protected with fear: the fear of being punished, the fear of dispossession and infection. Similarly, fear of a threat to body as well as life works to legitimise overt or covert racist violence.

A case of exception to the justifiability of normative power is analysed by Habermas, who argues that when domains of interests to be regulated need to be justified by discourse but they cannot, compromises are needed. Habermas makes a distinction between justifiable norms, which regulate generalisable interests, and norms that merely work to stabilise relations of force, which he names as normative power. Habermas introduces the concept of compromise as a 'normed adjustment between particular interests'[57] and as one form of normative power which can be justified in an indirect way. He claims that compromise between parties may happen only if there is a power balance between the parties involved and if the negotiated interests are not generalisable. If both of

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[55] Michel Foucault, "Docile Bodies," in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1995), 138.
[56] Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, 96.
[57] Jürgen Habermas, "Chapter 3: The Model of the Suppression of Generalizable Interests," in *Legitimation Crisis* Vol. 1, 111.

these conditions are not met, then, he argues, it is not a compromise but a pseudo-compromise. Pseudo-compromise is an important form of legitimation in complex societies (possibly referring to the advanced capitalist, post capitalist and post modern societies in his schematic classification of class societies). However, in traditional capitalist and liberal-capitalist societies, the ideological form of justification was dominant.[58]

1.4. Media, Language and Symbolic Violence

Symbols gain their meanings in systems – legal systems, for example – and ideological structures that justify them. Does violence ontologically exist in every symbolic act? And if so, is it possible to perform an act that is not symbolic (and therefore not violent)?

An aspect of the role that "the symbolic" plays in discourses on violence can be observed in the form of violence. As seen from the histories of biopolitics, the forms and methods that governing employs shift and change over time. This change, however, is not marked with a clear transition from one mode of governing to the other. In this respect, the symbolic act should be read with a reference to the changing aspects of political domination. To give an example, if a nation-state issuing an apology to a particular ethnic group towards which it exercised atrocities in the past, the relationship of the physical and the symbolic marks a territory within which the exercise of power relations assumes a different guise. The physical violence that happened in the past is an overt, visible form of violence that is irreversible. The apology that follows it generations later is a symbolic act that is still peculiar to the sovereign power. The sovereign, this time, merely carries the act of violence to a symbolic level where the ethnic group in question is still in a particular position in the power relations and does not have the right or possibility to act. They are bound to be in the passive, receiving end of the apology while the sovereign commits an "honorable" symbolic act.[59]

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[58] Ibid., 112.

[59] The different levels of power in the workings of symbols in its historical and contemporary aspects can be exemplified with a recent case from the UK. In October 2016 the United Kingdom Parliament attempted to pass a bill pardoning gay and bisexual men who were previously convicted of homosexual conduct when homosexuality was illegal. It has been reported that in his parliament speech, former Labour minister Chris Bryant 'recalled a group of gay and bisexual MPs who opposed the appeasement of Adolf Hitler in the 1930s,

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron present foundations for the concept of symbolic violence in an introductory chapter of their book entitled *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (1970). Bourdieu and Passeron's concept of symbolic violence touches upon the covert form of reproduction of power relations. Bourdieu and Passeron construct their ideas about symbolic violence mainly through education and how education is a tool for reproducing certain arbitrary norms of culture. The term symbolic violence refers to an implicit form of violence whereby established systems of symbols reproduce.

> Power relations determine a PA's [pedagogic authority] characteristic mode of imposition, defined as the system of the means required for the imposition of a cultural arbitrary [sic] and for the concealment of the twofold arbitrariness of the imposition, i.e. as a historical combination of the instruments of symbolic violence and the instruments of concealment (i.e. legitimation) of that violence.[60]

Established systems of symbols reproduce by tools that enable legitimation. As Richard Jenkins points out in his book on the work of Bourdieu, 'the symbolic strength of any pedagogic agency—its capacity successfully to inculcate meaning—is a function of its "weight" in the structure of power relations.'[61]

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but were bullied by the government of the day and branded the "glamour boys".' See: Rowena Mason, "Conservative minister obstructs progression of gay pardon law," *The Guardian*, 21 October 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/law/2016/oct/21/chris-bryant-commons-plea-gay-pardon-law" (accessed November 2016). Some of the gay men in question reacted to this by saying they need an apology, and not a pardon since what they did was illegal, but not wrong.

[60] Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, "Foundations of a Theory of Symbolic Violence," in *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. Richard Nice (London; Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1990), 15. Bourdieu and Passeron define the term "cultural arbitrary" as: 'an arbitrary cultural scheme which is actually, though not in appearance, based upon power.' See: Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, "Foreword," in *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London and Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1990), xv. The term "cultural arbitrary" is gramatically incorrect. Unlike the English word "arbitrary", which is an adjective only, the word "arbitraire" in French is used both as an adjective and as a noun meaning "arbitrary nature" (such as in *l'arbitraire d'état*: the arbitrary nature of the state). We believe it was during the translation of the book from French into English that this grammatical mistake was made.

[61] Richard Jenkins, "Symbolic Violence and Social Reproduction," in *Pierre Bourdieu* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), 66.

According to Bourdieu, the state holds monopoly on legitimate physical and symbolic violence, which are at the same time elements of state formation.[62] The widespread formulation of differentiations between two opposing forms of violence finds its place in Bourdieu's work as a distinction between overt violence and symbolic violence. His idea of overt violence is based on an economic or physical kind of violence that is based on gifts and debts: economic or affective obligations. Symbolic violence, however, is a form of "censored" or "euphemised" violence that is not overtly recognisable. He stresses that these two different forms of violence do not contradict but work together in the same social formation.[63]

Bourdieu's distinction between overt and symbolic violence references the gift-based, pre-capitalist economy of Kabylie people in the north of Algeria, where he did ethnographic research in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

If acts of communication –exchanges or gifts, challenges, or words- always bear within them a potential conflict, it is because they always contain the possibility of domination. *Symbolic violence* is that form of domination which, transcending the opposition usually drawn between sense relations and power relations, communication and domination, is only exerted *through* the communication in which it is disguised.[64]

Bourdieu mentions here a traditional opposition drawn between communication and domination whereas Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri note the importance of communication tools for legitimating political power. It can be said that the element of education to Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence is what communication is to Hardt and Negri's theory on legitimation of power. Bourdieu puts a particular emphasis on the

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[62] See: Pierre Bourdieu, "Appendix: Social Space and Field of Power," in *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 33.

[63] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 191. In his book *The Suffering of the Immigrant*, Abdelmalek Sayad, an Algerian sociologist who collaborated with Bourdieu, talks about the naturalisation process of immigrants as a form of symbolic violence, 'a masked violence that cannot be named as such, naturalization is more easily acceptable when it can take on the appearance or use the alibi of being an institutionalized and legally justified violence. As violence goes, it then seems to convert itself into a *gentle violence*.' See: Abdelmalek Sayad, "A Gentle Violence," in *The Suffering of the Immigrant*, trans. David Macey (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 229.

[64] Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of a Practice*, 237.

role of educational institutions in the production of symbolic violence. According to him, the educational institution is 'one of the authorities through which the state exercises its monopoly on legitimate symbolic violence.'[65]

Hardt and Negri's statements on communication are about the collective organisation of communication tools.[66] However, Bourdieu's particular definition of symbolic violence seems to address communication at an individual level. Bourdieu's sense of communication intrinsically bears an element of symbolic violence that works covertly through the communication channels. If so, then his position raises several questions. Is symbolic violence inevitable? Does there have to be a violent aspect to communication all the time or could there be ways to transcend violence in communication?

The terms "mediation" and "communication" here are distinguished on the basis of Sean Cubitt's distinction between the two whereby mediation is the broader term whereas communication is dependent on the separation of parties (such as sender-receiver). 'Communication is a special form of mediation: sunlight, for example, mediates between astral bodies without necessarily communicating. Some communication succeeds, though the forms are many (two people agree to make love, an artwork touches many, many people form a movement). Some does not (Gaia's complaints fall on deaf ears).'[67]

What if when a particular artwork (that both mediates and communicates) addresses the issue of violence? Then, would the mere existence of that artwork mean that violence is operating in several different forms, e.g. on the level of communication (symbolic violence intrinsic in the artist's communication to the audience as well as the violence of representation), display (museums, galleries as exclusionary social spaces), technologies (dynamics of production of media tools and the limits to access) and content (in the violent acts shown)?

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[65] Pierre Bourdieu, *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power*, trans. Lauretta C. Clough (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 377. Here, Bourdieu disregards the role of the Church in French educational institutions.
[66] Hardt and Negri use mediation and communication almost interchangeably and treat them as absorbed in capitalism's systems of power.
[67] Sean Cubitt, "Thinking filming thinking filming," *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 1 (2009), http://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v1i0.2122.

All of the levels listed above are the products of social agreements. According to Bourdieu, the social world is perceived at objective and subjective levels. At the objective level, the combination of certain properties are to be found in specific social settings due to the meanings attached to persons or institutions in those settings. On the subjective level, a world of common sense is created through relations of symbolic power that presents itself through tools such as language. These two levels of constructing a perception of the world construct and feed into the continuity of power relations. 'Objective power relations tend to reproduce themselves in symbolic power relations'[68] and 'via the distribution of properties, the social world presents itself, objectively, as a symbolic system which is organized in accordance with the logic of difference, of a differential variation. The social space tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of life-styles and status groups, characterized by different life-styles.'[69]

Bourdieu argues that reproduction of power relations is related to a process of struggle over who dominates the symbolic space. This struggle is a "struggle for the production and imposition of a legitimate vision of the social world."[70] Creating this legitimate vision of the social world, according to Bourdieu, is a process of "world-making."[71]

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[68] Pierre Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power," in *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*, trans. Matthew Adamson (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 135.

[69] Ibid.,133.

[70] Ibid., 137.

[71] Domination of the symbolic space for obtaining control over what is made legitimate in the process of world making is partly a function of the possession of symbolic capital. 'Symbolic capital, a transformed and thereby *disguised* form of physical "economic" capital, produces its proper effect inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as it conceals the fact that it originates in "material" forms of capital which are also, in the last analysis, the source of its effects.' (See: Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 183.) It is important to note here that the relationship between the symbolic and the economic that Bourdieu established is different from that of classical Marxism. David Swartz, in his book *Culture and Power* argues that Bourdieu's encounter in 1960s and 70s with the work of Althusser, who attributes culture a degree of autonomy from economy, lies at the starting point of Bourdieu's theories of symbolic violence. Swartz also acknowledges that these theories of Bourdieu's draw upon influences by Durkheim, French structuralism and Weber's sociology of religion. See: David Swartz, "Bourdieu's Political Economy of Symbolic Power," in *Culture & Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago, IL; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 65. Similarly, Cheleen Mahar, Richard Harker and Chris Wilkes state that Bourdieu rejected 'the economistic use of the concept of the symbolic.' See: Cheleen Mahar, Richard Harker, Chris Wilkes, *An Introduction to the work of Pierre Bourdieu: The Practice of Theory* (Houndmills; Basingstoke; Hampshire; London: Macmillan, 1990), 5. Therefore, it can be said that Bourdieu's symbolic violence has a bond with the economic aspect but not exclusively defined by relations of production.

Because of the difficulty of identifying the perpetrators of covert violence, theorists quite often see violence as a state rather than an act *per se*. As violence is present and embedded in different layers of communication and action, most of the time it falls under more than one category. The essential point posed in this study is to discuss what normalises, legitimates, and emphasises the presence of violence through biopolitical networks. In this sense, media art as a response to various forms of political violence is a very fertile field of analysis since it leads to discussions on the relationship between mediation, communication, and visibility of violence.

2. Biopolitics and Violence

This research takes up the notion of biopolitics as the theoretical framework for the study of the manifestations of political violence in the media art from the Mediterranean. Biopolitics, a term popularised by philosopher Michel Foucault mainly through his lectures in the 1970s, can be defined as a form of population control which operates through the collection and management of biological data. The aim of biopolitical control is to "make life live" for some bodies at the expense of letting the others die.

The aim of this section is to provide a contextual framework to the discussions of biopolitics in relation to the case studies to follow. Foucault's argument about modern power's capillary characteristics (i.e. its permeation into everyday practices) is taken as a starting point to the arguments about biopolitics and violence in relation to media art since the capillary action of power implies media through which power is communicated. Therefore, media artworks in this study are contextualised within the light of capillary nature of power because specific modes of government are associated with specific media: in case study one that being the code, in two maps, in three alternative networked media, and in four, video.

It is argued here that forms of violence intrinsic in biopolitical control start from a cellular level, permeating through other aspects of life in varying degrees, showing itself in overt and covert ways. Rather than incorporating an approach to violence that considers the intensity or the physical damage as the defining character for ranking its severity, this thesis

argues for situating contemporary political violence within a temporal framework of networked biopolitics. Starting with a brief overview of the concept of biopolitics, with a particular emphasis on the work of Michel Foucault, the basics of the contemporary biopolitical governance are discussed in this section. Departing from the ideas of Foucault and theorists that followed him, a brief overview of the related concepts of necropolitics (Achille Mbembe), immunity (Roberto Esposito), molecularisation and ethopolitics (Nikolas Rose) and agonal sovereignty (François Debrix and Alexander D. Barder) are given. It is then argued here that violence operates in and through biopolitical governance from a microscopic level and mediated within particularities of space and time in its definition of the two concepts of ownership and belonging. Biopolitical time as well as biopolitical space in relation to belonging and owning define borderlines in constructing the violent relationship as manifested in bodies of varying sizes. The section concludes by demonstrating how the human body can be taken as an axis to study various forms of visible and invisible biopolitical violence in each of the artwork case studies to follow.

Michel Foucault argued that modern power has "capillary" characteristics: it operates at even the tiniest social structure and constantly circulates even in the most mundane everyday practices. In the eighteenth century, the change in the exercise of power pointed to a novel direction that registers power within the social fabric rather than an exercise from above it. In Foucault's own words, it is a 'capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives.'[72] Power operates from the minuscule level. In a sense, one can argue, so do the bases on which violence is grounded. This becomes particularly relevant since the political communication of different modes of governmentality is emphasised through different aspects of the media that are used. Media become not only tools for communicating discourses of power, but also means for producing relations at different scales that administer and recreate power relations. The different ways in which this operates will be discussed through the case studies in this thesis.

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[72] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1980), 39.

Biopolitics as a form of population management is based on the administration and categorisation of individuals according to their biological data. Foucault argues that until the end of the 17ᵗʰ century and the beginning of the 18ᵗʰ century, sovereign power was in operation. Sovereign, as defined by Carl Schmitt earlier, 'is he who decides on the exception.'[73] According to Schmitt, sovereign power determined who had the right to live and whose lives should be taken. As we have seen, Foucault argues that since the eighteenth century, however, there was a rupture in the operation of this power, and a new form of power, biopower, which reversed the equation, was introduced. 'The right of sovereignty was the right to take life or let live. The new type of power, however, has 'the right to make live and to let die.'[74] This form of governmentality, the biopolitical rule is concerned with a life administration that takes human beings as species.

> The dimension in which the population is immersed amongst the other living beings appears and is sanctioned when, for the first time, men are no longer called "mankind (*le genre humaine*)" and begin to be called "the human species (*l'espèce humaine*)." With the emergence of mankind as a species, within a field of the definition of all living species, we can say that man appears in the first form of his integration within biology.[75]

The biological data extracted from populations are administered, classified, and managed. Biopolitical control works to optimise the efficiency in the species life and its future. At the expense of enhancing the biological existence of some populations, others are exterminated.

Philosopher Giorgio Agamben revisited Foucault's notion of biopolitics in his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* first published in 1995. Foucault's notion of biopolitics emphasised a break in the historical practices of population management, perhaps only with some aspects of the previous era's sovereign rule was seeping through to

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[73] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 5

[74] Michel Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-76* (New York, NY: Picador, 2003), 241.

[75] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-78* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 104-105.

the biopolitical rule of the 17ᵗʰ and 18ᵗʰ centuries. Agamben's approach, however, tends to establish a logical connection of continuity between sovereign power and biopolitics.

In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben distinguishes between two forms of life, using the ancient Greek words *zoē* and *bios*. *Zoē* corresponds to bare life that all living beings bear in common and *bios* to a mode of living that is practiced by an individual or a group of people. According to Agamben, the very core of sovereign power is the inclusion of *zoē* in the political realm.[76] The sovereign, through imposition of laws as a tool for self-legitimation, assumes a right over bare life, which results in the creation of *homo sacer* (sacred man): a figure in ancient Roman law that signifies a body that can be killed but not sacrificed.

Agamben takes the concept of "state of exception" from Carl Schmitt and argues that sovereign rule is defined through exceptions that it creates by suspending its validity. 'The exception does not subtract itself from the rule; rather, the rule, suspending itself, gives rise to the exception and, maintaining itself in relation to the exception, first constitutes itself as a rule.'[77] Agamben claims that the regulative character of law does not so much stem from its capacity to command and prescribe rules as from its ability to create its own reference in real life and make that reference regular.[78] Similarly, when Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri discuss the issue of legitimation in their book *Empire* published in 2001, they refer to the fact that social production lies at the very core of legitimation. 'Social production and juridical legitimation should not be conceived as primary and secondary forces nor as elements of the base and superstructure, but should be understood rather in a state of absolute parallelism and intermixture, coextensive throughout biopolitical society.'[79] This argument is in line with Agamben's assertion that the sovereign's position between law and violence constitutes a distinction whereby the law and violence pass over into each other.[80]

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[76] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 6.

[77] Ibid., 18.

[78] Ibid., 26.

[79] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 41.

[80] Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 32.

Agamben problematises the paradox of sovereignty through a discussion of the relationship between constituting power and constituted power.[81] In doing so, he refers to Walter Benjamin's essay "Critique of Violence" (1921). Agamben states that Benjamin presents the relation between constituting power and constituted power with his formulation of "the violence that posits law" and "the violence that preserves law".[82] Again, what is at stake is the ways within which legal means operate in order to justify the violence that they impose while creating subjectivities.

Along with biopolitical control, the nature of the one of the prime examples of mass extermination, the characteristics of war changed as well. According to Foucault, instead of a sovereign who must be defended, wars now 'are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital.'[83] The distinction in the administration of life and death with regard to biopolitical and sovereign rule is described by Michael Dillon in a paper entitled "Security, Race and War" (2008): 'What differentiates biopolitics from sovereign politics is *a change in the correlation of life and death*, not some escape from the inevitability of that correlation.'[84] This change in the correlation of life and death also translates into the discourses around the violent nature of biopolitical rule.

The biopolitical decision on bodies whose lives are worth living at the expense of extermination of others is selective, and so is the spread of the word about the violent aspect of this process. This biopolitical selection of lives deemed worthy of life is informed by a variety of dynamics at work, which start from a cellular level and operate through relations of power, a process which converges in the classification and profiling of the human body as well as that of groups and populations, which are relevant concepts in the context of the upcoming case studies in this research.

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[81] Ibid., 39.
[82] Ibid., 40.
[83] Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power Over Life," *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1978), 137.
[84] Michael Dillon, "Security, Race and War," in *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, eds. Michael Dillon and Andrew W. Neal (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 168. Emphasis added.

2.1. Biopolitics and Spread of Violence: Lives That Matter, Violence Worth Talking About

There may be said to be an implicit hierarchical approach in the ways in which political violence is mediatised. This includes not only media's response to the individual cases of violence and the point of view that they adopt, but also their influence on what is deemed visible, thus what spreads. Perhaps a good example to illustrate this point is Wole Soyinka's statement in his book *Climate of Fear: The Quest for Dignity in a Dehumanized World* (2004) that for him, the world changed not when planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2011, but 12 years prior to that incident when a plane crashed on Niger.[85] Soyinka's point illustrates how similar acts of political violence happening under different political frameworks are made visible via media in varying degrees.

Sometimes the motive behind the spread of the talk about violence is more obvious, as in the case of 9/11. However, at other times it looks more random and less controlled. That being said, one can still pinpoint certain recognisable elements of the physiology of the spread of some elements that constitute a case of political violence and what comes under the magnifying glass.

Wole Soyinka's comparison of the two cases of plane crashes, one being in the United States and other being in Niger, takes as a basis the geographical dynamic of the visibility of violence. In addition to this aspect, other factors may be listed, such as the assertion of the rules of capitalism influencing even the conceptualisation of the worthiness of human life. For example, if a person is harmed or killed by police or military, chances are higher that it will evoke collective reaction from the general public.[86] However, if someone, for example, dies due to neglect of health and safety considerations in the workplace, then the death of the person may simply be counted as another unfortunate incident among

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[85] Wole Soyinka, *Climate of Fear* (London: Profile Books, 2004), 22.

[86] Indeed, many of the recent political protests against state violence are ignited and sometimes symbolised through a deceased body, such as in the case of Mohammed Bouazizi, who set himself on fire in Tunisia as a protest after his fruit cart was seized by police on 17 December 2010, an event leading up to large protests in Arab countries starting in 2011, better known as the Arab Spring, or in the case of Michael Brown, who was gunned down by police in Ferguson, Missouri, United States in August 2014, leading up to large protests in the US mainly stemming from racial tensions.

many, possibly not evoking the same degree of overt reaction, such as protests, or even social movements. A related example for this phenomenon is the case of illegal immigrants who drown in the Mediterranean. This situation, besides being condemned by the mainstream media, has underlying messages that the people who try to cross the Mediterranean did so out of their own will and at their own risk.

There seems to be a kind of threshold on which the extent of the violence is assessed. A relation to neoliberal norms informs this threshold as do values that are recreating themselves in everyday relations. In this case, economic violence brought about by capitalism that costs human lives at times looks like a "lesser" violence than a state-sponsored physical violence. Domestic violence is another prominent example of this kind of tacit categorisation of violence as being lesser since it is not directly carried out by the state, political bodies, or the military. However, the conditions within which domestic violence takes place are created by the institutionalised forms of patriarchal culture that empowers agents to carry out the deed of domestic violence. Part of the reason for deeming individual violence "lesser" is the capitalist notion of individual responsibility whereby an illusion of a solid operational system is created by blaming its failures on individuals: e.g. the problematic raised here, in terms of capitalist ethics, is not the faulty logic of the system itself, but the individual's inability to break free from the kind of work she is doing, hence an implicit hint that how she does not "deserve" better conditions, including the right to live (even though this is not put forward openly as such).

The question of life and death in terms of the "worthiness" of the bodies and the reactions to the type of violence imposed is taken up in recent cultural analysts, as exemplified in the work of Achille Mbembe ("Necropolitics," 2003), Judith Butler (*Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, 2004 and *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* 2009), and Talal Asad (*On Suicide Bombing*, 2007). These three authors highlight divergent facets of the unsaid rules and conventions of the reactions that cases of violence evoke. Mbembe's interest lies in a politics of sovereignty based on the power to decide who can die and who can live. Butler talks about the unequal distribution of precariousness of human life, which proceeds from different power spaces. In his book about suicide bombing, Asad raises an issue about reactions against violence, and questions

why suicide bombing evokes a different level of moral repulsion compared to state-sponsored violence. All these examples demonstrate the different levels of precariousness in human lives, and how, in relation to this, perceptions about violence are shaped by and feed into the political dynamics that surround them.

Where can one situate discourses around violence within this framework? What makes one argue that one form of violence is worse than the other? Is it the impact of the violence, the death toll, and or the nature of the means used? Is it the deep impact that may not be necessarily instantaneous, but gains form and meaning over time?

As Slavoj Žižek stated: "violence is not a direct property of some acts, but is distributed between acts and their contexts, between activity and inactivity. The same act can count as violent or non-violent, depending on its context; sometimes a polite smile can be more violent than a brutal outburst."[87] The context of the act within any given case of violence is the key point to consider here in an attempt to understand a mesh of relations around violence since it not only defines what is considered a brutal act, but also shapes the degree of visibility and spread, as well as the discourses around it.

2.2. Biopolitics at a Molecular Level: Immunity and Protection

Philosopher Roberto Esposito extensively analyses paradoxes of biopolitical governance in ending life for the sake of preserving life in his book *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy* (2008). In *Bíos*, Esposito points to some gaps that he states Foucault did not address when developing his conceptualisation of biopolitics. In addressing these gaps, Esposito introduces the term "immunity." Using the word immunity as a term referring to both biological processes (an organism's immunity against diseases) and political ones (exemption from certain political obligations), Esposito discusses how biological life and politics are intrinsically embedded.

'Rather than being superimposed or juxtaposed in an external form that subjects one to the domination of the other, in the immunitary paradigm, *bíos* and *nomos*,

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[87] Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (New York, NY: Picador, 2008), 213.

life and politics, emerge as the two constituent elements of a single, indivisible whole that assumes meaning from their interrelation. Not simply the relation that joins life to power, immunity is the power to preserve life.'[88]

Esposito argues that the concept of immunity, as opposed to biopolitics, does not mark a moment of coming together of life and politics because it embraces life and politics as one single entity. The function of politics, thus, is to keep life alive.[89]

Immunity, according to Esposito, could be practiced since the formation of any society but it is only with modernity that it formed a most intimate essence of the society.[90] Modernity also marked an epoch when humans responded to this very fact of immunisation's centrality to the social structures. The reason for this, he argues, has to do with the invention of machinery and diminishing of natural defenses that included the symbolic protection of the 'theological matrix.'[91]

When Foucault analyses how power over life evolved since the seventeenth century, he introduces two basic forms: one, body as machine and two, body as the basis of the biological processes.[92] Foucault's conceptualisation of body as machine, as in his term "docile bodies" refers to the disciplining of the body like a machine. His idea of machinery and technology is external to the biological beings of humans. When Foucault talks about machine or the body's becoming machine, he is most of the time making an analogy with the workings of the power rather than pointing to the merging of the biological with the mechanical.

Esposito, on the other hand, relates his concept of immunity to a crisis in modernity that came with the invention of machinery. When talking about the contemporary, he takes into account the effects of technological progress on biological being and problematises the term *zoē* (bare life) in Agamben's analysis of biopolitics. He

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[88] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, Posthumanities Series v. 4, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 45-46.

[89] Ibid., 46.

[90] Ibid., 55.

[91] Ibidem.

[92] Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life," *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1984), 262-263.

states: '*Zōē* [sic] itself can only be defined problematically: what, assuming it is even conceivable, is an absolutely natural life? It's even more the case today, when the human body appears to be increasingly challenged and also literally traversed by technology [*tecnica*].'[93] Esposito's question addresses how media tools change humans' conceptualisation of the self and the sovereign.

Our relation with the media involves a question of command on the side of humans and a critical distance that is becoming narrower. Can we take Esposito's concept of immunity as a practice that became most visible in modernity and apply it to contemporary questions about humans' relationship to media? Could the contemporary protocological control of networks be regarded as migrating the practices of immunity to virtual space? Are humans' defense mechanisms against technological threat preceding their biological merger with technology? In this framework, what can computer viruses as malfunctions and interventions tell us about our defenses?

In looking at the transition to biopolitics through a paradigm of immunity whereby an individual seeks to make herself/himself immune to the contagions of the community, Esposito also touches upon the question of violence, using computer viruses as an example. In a chapter entitled "Immunization and Violence" in *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics* (2013), Esposito talks about computer viruses and biological viruses to contrast the notions of immunity and community. Esposito first explains how Western governments invest in keeping the anti-virus software up to date in order to prevent harm to financial, political, and military networks. After explaining that self-protection is not necessarily a phenomenon related exclusively to our times, he states that the "threshold of awareness with regard to risk" has changed.[94]

The idea of immunity, which is needed for protecting our life, if carried past a certain threshold, winds up negating life. That is, immunity encages life such that

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[93] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, 15. The impossibility of defining a zoē without the presence of technica resonates with Donna Haraway's concept of cyborg politics (outlined in her seminal "A Cyborg Manifesto" [1984]) in its rejection of the boundaries separating human from the animal and the machine. See: Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and the Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1991), 149-182.
[94] Roberto Esposito, *Terms of the Political* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013), 60.

not only is our freedom but also the very meaning of our individual and collective existence lost: that flow of meaning, that encounter with existence outside of itself that I define with the term *communitas*, which refers to the constitutively open character of existence.[95]

The boundaries that mark immunity constitute an aspect of the modern structure of community whereby certain bodies are exempt from rules and dangers at the expense of exclusion of other bodies. This process of exclusion could manifest itself in the form of state violence on the bases of nationality, race, and gender as well as in the neoliberal economic structures. In *Foucault, Politics, and Violence* (2012), Johanna Oksala states:

> While state violence thus remains an important political instrument for creating and maintaining the economic game in neoliberal governmentality, all other forms of violence are effectively divested of any political significance. Neoliberalism depoliticizes violence by turning it into an economic rather than a political or moral issue.[96]

Oksala's analysis is based on the premises that different kinds of violence could be categorised in a self-contained manner within which different modes of analysis could be applied. However, as it will be further argued in the second part of this chapter and throughout the case studies, violence is transformative: it can assume different forms and positions throughout its lifespan. The temporal aspect of violence also becomes an important element in identifying its existence. If different forms of violence were self-contained and static, and Oksala's above argument is to be taken as a guide to follow the operational logic of violence, then it would follow that Marxism also "depoliticises" violence since it bases its very existence on economic factors. When looked at it from this perspective, it could be seen that the relationships drawn between violence and its economic aspects do not necessarily bring forth its depoliticisation.

The link between the two different facets of violence, i.e. economic and political, is

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[95] Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, 61.
[96] Johanna Oksala, *Foucault, Politics, and Violence* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 142.

well grounded such that it is no longer possible to talk about them as different phases of governmentality. The structural framework of creating and maintaining immune bodies is informed by a combination of entangled variants of violence that are intrinsic to capitalism. Biopolitical governance operates on the basis of paradoxical practices related to maintaining and ending life. Looking at the process of making law to implement the legality of the war, and using war to test the boundaries of legality, theorist Ed Cohen illustrates that the biopolitics of immunity subsumes modes of living in a context where vitality is threatened by the very existence of organisms around it.

> Strictly speaking, where immunity exists there is no need of defense and where defending occurs there is no immunity. Nevertheless, the bioscientific appropriation of immunity collapses both these possibilities to describe how a complex organism maintains its vitality while living in a world where some of its fellow organisms (viral, bacterial, parasitic, and human) potentially threaten its well-being and aliveness. As a consequence of this incongruous and yet largely unnoticed fusion, the "immune" organism becomes a biopolitical life form through and through.[97]

Immunity implies a form of protection, whether it is legal or biological. Nonetheless, immunity cannot be a permanent state of being: its condition of being is based on those dynamics against which it is positioned (i.e. protection from certain conceived types of danger is needed at certain historical periods). Therefore, for any condition that is not subject to change over time for political or biological reasons, immunity is deemed void. Immunity as a concept is grounded on a negation of its counter forces: one needs immunity and protection from something which will otherwise contaminate it. The two major and contradictory ways to deem immunity null is either by a radical change in the balance of power (in its legal sense), or a slow mutational change over time (in its biological sense).

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[97] Ed Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 2009), 6-7.

Both from a legal and a biological point of view, although the factors against which agents are immune are subject to change, the idea of immunity itself as a long-term protection is stable. The agents immune to the dangers from outside form a social group where the focus is shifted from the rational basis of the immunity to the premises upon which it stands: the reason for immunity from the particular set of conditions is expressed to the extent that the idea of immunity is not questionable. The reason why one should be immune to something is justified by a need to protect the integrity of the body against the potentially threatening external agents. Within biopolitical rule, the question is not so much about the justification of the need for immunity; rather, it is about who deserves the right to be immune, hence to survive.

Immunity starts from a microscopic level, and as a concept, is closely aligned with the purity of the self, which is at war with external threats. Sociologist Nikolas Rose contends that risk management, increasingly becoming central to contemporary biopolitics, now operates at the molecular level.[98] According to Rose, contemporary biopolitics does not seek to identify and eliminate the individuals that are defective for the pure existence of the nation. Rather, there are more complex layers of administering populations that have economic as well as political and social implications. These are operated through 'epidemiological strategies that seek to reduce the aggregate levels of risk across a population.'[99]

Ethopolitics is the name that Rose uses to describe the modes of living and practices that an individual exercises as self-government. 'It is here, *at the intersection of the molecularization of life with the individualization of risk*, that Rose locates ethopolitics as the dominant biopolitical regime of the present.'[100] The modes and practices of current

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[98] Indeed, molecularisation is one of the five traits of contemporary biopolitics that Rose identifies as mutating: *molecularisation* (intervention into life at the molecular level), *optimisation* (deciding on the optimal possible being of the body with regard to health and illness), *subjectification* (the definition of rights of humans according to their corporeal existence), *somatic expertise* (scientific or technical specialisation into certain aspects of bodily form), and *economies of vitality* (capitalisation of the humans' biological value). See: Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, NJ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[99] Rose, "The Politics of Life Itself,", 7.

[100] Bruce Braun, "Biopolitics and the molecularization of life," *Cultural Geographies* 14, no. 6 (2007): 11, http://doi.org/10.1177/1474474007072817. Emphasis is original.

molecularisation of life and risk assessment provide a medium where the life of the individual is connected with the necessities of good government.[101]

> 'In ethopolitics, life itself, as it is lived in its everyday manifestations, is the object of adjudication. If discipline individualizes and normalizes, and biopower collectivizes and socializes, ethopolitics concerns itself with the self-techniques by which human beings should judge themselves and act upon themselves to make themselves better than they are.'[102]

Rose's concept of ethopolitics aims to lay out how vitality is achieved by individuals through the realisation of what is biologically regarded as optimum, which have to do with the health and wellbeing of the society as a body.

From a different but parallel perspective, one can look at the economic implications of this in contemporary neoliberal regime. Sociologist and philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato in his book *The Making of the Indebted Man* (2012) explains how the current economy is a debt economy within which regardless of class or position within the society, one is supposed to be an economic subject who can capitalise on symbolic assets of the self.

> 'What is required, and cuts across the economy and modern day society, is not knowledge but the injunction to become an economic "subject" ("human capital," "entrepreneur of the self"), an injunction that concerns just as much the unemployed as the user of public services, the consumer, the most "modest" of workers, the poorest, or the "migrant."'[103]

In both cases, i.e. ethopolitics and economic subjectivity, the capital that a body holds is presented to an outside world in an enhanced manner, through which new forms of governing are constructed. It is the degree to which one can become an economic subject under the neoliberal rule that one's body becomes a space that is worth keeping live and healthy. For the ones in between, as Achille Mbembe points out in "Necropolitics" (2003),

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[101] See: Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century.*
[102] Rose, "The Politics of Life Itself,", 18.
[103] Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man* (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2012), 50-51.

it is a world of the living dead, whether they are in a factory where they work under inhuman conditions, in a land that is occupied by armed forces, or in a war camp.

When talking about biopolitics and the destructive end of the biopolitical equilibrium, it is safe to assume that one of the most present feelings would be the feeling of agony. In their book *Beyond Biopolitics: Theory, Violence and Horror in World Politics*, François Debrix and Alexander D. Barder look at the existing literature on biopolitics in relation to violence and formulate their concept of "agonal sovereignty". Debrix and Barder argue that agonal sovereignty is about the possibility of pulverisation of the two opposite biopolitical principles of protecting or eliminating certain forms of life, and 'reveals their indistinctiveness.'[104]

According to Debrix and Barder, agonal sovereignty's objects of power are not humans (as in modern power) or life and species (biopolitical power); agonal sovereignty is concerned with singular human experience, body parts, and open wounds, with horror operating on senses and cognitively.[105] The reason Debrix and Barder state they wish to go beyond the existing theories of biopolitics is these theories' obfuscation of the extreme violence exercised on the body.

> Even when we try to make sense of the manner in which Nazi totalitarianism operated by way of an unspeakable violence onto human bodies, biopolitical frames of representability, such as those developed by Agamben, Esposito, Dillon and Reid, or indeed Foucault, fall short of apprehending the condition of horror and agony characteristic of the camp (actual or virual).[106]

Debrix and Barder contend that Agamben and Foucault 'remain caught within a dialectic of life or death.'[107] Esposito's theory of immunisation, they state, misses the very

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[104] François Debrix and Alexander D. Barder, *Beyond Biopolitics: Theory, Violence and Horror in World Politics* (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 21.
[105] Debrix and Barder depart from Adriana Cavarero's concept of horrorism and build upon their notion of agonal sovereignty with a view to move beyond different conceptualisation of biopolitics. See Adriana Cavarero, *Horrorism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009).
[106] François Debrix and Alexander D. Barder, *Beyond Biopolitics*, 120.
[107] Ibidem. Even though in Western philosophy, there are prominent bodies of work taking birth or death as departure points in discussing power, such as in the work of Hannah Arendt or Martin Heidegger.

material horror of the concentration camps. It could be said that the argument by Debrix and Barder that the existing theories of biopolitics as developed by Foucault, Agamben, Esposito and others on the basis of their disregard for the horrific violence exercised upon the bodies does not do justice to these theories. The critical engagements opened up by these theoretical grounds are implicitly informed by conditions of power that define and designate the worthiness of life, and everything in between life and death. Even though agonal sovereignty is an elaborate framework to see the contemporary workings of power through sensations such as fear, agony, and horror, it places a definitive emphasis on the overt violence that has visible manifestations. However, recent literature on violence, has demonstrated that there are also various other forms of covert violence in operation, and various theories of biopolitics criticised by Debrix and Barder encompass material and immaterial manifestations of forms of violence.

Some of the covert forms of violence lie dormant and at times manifest themselves in different forms, such as counter-violence. These may perhaps be best exemplified in the instances of protest whereby the infliction of less overt forms of political violence transforms itself into a violent response, causing damage on one's own body, property, or the designated enemy. What started the Arab Spring, a wave of protests across many countries in the Middle East against their political leaders, was an instance of a Tunisian street vendor named Mohammed Bouazizi burning himself. The event, before it happened and in its aftermath, demonstrates a wide range of different types of violence operating through and on bodies. Firstly, one can talk about the structural violence that was inflicted upon the body of Bouazizi through myriad means and forms that neoliberal governance has imposed. The very problem of Bouazizi was poverty, the inability to sustain the lives of his own body and perhaps other bodies that he is responsible to care for. This structural form of violence, combined with symbolic violence, has been lying dormant in the body of one single agent. These forms of violence are accompanied with the powers of the nation-state, which, in this case was exercised by police forces that took away Bouazizi's cart, through legal means. In this case, there is a violent act against a person's endeavour to sustain his bodily existence on perfectly legal grounds. This last act of visible police violence, combined with the existing dormant or less visible forms of violence that have been inflicted upon the person in different ways, turned into a counter act whereby he takes

action and transforms the covert violence into an overt form of violence by harming his own body as a political statement (and not in the name of another leader, body, institution, or concept, unlike suicide bombers). In its aftermath, this event that ignited the political protests across Middle East brought into play military violence, police violence, and revolutionary violence, among potentially many others. It is not only the singular experience of open wounds and body parts that are being targeted in this biopolitical relationship of different forms of violence, but a variation in the administration of life and death on the basis of various factors at work, mainly, I argue, of belonging and ownership.

2.3. Biopolitics, Violence, Belonging and Ownership

Drawing a comparison between capitalist ownership vis-à-vis that of the nation state, it can be argued that there is a twofold relationship to the idea of belonging. Ownership is a legal category that involves a financial stake whereas belonging has to do with one's status as a person that relates to a territorial area.

Belonging is affective and primordial whereas ownership is financial and legal. The idea of a nation-state involves both belonging to a land (as in living there), and "ownership" of a land (although one does not necessarily have to possess the land to belong to a nation-state). The logic that operates here is geographical or genealogical and thus, in majority of the cases, primordial. The belonging is given; it is not acquired in the sense that one can assume the nationality of another nation-state. The relationship could only go in the reverse direction: one can be banned from their country, and denied citizenship.

In terms of capitalist relationships and class, on the other hand, belonging to a class is not a prerequisite for ownership of capital in terms of biopolitics. Upward social mobility is a concept that the desires of many people are mobilised towards. The emphasis is not on the means, but on the end (In the process is sacrificed an ethics that is outside capital). Therefore, one claims responsibility for failing. There is always a set of criteria to judge one if they fail: You are not a hard enough worker. The judgment gets harsher as one goes down further. Those born into capital are not always judged based on merit and thus, their

non-achievement is not failure since their basis of operation is at a different level than those who do not belong to that particular class.

The difference between the idea of belonging and ownership of capital and the nation state, therefore, is at the symbolic level. This idea of responsibility attributed to a person about her own "fate" are among the motivations for people who actively seek to invest in their bodies in the biopolitical and ethopolitical systems of existence.

It is argued here that current biopolitical governance and its relationship to violence are closely linked to the designated dynamics of belonging and ownership, and their positioning within particularities of specific times and spaces. The space of a body as the target of violence is marked beginning from a micro level, for example a cell, to larger geographical entities, for example borders of a nation-state.[108] Hence, the artwork case studies in this thesis are based on a spectrum that ranges from the microscopic to the landscape level. This physicality is a reference to the space of violence and how it is embodied in the media arts of the twenty first century.

The time of violence could take shape in any abrupt act of overt violence, such as when a drone hits a target during a war, or over long periods of time, as in violence towards environment that accumulates over decades. Violence and violation of rights operate at different levels resulting from a profiling of one's body as it is situated within the dialogue between these two elements of time and space. Both profiling and spatio-temporal functioning are functions of the capillary media of biopolitics.

2.3.1. Belonging, Owning and Biopolitical Time of Violence

"Nobody, friends" – Polyphemus bellowed back from
*   his cave –*
"Nobody's killing me now by fraud and not by force!"

"If you're alone," his friends boomed back at once,

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[108] Some aspects of the belonging and ownership in question today is directly related to the early formation of nation states. At the end of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the idea of nation was formulated with regard to the people who lived there, which formed a basis for belonging to the space.

"and nobody's trying to overpower you now – look,
it must be a plague sent here by mighty Zeus
and there's no escape from that.
You'd better pray to your father, Lord Poseidon.[109]

In Homer's epic poem *Odysseus*, there is a scene where Odysseus is trapped in the cave of the Cyclops Polyphemus who devours his fellow men one by one. To escape the cave, Odysseus devises a cunning plan of first introducing himself as Nobody, and then offering Polyphemus bowls of wine before boring his eye with an olive stake. When the Cyclops cries for help from his neighbour Cyclops, he could only shout from his cave: "Nobody's killing me now by fraud and not by force!" The other Cyclops, in turn, think if nobody is killing him, then it must be the wrath of gods and tell Polyphemus to accept his fate.

The plan Odysseus devises to escape the Cyclops could be thought of as a metaphor for violence imposed through an existing body that yet becomes invisible through a trick name given to it via an organised plan. In this sense the plan is the organised capitalistic violence that is inflicted upon different aspects of bodies and life on the Earth.

Rob Nixon in his book *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011) describes the process of environmental destruction that spans over a long period of time using the concept of "slow violence", which is a form of invisible violence with delayed effects, that is contrary to the mediatised forms of visible violence.

> Advocating invading countries with mass forms of slow-motion toxicity, however, requires rethinking our accepted assumptions of violence to include slow violence. Such a rethinking requires that we complicate conventional assumptions about violence as a highly visible act that is newsworthy because it is event focused, time bound, and body bound. We need to account for how the temporal dispersion of slow violence affects the way we perceive and respond to a variety of social

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[109] Homer, *Circe and the Cyclops* (London: Penguin Books, 2015), 19-20.

afflictions—from domestic abuse to posttraumatic stress and, in particular environmental calamities.[110]

In his book, Nixon establishes a relationship between the invisibility of the slow violence to the invisibility of the environmentalism of the poor. Describing slow violence, Nixon refers to Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence. Nixon situates structural violence as a possible component of his concept of slow violence, stating that slow violence covers a larger terrain due to its emphasis on not only agency but also temporality. The contrast with slow violence is that Nobody has no profile as spatio-temporal place. Therefore Nobody cannot be (legally, politically) responsible for the act of killing.

When thought about in temporal terms, Nixon's concept of slow violence could be compared with Slavoj Žižek's "SOS violence," the opening chapter of his book *Violence: Six Sideway Reflections* (2008) which describes the discursive field of urgent appeal for eliminating violent agents as a way to obfuscate the actual pervasive structural violence of capitalism. Within this spectrum of temporal questions of violence, the underlying common theme is the invisibility of both forms of violence.

The difference in temporality between different forms of violence could be thought about in terms of having a target. Visible, physical, and abrupt violence such as in war has a target that has to be hit or eliminated. Slow violence, however, is not an end in itself; it is a process with material effects that may not always be easily identifiable.

Slow violence takes effect over an extended period of time, and its scope covers large geographical areas, its referents being ecological combined with the political whereas the SOS violence refers to a very specific violent discourse as situated in larger societal structures. The temporality of the violence, therefore, varies in accordance with the agents and surroundings involved: violence against humans in any setting, whether it be in a discursive field as Žižek mentions, or in a material condition such as war, is marked by its speed whereas slow violence against nature sediments slowly.

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[110] Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 3.

The time of violence is also interconnected to the spaces of violence, especially when thought about in terms of an "inside/outside" equation. Here media and media art assume an essential role as well. To give an example, the construction of masculinities across the nation —outside of one's house— over the years may lead to domestic violence inside home. In a similar vein, if we take the nation-state as one's home (even though the subject of the question may be migrants as well), what happens at home has repercussions for what happens in the world in general. At this stage, in some cases, the presence of a media tool such as a television or radio become a critical factor in accessibility to various forms of violence that have happened over time periods that have an impact on the domestic violence that happens in somebody's own house. That being said, the inside-outside dichotomy gains another level of complication with the widespread use of mobile devices that have access to the Internet in the 21st century, particularly 2010 onwards. Traditionally, television or radio brought the outside world into one's house, affecting the dynamics of domestic violence in many different ways (one may be motivated to inflict more violence through what one sees on television or on the contrary, less of it due to the different modes of living he witnesses on screen). With smart phone technology, however, the media tool is portable: it is both inside and outside. However, the main point here is not the positioning of the device itself; it is, rather, the users' experience of being permanently inside the network, a feature of contemporary exploitation.

The effects of violence of any given time may transform into various different forms at a later point, i.e. the violence of the past may resonate as a different form of violence in the present or in the future. This may assume the form of a response to the violent events of the past, state or legal responses or preemptive precautions to the threat of violence. In a similar vein, the remembrance of the violent events of the past is not factually reliable since memory of humans and environment are involved in the equation. This unreliability of the conception of violence of the past potentially has the power of transforming the violent attitudes of the present and future. Therefore, the idea of violence could be said to be situated in a time zone which includes dynamics such as physical harm, emotional responses, and memory, which has implications for further interpersonal, physical, legal, or state violence to come.

Just as the time in violence can mark the variations within different forms of violence, it can be argued that time is also essential in the demarcation of biopolitical administration. Biopolitical governance is a result of administration of population as their relationship to the space within a very specific time context. This time context can vary from the milliseconds of the networks (akin to the cellular body as a space) to decades or generations (just as in larger environmental space).

A microorganic mechanism within the body — as in the case of a cell, or a virus invading a body— is technically both a body and a space that can change in small amounts of time and remain within the host body over extended periods of time, sometimes genetically copied to generations to follow. (Parallel with networks, messages disappear whereas infrastructure remains, as in the accumulation of the history of messages). This change of body/space within time, its developments, evolution, eradication, and adjustment is essential for biopolitics with regard to statistical data collection and management as well as to the decision-making process of bodies worth keeping alive.

2.3.2. Belonging, Owning and Biopolitical Space of Violence

Philosopher Achille Mbembe argues that Foucault's notion of biopolitics is not sufficient in explaining some aspects of contemporary governmentality. In developing his concept of necropolitics, Achille Mbembe turns to Frantz Fanon's description of colonial occupation from a spatial point of view. The lives of the colonised people are "disposable" and necropolitics leads to a maximum destruction of these "disposable" bodies. For the surviving bodies among these ones, "death-worlds", spaces where one is neither living nor dead, are created.

Mbembe in his paper "Necropolitics," (2003) also looks at a Mediterranean problem, the current occupation of Palestine by Israel and its allies, in terms of necorpower that is different from the earlier forms of colonial occupation.

Late-modern colonial occupation differs in many ways from early-modern

occupation, particularly in its combining of the disciplinary, the biopolitical, and the necropolitical. The most accomplished form of necropower is the contemporary colonial occupation of Palestine.[111]

It was by drawing on Fanon's description of the creation and division of colonial space that Mbembe formulated the idea of necropower, a power which maximises death for certain populations and creates living death-worlds for the ones who survive. 'The town belonging to the colonized people… is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how.'[112] The particular site of violence is marked by the people living in it: the space *belongs* to people. People *belong* to the space, one may add. '[C]olonial violence and occupation are profoundly underwritten by the sacred terror of truth and exclusivity (mass expulsions, resettlement of "stateless" people in refugee camps, settlement of new colonies).'[113] Statelessness in this respect is signifier of lack of belonging: the subject does not belong to a state, and therefore should be in another designated area for belonging: the refugee camp. It is through the engagement of biopolitical space and time with regard to belonging and ownership that some mass population governance takes place. The issue at stake here is not only a state of belonging to a particular space; it is rather, belonging to the space at a specific time. It could be said that one of the most straightforward examples of this kind of governance is compulsory population swap of minorities between nation-states under a political pact, in which case the space one belongs to is identified by the nation-states on the basis of one's national heritage, ethnicity and religion rather than their place of birth.

Another such example, from a slightly different angle, is migration, where space and time of belonging as well as the ownership of capital and land collide. The issue of migration is particularly essential in the context of a study of political violence across the Mediterranean due to its extraordinary history of migration flows. The notions of purity and cleanliness tie in with popular discourse creating fear of a virus, including those carried by immigrants whose bodies invade the space one belongs to (and perhaps owns).

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[111] Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," trans. Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15, No. 1 (2003): 27, http://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-15-1-11.

[112] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. C. Farrington (New York, NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991), 39 in Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 26-27.

[113] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 27.

Mbembe's concept of necropolitics can be applied to the spaces created by the state of being a refugee, one of the central themes of the four cases in this study. The war torn zones or spaces of economic devastation become necropolitical. In this sense, human mobility is a tool to resist the necropolitics of the environment within which systemic violence takes place in overt or covert forms.[114] However, the movement does not necessarily mean an escape from the necropolitical environment: the refugee camps, dependent on the state regimes of where they are positioned, may become necropolitical as well. These spaces exist as if they belong to a different world than our own. This may be the reason why immigrants at Calais who advertised to rent their tents via Airbnb, a popular property rental site, attracted much attention from media since it was the penetration of a political world with another one. This act of protest may be contrasted with that of artist Ai Wei Wei, who used refugee jackets to attract attention to the contemporary refugee situation by making cinema celebrities wear them at the Cinema for Peace gala, part of the 2016 Berlin Film Festival, a gesture criticised by art circles after celebrities posed with the jackets to take cheerful auto-portraits with their mobile phones.[115] When looked at it in terms of biopolitics of space, Ai Wei Wei's act itself serves a similar purpose in terms of intent: intervening in the normality of spaces through means addressed to feelings. Nonetheless, the critical aim does not ensure that the act is carried out in a critical way.

The question of the time of one's biological data, and the time of the cells that one "owns" within one's body, as part of genetic heritage, where some of the profiling takes place. Ownership starts from a molecular level, and may define belonging (as in the genes defining where one's body is physically supposed to be, as in the case of forced migration).

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[114] Even though "escape" in its traditional form spatial or physical, the escape from the network is another problem we are yet to confront. "Indeed, the recently terminated practice of 'signature strikes', in which data analytics was used to determine emblematic 'terrorist' behaviour and match these patterns to potential targets on the ground, already points to a future in which intelligence-gathering, assessment and military action, including the calculation of who can legally be killed, will largely be performed by machines based upon an ever-expanding database of aggregated information." Susan Schuppli, "Deadly Algorithms: Can legal codes hold software accountable for code that kills?" *Radical Philosophy* 187 (2014), https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/deadly-algorithms (accessed September 2017).

[115] Clarisse Loughrey "Ai Weiwei made a room full of celebrities take selfies in refugee jackets," *The Independent*, 18 February 2016, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/ai-weiwei-made-a-room-full-of-celebrities-take-selfies-in-refugee-jackets-a6881266.html (accessed September 2017).

The bodies worthy of life under neoliberalism have an economic value, either in the way they contribute to the operation of the economic and political system, or in the way they support the living of other beings worthy of life. In her book *The Visible Human Project* (2000) Catherine Waldby looks at the marginalisation of some bodies and the logic of capitalisation based on this process:

> [B]iotechnology is a means of gearing the material order of living matter, and biomedicine in particular seeks to produce what I term 'biovalue', a surplus value of vitality and instrumental knowledge which can be placed at the disposal of the human subject. This surplus value is produced through setting up certain kinds of hierarchies in which marginal forms of vitality—the foetal, the cadaverous and extracted tissue, as well as the bodies and body parts of the socially marginal—are transformed into technologies to aid in the intensification of vitality for other living beings.[116]

The positioning of the body within a particular space is sometimes a matter of genetic heritage as defined by the primordial conceptions of belonging to a nation-state. Any form of movement within the geographical space where one does not belong to (either by blood, or by class) poses a threat to the integrity and the purity of the communities formed by neoliberal subjecthood.

Why is the notion of cleanliness so central to the idea of security? Does the invisibility of any form of external threat, such as a viral attack, have an influence on this? The most powerful discourses around the dangers of external attacks may be said to utilise the unseen and the unknown — as does the invisible workings of the violence that lurks beneath the seen scale of the visible.

In an article entitled, "Responsibility and Terror: Visual Culture and Violence in the Precarious Life," Mark J. Lacy, through reading of Judith Butler's *Precarious Life*, offers

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[116] Catherine Waldby, *The Visible Human Project: Informatic Bodies and Posthuman Medicine* (London; New York, NY: Routledge, 2000), 19.

an analysis of a selection of popular visual culture products, reflecting upon the notion of violence post-9/11.

> Post-9/11, a demonstration of awesome effects—what Butler refers to as the "sublimity of destruction"—is required to visually impress the population at home. And in a reversal of the way that the enemy is individualized and moralized, so those orchestrating the response to terror are also individualized and moralized (as good, civilized, careful) as agents of responsible violence, but a violence that is awesome, delivering the population from the terror of uncertainty.[117]

This argument points to a war against terror being symbolised, and maybe idealised, in the persona of individuals who ensure a relief, so to speak, from the contamination that uncertainty brings.[118]

The biopolitical equation is a conversation between the opposite concepts of life and death; practices of making live and letting die or killing. Under biopolitical rule, the administration of the living in between is a danger, a contagious threat to the assumed integrity of some segments of neoliberal society.

2.4. Biopolitics of Violence: Conclusions

Foucault argued that what was witnessed with Nazism was an amplified version of the already existing power structures within the Western world. In a similar vein, it could be said that contemporary forms of visible or overt political violence are at times the eruption of dormant invisible or covert political violence. Biopolitics and the contemporary literature around it are used as a theoretical framework in this research for the study of political violence in general and across the Mediterranean in particular, due to the variety in the political practices and the characteristics of the governance regimes in the region.

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[117] Mark J. Lacy, "Responsibility and Teror: Visual Culture and Violence in the Precarious Life," in *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 66

[118] As Foucault suggests: 'The fact that the other dies does not mean simply that I live in the sense that his death guarantees my safety; the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer.' Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended"*, 255.

Departing from theories of biopolitics which argue that biopolitical governance starts from the cellular level while administering the humans as a population, this chapter aimed to frame the positioning of fractions of spaces and time within a biopolitical framework of belonging and owning.

The information on cellular and genetic structures, which can be considered both as bodies and as paces, is used in biopolitical governance to collect and administer data within a specific time context. The biopolitical space and time of human bodies are organised in such a manner that the ideas of belonging and owning mark a defining role in the construction of the bodies that are worth living. This organisation, classification, profiling and management involves different economic and political outcomes with regard to the biological circulations of data and surplus value.

The problematics of biopolitical governance have also been raised as a criticism towards the positioning of contemporary art. In their book *Necropolitics, Racialization, and Global Capitalism* (2014), Marina Grzinic and Sefik Tatlic mention shifts in the coloniality as manifested in contemporary arts and reseach culture.

> [I]n contemporary art and theory, not only is life being used at their [biopolitcs' and necropolitics'] core (as their *materia prima*, as their raw material) but that the originary biopolitical characteristics of contemporary art (seen as an Institution) are effectuated in the way these projects and discourses deal with life, formally, aesthetically and contextually.[119]

Grzinic and Tatlic criticise contemporary art as being an Institution that relies on old networks of power. The "freedom" that is given to artists for criticising the neoliberal capitalism according to them is merely a space that has to be given for the system to work. This statement, no doubt, is relevant and valid for many networks of power that operate within the contemporary art scene. This kind of criticism towards contemporary art is based on its reliance on the capital of big corporate entities. However, the variety in artistic

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[119] Marina Grzinic and Sefik Tatlic, *Necropolitics, Racialization, and Global Capitalism* (Lanham, Maryland; Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2014), 134.

practices and contexts should not be overlooked. Otherwise, the argument would lead to a dismissal of any form of contemporary art as mere institutional entities with a biopolitical starting point.

How media could be perceived as brutally violent or highly emancipatory may be illustrated with two examples, both from the Mediterranean. The first example is a photograph of a four-year-old girl named Hudea who surrenders to the camera of Osman Sağırlı, the photographer, thinking it was a weapon at Atmeh refugee camp in Syria in December 2014.[120] The second example has to do with the capacity of media to open up novel ways of collective movements and protesting. In Spain, a new internal security law was introduced in 2015. Also known as the Gag Law, the new law dictated that no demonstrations can be held without prior permissions from the state or government bodies. Citizens whose democratic rights of protest were violated gave a response to the law by organising a hologram protest where a hologram of people marching was projected onto the street.[121] This response by the people to the suppressive practices of the government emphasised once again the role of body and media as a response to physical and non-physical violence and violation of rights, which then leads to the positioning of media art within this context.

Biopolitical accounts (as well as discourses on immunity and necropolitical practices) use networks: the historically changing form of Foucault's capillaries. In the virus, this capillary is biological, to that extent "mediation" through its management (immunitas) is always already biopolitical. Media art networks are situated within the triangles of art, networks, and biopower.

Biopower operates at the cellular, bodily, urban and regional leads, from epidemic control to post-disciplinary management ("care of the self"), and through population management up to the agonal sovereignty experienced in war. All of these are media that turn into violent forms of communication. The violent nature of communication is easier

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[120] "The photographer who broke the internet's heart," BBC Trending, 31 March 2015, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-32121732 (accessed September 2017).
[121] Jennifer Baker, "First Hologram Protest in History Held Against Spain's Gag Law," *Popular Resistance*, 12 April 2015, https://popularresistance.org/first-hologram-protest-held-against-spains-gag-law/ (accessed September 2017).

to diagnose when physical threat tools are involved (for example, weapons are a medium of communication, regardless of their potential brutality). Nonetheless, when it is at the more conceptual realm, the level where communication gets violent becomes more fuzzy.

Each of the case studies in this research illustrates how violence in the age of biopolitical control works in overt and covert ways through artworks that deal with different scales of bodies as their subject matter. The case studies presented in this research aim to give an overview of the relationship between biopolitical governance and its violent aspects as imposed on bodies of different scales. Media art provides a groundwork for study here as a form of response and a conversation between the dynamics of governance at force and the uses of media. The main five topics that the four case studies touch upon are: a) computer viruses and their metaphorical affinity to biological viruses b) illegal immigration and the bodies worth sacrificing 3) urban landscape of possession and the unseen violence of ownership 4) war and the biopolitical violence of the imminent physical destruction.

3. Media Art, Networks and the Mediterranean

How is it relevant to talk about the existence of a Mediterranean considering the existing disconnection in the region at multiple levels, consisting of those in micro areas resulting from factors such as ethnic, religious, and linguistic factors within the same urban geography to bigger areas of port cities vis-à-vis their hinterlands, and to the larger supranational levels of diplomatic relationships (such as France being a core economic power of the European Union and countries like Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain being members unlike others from the region)? The major studies on the history of the Mediterranean dealt with this problematic in their own ways. Some justified the existence of the Mediterranean due to it historically and presently being a subject of analysis. Some drew attention to the impossibility of its stability in the sense that it forms and dissipates, nonetheless acknowledged its existence across different time periods, albeit in different guises.[122] Yet others, such as Michael Herzfeld consider the idea of Mediterraneanism as passé, and as a remnant of the intellectual debates of the 1980s and

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[122] See: Naor Ben-Yehoyada, "Mediterranean, Becoming and Unbecoming: Fishing, Smuggling, and Region Formation between Sicily and Tunisia since WWII" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2011), http://search.proquest.com/docview/876963224.

1990s.[123] Indeed, this study is conducted thoroughly aware of the dangers of claiming to create a unified cultural space that may be used to reaffirm the archaic and primordial claims of nationhood or regionalism.[124] The dangers of constructing a romantic or utopian Mediterranean that is not dissimilar to the idea of an Orient have also been largely considered and contested by anthropologists[125] and historians working on the field. Therefore, it should be noted that the aim here is not to seek for a unity in the Mediterranean, but rather, to observe how patterns of relations are manifested in media art at a moment of historical transition in the 21st century.[126] As Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou state: 'Against the static image of the sea developed by Braudel, historians now view the Mediterranean as a space of dynamic and multiple interconnections, as a fragmented world which is nonetheless united by its very connectivity.'[127] The type of connectivity that Isabella and Zanou talk about corresponds to the choice of networks as the underlying theme of media art from the Mediterranean as one of the components of a cultural area.[128]

In his introduction to an edited collection entitled *Companion to Mediterranean History* (2014), historian Peregrine Horden categorises historical studies of the Mediterranean under four broad categories: romantic Mediterraneanism, "hyper-maritime" approaches that takes the sea to its center, "environmental-cum-geographical history", and the Mediterranean as a cultural area, which he describes as the youngest area of an already young discipline.[129] This study falls into the latest, and the youngest, of the four areas to situate the question of a 21st century Mediterranean.

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[123] In this respect, it can be said to be in contrast with David Abulafia's idea of multiple Mediterraneans across the globe where lands and continents are connected through sea and oceans, which this research is wary of using as a model since it attempts to look at the connections within the media art field of the Mediterranean rather than creating a concept of Mediterranean that can be generalised to be applied across the globe.

[124] This is why the selection of the case studies have been carefully avoiding both a romantic vision of Mediterranean utopias, the aims to construct supranational regional identities in the face of political uprooting, or cliché themes of gendered aspects of religion.

[125] This critique also points out to the importance of a move away from the previous centrality of "Mediterranean" notions such as honour and shame in the literature.

[126] If the aim was to seek a unified Mediterranean identity, contemporary fine art rather than media art would most certainly be an easier route to take for this study, and networks would definitely not be involved.

[127] Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou, "The Sea, its People and their Ideas in the Long Nineteenth Century," in *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, eds. Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 1.

[128] Even though the claim that Braudel's vision of the Mediterranean Sea being static is debatable.

[129] Peregrine Horden, "Introduction," in *A Companion to Mediterranean History*, eds. Peregrine Horden and Sharon Kinoshita (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 4.

This study aims to reach out to contemporary media art practices to encounter both a Braudelian unity and a postmodern "everything is fragmented and plural" approach. It holds true that the diversity in the Mediterranean fragments it and pluralises it at the national and supranational levels. Nonetheless, turning to the freedom of (and perhaps, a refuge in) the plurals and leaving the argument at the "everything is in constant flux" level have the perils of creating discourses that fail to capture a potential media art-historical moment.

Departing from a study of media art, can we talk about a 21st century Mediterranean culture area? This study seeks out to pose the Mediterranean as a question, and, through case studies, seek ways in which the theme of networks in demonstrating violence can answer this question. Therefore, this is not a utopian attempt at a Mediterranean unity, but rather, an inquisition into the (networked) Mediterranean connection in its specific contemporary context, an underlying component of which is political violence. This is an important question to ask in the sense that it offers a contemporary media art approach to a cultural area that has been traditionally studied from ecological, political or economic points of view.

One of the main challenges that this study encounters is its attempt to look at the 21st century condition of a cultural geography whose modernity has not been sufficiently studied.[130] This challenge can turn into an advantage as it claims originality in posing a question about the contemporariness of a region traditionally analysed via its ancient, medieval and pre-modern existence.

The Mediterranean region can offer richness to analysis in terms of its contribution to the political violence via the theme of networks in media art. This is based on three aspects: 1) the richness in human experience around the region and the richness the

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[130] Historians and postcolonial theorists such as David Abulafia, Edmund Burke III, and Iain Chambers look at the Mediterranean in modern times. Nonetheless, the amount of studies on Mediterranean up to the modern period is proportionally higher compared to the periods preceding it. For a discussion on the concept of modernity in relation to the Mediterranean, see: Naor Ben-Yehoyada, "Mediterranean Modernity?" in *A Companion to Mediterranean History*, Peregrine Horden and Sharon Kinoshita (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 107-121.

political violence cases that extend beyond the nation states, but assumes a transnational characteristic[131]; 2) the sea as communications route that connects and separates the land around it, hence creating 'a transnational constellation'[132]; 3) the theme of networks, a phenomenon, thought about in its online aspects, not necessarily originated in the region.

As Braudel points out 'all the problems posed by the Mediterranean are of exceptional human richness,'[133] adding that the region is not only defined by its geography but by the way it is imagined by its inhabitants and others. Besides functioning as an inland sea that facilitates and limits communication and exchange between lands around it, there is an additional dimension to the Mediterranean that the artworks from the region imagine. 'The Mediterranean becomes the site for an experiment in a different form of history writing, and, as such, an experiment in language and representation. The lands, languages, and lineages that border and extend outwards from its shores become accessory to its fluid centrality.'[134] Around the networks of this fluid centrality the dynamics of violence are formed and transformed.

It can be observed that in solely thematic respects, can one perhaps talk about a Mediterranean public media art space. Nonetheless, the visibility, inclusion, and circulation of these artworks are contingent on their circulation within Western, Northern European or American art circles. Looking at the examples of artwork cases in this study, it can be seen that as a work celebrating the democratising nature of networked information in terms

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[131] That is to say, if any given single country was selected as the geographical basis for this thesis, its borders would have already been given (by history), therefore, it would be assumed as already defined. Nonetheless, national borders have the potential to leave out some of the ethnic populations that are connected through language. If, for example the study was on media art from Turkey, the nation-state approach would pose a minority question for the Kurdish population that is spread across countries such as Turkey and Syria. In this case, the endeavour is to use the loose and dynamic borders of a transnational region in order to analyse violence and connectedness.

[132] This, according to Ben-Yehoyada, poses it as a transnational constellation: "My claim is that we should articulate our academic understanding of transnationalism to match the complexity of regionally specific, internally diverse ways of making and breaking transnational relations. The alternative is to assume that when people interact transnationally, all they have in mind is fraternity. That will not do, not only because it assumes that on the global scale only the like come together, but also because it obscures what transnationalism is all about: unity by that which divides, linkage by that which separates." Naor Ben-Yehoyada, "Transnational Political Cosmology: A Central Mediterranean Example," *Comparative Studies and Society and History* 56, no.4 (2014): 897, http://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417514000437.

[133] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II,* Vol 1. (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1972), 19.

[134] Iain Chambers, "The Mediterranean: A Postcolonial Sea," *Third Text* 18, no. 5 (2004): 425, http://doi.org/10.1080/0952882042000251769

of art play, *biennale.py* (2001) was commissioned for the Venice Biennial, the most globally acclaimed art biennial of the world. Bouchra Khalili's *The Mapping Journey Project (2008 – 2011)* has recently been exhibited in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York at the end of 2016. *Networks of Dispossession* (2013) was exhibited as an artwork in another major global biennial, the Istanbul Biennial in 2013. *The Zone* (2011) opened with a major exhibition in Nottingham in 2011. The second challenge, and again, at the same time advantage for this study comes from the networks as a theme. As a phenomenon of globalisation, the idea of networks is a challenging one to talk about in relation to region formation.

In its conceptualisation of different forms and levels of violence, the salience of physical violence in media art from the region is a reflection of the inseparability of the infiltration of the political, social, as well as the economic into the public space. A lot of the work from the region has its original voice in terms of the content it is dealing with. Nevertheless, the circulation networks are still dependent on an externality by which the works come to be observed by the viewer. This may include the flow of artist immigration from countries such as Algeria and Tunisia into France as well as a tendency towards the internationalisation of the profiles of the artists in media art. The intra-regional exceptions to these come from artists who have migrated to neighboring countries to take refuge. Nonetheless, the motivation for artist migration within the region tends to be political rather than internationalisation of the profile, such as in the case of movement to bigger centres of Europe.

The Mediterranean is not a political or regional unity such as the European Union. The shared connections are historically or geologically informed, therefore traces of shared culture across unidentifiable boundaries continue to exist. Rather than connectedness through a formal formation of a Mediterranean art space, one can trace patterns of similarity across Mediterranean media art. For example, the idea of East-West divide is a prominent feature of Palestinian media art as much as it is of Turkish. The reasons for these vary, because of the nature of Palestine as a diaspora while the Turkish case may be said to reside in the historical processes of Western modernisation, which continues to be a subject of political debate in the country. Cyprus is a divided country as Palestine is, but

due to different historical contingencies. The media art from Palestine reflects the nature of this rupture as starkly and predominantly while the art from Cyprus does not place much focus on it. In terms of access to the technological means and devices, the complexity of the technological nature of media art relates to each region's access to materials and methods of media art use. In this respect, support networks and funding are essential factors that separate the media art production across different art scenes in the region.

The online presence of media art in archives and personal portfolios vary according to position in the region. While the places that suffer the most from overt physical forms of violence endeavour to make the political violence and documentation available, the less overt forms of violence remain unseen in media art circles across the Mediterranean.

For the purposes of this study, the "Mediterranean region" refers to a geographical area composed of countries with a shoreline on the Mediterranean Sea (with work from those Balkan countries whose history is involved in access to shores and ports, and in the trade and conflict between Europe and Asia providing supporting material).[135]

There are several reasons why the Mediterranean is selected as a geographical area for this research. Firstly, the Mediterranean is a geographical area that is not only surrounded but, as a human space, constituted by many conflicts related to ethnicity, religion, race, and nationality. Secondly, the Mediterranean is the meeting point of three continents, each of which are shaped by their own geopolitical traditions. Therefore, it allows a broad outlook on the diverse forms of political violence as well as providing a potential contemporary example of the "transnational constellations" that form and dissolve, which Naor Ben-Yehoyada talks about. Thirdly, the production and circulation of media tools, which are a very important component of the production and aesthetics of media art, differ across the region and this makes it an interesting focus in terms of comparing the effect of access to media production with the characteristics of works where violence manifests itself.[136]

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[135] Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.
[136] Artist Ahmed Basiony, who was killed by the snipers of Egyptian Police Forces in Tahrir Square in 2011, was a self-taught media artist since at the time there were no academic programs in Egypt specialising in

In his book *Liberal Terror* (2013), Brad Evans criticises, rightly so, some analyses of violence because they are based on nations and the state as the only credible referent of political assessment.[137] Indeed, curator and art critic Omar Kholeif rightly criticises how, particularly with the uprisings of 2011 and after, the art world expects artists from the Arab countries to produce and exhibit works on topics related to violence.[138] The approach in this research is not to construct a concept of "Mediterranean Art" or specifically engage solely with the topical issues of recent uprisings and revolutions, particularly in the Arab countries, but rather to trace the dynamics of political violence in the region through varying scales and in varying degrees of highlight. The number and scale of political conflicts and the history of violence in the region as an endemic and perpetual phenomenon as narrated through these artworks may help illuminate the current political phenomena and the imagination of their future dimensions. Additionally, as a geographical region typified by cross-cultural encounters, the Mediterranean has a global relevance in analysing art and politics through new definitions.

One can ask, in this case, why the borders of the Mediterranean region are drawn based on nation-states for this research. This is due not only to a practical necessity to delineate the region but also the nation state's important role today that affects media art production, financing and distribution, people, movements, spaces. In her introduction to *On One Side of the Same Water* (2013), an edited volume on art from south and southeastern Mediterranean, Angelika Stepken notes that in the region:

> There are neighbors that hardly know each other: the border between Morocco and
> Algeria has been closed since 1944 as a result of the conflict over the Western
> Sahara, and the communication between the art scenes in the two countries has
> been blocked ever since. There are neighboring countries that one cannot travel to

digital interactive media. See Shady El Noshokaty's short biography of Ahmed Basiony: Shady El Noshokaty, "Ahmed Basiony," *Nafas Art Magazine*, March 2011, https://universes.art/nafas/articles/2011/ahmed-basiony/ (accessed September 2017). This example does not mean that some countries allow better media access to artists than others since the dynamics may change drastically even within the same country but it illustrates how media art production is very much dependent on material means.

[137] Brad Evans, *Liberal Terror*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 3.

[138] See: Omar Kholeif, "The Social Impulse Politics, Media and Art after the Arab Uprisings," *Ibraaz*, 2 May 2012, http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/34 (accessed September 2017).

with the same passport, even when they are a mere 16 kilometers apart from one another, such as Jerusalem and Ramallah. And, conversely, anyone who wishes to travel north from a Mediterranean country that is not a member of the European Union has to submit to the expensive and often humiliating procedure of applying for a visa. One example close at hand that we just experienced, in 2012, was when we invited an artist from Morocco for a residency at the Villa Romana in Florence: his visa was rejected three times, despite the invitation.[139]

State and political violence are also directly related through other mechanisms and phenomena such as: states' regulatory institutions of army, police, prisons, etc.; claims to statehood; and interstate violence. Furthermore, states are taken as units of analysis for large data sources on violence as a political phenomenon. The Mediterranean as a trans-state region is impacted by relations between the nation-states, e.g. migration dynamics, European Union, Arab League, Organization of African Unity, etc. Therefore, in this study, the nation-states are taken as referents but nationalities are not.

The analysed artworks have been produced since 2000,[140] referring to cases of political violence that have happened for the past few decades. 21st century media art in this research includes art produced using audio-visual electronic media, such as: net art, algorithmic art, generative art, hacking, live performance, interactive art, cybernetic art, robotic art.[141] The art works collected for this research are mainly electronic with an

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[139] Angelika Stepken, "On One Side of the Same Water: Introduction," *Ibraaz*, 29 March 2013, http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/57#author190 (accessed September 2017). Another example is Algerian artist Zineddine Bessaï who was denied entry clearance from Algeria to the UK, where he, ironically, was exhibiting work in a show entitled *New Cartographies: Algeria-France-UK* in 2011. The visa rejection letter can be reached here: https://www.flickr.com/photos/cornerhousemanchester/5594983307/in/set-72157626317138835/ (accessed September 2017). An audio piece where the artist tells about his experience (in French) can no longer be reached via the exhibition website (http://www.cornerhouse.org/art/art-exhibitions/new-cartographies-algeria-france-uk Update: September 2017).

[140] The research here is benefiting from being conducted at a moment that is at the turn of the century. Post 2000s denotes the aftermath of neighbouring Balkan conflicts while at the same time still witnessing the timeless violence through illegal immigration across the Mediterranean Sea, or contemporary Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation. As it is also at the aftermath of the end of cold war, it is arguably seeing a different turn in the development of capitalism in relation to world politics. Conducting a research on the question of a Mediterranean in the 21st century is also fruitful in its challenges to follow a 21st century approach to a region that is academically almost abandoned with regard to its modernism.

[141] Lev Manovich's list of the main characteristics of new media is used as a guide in the present research to define media art: numerical representation (digital code that can be described mathematically and manipulated algorithmically), modularity (media elements' ability to combine into larger systems without losing their independent functionality), automation (the possibility of partial removal of human intentionality

emphasis on the digital. At times their thematic focus crosses with, and their tools diverge from contemporary fine art practices.

As art historian Edward Shanken analyses in his recent writing published in *Companion to Digital Art* (2016), mainstream contemporary art and new media art share certain common characteristics and circulation routes, while new media art is sometimes marginalised by the mainstream contemporary art because of its immateriality or technological aspects. Nonetheless, Shanken argues, new media 'deploys technology in a manner that self-reflexively demonstrates how new media is deeply imbricated in the modes of knowledge production, perception, and interaction, and is thus inextricable from corresponding epistemological and ontological transformations.'[142] It is this self-reflexive nature and comparative ease of its circulation that makes new media art an important focus for the study the current Mediterranean conditions. Digital media networks and tools as instruments of political, economic, and social power (for example through surveillance, logistics, etc.) structure a media art that engages with already "public" domains of propaganda, censorships, adverts, or counter-moves like cyberwars.

The basis for geographical distinction for art in the present research is not based on nationalities of the artists but on the production circumstances. The fact that this research is mainly concerned with the works by artists who are based in the Mediterranean (at the time the artwork was created) regardless of their origin or nationality will allow moving away from a restriction on the basis of nationalities as well as providing a variety of perspectives by both native and non-native artists. "Media art from the Mediterranean" in this dissertation does not designate "a Mediterranean media art" but rather, media art that is produced or exhibited within and engages with the issues of political violence in relation to networks from the Mediterranean region.

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from the creative process), variability (the potential of the new media work to change and exist in multiple versions), and transcoding (translation between computerized data and cultural concepts). See: Lev Manovich, "Principles of New Media," in *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 27-48.
[142] Edward Shanken, "Contemporary Art and New Media: Digital Devide or Hybrid Discourse?" in *A Companion to Digital Art*, ed. Christiane Paul (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 464.

Using the Mediterranean case as a focus point, this research inquires how different forms of political violence are manifested in media art at various scales through a common theme of networks. This research does not argue that certain forms of political violence are unique to the Mediterranean area. Rather, it proposes that the foundations of political violence remain similar whereas they manifest themselves differently across different political and economic contexts. It argues that in the specific context of the 21st century, the phenomenon of violence is biopolitical and networked and transforms over time. Therefore, this research does not aim to identify new forms of political violence in the Mediterranean but rather, considers the geographical and historical context of the cases of networked political violence from the Mediterranean while at the same time considering how these operate on a transnational level.

Anthropological accounts of the politics of violence quite often draw attention to the need for reflecting everyday forms of violence as narrated by the agents exposed to violence as opposed to sensational media coverage of atrocities.[143] Media art in this sense could assume an essential role since it makes use of media tools and visual symbols, as does mass media. However, the questions pertaining to the aesthetics of the suffering, agency of the artist, and ethics of reflecting violence gain more importance as far as media arts is concerned. In this sense, what is at stake is a kind of work that oscillates between the private and the public, between the real and virtual, between the overt and covert manifestation of political violence. To be specific, these works either avoid or refuse the commodification of violence as described by Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman.[144] and the filthy rituals as described by Arjun Appadurai[145] or choose to show violence while at the

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[143] For example, anthropologists Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock give an account of how suffering is commodified in their introduction to the edited volume *Social Suffering*. See: Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock, "Introduction," in *Social Suffering*, eds. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock (Berkeley; Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1997), ix – xxvii.

[144] In comparing the news images from past atrocities in Guatemala, Rwanda, and Bosnia, Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman draw attention to the visual similarities between them. 'The cultural capital of trauma victims —their wounds, their scars, their tragedy— is appropriated by the same popular codes through which physical and sexual violence are commodified, sold in the cinema, marketed as pornography, and used by tabloids and novelists to attract readers.' See: Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman, "The Appeal of Experience; The Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in Out Times," in *Social Suffering*, 10.

[145] The emphasis on close-up images that Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman refer to bring to mind Arjun Appadurai's account of a form of intimacy between the perpetrator and the victim in acts of ethnic violence. Appadurai describes a "macabre," "horrible" or "brutal" intimacy that is displayed in the acts of eating enemy's organs, sexually abusing the victim, etc. This intimacy is displayed through forms of rituals. 'A great

same time realising the pornographic aspect, but using it nonetheless to challenge the ethical, economic, and power relations.

Sovereign regimes of violence, disciplinary violence, and biopolitical violence strive to optimise the domination, discipline, and regulative forces they exercise upon subjects and populations in accordance with the changing historical context. Violence exercised with a particular consideration (such as ethnic or economic) is mobilised and optimised in order to ensure sovereign domination: that of productivity, economic growth, expansion, racial purity, etc. The historical formations of state, economic, and gendered violence in the Mediterranean coexist, with emergent formations of sovereign violence combined with new media technologies, such as the CCTV cameras or motion sensors on and around the Separation Wall in Palestine.[146] In talking about how borders become instruments of violence in West Bank, Avram Bornstein argues: "There is exploitation of Palestinian workers by Israeli capitalists and consumers, but these economic forms of violence are largely opportunities emerging from racial forms of violence in a particular historical moment."[147] Race becomes a function of economic exploitation.

Media art as a creative response to the mobilisations of political violence in various economic, social and cultural directions offers a very fertile ground for how we can analyse both the potentials of media in response to the violence in our era[148] and the contemporary

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deal of political violence centers around boundaries, violation and perversity, sexuality, the uses of rituals in murder and choreographing of death including what Greenblatt calls "filthy rites." See: Arjun Appadurai, "Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalization," *Public Culture* 10, no. 2 (1998): 225–247, http://doi.org/ 10.1215/08992363-10-2-225 and David E. Apter, "Political Violence in Analytical Perspective," in *The Legitimization of Violence*, ed. David E. Apter (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 3.

[146] 'The wall itself is not just a wall. The first layer of defence is a thick fence of razor wire. Then comes a six foot electric barrier with motion sensors. Beyond this lies the wall, thick slabs of concrete punctuated by watchtowers and littered with CCTV.' Hannah Slater, "The Apartheid Wall, Palestine," Amnesty International, 29 March 2011, https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/leicester/apartheid-wall-palestine (accessed September 2017).

[147] Avram S. Bornstein, "Borders and the Utility of Violence: State Effects on the 'Superexploitation' of West Bank Palestinians," *Critique of Anthropology* 22, no. 2 (2002): 204, http://doi.org/10.1177/03075X02022002852.

[148] Possibly because of the conflicts within the region, as far as art from the Mediterranean area is concerned, there is an emphasis on the art as a mediator for dialogue and peace. Often, artists or researchers use the words "tolerance", "peace" and "dialogue" when talking about the Mediterranean public space. For example: Jerneja Rebernak and Islam Muhammad, "Artistic Interactions and Intercultural Competences in the Mediterranean," http://www.iemed.org/publicacions/quaderns/12/Artistic_Interactions_and_Intercultural_Competences_in_the_Mediterranean_Jerneja_Rebernak_and_Islam_Muhammad.pdf (accessed September 2017).

imagination of the Mediterranean region. Not only the art production in the region but also the way its conceptualisation and circulation are affected by the material realities of the region. In what ways is violence, which is situated in intrinsically political and sometimes overtly violent networks of power, manifested in media arts? The answer to this question lies in the dynamics of art in relation to the processes of mediation and communication within particular physical and ideological frameworks in the Mediterranean.

Defining the boundaries of a particular geographical location is difficult for any kind of study. The Mediterranean, in this sense is not denoted as a predefined static geographical area (unlike the nation states) but as a region constituted through histories of varying forms and facets of conflict. 'The Mediterranean, as both a concept and a historical and cultural formation, is a "reality" that is imaginatively constructed: the political and poetical articulation of a shifting, desired object and a perpetually repressed realization.'[149] Nonetheless, it is an object of desire in conflicting ways. Violence, for example, may be used to achieve the desired object of economic and political nation-state unities of neoliberal repression. Just as well, it may be used to suppress social movements for the opposite non-oppressive, non-capitalist desires.

The contemporary nation states outlined in this research as part of the Mediterranean region are geographical territories but they are not considered as rigid structures in terms of thinking about the communities living there. In addition, there is the question of artist mobility, migration and accelerated cultural exchange that happens across geographical regions, particularly in the current age where flow of communication is faster compared to the past.[150]

The Mediterranean in this sense is a convergent place and an important spot in the cultural exchange for the West. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell in their book *The Corrupting Sea* (2000) emphasise the centrality of the Mediterranean Sea in definition of

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[149] Iain Chambers, *Mediterranean Crossings: The Politics of an Interrupted Modernity* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2008), 10.
[150] Edward Said, for example, states that 'the net effect of cultural exchange between partners conscious of inequality is that the people suffer.' He gives the example of how Greek classics served the Western humanists without any problems resulting from Greeks claiming ownership on the cultural heritage where in modern times cultural exchange involves a relationship of domination. See: Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1994), 195.

the region in the ancient world. They state: 'logical priority of the sea was not, however, solely the creation of abstract thought. It resulted principally from the centrality of the sea to communications.'[151] The sea was an easier means to exchange goods and ideas than the land. Therefore, according to Horden and Purcell, it acted as a means for communications. Perhaps one very essential point that creates analogies to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the media art was their treatment of the sea as a medium in itself. '[I]t appears on a late Roman map, the Peutinger Table, where the sea is grossly elongated. Gulf, river, and sea are imagined as varying extensions of the same medium, not conceptually divided as they are in modern geomorphology.'[152] The sea serves as a medium that connects, and also separates lands and peoples via exchange between goods, languages, and cultures. When we talk about media arts, we are certainly talking about a particular form of mediation that at times communicates, just like the Mediterranean Sea itself. The Mediterranean is, from an ecological point of view, violent; it is a network; and it mediates and communicates often in forms that are overtly or covertly violent (such as the coastguard surveillance, weapons trade, smuggling, wars, and issues surrounding the immigration). The region's conflicts are mediated with a temporal and biopolitical violence of contemporary networks.

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[151] Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 11.
[152] Ibidem.

Chapter 3 Case Study 1: *Biennale.py* (2001)

Biennale.py is a computer virus that is written in the Python programming language. Once a computer gets infected with it, it affects programmes written in the Python language by inscribing a text on the associated files stored in the particular computer. Designed not to damage any files permanently, the virus can be removed via deleting the infection text using simple a text editor.[1]

What are the possibilities offered by analysing a computer virus as an art piece? How can one discuss the local – in this context, the Mediterranean – through a means at the center of which is global connectivity? Why focus on something more abstract and non-representative, such as a virus, in terms of political violence when there is actual overt physical force threatening people's lives? This chapter aims to provide an analysis of the tensions resulting from the scale of the body on which violence is imposed, the network as a political entity, and the factor of time as capital within media context.

The chapter will start by discussing the biopolitical aspects of viral threat on the human body and the issue of contagion. It will then look at network politics and art as a reaction and resistance to contemporary dynamics of digital production as opened up by *Biennale.py*, a computer virus by artists Eva and Franco Mattes exhibited at the Slovenian Pavilion in the 49th Venice Biennale (2001). Finally, it will ponder on the discussions that *Biennale.py* artwork opens up in terms of art as a response to violence. The approach to this artwork oscillates between violence itself and the media's increasing manifestation as a complex venue that not only represents violence, but also takes an active part in the production of violence itself and the net of discourses it produces.

Biennale.py is selected as a case study for this research because it sets up the idea of networks to be developed throughout the following case studies. A network is biological, and human carriers are vectors, vehicles for transporting viruses. Computer and human networks share similar morphologies. Virus provides an additional concept for the study of

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[1] [EpidemiC] official website, http://epidemic.ws/biennale_press/01.htm (accessed September 2017).

the relations between human and non-human networks, which in turn goes beyond being a metaphor. Networks create chaos in a sense; and *Biennale.py* touches upon this aspect of the network topology.

The selection of the artwork as a case study marks a move from impact, intensity or severity-oriented approaches to violence into a more spatial-temporal domain whereby the spread of the artwork over networks across time is the focus. In this sense, it does reflect what a lot of media art form the Mediterranean does by practically using international reach as a networked articulation for literal and symbolic practices even when the physical inaccessibility to the artwork becomes an issue due to material barriers. Admittedly, it does so in a playful manner that may, at a first glance, seem to underestimate the intensity of physical political violence practices across the region and perhaps certain forms of art that thematise it. Nonetheless, the work's origination and display in the Mediterranean and its framing for international audiences tell us about the mobility practices across the region. The work is Mediterranean to the extent that it is and at the same time it is not: its simultaneous bearing and lack of national or regional characteristics points to the Mediterranean's becoming a transversal medium.

1. Viral Threat on the Body as Database

As media analyses of communication models move away from a sender-receiver diagram, the particularities of social actors' relationship to the media they use and produce become key points. Turning back to the discussions around biopolitics in the context of media contagion, one can say that one of the most prominent aspects of the biopolitical management of data in late capitalism is the vulnerability of the systems within which it operates. In this respect, a digital threat such as computer virus becomes a suitable venue to create discourses of fear around because of its potentiality to attack networks as well as the data itself.

Eugene Thacker in *The Global Genome* (2005) argued that '[i]n biopolitics, the body is a database, and informatics is the search engine.'[2] One can then say that a biological

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[2] Eugene Thacker, *The Global Genome* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), 25.

virus is a threat to the body as the database. A computer virus is a threat both to the database content and to the search engine itself. The latter, while not necessarily harming the body physically, still acts as a threat to its existence in terms of governmentality in at least two different ways.

The first form of threat at a basic operational level: a body exists as long as its data can be translated into a readable format for biopolitical governance. 'It is important to note that biopolitics is not simply a technique employed by government for homogenizing the mass of its citizens. A key point stressed by Foucault is that the "governmentality" of biopolitical practices is predicated on a dual approach that both universalizes and individualizes the population.'[3] The second aspect of a viral threat has to do with the temporal dimension of the production of data. An attack by a computer virus on the tools and means through which bodily data are read is not simply a threat to the compilation and classification of biopolitical data. It is a threat to the existence of "bodily data as it was", since gathering, processing, and using biopolitical data is a temporally dynamic process, which constitutes a facet of time as capital.

If we turn back to the discussions about conceptualising violence as a limitation on the potential (Galtung), or a sliding scale defined through the reduction of being (Schinkel),[4] then it would be fair to say that the biopolitical reduction of bodies into numbers is a form of violence that, even though not imposed on the physical body itself, materialises through a combination of physical means. The body itself may remain physically intact; but the data extracted from it flows through networks that are defined and governed by informatic structures. These structures not only include network system infrastructures, but also political and economic dynamics defined, or at the very least, affected by geographical boundaries.

The question of invisibility of violence is at stake again. When discussing a computer virus in relation to the concept of violence and biopolitics, one can claim that there are at least two different forms of violence operating in any given basic virus attack

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[3] Ibidem.
[4] Please see the literature review and methods sections for a more detailed account of both concepts.

case. The first one is related to the violence imposed on the body by defining it through the data it generates for the purposes of biopolitical governance. The second one has to do with the capitalist relations, which are at work in the operation of computer and information networks (including for example, violence on nature for extracting the material for hardware or exploitation of labor).

Another type of violence could be added to this list: the violence of the discourse of fear.[5] This type of fear has to do with a very basic reasoning that results from the unknown. As Susan Sontag once said: 'Any disease that is treated as a mystery and acutely enough feared will be felt to be morally, if not literally, contagious.'[6] The feeling of the unknown not only pertains to our inability to understand the coping mechanisms for the viral attack, but also to a more general question of categorising, hence dominating, the knowledge about the viruses.

> There is no comfortable place for them [viruses] in any taxonomy, for they are clearly not inanimate, non-living matter, but they do not share at least one defining property of the living that is, they cannot reproduce themselves on their own; to reproduce, they require another body, a host. It is in honor of this immunological drama that we call certain computer programs, designed to reproduce themselves through and in spite of the logic of the systems they invade, "viruses."[7]

Jesse Cohn elaborately describes viruses as "immunological drama", a concept taken up and played in the artwork *Biennale.py*. In laying out the discussions that the artwork *Biennale.py* opens up, a first step may be to look at the idea of any virus as work of art in general.

2. Computer Virus as Media Art

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[5] This is in a similar vein to Žižek's categorisation of "urgent appeals for action" as violent, which he describes as SOS violence in his book *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (2007).
[6] Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978), 6.
[7] Jesse Cohn, "Believing in the Disease: Virologies and Memetics as Models of Power Relations in Contemporary Science Fiction," *Culture Machine* 3 (2001), http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/289/274.
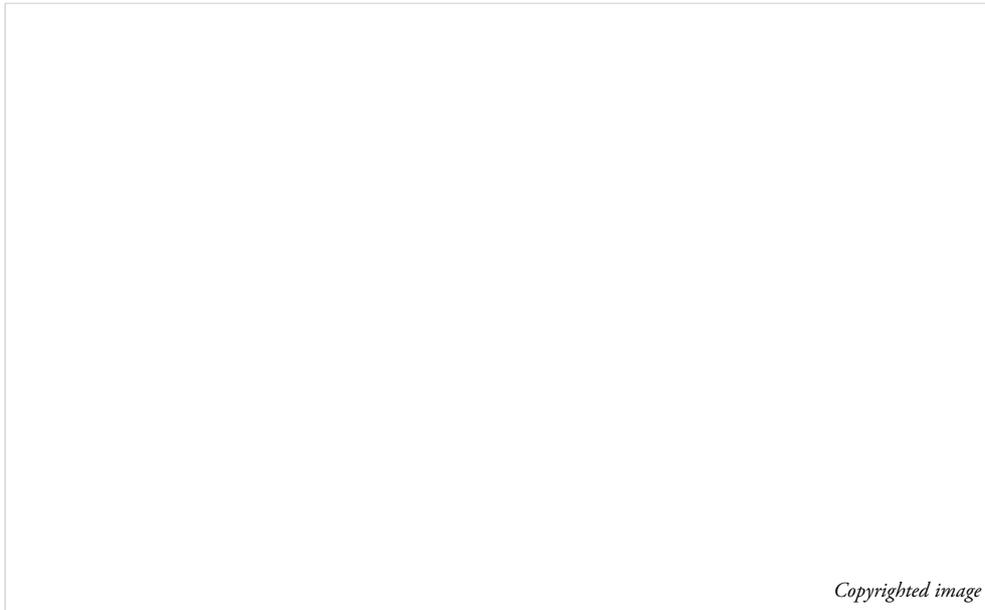
Fig. 1. *Biennale.py*, Exhibition view, 49th Venice Biennale, 2001. © Eva and Franco Mattes.

Recently some media theorists have pointed to the possibilities that the study of viruses, worms, spam, or malicious software in general may open up in media studies by providing an analysis at the nonrepresentational level. This point is raised in Tony Sampson and Jussi Parikka's collaborative work on contagious software, *The Spam Book* (2009) as well as in Tony Sampson's book *Virality* (2012). Talking about the *Biennale.py* in particular, Jussi Parikka states:

> The Biennale.py virus source code incorporated a new level of visibility that drew attention both to the politics of definition and coding of viral programs, but also to the frames themselves: How the nonrepresentational level of code seems to regularly pop up due to events that remediate code in other media formats as well.[8]

In laying the theoretical groundwork, it may be perhaps useful to add, along with the issue of representational analysis, another critique towards the conventions of media

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[8] Jussi Parikka, "Archives of Software: Malicious Code and the Aesthetics of Media Accidents," in *Spam Book: On Viruses, Porn and Other Anomalies from the Dark Side of Digital Culture*, ed. Jussi Parikka and Tony D. Sampson (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2009), 122.

studies by Alexander R. Galloway, Eugene Thacker, McKenzie Wark, who in their book *Excommunication: Three Inquiries in Media and Mediation* (2014) stated that media studies have been focused too much on the hardware and the material aspects of media.[9] In this sense, the study of a virus and software is instrumental in bringing together the hardware and software aspects of media art studies. That being said, the hardware through which media content is created, adapted, mixed, and shared, has an impact on the content and the context it exists. Therefore, we argue for a combination of software and hardware studies to highlight those aspects of contemporary media arts which work to materialise the conceptual underpinnings of violence. The study of virus is important in the context of software studies as a research area that potentially would highlight the dynamic aspect of media. As Wendy Hui Kyong Chun states: 'Based on metaphor, software has become a metaphor for the mind, for culture, for ideology, for biology, and for the economy…. More broadly, culture itself has been posited as " software, " in opposition to nature, which is "hardware."'[10] In this sense, it could be said that what *Biennale.py* does is to materialise the metaphor by making visible the software.

Looking at software as art in particular touches upon an epistemological terrain in media art. In contemporary digital media art, software is usually a means through which the final product of the artwork is displayed. The emphasis on the software at any given artwork production and display context may indicate much more than mere technical details of the artwork. These often have to do with (a) the possibilities of hardware and technical conditions, (b) the trajectories of spread and conditions of display of artworks, and (c) artists' tendencies in defining the role of media they use, all culminating in a web of relations and discourses that give the artworks their peculiar characteristics. Hardware and technical conditions have to do with the more material side of the production, which involve access to material and education in the craft of building up the computer code. The dissemination of artworks and the conditions of display may also potentially impact the way in which software is developed since the complications in the structure of the code would affect the mobility of the works. The relationship goes the other way around as well:

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[9] Alexander Galloway, Eugene Thacker, and McKenzie Wark, "Introduction," in *Excommunication: Three Inquiries in Media and Mediation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 1-24.
[10] Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2011), 2.

software may influence the future development of hardware. The artists' dispositions are very much dependent on the previous two factors, meaning their technical capabilities and relations to the display environments.

Of the three aspects that surround the software as a tool in media art, the last one about the meaning of creativity within media art from an artist's point of view could be the most fertile ground in laying out the complexities of the phenomenon. Examples of classical Western painting that depicted perfection of the body or nature from a representational point of view, for example, would not bear straightforward associations with the loaded concepts that come along with the software that media art uses. This is also partially a result of the network models of the media:

> Certainly a crude line is all too often drawn between the democratically linked network and one-to-many power relations of hierarchical structures. As a result, many-to-many relations are frequently misconstrued as prerequisites for assembling democratic political and economic spaces.[11]

Media tools of the 21st century are not just apparatuses to create a representational model for artworks; they are also considered potential means to transform human life, whether it be with their ability to enhance, to make better, or with their mission to lay the groundwork for democratisation.

> [Computing's] combination of what can be seen and not seen, can be known and not known — its separation of interface from algorithm; software from hardware — makes it a powerful metaphor for everything we believe is invisible yet generates visible effects, from genetics to the invisible hand of the market; from ideology to culture.[12]

In this sense, stemming from the visibility of the role of the media, contemporary approaches to media art have a dual aspect: that of regarding it as a harbinger of change, or

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[11] Tony D. Sampson, *Virality: Contagion Theory in the Age of Networks* (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 97.
[12] Chun, *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory*, 17.

at the very least sketches for possibilities in a vision of the future, and that of seeing it as an entity where a fear of technology is gradually eliminated since technology in art is "tamed" by the artist.

What if the scenarios about art feed into the very fear of technology that has been promoted over and over again in mass media? 'In a reminiscent vein, artistic computer viruses act as tactical media assemblages, tactical "accidents," shedding light on the otherwise imperceptible articulations of these bits of code.'[13] The factor of art in this relationship should be noted here because of the space of freedom it provides to the creator and the viewer alike (the work of art stands as a separate entity, beyond the intentions of the artist and open to the interpretation of the viewer). As an area where experimentations with ideas are welcome, the work contributes to the creation of a space whereby aspects of viral threat come to the surface, and hence become visible.

The *Biennale.py* case could be said to be touching on the issues of visibility from multiple directions: from the point of view of computing/software, networks of power relations, and hardware and media itself. The work contributes to an understanding of violence not only because it allows us to add a variety to the non-representational analyses of media content but also it adds up to distinct ideas of violence, providing a platform to potentially observe the differences in the operational logic of violence.

The Biennale virus, and other similarly orientated cultural mappings of the virus phenomenon (I am here thinking of the I Love You exhibition), are of creative interest in that they (a) engage with the established historical layers of perception (the technical, the medial, and the commercial), (b) produce a simulacra of such systems of perception (the Biennale virus being remediated and sold for a profit), and (c) short circuit the everyday perceptions into new assemblages of critical nature. These examples demonstrate well how the tripartite logic of power/knowledge (saying, seeing, calculating) is revealed by such tactical accidents,

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[13] Parikka, *The Spam Book: On Viruses, Porn, and Other Anomalies from the Dark Side of Digital Culture*, 120.

and how the micropolitics of algorithmic processes can be connected across medial layers into themes of visual and articulable.[14]

Biennale.py brings up the issues of violence against network structures through the spread of code. The work, however, does not delineate the target of the attack that the virus is potentially leading through the attack on the network and the hardware. The press release announcing *Biennale.py* at the 49th Venice Biennial describes the creation of the work in terms of its relationship to the limits of the Internet and global powers:

> The creation of a virus tout court, free and without an end or a goal, is in the worst case a test, a survey on the limits of the Net, but in the best case is a form of global counterpower, generally a pre-political form, but that resists the strong powers, it puts them under a new balance, it shakes and reassembles them. A new idea of a "virus that is not just a virus" is gaining acceptance, and that it can represent the outbreak of the social into the most social thing of all: the Net.[15]

A spectrum is outlined in terms of what a virus as an artwork can achieve, the hierarchy being set between an exploration of the Internet's limits and creation of a global counter power. The issue that can be raised against conceptualising the framework is more about the ambiguity of the borders of this spectrum rather than the ambiguity of the artwork's aim, function, or status. How is it that a computer virus will survey the limits of the net? What is meant by "limits"? Is it the spread of the software? Is it the time scale within which security measures against the virus are taken? Is it the hardware through which the virus spreads? Is it a geographical mapping of the spread of the virus? Similarly, the top of the hierarchy in the spectrum, which has to do with the global politics, raises more complex issues that have to do with conceptual issues of "pre-political" form, and "the balance" that is brought to the strong powers. From an epistemological point of view, is it possible that any form or manifestation of power be "pre-political"? What are the "strong powers" that are being mentioned? Is the strength measured by the scale or impact of the powers? How is it that a computer virus as an artwork could bring about a new

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[14] Ibid., 123.
[15] "Press Release, June 1st 2001", [EpidemiC] official website, http://epidemic.ws/prelease.txt (accessed September 2017).

balance to the workings of global powers? What are the possible outcomes of the process of shaking that reassembling that is being mentioned? What may be he possible ways these metaphors translate into the political realm?

A similar concern to that of "pre-political" could be raised against a claim of virus spreading "without mediations". The press release of the artwork states that 'a virus wants to exist instinctively and without mediations, and it is just this the [sic] main and only function of "biennale.py": to survive.'[16] Conceiving survival as a pre-political also would be problematic since surviving, even in the sense of most basic human desires, is not pre-political. What is meant by the term mediation here is not outlined in such a way as to make the distinction between mediated and non-mediated existence of the virus.

Furthermore, the metaphor of virus as a living being in a host organism and a computer virus is further extended here to the realm of survival. Survival is posited as a function of the artwork, indeed its main and only function. Is it actually possible that survival could serve as a function? Perhaps describing the function of the artwork as survival was an attempt to draw attention to those qualities of the work that emphasise a process rather than a product, or an end goal. However, it brings about a whole new character to the work itself, perhaps even an "innocent" quality to the software, which only wants to survive.

> Paradoxically, such as in biological viruses, "biennale.py" will spread not only through machines but also through men. The paradox becomes even more clear if you think that the virus, a vague and dangerous entity by definition, is for sale to adventurous curators and collectors. To buy a computer virus is probably on [sic] the most exciting investment one could make today.[17]

The paradox that is described here is about the spread of a computer virus through men (through t-shirts with the virus source code). However, the analogy drawn here between the biological viruses and the computer virus overlooks one essential point

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[16] Ibidem. For a note about the distinction between mediation and communication as found in examples from the media studies literature, please see the literature review.
[17] "Press Release, June 1st 2001", [EpidemiC] official website.

about the impact of the two different viruses: the computer virus infects the machines it is opened in whereas the source code of the virus that spreads through men carry no risk of infection. Therefore, *Biennale.py* would not simply spread by men; it would perhaps be disseminated, or advertised. A second aspect of this statement is the targeting of adventurous curators and collectors who are invited to invest in not only an artwork but also the future of it. In this respect, the basic logic behind the idea of insurance (preventing the uncertainty of future risk) is reversed: making a good move by investing in the future of a virus that "adventurous" curators and collectors (taking a risk to invest in a virus that has an uncertain future), where the virus changes owner.

The contradiction here is also about the types of approaches when it comes to mediation and sale. The claim for a non-mediated survival creates a contradiction when money as a tool for exchange is introduced to the equilibrium. The conceptualisation is left ambiguous within the context of the press release of the artwork. It is not clear whether the artists are creating a discourse around the artwork in order to put into the question the operations of the art market, or they simply would like to sell the artwork.

In the latter case, the use of the word "investment" would be a component for the ironical discourse built around the work. The care of the self, as seen in the previous chapter has been one of the aspects of contemporary biopolitics. There is an investment in the virus that coincides with the task of distinguishing oneself from the others undertaken by the idea of immunity. The host body is supposed to be protected from the virus: Investing in one's body means to keep its integrity, and to protect it from outside dangers, may it be viruses or terror. This manifests itself in networked communications: systems, in their material forms or otherwise, need to be protected against malicious software. Additionally, the self of the network must take care of itself.

The parasitic beings on the Internet are not limited to viruses or other malicious software. Today, there are many different types of trackers in any given website that collects information from users via their browsers. Nonetheless, in popular discourse, these trackers are not pictured as such despite them being instrumental in collection of data and online

surveillance. Part of the reason has to do with them being involved in a trade exchange: ethical concerns tend to be overlooked when profit is in question.

It may be perhaps useful to rethink *Biennale.py* in the light of these questions. The issue is not so much about the material structure of the software as it is about the purposes that it serves. In this sense, presenting a virus as an artwork could be said to offer a most fertile ground to raise questions about the workings of networked communications. Art as an entity that today has lesser boundaries in terms of functionality and aesthetics is where these issues could be extensively addressed. Artist Eva Mattes, one of the creators of the *Biennale.py*, states that:

> Once you set a virus free you loose [sic] control over it, you decide on when and where the performance begins, but you'll never know when and where it'll lead. It'll spread out of control, it'll make a round-the-world trip over two minutes, it'll go where you'll never go over your entire life, chased by anti-virus cops trying to regain control over it. In this very moment it's wandering around at the speed of byte. It's an art form that finds you, you don't have to go to museums to see it, the work itself will reach you inside your house.[18]

The artist makes two very important observations here: one related to the temporal aspects of the media and the other being about the changing spaces of art display. In terms of the changes that have happened with the introduction of digital media to visual communication, similarities between the spread of images and viruses have been drawn in recent theory. Media theorist W. J. T. Mitchell makes an analogy between the ubiquity of images today and viruses.

> Perhaps, then, there is a way in which we can speak of the value of images as evolutionary or at least coevolutionary entities, quasi life-forms (like viruses) that depend on a host organism (ourselves), and cannot reproduce themselves without

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[18] Eva Mattes as quoted in Jason Farman, "The Virtual Artaud: Computer Virus as Performance Art," in *TechKnowledgies: New Imaginaries in the Humanities, Arts and Technosciences*, ed. Mary Valentis with Tara P. Monastero and Paula Yablonsky (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 158-59.

human participation.[19]

To talk about images as analogous to viruses provides an interesting crossover with the discussions about the importance of studying virus software as bringing a variation to the representational approaches to the study of media. It is also worth pointing out here that the images are not treated as products, or as something external to the production of human life, but as living organisms that need a host (a human body/ the network) to travel. According to this approach, images are entities that are instrumental in human development and just as viruses, they cannot be contained in order to create a sterile presence. 'In the end, the meaning of our long-term coexistence with computer viruses may prove difficult to distinguish from the meaning of our own existence.'[20] However, the question of evolution is what causes the complications here. Theories of evolution tend to consider some principles related to change over extended periods of time whereby life forms take shape in accordance with external physical factors. However, the spread of the images may not be said to follow such an operational logic. Then the question to be asked is: how do images and information spread now?

At this point, it is perhaps useful to refer to models of analyses on contagious spread within digital networks of media, an analysis which then would lead up to looking at the spread of malicious software. In his book *Virality* (2012), Tony D. Sampson focuses exclusively on the question of contagion in the networked age. Sampson's analysis begins by identifying two different kinds of virality: molar virality and molecular virality.

> *Molar virality* is, I contend, endemic to new biopolitical strategies of social power, that is, a discursive (and prediscursive) means of organizing and exerting control via, for instance, the widespread imposition of generalized immunological defenses,

[19] W. J. T. Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 87.

[20] Julian Dibbell, "Viruses are Good for You," in *New Media Old Media A History and Theory Reader*, ed. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun and Thomas Keenan (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 232.

anomaly detection techniques, and the obligation of personal hygiene in network security.[21]

The second category of virality, *molecular virality*, is 'located in the accidents and spontaneity of desire.'[22] Molecular virality has a much more affective character. 'Unlike a social body composed of collective representations, this is a subrepresentational flow of events that radiates outward as a contaminating desire-event.'[23] Affect in this case plays an essential role within viral dissemination. The triad of the notions of security, fear, and violence are to interact with each other in a variety of combinations that provide the groundwork for the domination of one upon the other.

3. Fear, Virality and Violence

In his book *Security, Territory, Population* Michel Foucault takes up the examples of leprosy, plague, and smallpox in order to show the transformation of different power regimes since the middle ages. Foucault argues that legal sovereignty and religious rituals exercised exclusionary power over lepers' bodies in the Middle Ages. At the end of the Middle Ages and through the 17th century, plague regulations used disciplinary system whereby power over bodies was exercised via the organisation of the ways, times, and places within which bodies would interact with each other. From the eighteenth century, smallpox would have less to do with disciplinary control and more with the calculation of risks. 'In short, it will no longer be the problem of exclusion, as with leprosy, or of quarantine, as with the plague, but of epidemics and the medical campaigns that try to halt epidemic or endemic phenomena.'[24]

What Foucault maps out through an historical analysis of discourses surrounding different types of diseases demonstrates the changes in power structures, from juridical to disciplinary, and statistical. Pasi Valiaho in his book *Biopolitical Screens* (2014) argues that

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[21] Sampson, *Virality: Contagion Theory in the Age of Networks*, 5. Emphasis is original. In doing so, Sampson largely draws upon the work of 19th century sociologist Gabriel Tarde, and in particular refers to an epidemiological diagram about imitative social behaviour.
[22] Sampson, *Virality: Contagion Theory in the Age of Networks*, 6.
[23] Ibidem.
[24] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France 1977-78* (Basingstoke; New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 24-25.

neoliberal governance of life includes neuropower as a distinct element from the anatamopolitics of the body and the biopolitics of the populations, as outlined by Foucault:

> Although certainly containing traces of both these ways of administering the living, the contemporary biopolitical apparatus exerts through its imaginary a kind of neuropower that is not immediately disciplinary or regulatory but is instead based on the indirect modulation of the brain's adaptive and autopoietic capacities germane to the feelings, values, and imaginations that inform our minds and behavior.[25]

Behaviour modification by gaming exemplifies a form of biopolitical and neuropolitical rule that creates corresponding conditions in the physical world. In terms of the issues surrounding political violence, fear comes to the forefront among the imaginative qualities that are being moderated and shifted by biopolitical and neuropolitical means. Writing about bioparanoia and control, Critical Art Ensemble raises the point about contemporary capitalist networks' use of affective qualities in order to exert its own power.

> For the subject under capital, the body imaginary is a technology that can be adjusted, fine-tuned, and amplified by external social, political, and economic pressures in order to advance interests that too often are at odds with those of the individual. Capital's general ability to make such adjustments by constructing easily consumed and rapidly internalized apocalyptic fantasies has been honed to a very refined process. The consumer must accept these scenarios as probable, react with relative predictability, and yet avoid complete meltdown (productivity cannot be destabilized).[26]

The limit of the paranoia is drawn in relation to the subject's ability to produce and consume. 'The strategy of capitalizing on fear is also well entrenched, indeed a tradition

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[25] Pasi Valiaho, *Biopolitical Screens: Image, Power, and the Neoliberal Brain* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2014), 42.

[26] Critical Art Ensemble, "Bioparanoia and the Culture of Control," in *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism and Technoscience*, eds. Beatriz da Costa and Kavita Philip (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008), 413.

reaching back into the early years of the neoliberal assault on the social state.'[27]

The capitalist formulations of notions of security and freedom and the like are the products of long term organisational processes in which immense amounts of human power, time, and capital have been invested. Although the starting point of the process of capitalising of fear may be traced back to the early years of neoliberalism, according to Paul Virilio, the factor of fear has always been present in the notion of capital. 'Capitalist society has always tightly linked politics with freedom from fear, social security with consumption and comfort.'[28]

The proposition in the phrase, "freedom *from* fear", is the key point here. Fear is all around human subjects, and yet, it is possible to break away from it (through various forms of immunity). The question is not formulated around a spatial or temporal aspect, i.e. where and when of it, but rather at the level of politics. The crucial convergence is between politics and the material manifestations of the political conceptualisations that evolve around freedom, security, comfort, and other affective aspects. One can talk about the violence of fear in a similar manner to fear of violence. The fear of violence shows itself in different aspects of everyday life. The distinction between different kinds of fear of violence manifests itself in the backdrop against which fear is operating. A fear of violence in a setting where there is not military violence operating is different from a fear of violence that is experienced in places where there is an ongoing armed conflict.

The violence of fear may be much more subtle and diffused. In peaceful settings, it is mostly materialised around the discourses related to the importance of keeping one's self and environment "clean" and "intact". Anxiety, like any other emotion, is mobilised and manipulated in such a way as to keep the neoliberal subject under control.

The convergence point of politics and violence has many examples of the ways in which one of the two technically similar occurrences is delegitimised or made illegal as opposed to the other. The more dominant parties that either create or adapt to existing

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[27] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 17.
[28] Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics* (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2007), 140.

power structures tend to master the discourses that provide the framework for deeming any given act legitimate or otherwise. 'The liberal way of war thus makes war on life for the purposes making life live since it is the very emergence of life processes themselves which engender the threats and dangers against which liberal biopolitics must wage war if it is to succeed in promoting species life.'[29]

In any of the media discourse surrounding cases of political violence, qualities attributed to dead bodies not only work to describe and categorise them but also bring about a whole new set of assumptions about who deserves the right to live: the innocent, the uncontaminated, the one that builds and keeps the integrity of the body. To give an example, in the news coverage of death as a result of political violence, there is a tendency to list the number of dead bodies in a particular case, and the number of dead children separately. This form of media discourse may not inherently bear within it an approach whereby the death of children are attributed qualities than that of adults; but the implications it brings have to do with the notions of purity and cleanliness. The notions of innocence attributed to children highlight the tragedy of their death. However, the gravity of political violence cannot be measured with a yardstick showing the victims' level of innocence. The "victim" in this sense is a singular body rather than a collective body, since the notion of innocence cannot be attributed to a collective body, especially under the conditions of the collective movements. Innocence is a private property that evokes feelings of vulnerability. It is by its very nature defined by its position vis-à-vis the external threats in question, and thus offers a condition of immunity against that which will violently destroy its integrity.

Ed Cohen in his book *A Body Worth Defending* (2009) takes up the notions of immunity, self-defense, and the discourses about the integrity of the body and paradoxical ground against which the violence operates.

To avert excessive violent death, biopolitics augments the forces of life; in the name of a pacific life, it invokes the belligerent specters of war. This Janus-faced regime

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[29] Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 88.

incorporates within itself the very violence against which it contends, establishing war as the political ground for affirming the lives on which, and in whose name, it acts.[30]

Cohen's use of the phrase "specters of war" coincidentally links to yet another discussion about the shift in the metaphors that are being used to describe violence events occurring in different historical eras. In his introduction to *Occupy*, a collaborative work that seeks to analyse the recent occupy movements from Zucotti Park in New York to Tahrir Square in Egypt, W. J. T. Mitchell says:

> Each place has its own particular history and circumstances. And yet we know that something links these places and events that transpired in them. In the nineteenth century we would have called it the spirit of revolution, and understood it as a kind of ghostly, uncanny return of familiar images of popular uprisings and mass movements – among these the ghost that was haunting Europe when Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels penned The Communist Manifesto in 1848. In our time, the preferred language is biological and biopolitical, employing terms like "contagion" to describe images and words that have gone viral in the global media.[31]

The ethereal metaphor of ghost that was used during the 19th century modernisation whereas the biological metaphors such as contagion today works against the backdrop of a political system where body itself integrates into networks powered by machines, not through its physicality only, but also through the data that it produces. Also, a distinction has to be made between the two metaphors of the "ghost" and the "contagion" since the former referred to the revolutionary attributes led by the working class, thus having more positive connotations from a revolutionary point of view, whereas the latter varies much more with regard to the contexts within which it is used. A contagion, taken in its literal sense of the spread of a physical disease, is something that needs to be fought against. This could be exemplified in the abundance of discourses

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[30] Ed Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 2009), 18.

[31] W. J. T. Mitchell, "Preface," in W J T Mitchell, Bernard E. Harcourt, Michael T. Taussig, *Occupy: Three Inquiries in Disobedience* (Chicago, IL; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), x.

against the ghastly spread of global contagions. However, when the metaphor of a ghost in the 19th century Europe was introduced, the Western world was well over with its fears of transient beings. Furthermore, the metaphor of the ghost was perhaps an effective opening phrase of the Communist Manifesto, but not further material for discussions.

Metaphors such as contagion, however, do not only evoke fear, but also could have positive connotations for the purposes of capitalist production and dissemination. A viral sales campaign would be considered successful, the more contagious it got. Therefore, it is not the spread itself that is the source of the problem for biopolitical power regimes; it is the nature of the spread with regard to the possibilities of its control, regulation, and adaptation.

4. Resistance through Media

According to the artists and the curator of the *Biennale.py* exhibition, the artwork could be thought of as a global form of resistance, a counter attack on the global powers. Another way to read the artwork in terms of violence is through its attack on computers and networks.

If we take up the computer virus as a form of resistance against global powers, then the focus is more towards the structural violence of capitalism. However, the *Biennale.py* work in itself is about the visibility of the process and the dynamics of power; it does not necessarily interfere in the process.[32]

> The "biennale.py" fits perfectly with the context of the Pavilion of the Slovenian
> Pavilion [sic], that this year will present the Absolute One project. With Absolute
> One the Slovenian Pavilion, starting from the basic question on how the artist
> could consctructively [sic] operate and actively respond to the globalization process,
> offers a strong and optimistic signal instead of the spreading fatalism and of the idea

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[32] In this respect, it differs from *Networks of Dispossession* project. *Networks of Dispossession*, besides showing the political violence operating at the level of urban transformation, also acts as an activist media artwork through the channels that it uses.

of inevitability.[33]

This vague statement about the "constructive operation" of the artist within the globalisation process may indicate that the artwork's focus is not on the violence of the structures of globalisation, but on the ways to keep optimistic in the face of assumed inevitability.

If we read the artwork as a violent attack on computers and networks, instead, we can consider the whole display of the work as a metaphorical demonstration of violence that is inflicted by the computer on the virus, but also vice versa. "The main and only function of "biennale.py": to survive" as written in the exhibition press release is perhaps a statement that implies this bidirectional relationship between the two parties.

In terms of the method it uses, the virus artwork follows a legal procedure by letting the anti-virus companies know about the existence and the spread of the virus, a choice on the artists' behalf. In this sense, it follows a different path from other comparable hacktivist artworks, such as Paolo Cirio's *Loophole4All* (2013), which involves the hacking of Cayman Islands' government servers to release the information of companies that register as shell companies to avoid tax.[34] *Loophole4All* uses computer coding to retrieve the decodable data on the existing legitimate but unethical capitalist practice. *Biennale.py* is a statement on the current state of affairs and conflicts through the exposure of code to the audience.

The virus software can assume a variety of functions and methods.[35] However, one common aspect is that it has to interject and interrupt the practices of the user, whatever the intention may be. The same holds true for many Internet applications that users install on their computers.

Software is an artificial organism that needs to be kept alive by humans to continue functioning. Software has the technical infrastructure, networks, and protocols, as well as

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[33] "Press Release, June 1st 2001", [epidemiC] official website.

[34] "About the Loophole for All project," Loophole4all, http://loophole4all.com/about.php (accessed September 2017).

[35] For a variety of contexts where computer viruses are created, see: Dibbell in *New Media Old Media A History and Theory Reader*, 219-232.

user experience design, research and development, and discourses around them. The possibilities offered by the software and the amount of central corporate control on it helps shape aspects of their users' online behaviour. The software that collect data are developed and enhanced to ensure a maximised amount of time of use, based on the user experience design methods.

In this case, the nature of some computer virus and the central control over application software are similar in the sense that they both are capable of interjecting with the actions of the user. The difference, however, lies in the function of the action. A computer virus could be an act of defiance without necessarily an ultimate goal whereas the central remote control of software almost all the time aims for more profit, either by advertising third party products and services (as does the broadcast media, for example) or optimising the way users give away their data.

> What neoliberalism seeks to impose is not so much the generalized commodification of daily life—the reduction of the extraeconomic to the demands of exchange value—as its financialization. Its imperative is not so much the measurement of biological time as its incorporation into the nonmeasurable, achronological temporality of financial capital accumulation.[36]

Time is turned into financial capital through a variety of ways, among which are: the use of time differences as a source of profit in financial trading; attention time and its manipulation for financial gains; mining social media to see the cultural changes over relatively longer periods of time for profit; and amassing data from temporal behaviour and turning them into static databases, as Cooper says.

Corporate bodies and governments condemn computer viruses as agents that interfere with the coherent workings of network systems. However, it has been the case that Internet Service Providers (ISPs), in collaboration with governments, used methods of viral attack to manipulate political resistance via the Internet. To give an example, on March 21 2014, shortly before the local elections, Turkish government blocked access to the social

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[36] Melinda Cooper, *Life as Surplus* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2008), 10.

networking website Twitter.[37] Immediately after the censorship took affect, "how to" tutorials about going around the censorship were released by the technically more literate and the Internet activists for general public. The information mainly spread through other available social media websites. In a very short amount of time, many Turkish Internet users learned how to change their Domain Name System (DNS) settings in order to go around censorship.

On March 29 2014, since large numbers of people were using alternative public DNS services to go around social media blocking, it was reported that most of the ISPs in Turkey did DNS spoofing,[38] a form of attack method which is similar to the viral method of IP spoofing where 'an attacker creates data packets with a falsified originator address; the receiver computer assumes that this is an internal user and grants access rights.'[39]

Such use of illegitimate attack methods by ISPs in collaboration with a government display complex relationships between media users, digital access rights, corporate bodies, and governments. The users who faced the repressive state regulations in this case chose to turn to corporations such as Google, Facebook and Twitter, which are large corporations known to collect and sell users' personal data to their clients.

The use of malicious software, which is condemned by governments and corporations, by governments themselves for population control is akin to the practice of considering certain types of visible physical violence legitimate and legal, when it is performed via politics, or invisible violence when it is performed by capitalism.

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[37] "Widespread Twitter outages in Turkey after PM threatens ban," Reuters, March 21, 2014, http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/03/21/turkey-twitter-ban-idINDEEA2K00620140321 (accessed September 2017).

[38] For example see: Sean Gallagher, "Turkey now blocking social media by hijacking Google DNS," Ars Technica, 21 March 2014, https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2014/03/turkey-now-blocking-social-media-by-hijacking-google-dns/and "Google's Public DNS intercepted in Turkey," (accessed September 2017) and Google Security Blog, "Google's Public DNS intercepted in Turkey," 29 March 2014, http://googleonlinesecurity.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/googles-public-dns-intercepted-in-turkey.html (accessed September 2017).

[39] Different types of computer viruses could be listed as follows: File viruses (Program viruses, COM viruses), Boot sector viruses, Macro viruses, Hybrid viruses (Multipartite viruses), Script viruses, Link viruses/Directory viruses, Stealth viruses, Polymorphic viruses, Slow viruses, Experimental viruses, Worms, Trojan horses, Logical bombs, Direct-action viruses, ANSI viruses, Denial of service (E-mail bombing), E-mail viruses, Sendmail bugs, DNS attack, RIP attack, Backdoors, Keystroke reader, Packet sniffer, IP spoofing, ICMP attack. Lutz Stange, "Virus types and variants," digitalcraft, http://www.digitalcraft.org/?artikel_id=296 (accessed September 2017).

The human security literature, in other words, both avows and disavows the violence of neoliberalism. Although it seems to offer an indisputable testimony to the experience of neoliberalism—proliferating in threats, warnings, and dire prognoses—it simultaneously prohibits any serious reflection on its economic imperatives. Instead, it displaces insecurity and its affective equivalent—fear—from the structural violence of free-market economics to the transversal movements of people, viruses, and biological agents of all kinds.[40]

Cooper's analysis here refers to a structural system whereby people's concerns stemming from insecurity and fear are mobilised towards external agents such as migration of people or viruses that work to contaminate the environment towards which they move. In this sense, the physical movement of agents that effect populations' livelihood and wellbeing is fundamentally a displacement of neoliberal insecurities that, albeit dynamic in nature, are in essence grounded in the system. Cooper's ideological analysis of the relationship between structural violence and fear of viruses' and people's movements could be read as a contextual framework for the emergence of active prophylactic measures. Life under the biopolitical governance needs to be protected, fostered, and enhanced. This is achieved via the prevention of risk factors and eliminating them.

As a form of rule whose referent object is that of species existence, the liberal way of rule is simultaneously also a problematization of fear and danger involving threats to the peace and prosperity of the species. Hence its allied need, in pursuing the peace and prosperity of the species, to make war on whatever threatens it. That is the reason why liberal peacemaking is lethal.[41]

Risk prevention operates on the basis of possible scenarios of catastrophe whereas troubleshooting is a way of dealing with a particular case that has already caused the damage. Anti-virus software, in this sense, could act as a metaphor of the combined practices of risk prevention, insurance, and troubleshooting.

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[40] Cooper, *Life as Surplus*, 66.
[41] Dillon and Reid, *Liberal Way of War*, 42.

[C]leanliness and hygiene are what the consumer pays for! This demonstrates how consumer products succeed in their role as "anxiety relievers." Capitalism involves a myriad machines producing fear complemented and reinforced by machines producing consumer products. The desire to consume as a way to fight fear and anxiety is at the very heart of digital culture and, in our case, the discourse of such digital contagions as worms and viruses.[42]

Is there a difference in the nature of the fear that feeds from the different discourses related to the software and the human body itself? War against biological viruses includes the layers of identification, war against the microbe, and the conceptualisation of the whole body as at war against the viruses. As anthropologist Mary Douglas states in her book *Purity and Danger* (1966), '[t]he bacterial transmission of disease was a great nineteenth-century discovery…. So much has it transformed our lives that it is difficult to think of dirt except in the context of pathogenicity.'[43] After the identification of the microbe, a "war" was waged on it. In *AIDS and Its Metaphors* (1989) Susan Sontag states that 'disease is regularly described as invading the society, and efforts to reduce mortality from a given disease are called a fight, a struggle, a war.'[44] The modern body, continually at war, needs to be protected. '[I]mmunity defensively renders the organism distinct from the vital contexts in which it necessarily exists, locating both nature and culture inside it. This diremption hollows out the lifeworld, defining the organism as a defensible interior which needs to protect itself ceaselessly from a hostile exterior.'[45]

In a sense, the discourse on war against computer viruses has not had to go through the process of identification, naming, and war that biological viruses did. Rather, it has worked against the backdrop of an existing concept of external viral threat invading a body, which made it straightforward to categorically identify the type of adversary that is being handled.

This situation has two essential elements regarding its relationship to the physical

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[42] Jussi Parikka, *Digital Contagions: A Media Archaeology of Computer Viruses* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2007), 169.
[43] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London; New York, NY: Routledge, 1966), 36.
[44] Susan Sontag, *AIDS and Its Metaphors* (London: Penguin, 1990), 10.
[45] Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body*, 14.

human body and its existence vis-à-vis the existence of machines or commodities. Firstly, the body that a computer virus attacks is the mechanical body of the computer, but also it is a network operated by humans. Just as viruses need a host organism to survive, networks need humans to be maintained. The protection of the physical body is a prerequisite for the protection of network, so much so that the protection of networks has become an end in itself, bodies acting as an instrument of the process. The second aspect relates to the first one, and perhaps ties in to violence in a more direct way: it has to do with the extermination of the body. A biological virus could result in damage or loss of human life. The computer virus, however, is an attack on the network system and machines. The system, even though it contains essential data that has an economic counterpart, is technically replaceable. However, the data provided by bodies and smooth workings of the system are essential to the operation of biopolitical networks, making it worthwhile to make life live for some while exterminating it for the others. [46]

5. Conclusions

Being immune is a state of being; immunisation is a preemptive war against threat. The point of being immune is reached through the process that involves precautionary violence against violence since the annihilation of the potential attack is the ultimate goal.

When we consider on the one hand the explicitly medical, even epidemiological, vocabulary adopted in the battle against computer viruses—also feared as a potential vehicle for international terrorism—and on the other hand the expressly military terminology used in the scientific world to describe how the immune system responds to environmental threats, we come full circle. [47]

The computer virus artwork case in this sense could be said to make transparent these processes of violent relations. It shows the unruly relationship between the host

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[46] 'In the neoliberal framework the essential question is not to whether violence is wrong or unjust, because cost-benefit calculations and other market criteria form the framework for rendering it intelligible. Violence becomes invested with a historically specific meaning–it is understood as a rational and strategic form of conduct, which responds systematically to modifications in the environmental variables, and is therefore susceptible to economic analysis.' Johanna Oksala, *Foucault, Politics, and Violence* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 142.

[47] Roberto Esposito, *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), 5.

mechanism and the viral body. The dynamic nature of the process is the key point in this respect. Both the host mechanism, i.e. a computer that is situated within a network, and the virus itself are prone to change over time at a high speed. The change takes effect quickly, and the implications are of high importance.

When thought in terms of the media art from the Mediterranean, *Biennale.py* could be considered as a unique artwork with regard to the contextualisation and the tools it is using. The work itself does not exclusively work on the issues of political violence peculiar to the Mediterranean area informed by the political dynamics of the region. However, it is important to the definitions of the Mediterranean that will emerge across the case studies. The micro scale of virus, in conjunction with the macro scale of positioning of the Mediterranean as a region, will include, even though it does not specify, the Mediterranean. The artwork analysis also has the potential to shed light on the relationships between violence and the unseen, visibility, temporality, and networks, humans, migration, and subjectivities that are created and transformed through violence, leading up to a discussion of Mediterranean public media art space.

> Without necessarily taking on the lineaments of a generalized war or a dynamic of a truly phallic nature, social violence tends to crystallize around currently crucial questions such as the constitution of identities, the modalities of citizenship, the management of mobility, and the capture of free-floating resources.[48]

In this respect, an analysis of the spread of a virus, which operates at the micro organic level, bind to the discussions around the movement of human and non-human bodies, both from a metaphorical view and otherwise. An outlook that oscillates between physical and metaphorical realms may be necessary in the context of this case study because the artwork itself plays with the idea of viruses with different implications (virus travelling through a network is the main concern, but the use of human bodies are used as a non-essential component of the conceptual framework). Thus, it may require further look into the physical differences and metaphorical affinities of biological and computer viruses, even

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[48] Achille Mbembe, "Sovereignty as a Form of Expenditure," in *Sovereign Bodies: Citizens, Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World*, eds. Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 165.

though, both are epistemologically different entities. Biological and computer viruses need bodies as host organisms to spread, and discourses around bodies that spread across geographical boundaries parallel those on the threat of a virus. Despite these parallel functioning and discourses, there are fundamental differences between the operation of two types of spread.

The first has to do with the directions of contagion. A virus spreads from an infected body to another one, thus the direction is from so-called dirty to pure and clean. When talking about computer viruses, though, the computer that spreads the virus is not contaminated: it is a fully functional hardware that is used to create the viral software. It is the software itself and the network that is being contaminated. The second builds upon the concepts regarding the flow of the virus, but its main focus has to do with the mechanisms of the host organism. There is a subtle difference in the type of bodies needed for metaphorical and non-metaphorical divide and it has to do with the labeling with regard to the direction of the flow of the virus and the contamination of the parties involved. A computer virus is part of a media environment with agents who have access to hardware and software. That is to say, a distinction is drawn between the bodies that spread the virus (whether it is a computer virus or a biological one), and those that spread like a virus (at a metaphorical level). Both processes involve an outburst, a lack of control, a threat to the supposed unity of the host organism, not only during the time of contamination, but for a period beyond. As Susan Sontag said: 'Viruses are not simply agents of infection, contamination. They transport genetic "information," they transform cells. And they themselves, many of them, evolve.'[49]

In this sense, a host organism could be any of the categorically different organs: a host organism can be a human body, a computer, a network, and an assumed unified society that the nation state frames. The dynamics of spread, the nature of contamination, and the assumed damage are various. However, the neoliberal discourse reduces these varieties to one single concept that is surrounded by the idea of threat. The idea of being surrounded by external forces presupposes a distinction between the inside and outside. This becomes particularly relevant if seen in terms of the region formation around the

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[49] Susan Sontag, *AIDS and Its Metaphors*, 68.

Mediterranean: e.g. the idealised conception of a sea that is a whole and that needs protection from its surrounding lands whereas it at the same time becomes a source of threat that carries migrants and pollution. Therefore this first case study provides the scope for describing the multiple formations of the Mediterranean as well as discussing the foundations of pervasive violence starting from a micro level both online and offline. An example of this from the Mediterranean region may be the hacker conflict between Israel and Palestine, which started in 1999, and has escalated over time.[50] The cyber war included the release of a malware named "Flame" (first seen in December 2007) that infected thousands of computers across Middle East, especially West Bank and Iran, potentially stealing information and transmitting it across networks.[51] The threat surrounds, interferes, and carries across information. Inside and outside regimes merge, just as the interior of the Mediterranean is surrounded by its shore and merges with it through the bodies that are carried across the sea. The sea, being the interior for natural forces and human flows also acts as an exterior to the nation states of the land around and beyond its shores. The manifestations of the sea being exterior can be traced in the idea of fortress Europe, which needs to be protected from the threats surrounding it.

Network is prophylactic, and it is designed to protect humans from fear in the same way that consumerism does. Its safety is at the forefront of capitalistic discourses, and its sterility is the ultimate aim in predicting the contemporary consumer behaviour. 'Capitalism involves a myriad machines producing fear complemented and reinforced by machines producing consumer products.'[52] All the dynamics of production of goods and fear have now created a framework that enables itself to grow, manufacture, and encourage consumption. The network has become autonomous, corporate, intrusive, and free of the human body that now it uses as host in order to replicate itself. Therefore, the network itself has become virus-like. *Biennale.py* reveals network's transformation into virality.

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[50] For a study on the manifestations of Palestinian-Israeli conflict in cyberspace, see: Chanan Naveh, "The Palestinian-Israeli Web War," in *New Media and the New Middle East*, ed. Philip Seib (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 171-190.

[51] Asa Winstanley, "Cyberwarfare: US, Israel's electronic attacks on Iran and Palestinians," *The Electronic Intifada*, 2 July 2012, https://electronicintifada.net/content/cyberwarfare-us-israels-electronic-attacks-iran-and-palestinians/11453 (accessed September 2017).

[52] Parikka, *Digital Contagions: A Media Archaeology of Computer Viruses*, 169.

Chapter 4 Case Study 2: *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011)

1. Imagining, Imaging and Mapping Borders

The Mapping Journey Project (2008-2011) is an installation by artist Bouchra Khalili with eight single channel videos and a map about the clandestine journeys of illegal immigrants across the Mediterranean. The videos show maps being marked by the immigrants as they narrate their stories of moving across borders.

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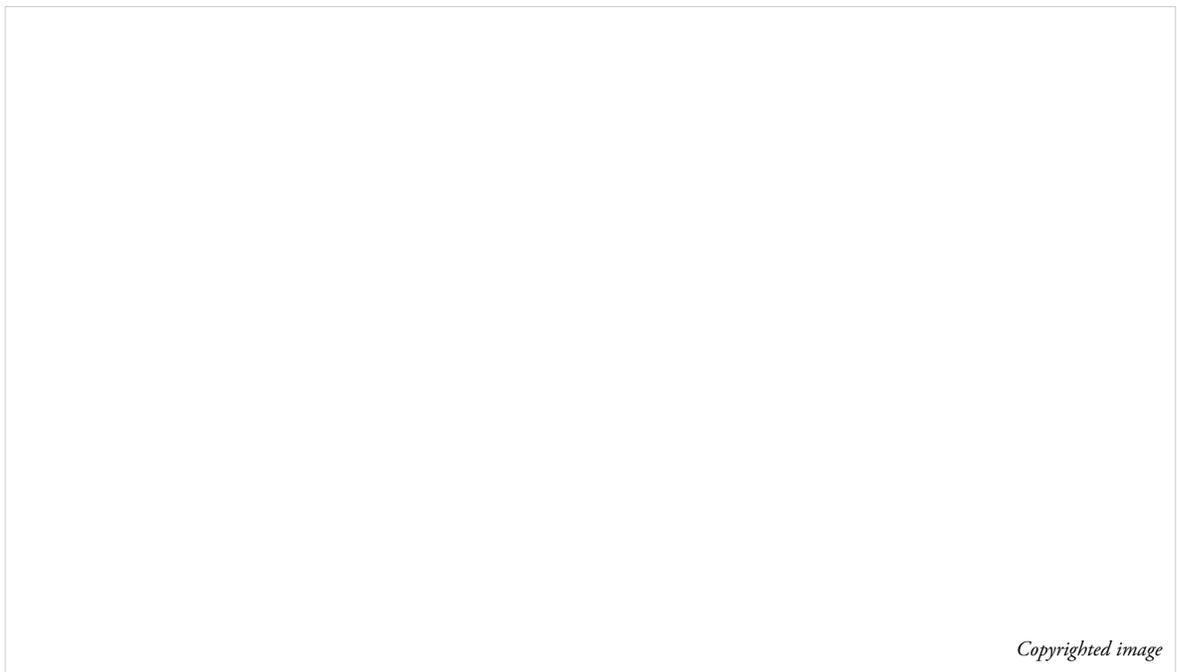
Fig. 1: *The Mapping Journey Project*. Video installation. 2008-2011. 8 single channels. Variable dimensions. View at *The Opposite of the Voice-Over, solo exhibition*, Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Toronto, 2013. ©Bouchra Khalili.

According to the artist, the aim of the project is to develop an alternative approach to map-making based on the experiences of the people who illegally crossed borders.[1] The artist uses cartography, storytelling, and language through perspectives of individuals to deal with the issues of migration. She explains in a lecture the significance of map-making and cartography as methods in the context of her work developed at Art School Palestine in September and October 2009:

> 'I found that working with a cartographer and following all the map-making process and all the work could be a very direct way and a very simple way to show what is an occupied territory and how the strategies of colonization affect daily life, human mobility, and make impossible the continuity of the Palestinian state.'[2]

The artist uses cartography and human voice to develop the artwork that brings visibility to issues of migration, colonisation, war and their violent outcomes.[3] In a catalogue essay written about *The Mapping Journey Project*, art historian and art critic Elvan Zabunyan draws attention to the double meaning of "mapping" in the project title.[4] Maps are used as means to develop the artwork and demonstrate the geographical pathways of mobility via material means as well as referring to the mapping process by means of collecting stories of immigrants. Khalili's work, which deal with individual stories one at a time, could be interpreted as a way to counter the mainstream approach of reporting violence (mainly through news outlets) via the number of people who died or were physically harmed. Khalili's work makes visible the stories of the human agents who are more often than not reduced to numbers by mainstream media and political actors alike. Khalili uses maps, sound, human voice and pictures, which offer different modes of visibility. Maps are present as tools for narrating the journeys whereas hands add a dynamic aspect to the static nature of a picture of a map in front of the camera. As

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[1] "The Mapping Journey Project. Video Installation. 2008-2011," Bouchra Khalili official website, http://www.bouchrakhalili.com/the-mapping-journey-project/ (accessed September 2017).
[2] "The Cartographer - Bouchra Khalili," Vimeo, March 2010, https://vimeo.com/17756648 (accessed September 2017).
[3] The recording of the human voice heard in *The Mapping Journey Project* reflects the humility of the immigrants' journeys as it does not bear the traces of any involvement of expensive gadgets or post-production tools.
[4] Elvan Zabunyan, "Bouchra Khalili," *Tarjama/Translation: Contemporary art from the Middle East, Central Asia, and its Diasporas*, trans. Salima Semmar (New York, NY: ArteEast, 2009), 74.

such, they actively seek to make space for themselves while being combined in front of the camera. Neither the map nor the picture is in and of itself capable of narrating the story in the way they together do, both from an aesthetic and from a thematic point of view.

The Mapping Journey Project raises questions about various aspects of border regimes, and mobility as well as the motives behind migration. Curator Diana Nawi argues that the stories of the immigrants in Khalili's work have certain indications that negate the idea that migration is based solely on economic motives.

> The inclusion within the eight videos of an altogether different and much smaller map of the area between Israel's western border and the Palestinian territories reveals the political dimensions of not only the work, but of the entire concept of movement and migration at the core of Khalili's practice. Seven of the maps show numerous countries residing on different continents, but the singular video, Mapping Journey #3, which shows the borders between these two contested places, is what critically illuminates the artist's guiding philosophical position: migration and travel are not simply tied to ideas of economic opportunity, exile, or escape. Rather, they also operate as modes of resistance: they are lived expressions of political positions that refuse state control and power, and the restrictions of nationalisms, regionalism, and ideology. The smaller map, often ignored by critics in assessments of this work, is the sharpest indication of the arbitrariness and implicit subjugation of borders.[5]

The projection of a map onto the singular screen is itself a mapping process, which, when juxtaposed with paper maps, also could reference the borders of the media used in the process such as the networked technologies of display and dissemination, that is to say, the mobility of visibility of what is being narrated. The argument about the mobility of the humans, on the other hand, brings with it questions about framing resistance in the act of mobility. The movement of people across nation-state borders operates against a backdrop of

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[5] Diana Nawi, "Other Maps On Bouchra Khalili's Cartographies," *Ibraaz*, platform 008, January 2015, http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/115 (accessed September 2017).

several legal and political frameworks. The regimes that determine the legality of the movement of people across borders have their own histories. Current crises of migration mark a cleavage between the operation of political and legal frameworks and the changing characteristics and needs of agents and populations. As a concept, it demonstrates the challenges faced by a competing idea of belonging to a particular territory versus the desire to move due to a variety of motives. Borders assume the role of various sites of human relations and aspirations. Border indicates not only physical realities but also imaginations in terms of space ("the life on the other side") and time ("the future of our lives"). Borders can be frontiers of an imagined direction in terms of space and life styles, sites of existence, sites of regulation and law, and a temporal break from the general conditions of the flow of life. In terms of their roles, borders can go either way in political and social spectra: they may offer inclusion and exclusion; and they may become tools of oppression as well as symbols of freedom. The rules of their administration may be subject to change in accordance with political decision-making.

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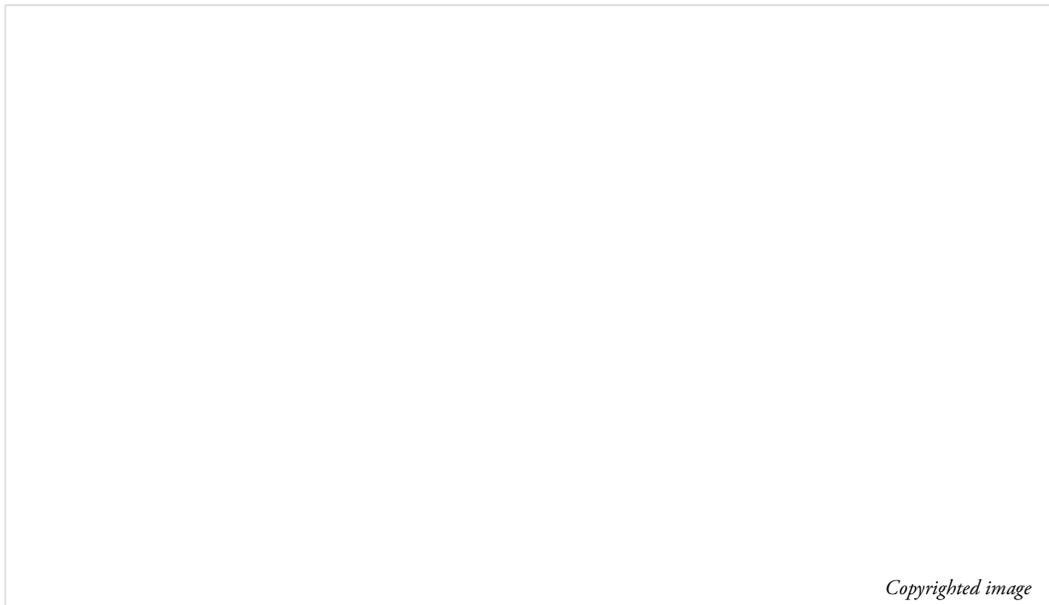
Fig. 2. Mapping Journey #7, from *The Mapping Journey Project*. Video. 6'. 2011. ©Bouchra Khalili.

Migration is one of the phenomena where the impact of political violence administered on legal and legitimate bases can be directly traced in peoples' lives. Practices of border control, collection of biological data and profiling are assumed preemptive precautions of the neoliberal

biopolitical state. These practices incur economic implications, which, then adds another layer to the dynamics of border control and policing.[6] The system of militarisation of borders then becomes a self-reflexive order that needs manpower, technology, and agents to sustain its very presence while at the same time rationalising and strengthening discrimination on the social realm. This discrimination finds its resonances in the everyday lives of the citizens embedded in material circumstances, such as employment, or in symbolic actions, such as the use of language and discourse. Borders help form both feelings of unity in anti-migrant groups that result from a stance against the immigrants as well as providing the basis for regulating internal population by creating discourses about the need to form a rule against the potential chaos that follows immigration.

How then to make visible aspects of these entangled relationships? Given a political crisis of the 21st century that involves violence (either by distant administration by governments or through its practice in refugee camps inside and outside of Europe) on other humans, there are several different aspects of communicating it through media and art. These can be broadly categorised as:

- Identification: reporting (both direct and through a first person narration and third person reporting), providing an account, e.g.broadcast media or citizen journalism.

- Dissemination: sharing of the information and commenting on the identified content (news outlets, citizen journalism, documentaries). Such content may be in the form of words, data and images. Dissemination of data may come in the form of statistical information or graphic presentation whereas imagery could be more personalised and addressed to evoke certain forms of feelings. Examples of these include websites dedicated to dissemination of news and information on political violence.

- Visibility: making visible different aspects of physical or non-physical violence through new

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[6] These economic implications may also bear some aspects with regard to inclusion and exclusion: the economic inclusivity within employment systems does not always guarantee labour regulations or workers' rights.

creative content and context (artistic expressions). The different ways to make visible an invisible aspect of violence may come in the form of bringing to the fore the physicality of what is existent but hidden as well as in the form of creating a visual lexicon for things that exist as a concept (such as border), but for which there is no intrinsic visual references. Khalili's *The Mapping Journey Project* does this through the voices of the excluded and the marginalised.

- Action: developing plans, means, and technologies that provide tools for overcoming the problems encountered, and frameworks of future actions. These include activist projects and alternative mapping systems.

These different categories of encountering any form of violence and the means to overcome the problems stemming from it are not isolated from each other, nor are they meant to delineate the limits of the possible reactions and actions. This categorisation is based on a practical discussion of resistance towards the atrocities, visible or otherwise, which decrease the quality of human life and environment in terms of their relations to objects as well as leaving them to cease to exist. The temporal aspect of the decrease, i.e. an abrupt decrease or a decrease that spans over a longer period of time, references the difference in the forms of violence.

These categories around the dynamics of the way violence are seen and discussed do not necessarily entail separate realms whereby different elements follow each other. In a given context, some elements overlap to create realms in which distinct features are intermingled. Khalili's work, one can argue, is mainly informed by a visibility project, and opens up potentials for actions through alternative mapping practices. Kaelen Wilson-Goldie's focus article on Khalili's work states: 'She [the artist] didn't go searching for her subjects but rather waited for an occasion to meet them. "Sometimes they find me rather than I them," she says.'[7] In this sense, the process of developing the artwork, the journeys of the subjects, and the presentation of the artistic material to the audience follows a pathway similar in terms of methods but distinct in terms of context and content. The artist, who sets out with a particular

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[7] Kaelen Wilson-Goldie, "In Focus: Bouchra Khalili," *Frieze*, Issue 153 (2011), http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/focus-bouchra-khalili/ (accessed September 2017).

motive in mind sets out to a journey where she is not yet sure about the encounters. The artist does not know about her subjects as she wanders to find them. There is the interplay between movement and stillness as well as about visibility and invisibility during the whole process. The artists' movement is both literal, as in searching for subjects and metaphorical, as in the process of taking action to make the subjects' stories visible.

2. Motion and Stasis: Visibility, Proximity and Speed of Violence

There is a need to think of new ways of talking about violence and its impacts (whether it be sparse, less visible, structural, or more visible, direct, and physical) through its implications in the social realm on the wellbeing of humans, other animal species, and the environment at large. Current political and media rhetoric around migration display a similar pattern to those about viruses and the contagion within human and computer networks in the sense that both are informed by a crisis discourse that involve 'invasion' by a large group of agents the consequences of whose actions may destroy the operation of a particular system.

Verbal metaphors used by media and public at large for the immigrants tend to either demonise them (such as viruses) or make them sound like a threat by putting emphasis on the number of people who set out to change countries. In this sense, the issues that *The Mapping Journey Project* raises about political violence are in some respects complementary to those that were opened up in the previous chapter by a discussion of the computer virus artwork *biennale.py*. In this case, the centre of the discussion shifts from viruses to humans, and their positioning under terms of legality and illegality. These relationships throughout the illegal journeys involve exchange of money and ideas, communication, and networks and technologies used by border policing. Legislation itself becomes a mode and tool of violence for making these journeys perilous.

The fact that production of power resides in decision-making processes rather than achieving what could be done to improve human life is evidenced by the investment in border control when it is evident that border control does little to stop anyone from moving, but

diverts, controls, and commands the human flow. When thought about in an historical perspective, human movement in its diverse forms has always been present.

> Population movements constitute the bedrock of world history and assume a wide range of guises: epic wanderings, pilgrimage, pastoral nomadism, transhumance, voluntary relocation, forced expatriation, trade diaspora, travel, tourism, slavery, and labor mobility of many kinds. The critical elements in taxonomies of motion are the relative presence and absence of force, the motivations and objectives of those favoring departure over staying put, the duration and patterns of expatriation, and whether the place of exile became over time a space of belonging.[8]

The question of belonging in relation to time and space here manifests itself as a defining factor of the definitions of different types of human movements. Biopolitics of ownership and belonging has previously been discussed here in relation to space and time.[9] In addition to the issues of ownership and belonging as framing factors for biopolitical rule, one can identify other dualities that ensure the continuation of this frame.

Continuation of violence as events resides in the administration of tensions between speed and slowness, visibility and invisibility, biology and politics, and motion and stasis. Through reading the methods by which these tensions are managed, one can partly understand how political violence continues to operate at different social, political and economic realms.

Biological data of humans are gathered, administered, invested in, bought and sold as part of the biopolitical rule. This whole process is very dynamic and involves many agents as well as networks of dissemination and storage of data, although for one particular individual person on the user end the process may not be visible. Contemporary biopolitical neoliberal administration has been successful in its attempts to make the violation of human rights and privacy as invisible as possible.

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[8] Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Mediterraneans: North Africa and Europe in an Age of Migration, C. 1800-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 11.

[9] For a detailed discussion please refer to the contextual section on biopolitics in the literature review.

Border policing and controls do not stop people from moving, but they merely change the form and dynamics of movement. The core of the question of an ongoing issue of the practice of violence follows different pathways that are interlinked. One is through a passivity of the self, a "harmless" silence and immobilisation. This holds true for the examples of "left to die" migrant boat where 63 of the 72 migrants who left Tripoli during the Libyan conflict in March 2011 died after drifting on the Mediterranean for 15 days without food and fuel. The critical point here is about the proximity to the centre of violence as event. This is to say that there is a categorical distinction between the immobility towards what happened on the Mediterranean and what happens when states and multi-billion corporations track users' data. A demand for visibility by state and corporate agents during a moment of distress on a refugee boat on the Mediterranean would be a demand for visibility not as individual human beings, but as human species, i.e. it would be a wish to be seen as biological entities as in the sense of alive humans. The case of the "left to die" migrant boat on the Mediterranean has an imminent danger and a human cost whereas the corporate surveillance of data is framed by a structural problem that slowly sediments into the realm of the social through the political. Various actors and agents of administration are involved in this structural dynamic, and it is through an administration of immobility that violent acts survive and evolve, giving way to other forms of violence. This administration of immobility refers both to the control of means and media of movement and to the political administration's self-inflicted incapacity to act, which safeguards the powers of status quo.

The proximity and visibility of violence are two distinct but interrelated questions when it comes to the reaction against the harms of its outcomes. The role of mediation is an essential factor especially considering the role of media in terms of altering the relationships between distances and invisibility of violence. The processes of mediation, however, do not work in a predictable manner, which is to say, the premises of proximity that mediation builds do not ensure a "movement" (i.e. the frozen incapability of political systems that maintain the status quo discussed above) in a way to re-frame the political outcomes of violence. Mediation can result in either action or inaction, depending on the external circumstances. Scaling of violence

(i.e. its qualitative assessment in terms of impact and effectuation) and visibility are in a dynamic relationship with proximity: violence of events that are made visible establishes a certain physical proximity (e.g. violence viewed via a news broadcast on a television set in a living room or a mobile phone in a hand) as well as a non-physical distance (e.g. the problem of certain forms of violence being the problem of outside world). Scaling, being one of the most essential tools of cartography, can be traced in Bouchra Khalili's work.

In the case of illegal immigrants that are discussed in the work of Khalili, the issues of visibility and proximity take a different dimension. The stories of the movements of the illegal immigrants show how contradictory motion, invisibility, reaction and contempt can be traced through the simple everyday relations that surround the agents that are involved. The clandestine journeys exemplify the extent of these contradictions of visibility and invisibility. Legality in this instance may become a concept that is not necessarily protective of a person's right to live in a particular setting, but on the contrary, a challenge to it.[10] Mechanisms of law become a fearful phenomenon for many who did not have the experience of directly dealing with it. Invisibility could be a preferred method for survival.

Fear of going back, both in terms of space and time, may shape various actions, political preferences, and interactions of people and populations. In its spatial sense, this fear could be thought about in terms of going back to the previous life conditions in a particular environment. In its temporal sense, going "back" may refer to a return to olden times whereby a particular rule in a particular era may be the case. A very striking example of this in the Mediterranean may be the case of the Alawite population in Syria. The Alawite, an unorthodox sect of Islam that can be found across some Mediterranean countries, have had a long history of suppression by their Sunni counterparts. Beginning the early 16th century, oppression against the Alawite within the Ottoman Empire started to increase, with Selim I killing a large number of the population for supporting Shah Ismail, conqueror of Persia. In contemporary

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[10] Hannah Arendt's 1943 essay "We Refugees" gives an account of how right to live is considered to be a right for the citizen, laying out distinctions between the Jewish refugees and the native Jewish community where these refugees moved to in the context of World War II. See: Hannah Arendt, "We Refugees," in *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*, ed. Marc Robinson (Boston, MA; London: Faber and Faber, 1994), 110-119.

war-torn Syria where there has been an ongoing civil war since 2011, part of the Alawite population are known to support President Bashar al-Assad out of the fear of going back to the days where suppression of Alawis took place. Crises and fear embed in themselves the different axes of motion and stasis, proximity and visibility, and going back, both spatially and temporally (in a metaphorical sense).

As much as these tensions provide a tool for biopolitical administration, so do they open up spaces of resistance. Arab Media researcher Donatella Della Ratta's analysis around visibility and spaces of violence may be given as an example. Della Ratta looks at the situation in contemporary Syria and explains how production of visual material creates its own spaces and histories in networked environments by using the term "expanded places."

> Expanded places are endless networked versions of physical sites that have been destroyed, and then regenerated through the multiplication of mediated forms and formats enabled by networked communications technologies. They thrive on the latter's techno-human infrastructure, and rely on the endless proliferation of images occurring as a result of the loss of control of image-makers over their own production.[11]

The expansion of physical places into virtual realm is one indicator of how the problem of extensive amounts of violence has been dealt with. In a media-historical context, it is also an important case to look, both from the Syrian example and other countries alike, to observe the patterns of how the practice, experience, and aftermath of physical violence is being represented, archived, preserved, and evolved in the virtual realm at the relatively early stages of the use of personal media tools such as mobile phones and handheld cameras in the popular realm.

Even though the creation of virtual spaces is an interesting concept and step when thought about in terms of the production of new resistances, it should also be noted that the

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[11] Donatella Della Ratta, "Violence and Visibility in Contemporary Syria: An Ethnography of the 'Expanded Places'," *CyberOrient* 9, no 1 (2015), http://www.cyberorient.net/article.do?articleId=9557 (accessed September 2017).

expansion of these spaces do not come free from their own constraints. The particularities of media production, the very material and political dynamics around it, shape the ways and forms within which physical spaces expand into the virtual realm. The preservation of data in these spaces may be challenged by a few obvious but important dynamics, which could be mainly categorised as technical and political realms, which have direct and indirect influences on each other.

2.1. Mediterranean as Border: Visibility of Death in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean region has a rich history of migrations and human mobility since ancient times, especially among port cities connecting and regulating the flow of humans, goods, money, and viruses. Historians and scholars described the Mediterranean Sea as the "great" (David Abulafia), "encircled" (Sarah Arenson), "corrupting" (Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell) and "faithful" (Adnan A. Husain and K. E. Fleming) sea. The sea itself historically has had a dual role of being a facilitator of this flow as well as a challenge to it.

Looking from today's perspective, it can be said that contemporary dynamics of migration has gone through a few phases marked by big world events such as World War II. In a paper entitled "Mediterranean migration futures: Patterns, drivers and scenarios," migration researcher Hein de Haas identifies four stages of migration patterns after the Second World War. The first phase (1948 – 1963) was characterised by mobility towards North from north-Mediterranean countries (NMCs) to meet the needs for industrial reconstruction in north-West European countries after the world war. The second phase (1963 – 1973) saw the South Mediterranean guest worker boom from countries such as Turkey, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Another phase follows the oil crisis in 1973, the economic boom in the Gulf region and the resulting flow of migration there. The final phase is affected by political upheavals such as Gulf War and outbreak of Algerian civil war, which then was followed by a rise of the south-European Mediterranean countries as new migration destinations.[12]

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[12] Hein de Haas, "Mediterranean migration futures: Patterns, drivers and scenarios," *Global Environmental Change* 21, s. 1 (2011): S51, http://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2011.09.003.

The Mediterranean Sea now acts as a border for Southern Europe that needs to be traversed for those seeking refuge. International Organization of Migration estimates that the total number of migrant deaths on the Mediterranean Sea routes to Europe has reached 2,556 in the first nine months of 2017.[13] Drowning cases in the Mediterranean have been in the news headlines whenever a major incident has happened over the past few years since around 2012. There has also been an increase in the news items, reports, and public reaction about immigrant tragedies in the Mediterranean since 2012. The increase in the visibility is partly manifested in the images of tragedy that have circulated across media and become symbols for catastrophe. As a result of this increasing visibility, protests and solidarity actions have been organised across Europe for refugees, particularly for those from war-torn countries.

Images of other people's suffering circulating around many news and media outlets work to incite a particular level of emotive reaction which then fades away until another humanitarian crisis is at stake. New stories of illegal immigrants crossing across the Mediterranean have been yet another problem that makes itself seen occasionally. In this sense, it bears an affinity to the state of being homeless (whether as an immigrant or not) and without protection.

The problem with the presence of these images in the social realm is that it helps to create separate identities of immigrant worker and local resident as well as distinction between refugees and survivors of immigration, and those in a precarious state and being held in camps and dedicated centers. The image of the immigrant is drawn separately from the local, placing a particular emphasis on the lower status of the immigrant based on the economic and political situation in their home countries. This distinction is exemplified by the use of the term "expat," which usually refers to middle class professionals that live in other countries. The visa regimes and the conditions of living differ from the local residents in the sense that expats are at times granted certain privileges and discrete spaces to inhabit.

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[13] "Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 133,640; 2,556 Deaths in 2017," International Organization for Migration, 22 September 2017, http://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrant-arrivals-reach-133640-2556-deaths-2017 (accessed September 2017).

In the context of nation-state borders, early arguments around global mobility have been characterised by the dissolution of nation-state borders. Even though the technological developments may have opened up some means for mobility, there are various dynamics at stake when one talks about the global mobility. The actualities of everyday struggles of actual human beings that live in a state of fear is a face of violence that is not framed as violence by its mainstream definition. This lack of protection for the people such as illegal immigrants, or the homeless is an amplified demonstration of the lack of social securities, i.e. work security, health services security, etc., that is characteristic of a neoliberal world order and the increasing neoliberal attack on the welfare state.

The fact that every citizen's life is protected by the order of law does not necessarily lead to an order where every agent within the system is treated equally (other factors –such as legal factors like voting rights, freedom of movement, freedom to work and cultural factors like racism– to consider here are the degrees and variations of citizenship). At the centre of this inequality resides the amount of integration one is supposed to have within the capitalist system. In 2013 when the war in Syria broke out, Turkey opened its borders to Syrian refugees who escaped the war, mainly as a result of the opposing political stance of Turkey's then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Syrian president Bashar al-Assad. Without the necessary infrastructure and the means to sustain the lives of people, Syrian refugees were left to survive in Turkey where their currency was not as valuable as Turkish liras. The resulting scene was a combination of charity help from the host people, whether in terms of material help or employment. However, there has also been a considerable amount of hostility and discrimination against the refugees, not in terms of the classic "they have come to steal our resources" rhetoric, but more through their demonisation as potential criminals. This example demonstrates how the legality of immigration by itself is not enough to make it a practice that respects human rights. Even under the conditions of perfectly operational practices of immigration, there is always the risk of being deported. The seemingly equal legal grounds by no means guarantees wellbeing.

The Mediterranean Sea in this instance is a space of exchange and mediation that makes transparent conflicts and contradictions on both legal and social realms. The sea is surrounded by technologies to enable commerce and connection between the lands around it as well as surveillance and image-making techniques that give out information about the motion on the sea.

> The contemporary ocean is in fact not only traversed by the energy that forms its waves and currents, but by the different electromagnetic waves sent and received by multiple sensing devices that create a new sea altogether. Buoys measuring currents, optical and radar satellite imagery, transponders emitting signals used for vessel tracking and migrants' mobile phones are among the many devices that record and read the sea's depth and surface as well as the objects and living organisms that navigate it.[14]

In metaphorical terms, the body of a state or geographical territory might be thought about in terms of its affinity with the corporeality of the human body. The attack on the whole, undivided, and indissoluble being of a geographical arena marked with very material means such as policing, surveillance technologies, and various means of border-making, work to identify a place through its assumed integrity. In this instance, the mobility of the humans means a threat to the integral structure of the land, particularly that of the nation-state, and to the purity of the race that is supposed to occupy the land. However, all of the definitions of the abovementioned ideals and concepts are reminiscent of a century when the constructed concepts of nation worked to build the borders. In a piece entitled "Is There a 'Neo-Racism'?" (1991), Etienne Balibar traces the change in the racism after the colonial powers dissolved and the old colonial centers started to be occupied by peoples of the previous colonies.

> Ideologically, current racism, which in France centres upon the immigration complex, fits into a framework of 'racism without races' which is already widely developed in other countries, particularly the Anglo-Saxon ones. It is a racism whose dominant

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[14] Lorenzo Pezzani, "Liquid Traces. Spatial practices, aesthetics and humanitarian dilemmas at the maritime borders of the EU" (PhD diss., Goldsmiths, University of London, 2015), 90, http://research.gold.ac.uk/12573/.

theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences […].[15]

What Balibar emphasises is the emergence of a cultural racism that differs from a purely biological one. Construction of these cultural differences in an abstract level in terms of creating an otherness in identity whereby the neo-racism operates goes in parallel with constructing the differences in a more physical or concrete level of biopolitical administration.

3. Mapping, Violence and Biopolitical Time

Mapping and politics have been directly related in practical terms. Maps have been historically used as a means of knowledge production and dissemination for a variety of purposes, such as trade, exploration, colonialism, policing, and military purposes, including violent ones. One of the most striking examples for this lies in maps' instrumental role in wars, and the power dynamics around its production and functionality. Cartographic knowledge for war-making has included an interpretation of geographic aspects of lands to make better uses of the knowledge at hand in order to attain the goal of targeting that particular geography. Representation on a map is one of the aspects of war and imperialism that enables the concentration of violence into a particular, focused or dispersed area. As a process that includes translation of geographical data into a tool, mapmaking entails a reduction of being of some aspects of the land that it represents.

> 'Maps require these practices of abstraction due to their selectivity: Maps can only exist because it is possible to ignore the excessive abundance of what is seen. If mapping is also rooted in the art of abstraction then it can only develop as a strategy of visualization in connection with the ability to concretize, visualize, and embody something that is abstract and thus not simply perceptible.'[16]

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[15] Etienne Balibar, "Is There a 'Neo-Racism'?" in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1991), 21. Balibar here references Pierre-André Taguieff's concept of "differentialist racism."

[16] Sybille Krämer, *Medium, Messenger, Transmission: An Approach to Media Philosophy* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 200.

Mapping selectively brings visibility to invisibility. The same could be said about practices of media art being analysed here in terms of their capability of making the invisible violence visible through uses of contemporary media. Bouchra Khalili's artwork makes use of a traditional printed map. What the viewer sees is a hand drawing, and thus intervening, in the physical and spatial structure of the map as well as to the temporal aspects of map by associating with the map a narration and time-based gesture of drawing. Drawing is a vector with a beginning and an end; a line with temporality and direction. This temporality and direction helps construct a region that is also temporal, vector-based, and narrative. The kind of intervention by the immigrant is an external, visible aspect that uses a similar method to those followed by technology companies to involve the user, or the consumer, in the dialogue by shaping experiences of navigation and collecting data along the way. Khalili's artwork approaches the issue of the involvement of the user from the reverse perspective: the external contribution by the user of the map does not assume a functional role by referring to intents of future re-use (even though it bears potentials for re-use in different online platforms such as social media due to its affective nature). Rather, the intervention into the map is an indicator of how many different experiences of human struggle are left invisible.

The involvement of hand into the traditional map in Khalili's work attracts attention to the gesture of the hand, an extension of human body that has been attributed various symbolic meanings. Artist Mona Hatoum's *Routes II* series[17] is another example of external intervention to maps in order to present a portrait of movement within the context of maps. In *Routes II* (2002), Hatoum paints hand-drawn lines and abstract shapes based on flight patterns on the maps on airlines' brochures. Both with Khalili's *The Mapping Journey Project* and with Hatoum's work, the work present itself with questions of free movement while using hand drawings as an intervention to maps.

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[17] "Mona Hatoum, Routes II, 2012," MoMA website, https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/mona-hatoum-routes-ii-2002 (accessed September 2017).

Khalili's work *The Mapping Journey Project* may be said to be at the intersection of two separate kinds of media, maps and moving images, namely.[18] Thus, an analysis of her work would require a look at the relationship between imagery and maps with regard to the time of the image versus time of the biopolitics of violence.

Traditionally, images have been used in maps to build up narratives, signify certain attributes of the space, construct allegory and illustrate, indicate landscape features and symbols, or to simply decorate. Contemporary map-making has adopted a combination of various forms of narratives and scripts, particularly due to the involvement of the technological tools in the process. What had previously been regarded as a two-dimensional representation of a geographical setting increasingly took on different attributes, some involving image making, such as the different ways geographical attributes has been represented. With the use of the satellite imagery, street view tools, and Global Positioning System (GPS), the accuracy of one's position within maps has been significantly improved over the past decades. Therefore, the everyday map-user is no longer looking at a representational tool that has been prepared with an emphasis on one particular purpose in mind. Rather, the user experience is designed to lead the user to believe that she is at the center of projected activity, thereby establishing an analogous operation of cartography with perspective.

This brings up the question of the involvement of temporality and action within the use of maps in *real time*. This question is essential and relevant to the analysis outlined here since it is closely related to the contemporary mediation techniques in relation to mapping and operations of power. Currently, anyone with an Internet connection can track navigational routes and techniques in a variety of combinations. Usually, online maps services and applications give an estimate of the amount of time it would take between points of departure and arrival within the given routes. The user therefore has the ability to focus on a variety of

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[18] A third layer to this equation would be the Mediterranean Sea itself. As social theorist Paul Hirst states in his book *Space and Power*, 'Land and sea are very different environments. It is almost impossible to stand on the defensive in the sea and await enemies. Ships have to move and fixed positions cannot be built on the high seas.' The physical constraints of geographical factors as mediators of movement affect not only the space but also the time of movement as well as factor of invisibility as a survival method. See: Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), 53.

scales of geographical areas on maps, depending on their needs and purposes. What has been novel, developed over the past few decades with the advancement of networked technologies, is the representation of the self in real time on the map. Not only is the user able to locate herself at a particular point on the map, but also she can observe the direction their mobile devices point to. This gesture of direction, and the movement being changed in real time in accordance with the data collected from one's phone and transmitted through the network to provide more detailed and accurate information about the location and direction of a person have been shaping a particular form of positioning one's self within the physical and virtual networks. These networks can constitute cartography both as a tool of liberation as well as a tool for exercise of power.

Just as the information updates about the positioning of one's self within the map, the different urban architectural and topological aspects have to be continually renewed on maps within relatively short amounts of time, compared to the traditional practices of mapping. Previous processes of preparing and producing a map that is taken to a user for a particular purpose has had a different time framework than today's urban setting where millions of users collect and give out data through location and tracking services. Maps that are being used everyday now by users on their mobile devices do not only contain data such as satellite view or street imagery, but also contributions by users such as additional images, videos, ratings of services. The digital map is a combination of human experience and the movements within space within a framed amount of time. While the users' perception of the self lies within the centre of the new and changing maps that more and more incorporates different aspects of location data rather than only the geographical attribute, the processes of data collection, tracking, and administration run in the background as they do with many other online applications and services that make use of the users' data.

Time of the contemporary online map has changed in comparison with the time of the map on paper when thought about in terms of usability. Transport links, and data collection, and management add another layer to the production of power-knowledge relations via the use of maps. The maps' relationship to mobility and how aspects of mobility can be produced,

consumed, collected, preserved, and administered bear future implications that have yet to become engulfed in a dystopian narrative of increasing control over physical networks of urban spaces or increasing change in the organisation of urban environment by slowly pushing groups that are deemed marginal to a particular physical area, for example through processes of gentrification. As such, mapping processes entail selecting and translating information into formats that are functional.

Besides being functional in many cases, maps could also be said to be descriptive. Maps contribute to the public imagination of spaces and territories, and their relationships with power. An example that illustrates this by using digital tools to create alternative cartography projects as art is MigMap: A Virtual Cartography of European Migration Policies. 'MigMap conveys a picture of how and where the production of knowledge is currently taking place in the area of migration – and of who is participating in and has access to it. MigMap investigates precisely how the new forms of supranational governance that can be observed in the European migration regime function.' [19] MigMap brings up migration-related issues in relation to actors, discourses, and the notion of Europeanisation. Map-making examples such as this also work to question the idea of maps as sources of absolute knowledge.

> Most map-users see cartography as a science, a skilled, unproblematic exercise in precision, made increasingly accurate by modern technological advances. This approach is misleading, not least because it is based on a limited understanding of science. The limitations of the map-medium are more than 'technical' and non-controversial; the questions involved are more than merely a matter of which projection or scale to select, and with such choices seen as 'technical', rather than as involving wider issues.[20]

Technical knowledge transforms the presentation of political knowledge and the way it is presented, which then inevitably feeds into wider political spectrums. Technological

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[19] "MigMap: A Virtual Cartography of European Migration Policies," http://www.transitmigration.org/migmap/ (accessed September 2017).
[20] Jeremy Black, *Maps and Politics* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 17.

developments on imaging and map-making offer possibilities to access information and translate it into a form of knowledge that provides alternative perspectives as well as a critical look on the uses of data. Laura Kugan, an artist who examines the role of mapping and satellite imagery in her work, gives as an example the case of war in Kosovo in 1999.

> 'So Kosovo names, among other things, the conflict in which classified NATO images were finally released systematically to the public.(…) This time, in addition to footage of bombs and missiles, the public could see ethnic cleansing in progress: high-resolution imagery of mass graves, refugees in the mountains, burning villages, and organized deportations. It was the war in which satellite images were used as a way of forming public opinion. The manner in which they were released, however–as pictures, rather than as data–shows less the facts on the ground than the ability of the technology to record, in minute detail, these facts.'[21]

With the scientific and technological developments of the past few centuries, our gaze has been directed towards different scales of substances within the observable universe. These changes in the scale of the area that we can see, describe, map, categorise, order and maintain have enabled changes in the organisation of political and social life. Maps have always been instrumental in political decision-making as well as involvement in violent human acts such as invasion and war. However, the amount of minute details that have been gathered from satellites that are distant from the earth have made it overtly possible to use the data that is related to different realms of human activity. Maps are no longer only representations; they are dynamic in their display that allows users to switch between different kinds of viewing options and to add and access different kinds of information, which raises questions about online and offline public spaces as well. Today's Geographical Information Systems (GIS), which may be described as an overall system for the analysis, accumulation, and management of geographical and spatial data, uses different levels of abstraction than traditional maps since the abstraction is between movements/events and data which are digitally transmitted and stored.

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[21] Laura Kurgan, *Close Up at a Distance: Mapping, Technology and Politics* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2013), 117.

Invisible boundaries are created within urban settings via a combination of infrastructural and material reinvestments and modifications, as exemplified in the case of gentrification, symbolic means of creating spaces that only a particular group of people would inhabit, and finally economic barriers that are hard to traverse. These boundaries are reproduced and visualised with the use of contemporary techniques of using data, including those drawn from the maps that users are using everyday. The increase in the amount of borders signals a change in the nature of their conception from spatial entities to barriers set in the mental realm.

Biopolitical rule of the nation-state partly resides in its ability to control and manage the tempos and rhythms of populations at large. Any disruption to the ordinary expectancies, particularly those related to the life of the body, becomes a domain where intervention on behalf of the state takes place. This is one of the reasons why the geographical borders of the nation-state are kept "intact" along with the temporalities of the borders of the human body.

'The biopoliticization of the border is signaled by the political concerns, events, and means by which the border will become a privileged instrument in the systematic regulation of national and transnational populations—their movement, health, and security.'[22]

The systematic regulation that biopoliticisation of the border involves classification, management, and the intervention to the spatiality and temporality of a human body, as well as the population at large. In *Border as Method, Or, The Multiplication of Labor* (2013) political and cultural theorists Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson argue:

The nation-state, in our estimation, is really much more adaptable, sly, and fragmented than the limited and sovereign community identified by theorists who imagine it in

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[22] William Walters, "Mapping Schengenland: denaturalizing the border," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 5 (2002): 571, http://doi.org/10.1068/d274t.

these terms. It is capable of harboring a multiplicity of times, temporal zones, and temporal borders. These facilitate its management of different temporal practices and rhythms, from those associated with the lightning speed and fiber optic-mediated transactions of cognitive capitalism to the slower and biopolitical tempos arising from the demographic variations of populations.[23]

It is hard to separate the spatial and temporal realms of the biopolitical rule of the state from its relationship to the dynamics of the capitalist domination. Various aspects of temporal rule, beginning from the nanoseconds of transmission of information and data to the monitoring of populations' lifetime, are in a dynamic state of being for the reason that the very nature of the biopolitical data is time-sensitive. This time-sensitivity partly results in consumption of data that operates at a level that feeds into, but not exclusive to, consumption of other material substances. This exchange in the production and consumption dynamics also parallels with the use of present or historical data into future systems.

If the temporality of what Mezzadra and Neilson label as slow biopolitical rule is made up of various combinations of existing and forecast information and data about the life of persons and populations, then it has to mirror, to some extent, the micro temporalities of the data which have been collected and administered. In this respect, one can observe at least two different temporalities of working order. One is related to the content of the slow biopolitical rule, e.g. the changing of the data of the populations that have been processed, classified, and administered. The second is about the essence of the methods of the biopolitical rule since, by its very nature, it is open to changes, particularly those brought about by technology. It is at this point of different temporalities that we can trace a juncture between the fiber optic speeds of contemporary capitalism and the slow biopolitical rule. The biopolitical governance has to be actively involved in the various aspects of this difference in the temporalities.

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[23] Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, Or, The Multiplication of Labor* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 165.

This role of time in the rule of the state presents us with a picture that differs from the conventional image of the nation-state as first and foremost bearer of *spatial* territory. Certainly, the nation-state has a territorial existence; however, the role of time within its contemporary running has been important, too. It is particularly essential to think about the borders and temporalities in relation to such phenomena as migration, which is mainly analysed through its relationship to spatial regimes. If we take the biopolitics of state administration as a way to control the lifetime[24] of each single individual human and extend this to the populations at large (as manifested in demographics being a tool of government), then we could redirect our attention to an aspect of the point of analysis as to why migration crises has been a long term unresolved issue in contemporary world.

4. Problems of Difference and Indifference

In her artwork Khalili chooses maps as the visual component of an artwork that mainly involves recorded audio narratives that involve the journeys during illegal immigration. Within the artwork, both the narrative and the visual reference points are controlled by the subject, with no direct intervention on behalf of the artist. The realisation of the artwork, whether intentionally or not, could be said to mirror experiences of each individual agent of action as an intervention in the routes around the Mediterranean. The immigrants as agents are not directly involved in the creation of a new map; they, however, intervene and change the political narratives associated with the particular spaces they have passed through. The lines and drawings on the maps of illegal journeys can be viewed as bare reminders of the human experience that has been an unresolved issue of violent restrictions on movement.

The current forms of visibility alongside with the indifference that they bring are two main aspects of the continuing migrant crisis that have been haunting the Mediterranean Sea. However, visibility and public reaction are not in themselves enough to create a solution to the

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[24] Debt is also a method of control of the lifetime, of individuals as in the case of personal debt for survival as well as larger populations, as in the case of nations in debt. Control by debt can be described as a form of less visible, non-physical form of violence (even though it may have direct visible implications) that is administered temporally.

problems of the visibility of the violent aspects involved in the processes of transformation and change that come with the sets of barriers that have been placed on human mobility. Visibility and attention may also bring along a culture of acceptance and rationalisation based on the neoliberal values of the current international order. It is due to the lack of a genuine political interest in solving problems and the economies of movement that migration still remains a problem that costs lives.

> 'Rather than being simply an object of institutional regulatory frameworks, migration emerges therefore as constituent force of the European polity in as much as it challenges the concept of citizenship as being formalistically defined from 'above' and shows that European citizenship is a terrain of struggle constituted through a continuous interaction between migrants' practices of citizenship and its institutional codification.'[25]

The borders of the European Union have come to be the borders of a political body that also creates an undefined, distinctive cultural ethos. Slavoj Žižek's recent opinion piece about the migration crisis bears traces of the presence of this distinctiveness. Žižek proposes four ways of dealing with the current immigration crisis: 1) to ensure the safety of all the immigrants to the Europe 2) to impose clear rules and regulations 3) military and economic interventions to prevent neocolonial traps 4) to prevent the conditions that create refugees. Žižek claims the last to be the most difficult one since it entails larger changes to world order.[26]

Žižek's writing received some critical responses, which may be due to the "us" versus "them" perspective that the article adopts while expressing the privileges of the European culture and values:

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[25] Rutvica Andrijasevic, "From Exception to Excess: Detention and Deportations across the Mediterranean Space," in *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*, eds. Nicholas de Genova and Nathalie Peutz (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 147-165.

[26] Slavoj Žižek, "We Can't Address the EU Refugee Crisis Without Confronting Global Capitalism," *In These Times*, 9 September 2015, http://inthesetimes.com/article/18385/slavoj-zizek-european-refugee-crisis-and-global-capitalism (accessed September 2017).

State control of the stream of refugees should be enforced through a vast administrative network encompassing all of the European Union (to prevent local barbarisms like those of the authorities in Hungary or Slovakia). Refugees should be reassured of their safety, but it should also be made clear to them that they have to accept the area of living allocated to them by European authorities, plus they have to respect the laws and social norms of European states: No tolerance of religious, sexist or ethnic violence on any side, no right to impose onto others one's own way of life or religion, respect of every individual's freedom to abandon his/her communal customs, etc….Yes, such a set of rules privileges the Western European way of life, but it is a price for European hospitality. These rules should be clearly stated and enforced, by repressive measures (against foreign fundamentalists as well as against our own anti-immigrant racists) if necessary.[27]

The possessive in "our" anti-immigrant racists indicates a sense of ownership of the land and the political attributes of the land define through the national borders, which takes us back to the earlier questions about biopolitics of belonging and ownership. Part of the problem with dealing with the issues of political violence that arises from the questions of nationality and race stems from the fact that a sense of belonging to larger political formations and cultures does not overcome the sense of belonging to particular regional or national border. This can be seen in the case of description of "our" anti-immigrant racists as members of a particular group that has been pre-defined in the previous century by the political formations of the national borders. A different approach to the questions of conflicts between the local and immigrant populations would be based on a presupposition that the values that one claims ownership of transcend the boundaries of the local and the predefined. To stay with Žižek's example, unless "we" share the same racist values with them, "our" racists will not be "ours" just because of the shared geographical land. It is important to establish the *discursive* starting point based on this because it will allow thinking about the ways in which we create new possibilities of forming regions.

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[27] Ibid.

Žižek's piece came almost like a prophecy of the media discourse on the problems to follow. On the New Year's Eve, sexual harassment incidents from Cologne and Hamburg in Germany were reported, where some people were to claim that the perpetrators were asylum seekers.[28] The accusations brought about new practices of exclusion: according to another recent news item, male asylum seekers were prohibited from entering a swimming pool in Bornheim, Germany on the grounds that they were sexually harassing women.[29] This is not merely a problem of cultural differences and integration, as the usual rhetoric would go. This is a gender issue at large, which is informed by political and societal problems. This could be proven by the fact that female asylum seekers are also reported to be subjects of sexual abuse and harassment by male human traffickers, guards, and others, sometimes being asked to offer sex in return for paying less money to continue their journey.[30] The fact that the side which is affected by violence (i.e. female asylum seekers) could also be the group considered as perpetrators (i.e. asylum seekers) is a striking example of the necessity to rethink where to situate the problems that come with the current migration crises. What is at stake here is a larger political and sociological question that leads up to the construction of different forms of violence, including gendered violence.

5. Conclusions

The way the world's problems with regard to violence get responses presents an ethical dilemma. Slow violence on the environment, as Rob Nixon put it,[31] could be seen as an example that shows clearly the importance of pointing out to the less visible form of atrocities. Certainly within broadcast and online digital media, and in certain ways within visual arts, the problem of violence tends to be made visible at moments of heightened conflicts where

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[28] "Germany shocked by Cologne New Year gang assaults on women," *BBC News*, 5 January 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-35231046 (accessed September 2017).

[29] Reuters in Bornheim, "German town bans male refugees from swimming pool," *The Guardian*, 15 January 2016, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/15/german-town-bans-male-refugees-from-swimming-pool (accessed September 2017).

[30] "Female refugees face physical assault, exploitation and sexual harassment on their journey through Europe," Amnesty International, 18 January 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/01/female-refugees-face-physical-assault-exploitation-and-sexual-harassment-on-their-journey-through-europe/ (accessed September 2017).

[31] Please refer to the literature review for a description and discussion on the slow violence.

physical harm is imminent. Media and public attention are steered towards those instances and events where the visibility of violence is deemed worthy of news, a process informed by various political and social dynamics. The reason why environmental harm is a useful example illustrating this point is partly because its existence over a long period of time with known effects and consequences being disregarded as instances or events of violence until it creates shocking effects like the US storm of January 2016 - by contrast the Syrian drought is almost totally unreported in European media even though it could be regarded as one of the aspects of the ongoing conflict in the region.

This approach to violence where the habituation becomes an aspect of it that avoids it from being talked about could be one of its most detrimental aspects. The reason for this is the tendency to normalise certain forms of violence. Certainly, there is not always an overt discourse about some violent acts justified whereas some are not, but the implications of treating some forms of political violence as acceptable gives the practice of violence one of its strengths.

One could trace this acceptance of political violence on the grounds of justification in many cases ranging from environmental harm, illegal immigration, drugs smuggling, large-scale arms trading, debt, or overt cases of war or terror attacks. Some forms of political violence run in the "background" of the political scene, allowing them to be taken for granted. The detrimental effect of capitalism on the environment is relevant to the everyday lives of inhabitants of the world, including people and other living beings alike. However, it is only when a sensational natural disaster occurs that such violence becomes a topic of political conversation, with the phenomenon not being classified as a form of violence. When it is a case such as illegal immigration, however, the overt consequences of the materialisation and peak of violence are usually the cases that made visible. Therefore, invisibility becomes the norm that is disrupted by the materialisation of violence, depending on the dynamics at stake.

The case of illegal immigration demonstrates the perils of a perspective on the issues of political violence that relies solely on its visible manifestations. Current presentations of

problems associated with migration resemble those associated with risk assessment and prevention of (biological and online) viruses.[32] It is argued here that unless various forms of covert violence (that at times transform into each other) are recognised and addressed, they will continue to bear such consequences as visible, abrupt, explosive materialisations of more visible overt cases of violence.

Construction of borders entails a certain level of violence that is intrinsic in the process of dividing up the land and building up differential administrative controls. This covert violence is then surrounded by agents such as military, police, and private sector institutions that maintain borders and the human mobility around them. The formations of these institutional bodies also have economic implications and consequences. Therefore, the covert violence imposed on human mobility operate in terms of both the symbolic divide of material manifestations of power embodied by borders and the means of border policing.

Bouchra Khalili's work provides a projection of an image on a screen, a hand gesture that draws a vector that is spatial (on the map) as well as temporal (that has a beginning and an end). In doing so, the artist does not openly discuss the motives behind this particular form of providing an account of mobility and the imaginations of mobility whereas the gestures and the ways in which content material are represented raises issues about the cartographic reason in relation to the time and space of the biopolitics of violence.

Time again strikes back as capital. Borders present themselves as spatial (cartographic) entities. Nonetheless, the experience of border is that of time. Borders organise flows of people through delay: even though it is not possible stop migration, but the quantity of biopolitical flow (of living bodies) is reduced. The slowing down of the flow happens in tandem with the needs of the capital. Even though neo-liberal capital no longer makes disciplinary judgements of character, it still selects in a formulated fashion who is to be prioritised in rescue (e.g. women and children) while letting men self-select through their energy as these are the ones capital needs. The elderly, sick and weak are left unselected. The flow of money, goods, and

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[32] Please refer to the case study on *Biennale.py* for a discussion on viruses in relation to media art and violence.

people across borders is hierarchically structured, with people being allowed to move the slowest. Borders deliberately delay not only individual journeys, but the total flow of human populations. This delay creates difference that can be exploited economically and through power.

Chapter 5 **Case Study 3:** *Networks of Dispossession*

1. Media Art and Violence of Networks

Networks of Dispossession[1] is a collaborative data visualisation and sharing project about capital and power relations in the context of urban transformation in Turkey. The project was initiated and led by Yaşar Adanalı, Burak Arıkan, Özgül Şen, Zeyno Üstün, Özlem Zıngıl, a group of artists, urban planners, economists, journalists and sociologists who met during protests in Istanbul's Gezi Park, where the first workshop of the project took place on June 6, 2013.[2] It has been further developed with the participation of anonymous contributors since then. *Networks of Dispossession* was exhibited as an artwork at the 13th Istanbul Biennial between 14 September and 20 October 2013 and later in an exhibition entitled *Istanbul. Passion, Joy, Fury* at the MAXXI Museum (Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo) in Rome between 11 December 2015 and 8 May 2016.[3] According to the project website, its regularly updated database contains 700 companies, 50 government institutions, 40 media organisations, and 600 projects.[4]

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[1] The project can be found on http://mulksuzlestirme.org/index.en/ (accessed September 2017).
[2] Curated by Fulya Erdemci. 13th Istanbul Biennial: "Mom, am I barbarian?" official website: http://13b.iksv.org/en/ (accessed September 2017).
[3] Curated by Hou Hanru, Ceren Erdem, Elena Motisi, and Donatella Saroli. "Istanbul. Passion, Joy, Fury," Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo (MAXXI Museum) website, http://www.maxxi.art/en/events/istanbul-passione-gioia-furore/ (accessed September 2017).
[4] Networks of Dispossession website, http://mulksuzlestirme.org/index.en/ (accessed September 2017).
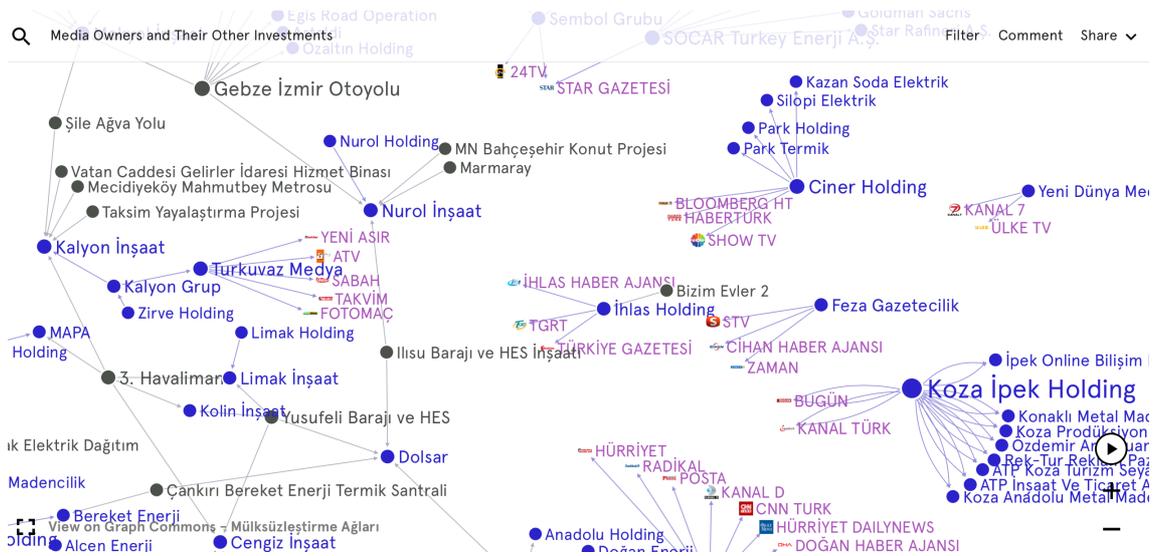
Fig. 1. "Media Owners and Their Other Investments," screenshot from Networks of Dispossession website, http://mulksuzlestirme.org/turkey-media-ownership-network.

Networks of Dispossession originally consisted of three maps: 1) projects of dispossession 2) partnerships of dispossession and 3) dispossessed minorities. "Projects of Dispossession" deals with the partnerships between government bodies and corporations in Turkey, particularly those focusing on large scale infrastructure projects and urban transformation plans. "Partnerships of Dispossession" is about the formation of partnerships via members who become the board members of these companies. "Dispossessed Minorities" exposes the ways in which governmental organisations confiscate properties of minorities. Thus, it could be said that the project consisted of three parts about capital and power from the standpoints of infrastructures, individual agents, and dispossession of ethnic groups. These three parts of the project presented the multiple ways in which the flow of capital is controlled and managed by the government institutions, agents and companies, the roles of which have been changing over different periods of time in relation to power and capital.

Some of the questions the project team raises are: 'What are the relations among the stakeholders of urban transformation? What kinds of partnerships have been established between the state and private corporations during the urban transformation process?... To which specific capital groups is the people's tax money being transferred through the reconstruction/ management of public property? […] What are the processes of depriving minorities from their property and the partnerships between the state institutions and

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private companies that have appropriated the unearned capital resulting from these processes?'[5]

Networks of Disposession is an ongoing project that is not initiated as an artwork, but has been exhibited as part of an art biennial and ever since has been a work of art besides a dynamic online platform. The project has been developed and upgraded to a second version on July 14th, 2014[6] after the first wave of project creation and feedback. It has been an ongoing endeavor to focus on the methods of creative network mapping with the workshops that have been presented as part of it across the world.[7] From the point of view of media art, *Networks of Dispossession* presents a case of versatility for certain forms of media art as they are presented in different formats and contexts. Although the work does not come from a fine art background per se, its creation, sharing, and various attributes about development via open source infrastructures and the use of Creative Commons licenses situate the work in a realm that spans between a collaborative project using survey and research methods to a media art project that can be exhibited in various formats and settings.

The work is situated at the intersection of debates around the visibility of political violence in the sense that it makes visible the networks of power relations that impose covert violent outcomes for the less privileged by processes of dispossession of commons. In doing so, it benefits from dominant structures' network mapping methods, appropriating them for creative and artistic responses to practices of gentrification and consumption. Burak Arıkan, one of the initiators of the project states:

> In my work, I try to map invisible power relationships and share them in public. It is counter to what governments and corporations do, who continously [sic] watching and mapping all the citizens and consumers. We map the relationships of

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[5] 13th Istanbul Biennial: "Mom, am I barbarian?" official website
[6] Zeyno Ustun, "Networks of Dispossession Version II," *The Graph Commons Journal*, 26 September 2014, https://blog.graphcommons.com/networks-of-dispossession-version-ii/ (accessed September 2017).
[7] "Graph Commons Workshops," *The Graph Commons Journal*, https://blog.graphcommons.com/workshops/ (accessed September 2017)

government and corporations instead, to be able to make their presence and power relations visible, and thus discussible.[8]

The work investigates issues of power relations and their violent outcomes with a unique artistic approach to the contextualisation of its problematics. *Networks of Dispossession* is about Turkey, a country from the Mediterranean region, and thus, due to the content of the work, looks at the problems some of which pertain to the region or involve regional actors. However, it situates the issues it deals with within a larger economic and political context: 'Turkey, like all other market oriented states keeps the information exclusive to itself, and enhances its capacity to process and analyze the big data.'[9] Therefore, by contextualising Turkey's stance in relation to the analyses of data worldwide, the work points to a juncture of data-related practices. When thought in these terms, the work oscillates between different positions: 1) the fact that it is presented as an artwork whereas it could be regarded as an activist project 2) it deals with a larger problematic of market orientation and use of data by states and data transparency 3) the fact that the project has one title and form where some creators are credited whereas it is also a collaborative effort between anonymous participants.

Networks of Dispossession's other important artistic attribute is its use of interactivity as a presentation of the work. The work in this sense actualises the use of interactive elements to expose and display how capital is changing hand in contemporary Turkey in parallel to the political changes that have been happening in the country over starting from 2013, when Gezi protests happened. In a journal interview Arıkan states:

We treat networks not just as maps, but as a process and a living being. Therefore, what is at stake is more complicated than an "image". A network has static and dynamic characteristics that change over time: centrality, aggregation, topology, contagiousness, and virality to name a few. As with every medium, if you understand these characteristics, you can find creative and critical uses for them. To

[8] Burak Arıkan, "Collective Networking: Burak Arıkan in conversation with Basak Senova," *Ibraaz* Platform 007 (May 2014), http://www.ibraaz.org/usr/library/documents/main/collective-networking.pdf (accessed September 2017).
[9] "About," Networks of Dispossession website, http://mulksuzlestirme.org/about/ (accessed September 2017).

understand and give meaning to this era of networks that we live in, I believe using networks as a medium is a matter of urgency.[10]

The Graph Commons software, developed by the initiators of *Networks of Dispossession*, provided the infrastructure for the project.[11] At the heart of mapping relationships lies an understanding of the dominant actors and how they relate to each other. The relationships as defined in the connections are categorised under four kinds of networks: 1) tranmission/flow networks; 2) interaction networks; 3) attribution networks; and 4) affiliation networks. Flow or transmission networks are physical, measurable, and breakable. Interaction networks consist of an event at a specified time. Attribution networks are about relationships; they are real, but difficult to measure, and only visible if you state the relationship. Affiliation networks are based on belonging to a group or a category.[12]

As an artwork that uses networks for dissemination, *Networks of Dispossession* may be said to be in parallel with the *Biennale.py*, the computer virus and an artwork by Eva and Franco Mattes that has been studied in this thesis as the first case study. The two works are similar in terms of their dissemination to the audience via Internet as well as their problematisation of networks, with an emphasis on the medium. This shows in their treatment of the display of offline matter, print outs of the network diagrams in the former and the code in the latter. However, *Networks of Dispossession* is not constructed to be intrusive in the same way as *Biennale.py* is. The two works can be said to be approaching to the question of networks from opposite angles: while the former uses online networks to unravel the relationships between power holders and in doing so, demonstrates the power of the networks it is using, the latter uses it almost as a rhetorical tool to raise questions that end up in an artistic discourse of questioning the deeds of an ambiguous "powers that be".

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[10] "Sivil ağ haritalama: Ağlar müşterektir" Interview with Burak Arıkan by Ekin Sanaç. http://www.bantmag.com/magazine/issue/post/24/96 (accessed September 2017). The above quote is translated by me. Also see the analysis and critique of relational databases in Anna Münster, *An Aesthesia of Networks: Conjunctive Experience in Art and Technology* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2013).
[11] Graph Commons official website, https://graphcommons.com (accessed September 2017).
[12] From Graph Commons workshop led by Burak Arıkan at the British Library, London on 10 November 2016. Part of the Internet of Cultural Things-project, https://internetofculturalthings.com (accessed September 2017).

Networks of Dispossession includes a public database updated continually. According to the project website, the data have been referenced by public resources of information such as websites of companies in question, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce website, and Turkish Trade Registry Gazette and are supported by secondary resources such as newspapers. Furthermore, non-governmental organisations and foundations contributed to the collection of data. 'Labor crime data was contributed by Umut Derneği, non-muslim minority disposession data partially contributed by Hrant Dink Foundation, thermal power plant data partially conributed by Ekoloji Kolektifi.'[13]

Public can contribute to *Networks of Dispossession*, which gives a double meaning to the idea of interaction.[14] Interaction in this respect refers to the user engaging with the graphs, creating new maps, and contributing to them by providing data. The intrusive nature of *Biennale.py* contrasts with the collaborative nature of networks with this artwork. *Biennale.py* excludes interaction in its specific performative emphasis. *Networks of Dispossession*, however, can be interactive since its systems are set up for interpreting the data; not the performance of a final artwork based on data. Performative also refers to the statements that perform what they describe. Software is performative because a 'statement' in code is also the cause of an event. Unlike the performative software of *Biennale.py*, *Networks of Dispossession* requires an additional human interpreter to effect the change. Performative blends with data interpretation to bring visibility to relations of capital and power.

There may be said to be two different levels of visibility as indicated in the *Network of Dispossession*s. One is about the transformation of capital, and the other is about the visibility of power relations. Possession and visibility are two main elements of the work. The political implications of creating a work based on data and power relations are many:

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[13] "Credits and Participation," Networks of Dispossession website, http://mulksuzlestirme.org/credits/ (accessed September 2017).

[14] 'A more recent case was Kolin Holding's illegal occupation of the land owned by Manisa's Yirca Village and destruction of 6,000 olive trees in order to build yet another power plant. Right after the event, people stormed to the online maps, found Kolin Holding and its other contracts with the government, selected and shared them everywhere. It went viral on social media. When users hear of a new catastrophe such as the death of a construction worker, they immediately use these maps to highlight the perpetrators of the crime—such as the owners of construction companies responsible for the unsafe working conditions of those laborers.' Berin Gölönü, "Discussion with Burak Arıkan about "Networks of Dispossession," *Open Space Journal* 7, http://www.openspace-zkp.org/2013/en/journal.php?j=7&t=46

One, it shows alternative routes within which arguments around big data can be shaped. That data can be made use of by large corporations only is contested with the skillsets that are introduced by commons to the arena of data compiling and sharing. The fact that the initiators of *Networks of Dispossession* can analyse the wider implications of data in economic, sociological, and political sense shows in the grouping of the graphs' headings on the project website. The graphs refer to incidents and events that are topical to the Turkish political realm: e.g. those related to a mine catastrophe in the town of Soma on 13 May 2014 and the demolition of a historic cinema building on 21 May 2013, among others. This aspect of the project allows it to be transformed and updated both in terms of questions involved and in terms of the technology it uses. The questions the work raises are particularly relevant to the construction of political discourses of development and infrastructure in Turkey, a hotly debated issue within the country.

One of the most outstanding aspects of the discursive practices of Justice and Development Party, the current ruling party in Turkey has been its emphasis on the infrastructural investments that it has done over the time it has been in power. The discourses point to a communicative model between the ruling side and its supporters whereby the services provided are a means to ensure further growth within the country. This emphasis on the economic aspects of rule has been welcomed by a large amount of supporters of the ruling party, who may be said to have taken its leadership almost to the level of a family relationship that is ruled by its former leader—now president of the state— Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

The current discourses of the Turkish state are biopolitical in their operation, but it may be said to differ from more advanced capitalist states' biopolitical operation in the sense that it lacks subtlety. In the discourses of "us" versus "them", the construction of sides is based on Turkey's political contexts. For example, in a regional rally in South East Anatolia where the majority of the population is Kurdish, the discourse could be oriented towards a delineation of sides that condemns how the Kurdish population has been oppressed over the decades following the establishment of the modern republic of Turkey, which, like many contemporary nation-states, built up its nation via elimination of minorities in the interests of creation of a majoritarian identity. During the political rallies

that take place outside the Kurdish area, the identity of the oppressed self is constructed through a historical reference to the elimination of religion from the public spheres of the country.[15] The discourses of the ruling government in Turkey centers around a complicated relationship between being the oppressed side of a republican revolution that saw the formation of a nation state at the beginning of the twentieth century and being the winning side in the contemporary Turkey as an all-powerful political force. The ruling party regularly uses these conflicting stances in order to address the collective emotions of the population. In this respect, at the discursive level, the Justice and Development Party government in Turkey at times paints itself as the representative of an historically oppressed side of the political spectrum whereas at other times an imagined economic superpower. *Networks of Dispossession* presents factual information about the latter and what its implications are. Network as an environment and an infrastructure is both political-economic and electronic. As invisible they are performative, and when made visible they are open to interpretation and questioning.

2. Possession and Dispossession

The second element of the title of the artwork is "dispossession", a word that has implications that are related to loss of what is possessed. This possession may not be capital *per se*, but has the potential to refer to the loss of natural resources (e.g. destruction of forests for a third airport in Istanbul, capital, or historical buildings that are being demolished for the purposes of urban regeneration or transformation.)

Networks of Dispossession refers to enactment of economics as a means to restructure the capital relations that bear the sign of a larger change for the population at large. The specific positioning of Turkey in this respect has historical references rooted in the change of the capital due to ethnicity issues. For example, a tax system named "varlık vergisi" (wealth tax) was implemented in 1942 on Armenian, Jewish, and Greek minorities in Turkey, as a result of which nearly half the population of non-Muslim minorities in Turkey

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[15] Turkey, accepting the model of French laicism, has transformed its political institutions and cultural realms. This included an "alphabet revolution," a change from Ottoman alphabet, which was based on Arabic alphabet, to Latin alphabet on 1 November 1928 or a "hat law" that imposes wearing Western style hats instead of traditional Ottoman fez that came into effect on 25 November 1925.

emigrated from the country. This illustrates that the networks of capital relations today has historical roots related to the biopolitical conditions of populations.

How are agents of capital exchange in contemporary Turkey positioning themselves as the actors of a change within the larger scheme of global progress of capitalism as a system? Is the situation in Turkey a reflection of world's current economic affairs, or has there been any specific characteristic to the neoliberal transformation that is related to the development of capitalism in different geographical contexts? On a micro level, how have the power-capital relations been reflected upon various social actors that continue a political and economic struggle for existence? Finally, how does the power struggles and flow of capital relate to an ontological sense of violence that has been free from the categories of visibility versus invisibility? All these questions will help to mark a terrain with the tensions between different phases of the development of capitalistic relations and the exposure of their fragile nature.

Networks of Dispossession poses different levels of questions on the detrimental effects of political violence in different realms of social life affected by economics. In a book entitled *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (2013) Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou discuss the concept of possession in relation to such concepts as living, land, citizenship, and violence.

> [D]ispossession can be a term that marks the limits of self-sufficiency and that establishes us as relational and interdependent beings. Yet dispossession is precisely what happens when populations lose their land, their citizenship, their means of livelihood, and become subject to military and legal violence. We oppose this latter form of dispossession because it is both forcible and privative.[16]

When populations become subject to military and legal violence as Butler and Athanasiou state, subjects of violence are created. Dispossessed subjects within the capitalist machinery sell their labour power, which is all that they possess. Old (pre-capitalist)

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[16] Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 3.

relations of mutual obligation are replaced with freedom to move and offer labour-power in another setting. However the employers' obligations to peasants disappear and are replaced by legal rights. The person is reduced to their (legal) property –the last of which, for the poor, is their labour-power. Through forms of discipline such as debt, populations are controlled and managed. Material (such as property) and immaterial (such as rights and privileges) gains of the systematics of possession feed into each other. Material gains may ensure certain rights and privileges while at the same time bringing with it new forms of responsibilities such as taxes.

The layering of time within different aspects of the creation and destruction of materiality and absorption into the legal framework also work on a level that is less overt than the way physical sites are constructed. The existence and protection of legal rights and the idea of citizenship is embedded in a mesh of relations that are historically created and sensitive in terms of time. These ideals and applications of the rights and duties of citizenship, for example, are engulfed in a state that is protected and measured by law, a system that has violent aspects both in terms of its creation and in terms of its applications.

The accumulation of rights typically takes a longer period than their destruction. Once the feudal ties are broken and replaced by legal ones (by wages), long periods of fights pass to achieve new rights (such as voting, access to healthcare and other public services and to education).

Contemporary urban landscape, which in itself is inevitably rooted in history through the survival of architecture, relics, or non-material forms such as traditions, is established and maintained over longer periods of time. However, it may take significantly shorter amounts of time to destroy. The length depends on the type of violence inflicted: in the most extreme case of war the change is abrupt; slow transformation of urban space takes relatively longer. The condition of Gezi Parkı and Taksim Square may be given as an example for this. The initial starting point of the protests against the Justice and Development Party started in Turkey in 2013 was against the demolition of the park and the green public space. The claim for possession of the city was the result of the accumulation of material and non-material cultural products and traditions. The possession

of the park site itself was claimed by the nation state within the borders of which the city falls. The destruction of the park via violent means and the erasure of past would have taken comparatively shorter amounts of time. This points to the fact that different layers of time are embedded in the processes of creation and destruction, possession and dispossession, violence and hostility within city in relation to citizenship, which goes further than the geography.

Belonging here at its core assumes two separate meanings when thought about in relation to the city: one belongs to a city and a city belongs to one's self (in the sense of an ownership that is exchangeable). In this case, Gezi Parkı belongs to the residents of Istanbul in an emotional sense, but it belongs to the state in the sense of ownership. The state has the legal right to sell the park, hence transfer the ownership from the public to a private company.

The starting point of the idea of *Networks of Dispossession* project could be based on an idea of belonging that incorporates the presence of a communal software development and sharing platform, and the construction of a belonging to an online community that defends citizen rights that come, by default, due to their belonging to a city. This very idea of belonging, on the other hand, could be abused by forms of othering based on belonging: the immigrant, the economic and political external threat, etc. The dispossession that Butler and Athanasiou refer to is possibly one that is shaped around both the economic-legal (e.g. land) and cultural-political (e.g. nation) assets.

The dispossessesion from material such as land may lead to the dispossessed being forced to sell their labour power. The resulting production relations lead to the accumulation of capital as Marx pointed it out. In the meantime, the citizens' rights as well as the historical heritage of a city accumulate. As Marxist theory teaches us, when the material accumulation saturates, physical violence and war break out. Physical violence tears down belonging in its emotional sense and replaces it with the belonging of accumulation in an economic sense.

In *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913), Marxist philosopher Rosa Luxemburg points out two separate aspects of capitalist accumulation: one being the production of surplus value through production relations and the other being through expansion of capitalism into non-capitalistic realms through force and violence:

'Thus capitalist accumulation as a whole, as an actual historical process, has two different aspects. One concerns the commodity market and the place where surplus value is produced – the factory, the mine, the agricultural estate. [...] The other aspect of the accumulation of capital concerns the relations between capitalism and the non-capitalist modes of production which start making their appearance on the international stage. Its predominant methods are colonial policy, an international loan system – a policy of spheres of interest – and war. Force, fraud, oppression, looting are openly displayed without any attempt at concealment, and it requires an effort to discover within this tangle of political violence and contests of power the stern laws of the economic process.'[17]

Luxemburg's account of capitalist accumulation emphasises the politically violent side of the latter aspect, i.e. capitalism's expansion into non-capitalistic spaces. It should also be noted that Marx described capital as having a violent nature by its very existence. In both cases, a violent relationship is imminent in the relations of production in terms of accumulation of capital. Contemporary Marxist theorist David Harvey takes up Rosa Luxemburg's idea of capital accumulation and formulates it with the concept of "accumulation by dispossession," which he uses to denote those neoliberal policies since 1970s that result in the transformation of capital into the hands of private owners through dispossession of public assets. This process does not necessarily have to be illegal; on the contrary, public dispossession occurs through legal means. Harvey's emphasis on the techniques of accumulation by dispossession not necessarily being ethically justifiable ties in with the earlier discussions in this study about the legitimacy and legality of violence.[18]

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[17] Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), 452.
[18] Please refer to Literature Review for a discussion on legal vs. illegal and legitimate vs. illegitimate violence.

The biopolitical tie-in with this form of accumulation can be established through the examples Harvey uses to illustrate the concept, which include the collection and use of biological materials and genetic sources and how these could be used to manage populations at a macro level.

> 'Wholly new mechanisms of accumulation by dispossession have also opened up. The emphasis upon intellectual property rights in the WTO negotiations (the so-called TRIPS agreement) points to ways in which the patenting and licensing of genetic materials, seed plasmas, and all manner of other products, can now be used against whole populations whose environmental management practices have played a crucial role in the development of those materials. Biopiracy is rampant and the pillaging of the world's stockpile of genetic resources is well under way, to the benefit of a few large multinational companies.'[19]

Harvey's example relates to the contemporary dynamics of biopolitical violence, which include the operations of multinational companies to collect and store biological and genetic data. By the same token, any enclosure of park or the demolition of the historic cinema not only allows building malls but it also dispossesses the population of shared common resources for recreation, guiding them to consume while at the same time removing the common meeting spaces where resistance may form.

What could be traced in Luxemburg's theorisation of different aspects of capital accumulation and Harvey's illustration of its contemporary uses by multinational companies, is violence in its different formats: firstly, one can trace the violence implicit in the capitalist relations of productions as manifested by exploitation of labour. Secondly, accumulation by dispossession entails violent methods of expansion into non-capitalistic spaces and realms by mostly legal techniques as implemented by states, as Luxemburg states. Thirdly, in the contemporary relations of production, there exists a biopolitical violence, which could be said to be a more recent practice compared to capitalist production, which makes use of biological resources and data to manage populations at a

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[19] David Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession," *Socialist Register* 40 (2004): 75, http://socialistregister.com/index.php/srv/article/view/5811/2707#.WcqYPhS1fF4.

macro level. These forms of bio-political expropriation of the land and bodies of the oppressed can also be regarded as the new form taken by what under sovereignty was colonial/imperial expansion and slavery.

In *Commonwealth* (2009), Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri see the "common" as the non-capitalist realm which biopolitical rule reaches out to.

> Biopolitical exploitation involves the expropriation of the common, in this way, at the level of social production and social practice.

> Capital thus captures and expropriates value through biopolitical exploitation that is produced, in some sense, externally to it. It is no coincidence that as biopolitical production is becoming hegemonic, economists more frequently use the notion of "externalities" to understand the increase and decrease of value.[20]

What have been the examples of resistance to the current direction of the biopolitical reach out to the area of the common? There have been various social movements against capitalist accumulation by dispossession across the world, which came to existence mostly since 1980s. The historical point of reference here may be taken as 1970s, when neoliberal capitalism entered into a different phase, according to David Harvey. Therefore, the historical pattern in the resistance movements follows the patterns of the change in capitalist productions. When looking at the Mediterranean region, one example of the resistance movement may be the village of Marinaleda from the Andalusia region where the members defined their territory as free from capitalist relations. Even though the movement does not take dispossession as the central trait upon which the village is formed, the practices that are construed as a reaction to capitalism do take into consideration those aspects of capitalism which lead to dispossession of individuals and populations alike.

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[20] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 140-141.

The biopolitics of violence embedded in dispossession, from a relational point of view, has embodied itself within the current neoliberal order. Various levels of management of populations based on their biological data may result in policy decisions that embody economic and political implications. An example that illustrates the politics and economics of networked data is medical monitoring. Network apps provide targeted data for treatments for the symptoms of over-consumption and over-work. This, however, diverges from earlier modes of confinement for the commons in the sense that it involves self-exploitation in order to survive. Even though these economic and political implications would be within the legal realm, the construction and implementation of law itself could embody violent practices that are justified according to the capitalist traditions and ethics. The seizure of the state by neoliberal capital, especially since mid-1970s, has made it justifiable for the capital to write the law.

In this respect, what is at stake is a combination of capitalist traditions, practices, and discourses and their use within the contexts of different historical periods. For accumulation by dispossession to be understood and analysed correctly, the historical development of capitalist use of tools has to be understood. Any debate about dispossession by capitalist relations also has the potential to entail systems of operation which take to its center a different aspect of population management. Even though the word dispossession by its very nature refers to possession of property, at any given process of dispossession, a different factor may be the central one. For example, accumulation of capital by dispossession may extends through war, as Luxemburg observes, which may have economic and political motives. However, accumulation by dispossession may be directed at the internal population in order to sustain the existence of state systems and economic policies, which are based on models of capitalism that have been historically constructed. The practices of dispossession may be targeted against internal populations, for example minorities, based on their belief systems or ethnicities. In this respect, in most cases it may function as a perfectly legal means to eliminate the targeted populations, groups or members of public in order to transform spaces or construct and protect the idea of national identities.

One recent example of this practice has been in South East Turkey, where the Kurdish civilians' houses have been targeted and bombed by the Turkish military on the grounds of war against terrorism. The practices of attacking a part of the country by the state was military chauvinism combined with discourses profiling the local residents as terrorists, a practice which has assumed different forms over the history of the modern Turkish Republic since the early 1920s.

The recent Turkish military operations on Kurdish towns and the curfews that lasted as long as three months in early 2016 coincided with the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation's plans for the urban transformation of the historic town of Sur in Diyarbakır, where military operations and curfews were experienced intensely. A report entitled "The Two Faces of Destruction in Sur: Urban Transformation and Siege" by an NGO named Zan Institute for Social, Political and Economic Studies was released on 30 March 2016 to analyse the effects of the military operations in the context of urban transformation. The report identifies the implications of urban transformation and siege from different categorical viewpoints in a summary table at the end. According to this table, the economic implication of the urban transformation is that the state and financers will gain wealth and poor Kurds will get poorer due to the spatial change.[21]

In this case, the biopolitical violence against a minority group within the borders of one national state worked against economic and political agenda of the state itself. Dispossession in this example starts with an abrupt destruction of the historic landscape of the city and extends into urban transformation that will be carried out in an extended period of time through material and symbolic constructions. These destructive practices of dispossession not only feed into a temporary change in the landscape of the city, ownership of urban assets, or investment into military tools, but also has latent reverberations across the definition and biopolitical profiling of the Kurdish population, which then would feed into economic and, thus, social relations. Moreover, practices of overt physical violence are

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[21] Serhat Arslan, Derya Aydın, Hakan Sandal and Güllistan Yarkın, "Sur'da Yıkımın İki Yüzü: Kentsel Dönüşüm ve Abluka," Zan Institute, 30 March 2016, http://zanenstitu.org/surda-yikimin-iki-yuzu-kentsel-donusum-ve-abluka/ (accessed September 2017).

combined with techniques of necropolitical management, which then results in a political tradition of hostility embedded into the memories of the populations in question.[22]

This factor of remembrance and collective memory points to yet another characteristic to latent violence[23] whereby violence as event has not only the damaging effect on the present moment of its happening, but also spreads out to the future by changing its form through narration and multiple ways it is remembered. The reverberations of its existence as an event in the collective memory create possibilities of its existence in other shapes and forms.[24] This way, violence as event continues its existence. One of the examples of this from contemporary Turkey that may illustrate this is "Cumartesi Anneleri" (Saturday Mothers), who gather in Istanbul's Galatasaray Square noon time on Saturdays over the past 21 years in silent protest to ask for accountability from the Turkish state regarding the forced disappearances of their sons and daughters during and after the military coup of 1980.[25] As of May 23rd 2016, the Saturday Mothers have gathered 582 times. Over the course of the protests, the group at times has had to face police intervention and violence. In the case of Saturday Mothers, the state-sponsored violence against citizens turned into an act of civil disobedience where protest is in the form of non-violent silent sit-in. Even then, due to the current practices of policing in Turkey, the protesters have at times had to face violence. The scenario could also have been otherwise: as in the case of Kurdish guerilla movement who has been in war with the Turkish state following the establishment of the republic in early 1920s, with the anger against the state building up for generations with the continuation of conflict between the Kurdish guerillas (or terrorists, as the Turkish state would call them) and the Turkish state.

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[22] Histories of dispossession can be marked with parallel practices of population replacement or import, followed by genocides. The deportation of convicts to Australia after indigenous people's mass murder and the early import of slaves to the United States are examples for this. In the case of the latter, the profitability of the production of colonies' own labour-power was a factor in the end of the system. Even though the early history of Turkish Republic is marked with events leading up to the mass decrease in its various minority populations, the systemic replacement of populations has not been formally done with the hand of the state, but through its paramilitary connections.

[23] Please refer to the methods section for a discussion on latent violence.

[24] "Our kids are terrorists already in their mothers' wombs" says the father of İsa Oran, whose burnt body he was able to retrieve 27 days after his death during the military operations in early 2016. Hazal Özvarış, "Bizim çocuklarımızın adı ana rahmine düştüklerinde terörist, doğduklarında suçlu!" T24, 3 February 2016, http://t24.com.tr/haber/bizim-cocuklarimizin-adi-ana-rahmine-dustuklerinde-terorist-dogduklarinda-suclu,326588 (accessed September 2017).

[25] Even though the question here is about loss rather than dispossession. However, as seen in the previous discussions earlier in this chapter, the two are interrelated.

Just as the time of biopolitical profiling is time sensitive since the bodily data is accumulated, transmitted and managed at different paces and via different technological means (may it be biotechnologies combined with computational operations or data processing techniques), the time of violence as brought about by biopolitical processes remains dependent on the social histories of the violent events in question.

Seen in this light, Harvey's concept of accumulation by dispossession could be seen as a backdrop of violence that embeds in itself overt, covert, legal and illegitimate means of capital accumulation. Because this level of accumulation is legally justifiable, its violent aspect could be said to be at times more hidden. Therefore, any form of violence bears within it two basic interrelated axes: one related to the slow evolution of the conditions for overt and covert violence, as can be observed in the evolution of capitalism itself, for example. The second axis is related to the time of violence, and it is in direct relationship with the first in the sense that the material conditions that create the violent environment may have been rooted in the past or may have future implications. These in turn may allow a shift in the form of the violence that can be traced by pinpointing particular historical events. If violence is thought about considering these characteristics, then it could lead to the conclusion that it may not always be easy or possible to identify the beginning or predict the end of violence, especially when ongoing historical problems have been involved.

If we operate on the assumption that isolating the beginning or end of violence, and that it can transform from rapid to slow and vice versa, then what role could the networks as tools of contemporary media and communications offer for an analysis of violence? Networks, due to their characteristics and heavy reliance on the specificities of technological infrastructures and economic relations operate on a model which is not very different from the pervasion of biopolitical violence: both are highly time sensitive, and they are based on techniques of data compiling, collection, storage, and administration as well as its privatisation, commercialisation or sequestration (as in state surveillance or commercially held data on users' network behaviour). The argument here is not that networks by their very structure are violent entities: however, the common grounds for

networks and operations of violence could be sought to establish a structure of analysis within which we can understand the potentials of contemporary networks to seek what the media used today can offer for a temporal analysis of such a timeless phenomenon as violence. Networks are slow when considered as infrastructure, but ultra-rapid in terms of operation. The storage of data is slow, but once processed, stored data can become very violent very quickly, as in the case of targeting raids on humans. Data capture sometimes can serve as accumulation by dispossession, for example the sales of stored health data for profit or genetic data for ethnic profiling.

3. The Potentials of Media Art to Understand Networked Violence

In *An Aesthesia of Networks* (2013), Anna Munster problematises our perception of networks as nodal entities. What Munster argues is that networked experience could be understood through relations that do not necessarily have to come from a human perspective, but rather, could also come from a network relation perspective.

> [I]t is the map of distributed communications that has become the definitive image of technically inflected networks of communication. Although this model of the network has become the enduring image, packet switching is the *operation* propelling the movement of information into a networked patterning. Which comes first: the network or networking? image or operation? map or diagram?[26]

These questions that Munster raises are significant in putting into question the varieties of use of new media tools to create artworks that deal with the problems of mapping and networks in relation to violence that is directly or indirectly imposed on biopolitically categorised human groups, such as illegal immigrants as in the case of Khalili's artwork *The Mapping Journey Project*, or ongoing practices of dispossession, as laid out in *Networks of Dispossession*. Both of the artworks use nodes as entry points to map out a diagram of relations which are the underlying bases of political violence illustrated in the artworks. However, mapping through these nodes may be said to be tangential, rather than central, to both of the artworks' narratives even though this form of imaging dominates the

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[26] Anna Munster, *An Aesthesia of Networks* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2013), 23.

visual layout of the artworks. Both artworks narrate stories, some of which are more linear than the others with a designated beginning and events that follow each other. This time narration differentiates them from other forms of visual representation of data, such as data visualisation. In this sense, the ways within which media are used to create narratives of dominance, conflict, power, and emotions come to the fore as essential aspects of artwork creation.

What can the image of networks capture about contemporary practices of violence, and how is the representation of network relevant to the questions of political violence of our times? How can networks be imagined in creative ways through media art to help us understand better how biopolitical temporalities of violence operate? What is specific about the Mediterranean since the phenomenon of networks is usually discussed with a reference to the processes of globalisation? The answers for these questions may not be obvious since it is a question of novel ways of analysing a phenomenon that developed rapidly since 1940s. Mapping, identity, operations, infrastructures, and times of networks, by their very nature, involve different phases of information processing and transmission within micro temporalities. Therefore, any representation or problematisation of networks through art will involve some form of reduction of its being, at least to bring it into the realm of public interaction. If networks are the characteristic form of contemporary exploitation, the network art has to be fully aware of its extent of complicity in the biopolitical work of networks. The potentials for the network art to have the sufficient autonomy to critique it should be sought.

In early March 2016, an investigation for child abuse started in central Anatolian town of Karaman in Turkey after daily BirGün newspaper's news about 10 boys being sexually abused in dormitories of the Karaman branch of Ensar Foundation, a non-governmental organisation. A teacher named Muharrem B., who volunteered to teach private courses at the Foundation, was then arrested and sentenced to jail for 508 years and 3 months. The ruling AKP party member Nihat Öztürk said that the party would continue to support Ensar Foundation at a press conference on 21 March 2016. The scandal and the ruling party's stance have had further reverberations. The opposition parties at the Turkish

Grand National Assembly offered to form a parliamentary commission to investigate the case further, but the proposal was rejected after AKP voted against it.[27]

Since the incident there has been a considerable amount of news coverage around the child abuse scandal. Left-leaning daily newspaper BirGün used a mapping on their system that uses Graph Commons, the same infrastructure that *The Networks of Dispossession* uses, to show the connection between Ensar Foundation and the AKP government. The map that the newspaper published was censored by the Turkish Internet Service Providers Turk Telecom, Turkcell, Uydunet and Vodafone.[28]

Looking at this case, one can observe that there are different levels of political violence at stake. The first and most basic one is the incident itself (including the slow conditions such as the institutional dormitory). Secondly, another level of political violence at the discursive level could be observed in the highly criticised statement of Sema Ramazanoğlu, then the Minister of Family and Social Policies, who said it was just a "one-time" incident, for the sake of protecting an institution that the government has close ties with. Thirdly, the legal violence, protecting perpetrator from the victim (thus encouraging violence) introduced by the members of the governing party, who decides on the General Assembly agenda due to the majority of the seats they hold. Yet another form of less visible political violence comes with the censorship of the news item, which is introduced not directly by the state or military, but through the administration of network services.

It has been argued in this chapter in particular, and throughout this study in general, that the operation of violence is less static, more time-sensitive and more varied than what its visible manifestations may offer. Thus, the forms of violence made visible by the existence of networks and through the use of networks is bound to involve a perspective not only on the violence as a phenomenon but also on the operations of networks

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[27] Nick Ashdown, "Government-linked Foundation Caught Up in Turkish Child Sex Scandal," *The Media Line*, 27 March 2016, http://www.themedialine.org/news/government-linked-foundation-caught-up-in-turkish-child-sex-scandal/ (accessed September 2017).
[28] The original news piece can be accessed outside of Turkey via the following link: http://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/ensar-dan-gecen-yollar-akp-ye-cikiyor-ensar-vakfi-nin-iliskilerinin-haritasi-ve-analizi-109527.html (accessed September 2017). For the news item on the censorship: http://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/birgun-un-ensar-rejimi-haritasina-sansur-110302.html (accessed September 2017).

themselves. If the role media art plays in this equation is added to the picture, then what the artwork generates turns out to mirror what could be made visible at the intersection of the elements of networked relations, violence, and translations into media art. This argument is not necessarily presented as a critique of media art, nor of the networks themselves since creative practices of media art comes with a default duty of accounting for the phenomena it is dealing with in every detail. However, this perspective on the limits on the potentials and abilities of media art to document, account for or capture aspects of violence as it stands in its current historical context must be kept in order to avoid an idealisation of media arts or networks as providers of visibility to what is deemed invisible. A most essential aspect underlying this is time: Cartographic logic reduces time to eternal present of space: clock time makes every instant interchangeable with any other, and turning events into data deprives them of their lived temporality. All three are against time: media art reintroduces time difference, especially to show the slow or the critical/fast.

Just as contemporary fine art enjoys the liberty to use materials and concepts that would not have been traditionally deemed art, media art is making use of the procedures and tools that may currently be categorised as fine art. *Networks of Dispossession* is an example of this approach which media art is adopting based on the historical development of contemporary art.

Networks of Dispossession brings together two central elements of the previous case studies, which looked at computer virus as art and mapping migration across the Mediterranean. It looks at networks not as the central theme of the piece. However, the idea of networks consistently come up in discussions and analyses that the core team that initiated the artwork provide when discussing it as an artwork. The second element of the work, mapping, is thematised in Bouchra Khalili's *The Mapping Journey Project*. Whereas Khalili's realm was the physical challenges and aspects of illegal immigrants' journeys, *Networks of Dispossession* maps the processes of financial relations (which, in their own right have physical implications). In this respect, the artwork provides a macro view of the parties involved in the production and reconstruction of the networks in question.

The difference in the way networks and maps manifest themselves in these different artworks in question may help identify the role of the use of media and new technologies as such in artworks. This will in turn bring forth arguments about the positioning of media art within the larger realm of fine art.

If media art is about perception of what media trigger, how do the technological tools that artists use in *Networks of Dispossession* create an perceptual landscape within which the interaction with the audience is constructed? The answer will vary, but it could be argued that in the context of this artwork, the loaded political statements and potentials of anger caused by dispossession are balanced with the aesthetics of data visualisation. The classical violence imagery of perpetrator-victim encounter is overcome by the creative opportunities offered through media, which are productively used to understand the contemporary workings of violence.

Works such as *Networks of Dispossession* also raise the questions of preservation and continuity of new media artworks, which, in a sense ties in with the latency of violence. The kind of violence that is demonstrated with *Networks of Dispossession* is not only covert but also latent. This means that the violent nature of the phenomenon is not immediately visible as it would be in a case of physical violence. Moreover, the very same violence could assume different forms over time due to its latent nature. These forms would be determined by the relations of the parties involved as well as the harm they cause to the natural, cultural, and other resources of the urban landscape within which they operate. The depicted relations are not visible, but mediated. Media art takes on the role of explore and explain the networked violence as the victims in this case may not be aware that this is the violence they are suffering from.

It could be argued that the biopolitical use of networks is itself a form of accumulation by dispossession, and therefore, is a form of invisible violence, but analogous with colonisation. Commodification and biopoliticisation of networks is a violence against their functional openness. Thus, its universality has been enclosed in the name of profitability.

4. Conclusions

The biopolitical use of networks could be identified as a contemporary form of accumulation by dispossession that bears within it invisible forms of violence that are latent and subject to transformations, but at the same time inherits colonial patterns of operation. If we operate on the basis of the assumption that networks in themselves are intrinsically open, it could be considered that the biopoliticisation of networks is a form of invisible violence inflicted upon them.

The flow of capital as described in *Networks of Dispossession* violently overrides not only the spatial attributes of the cityscapes but also the temporal attributes of economics. The implications of devaluation of money, for example, have to do with the social as well as the economic. Change in the nature of money can happen slowly over time, or abruptly in the case of a crisis. These two opposite but related aspects of economics are akin to the nature of the violence that has been discussed throughout this study: the change in the time of violence can be an indicator of its immediate and latent effects, as can the change in the value of money over time.

The type of political violence as discussed in this artwork has implications that have to do with the future restructuring of spaces, relations, and economies. This dynamic nature of the politics of violence present in the work also has the potential to translate into traditions that are more grounded and therefore, display social patterns. In case of Turkey, the change of capital has been the result of historical processes whereby different groups in the political segments of conservative right have restructured their relations over time. These not only altered the balance of power within the ruling Justice and Development Party, but also had implications in terms of the larger political history of the country. These changes in power relations and their translation into the flow of capital could be said to be creating new spaces and cultures of relations that are related to, but not solely informed by, economics. For example, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, which has been referred to in the literature review of this study, could be said to be a byproduct of relations as such and their sedimentation over time. Therefore, it may be said that there are two parallel terrains of the temporal workings of covert political violence as brought to light by

Networks of Dispossession: one is the instant, abrupt changes to the urban landscape and quick flow of capital between various actors and parties involved, and the other is embedded in the manifestation of overt and symbolic workings of latent violence.

Although this operational logic of latent violence can be described by looking at the specific case of contemporary Turkey and how the economics of military expenditures or large scale export-import decisions have an impact on the present and future reshaping of political cultures simultaneously, it could be traced in many political situations across different political systems and geographical terrains. *Networks of Dispossession* shows the culmination of specific regimes of power shifting in relation to other dynamic elements while at the same time leaving a trace in the physical appearance of a city, for example. Networks tend to be abstract and invisible: nods make them visible by linking them to the specific urban destruction and building projects. Global networks are successfully dragged into the right through their local impacts.

New media tools help to map out how the sedimentations of latent violence continues to create different levels of political violence, the effects of which come to the fore and change over time. This mapping could also entail tracing different phases and traces of sedimented political violence, which give us the patterns of operational logic of how political violence manifests and recreates itself.

An image of violence differs from a network diagram or map in the sense that it intrinsically bears the idea of witnessing as well as a certain degree of ethical responsibility in terms of its production and dissemination. In networked biopolitical violence, however, the relationship between the event of violence and its visual manifestation are not correlated in its classical sense. Rather, violence of/through networks are dispersed via the networks themselves. The manageability of networks provides grounds to doubt the irreversibility of an intervention into existence. Therefore, both what the viewer of an image of violence in the network and a violent exercise throughout the network puts into question its reversibility and, therefore, its particular form of existence.

Networks in this instance offer a very specific context to the study of political violence from the point of view of time. *Networks of Dispossession* is composed of various elements that operate on a response and feedback basis. This holds true not only for the technical infrastructure of the work, i.e. the collection, analysis, storage, and transmission of data, but how the audience response, feedback, and contribution play an essential role.

As the analyses of artworks show in this study, the beginning, demarcation, and end of political violence may not always be overtly and immediately judged from the isolated instances of heightened cases of violence (Arresting one sexual abuse criminal neither ends the crime of sexual abuse, nor alters the institutional networks that make it possible and protect those involved). For political violence to continue, it has to be perpetrated not only through material conditions such as arms trading, legal arrangements, and military operations, but also through the discourses, practices, and persistence of continuing set of relations which make its existence possible. Moreover, the end to a particular form of violence may not necessarily demarcate its erasure from the social life of humans: violence may be present in a different form, intensity or content, which is made possible by the economic, political, and social relations.

Case Study 4: *The Zone* (2011)

The Zone (2011) by Ramallah and Jerusalem-based artists Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme is a multiscreen video installation that is composed of a built structure with variable dimensions, 15-minute two-channel video and 4-channel sound.[1] After having been shown as a video and sound installation at the New Art Exchange in Nottingham, AL Mamal Lab Space Darat Al Funun in Amman, the 5th Jerusalem Show[2] in 2011, and the Asian Art Biennale in Taiwan in 2013, the work has been developed into a research project by the artists.[3]

The Zone looks at the emerging cultures of consumption in Palestine, and how the desire to feel normalised by the Palestinian society is currently mobilised by political powers to create a consumerist culture. In artists' own words, "*The Zone* explores the intersections between neo-liberal and colonial regimes in the contemporary Palestinian context. By evoking the phantasmagoria of the dream-world and the dystopia of the catastrophe that marks this landscape, the project reveals a situation of surreal absurdity and a growing sense of the uncanny."[4]

1. Windows, Tunnels and Ruins of Desire

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[1] "The Zone," Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme official website, http://baselandruanne.com/TheZone (accessed September 2017). A password for the full video is sent for examination purposes upon my request https://vimeo.com/65124871.

[2] See: "The Jerusalem Show V: on/off Language," Al Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art, http://www.almamalfoundation.org/the-jerusalem-show/2011/program-2 (accessed September 2017). Curated by Lara Khaldi & José A. Sanchez. For exhibition documentation, see: "The Zone_installation view 5th Jerusalem Show," Flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/ruanneandbasel/6951990743/in/album-72157629143895560/ (accessed September 2017).

[3] The outcomes of this research project in progress will potentially include a publication in collaboration with artist Raouf Haj Yahia and writer Nasser Abou-Rahme. Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, "The Zone," *Art 21 Magazine*, Issue: Ruin (March-April 2015), http://blog.art21.org/2015/04/22/the-zone/#.WAwONBSLm_o (accessed September 2017).

[4] Ruanne Abou-Rahme and Basel Abbas, *The Zone: Desire and disaster in the Contemporary Palestinian Landscape* (New York, NY: Printed Matter, Inc., 2012)" Artists and Activists Series No. 19.

The title of *The Zone* by Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme references *Stalker*, a Soviet science fiction art film from 1979 directed by Andrei Tarkovsky.[5] In the film, "The Stalker" is a guide that takes people to "The Zone", which is a special and dangerous area that is protected by the government where reality is experienced in an unconventional manner.[6] "The Zone" contains a section called "The Room", which makes the most secret wish of the visitors come true. The film is about the endeavour of the three characters "The Stalker", "The Writer", and "The Professor" to enter into "The Zone." The dangers of "The Zone" are invisible and inaudible, hence are unpredictable. The Stalker has to throw metal nuts ahead in "The Zone" to test the invisible dangers. Just as violence operates in various forms and guises through structural and other means across different temporal veins, the dangers of "The Zone" remain unpredictable, yet omnipresent.

Abbas and Abou-Rahme's artwork references Tarkovsky's film thematically as well as visually. The elements such as passages, tunnels, ruins, and windows as well as the idea of hope, faith, desire and future repeat themselves across Tarkovsky's narrative as well as Abbas and Abou-Rahme's artwork. A frame with a man walking filmed from behind with a tree on the left; stills shots of ruins; a man walking through the ruins, and towards windows; the passages through tunnels to reach an end point that is ambivalent and yet to come are familiar patterns of visual imagery found both in *Stalker* and in *The Zone*.

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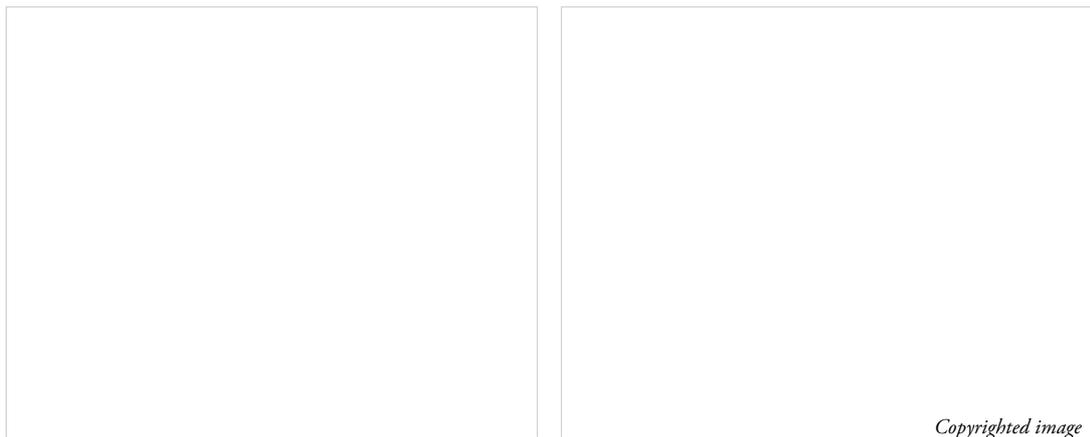
[5] Eva Langret, "A Conversation with Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme on 'The Zone'," *Jadaliyya*, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1642/a-conversation-with-basel-abbas-and-ruanne-abou-ra (accessed September 2017).
[6] In order to avoid any confusion as to what "the zone" refers to in this chapter, the phrase will be italicised while referring to Abbas and Abou-Rahme's artwork, i.e. *The Zone*, and it will be put in between quotation marks while referring to the element in Tarkovsky's film, i.e. "The Zone" (except in a direct quote from an external source in which case the original format of the wording will be retained).

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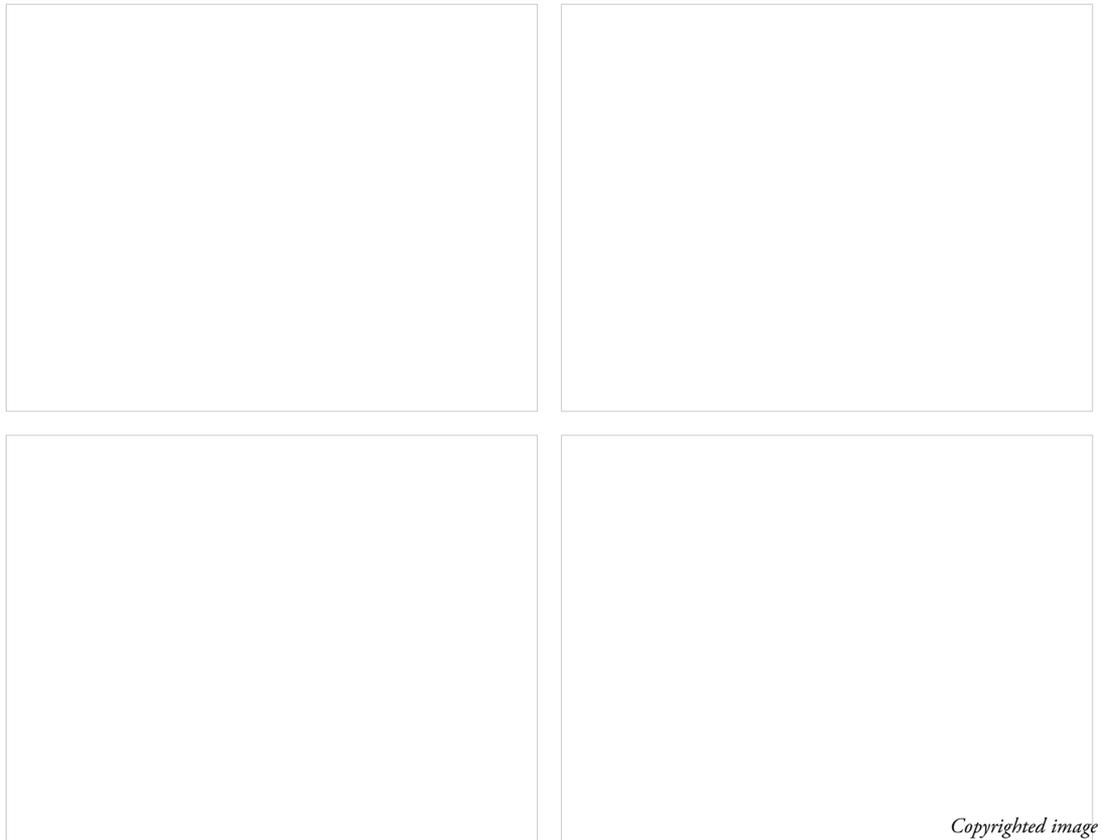
Fig. 1-6: Left: Film still from *Stalker*, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979. ©Mosfilm, Vtoroe Tvorcheskoe Obedinenie/Andrei Tarkovsky. Right: video still from *The Zone* (2011), Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme. *The Zone* © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011.

In a book entitled *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema* published in 1986, Tarkovsky explains the thematic underpinnings of his film *Stalker* and how these reflect in the way shots are arranged:

> [T]he hero goes through moments of despair when his faith is shaken; but every time he comes to a renewed sense of his vocation to serve people who have lost their hopes and illusions. I felt it was very important that the film observe the three unities of time, space and action…. I wanted time and its passing to be revealed, to have their existence, within each frame; for the articulations between the shots to be the continuation of the action and nothing more, to involve no dislocation of time, not to function as a mechanism for selecting and dramatically organising the material— I wanted it to be as if the whole film had been made in a single shot.[7]

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[7] Andrey Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*, trans. Kitty Hunter-Blair (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005), 193.

Tarkovsky's conscious decision to avoid time lapse in the film is not mirrored in Abbas and Abou-Rahme's video work since as a video installation, it differs from Tarkovsky's film in terms of its genre. Nonetheless, the way the transition between the scenes across the two juxtaposed screens side by side makes the viewer conscious of the (almost) continuity of the narrative through its repetitions. Unlike Abbas and Abou-Rahme's other video works such as *Collapse* (2009), *The Zone* does not frequently make use of cuts to change perspective in the video piece. The camera angle is usually static and dynamism is created through the action within the content of the footage. In *The Zone*, the viewer sees the elapsing of an action from the beginning (nearly) to the end: a man walks, a car moves through a dark tunnel to see the light at the end, the darkness sets over the city in the evening. Nonetheless, just when the viewer expects the event to conclude, come to an end, or perhaps give way to another one, the scene abruptly transitions into another one without resolution, or explanation. This could perhaps be considered as a symbol of the histories of peace-making process in the occupied territories of Palestine that come to an abrupt end before the resolution is reached.

A similar form of symbolism could be traced in the way in which the windows, passages, and tunnels are used in *The Zone*. Contemporary video art from Palestine displays some thematic patterns as well as some visual imagery that can be traced across the practice of different artists. These include tunnels, borders, fences as well as themes of freedom, dystopia, non-existent places. Doorways, windows, passages, and tunnels are visually essential elements in *Stalker*, too, even though the film does not overtly emphasise any symbolisms associated with the use of these visual elements.

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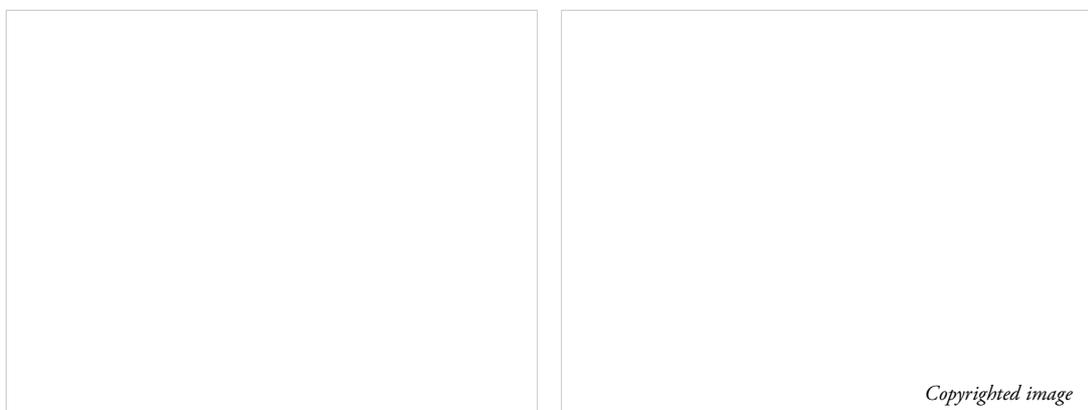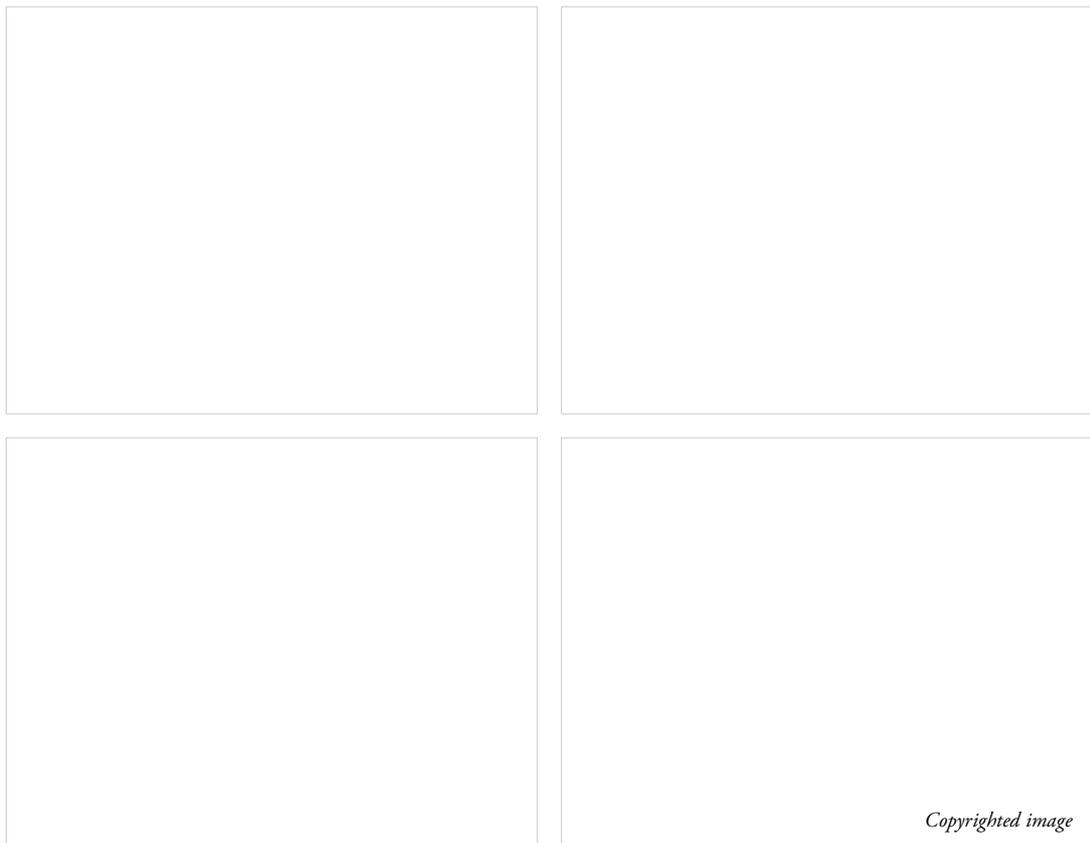
Fig. 7-13: A selection of scenes with windows, passages, tunnels and doorways which are a prominent visual aspect of *Stalker*, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979. ©Mosfilm, Vtoroe Tvorcheskoe Obedinenie/Andrei Tarkovsky.

In *The Zone*, however, the transitions through, towards, and past windows and other passages as well as the still shots whereby the camera is angled to make the viewer face the source of light potentially take the viewer through different emotive fields, conveying a sense of loss, missed opportunities for peace, and perhaps disappointment for the future political prospects in the country.
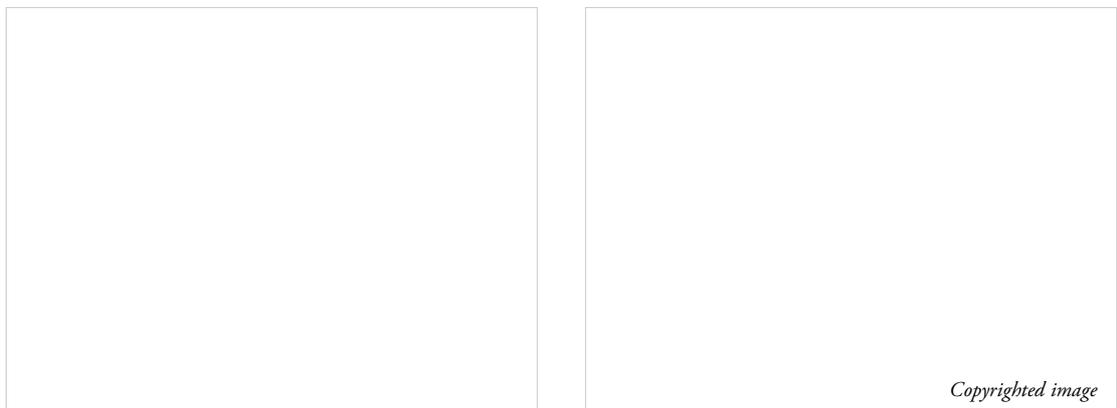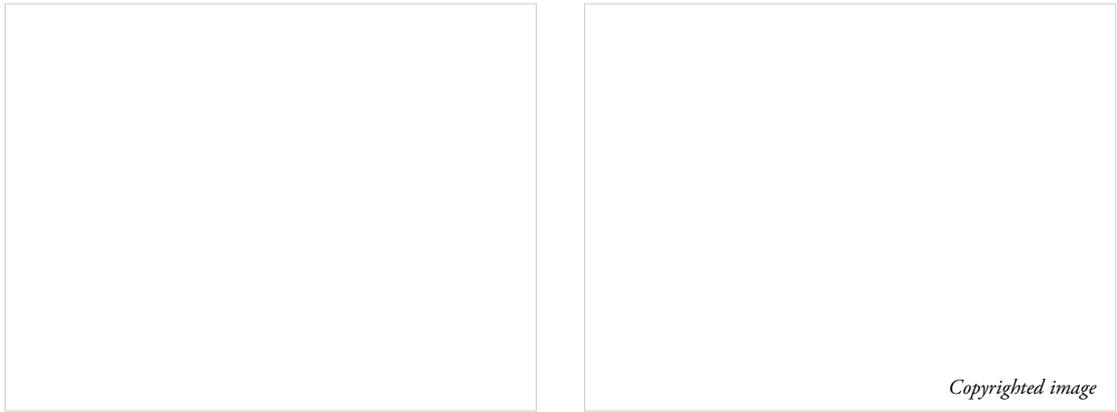
Fig. 14-17: A selection of scenes with windows and tunnels featured in *The Zone*. © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme.
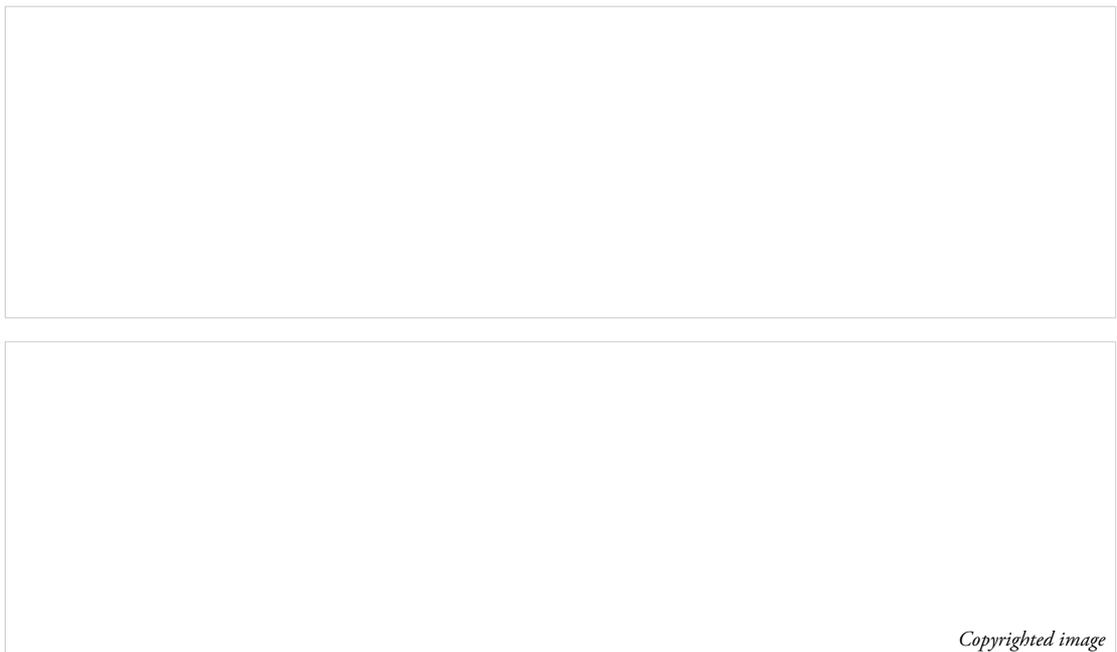
Fig. 18-19: The juxtaposed screen stills of the two-channel video with shots before and after the end of a tunnel is reached in *The Zone*. © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011.

The camera in *The Zone* at times moves towards a source of light at the end of the tunnel that, contrary to the viewers' expectations, gives way to a passage protected with side walls and wire fences. The process repeats as the camera enters into one tunnel after the other. The tunnels, the artists explain, connects different sites. Nonetheless, some of them have a dual function of disconnecting them from accessing the roads for the settlements above.[8] In a way, the tunnels' dual role in real life is matched in the artwork with the dual role of the light being a source of hope, followed by disappointment at the same time.

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[8] Abbas and Abou-Rahme, "The Zone," *Art 21 Magazine*.

The Zone differs from the previous case studies in this research in the sense that it invites the audience to engage in a critical viewing experience that potentially aims to trigger a feeling of loss of hope as well as displaying destruction, consumption and capital exploitation through the sequence of imagery and sound. The previous three case studies consecutively show: a mode of contagion, a mode of survival, and a mode of operation. Nonetheless, as artworks, they are almost isolated from the emotions that surround them.[9] In *Networks of Dispossession*, the themes of reconstruction of the urban environment are taken on the level of data visualisation. The change of capital through the hands of corporate and state agents are represented by data, even though this data sometimes implies the physical destruction of an urban landscape and its residents, which is followed by urban regeneration.

The narrative of destruction in *The Zone* is told through archival and contemporary moving image and an important role of sound (field recordings, ambient sounds, and silence), which, through the temporal gaps and continuation grounds the passing of time depicted visually. This leads to the construction of an image and soundscape whereby their juxtaposition and recurrence help build up a viewing experience that implies and signifies desire –a desire to consume in particular. 'Consumerism becomes a form of escapism for the people, a way to experience a form of normalcy in their sporadic lifestyles.'[10] The biopolitics and necropolitics in contemporary Palestine work through a desire to own as well as to belong. The desire to belong signifies a heavily emotional standpoint of belonging to the land of Palestine whereas the desire to own is a mere echo of the global advancements of consumerism. Hence, the artwork can be said to capture a moment of transition from the political wish to belong to the country of free Palestine to a wish to own property and land.

In a scene in *Stalker*, it is told that "The Room" fulfills one's most secret wish, the innermost desire rather than their stated one, through the story of a previous stalker nicknamed Diko-óbraz. According to the story, Diko-óbraz goes to The Room to ask for

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[9] This would apply more so to Bouchra Khalili's *Mapping Journey Project*, which has the ethical responsibility of dealing with the migrant identity as her subject(s).
[10] Lara De Jager, "The Zone Exhibition at the New Art Exchange," The Culture Trip, https://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/palestinian-territories/articles/the-zone-exhibition-at-new-art-exchange (accessed September 2017).

his deceased brother to be brought back to life. When he comes back home from The Room, he finds out that his brother has not come back to life, but instead, he himself has become a very wealthy man, which was his real desire. Upon realizing this, Diko-óbraz hangs himself. The story of Diko-óbraz resonates with the themes of the artwork *The Zone* discusses in relation to the materialisation of the wishes the Palestinian society juxtaposed side by side and shown in a stark contrast from a visual point of view. The worn out revolutionary posters on the walls are across the road from brand new advertisement billboards.

In *The Zone*, traces of destruction, construction, and violence permeate a visual space that is very hard, if not impossible, to present in data sheets or networks. However, the interference of networks in this artwork operates in two levels: a) the networks of destruction and capital production and b) the networks of distribution of the artwork. These two intimate levels of intersection with networks can be explained through the way the artwork is produced and presented to the audience.

2. Moving through the Zone

A lot of the visual motifs in the video component of *The Zone* are architectural, which makes the installation element an important aspect of the artwork. *The Zone* was first displayed in a solo exhibition at the New Art Exchange Nottingham, United Kingdom between 21 May and 6 August 2011. For this exhibition, 15 screens with video and sound clips ranging from 4-8 minutes were installed along the corridors through with the main installation space where the video diptych was placed along with an installation element.[11]

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[11] This information is gathered from the following sources: The exhibition documentation on image sharing website Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/newartexchange/sets/72157635345223584/ (accessed September 2017). Artists' description of the installation on their official website: "The Zone," http://baselandruanne.com/TheZone. Artwork extract on the video hosting website Vimeo: https://vimeo.com/31819451 (accessed September 2017). The curatorial text on the New Art Exchange website: http://www.nae.org.uk/exhibition/the-zone/30 (accessed September 2017).

The length of each scene on the diptych video varies from 2 seconds to 82 seconds, the imagery alternating between documentary, set up shoots, and archival footage.[12]

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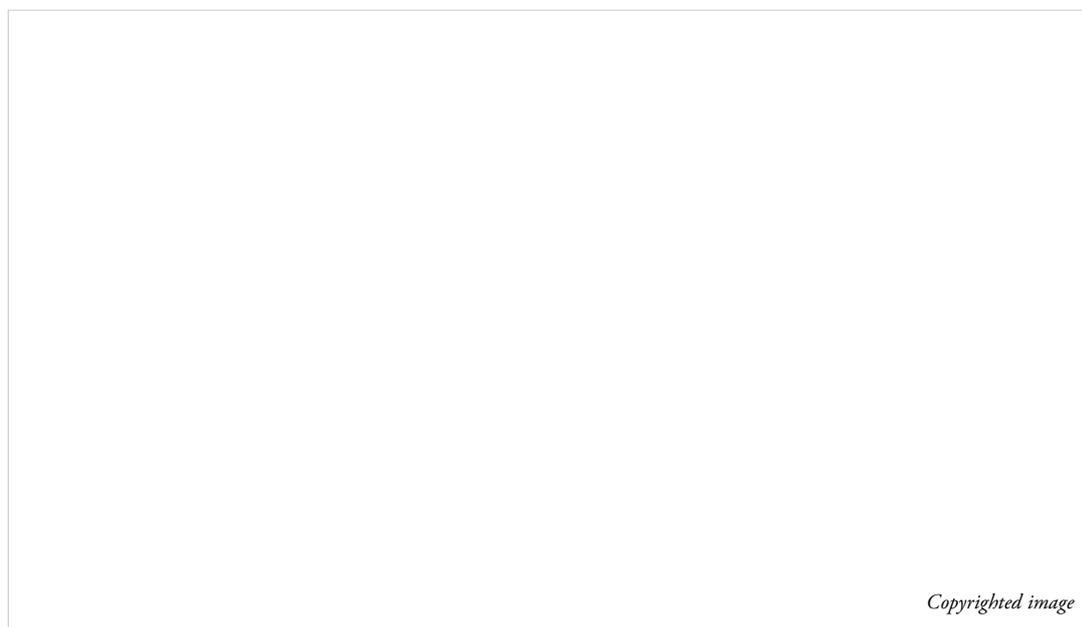
Fig. 20: *The Zone* exhibition view of the video installation at the New Art Exchange, Nottingham, UK © New Art Exchange, 2011.

According to the curatorial framework of *The Zone* at the New Art Exchange, exhibition's aim was to create 'an immersive environment for the visitor, who, upon entering the installation, is subjected to a disorientating, sensory experience.'[13] This curatorial approach towards disorientation mirrors a thematic strand of Palestinian media art and film, which reflect the Palestinian histories of political struggle, particularly since the *Nakba* (which literally translates as catastrophe) and the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948. 'The displacements and uprootings that dominate post-*Nakba* Palestinian experience are often translated by artists into visual images or spatial installations that convey a sharp and composite sense of disorientation.'[14] Along with disorientation, a lack of

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[12] For a detailed transcription of scene changes in *The Zone,* scenes have been broken down, indicating the length, light, and framing of each scene. The video copy used for this breakdown was the full version provided by the artists upon my request.

[13] "The Zone," New Art Exchange official website.

[14] Gannit Ankori, *Palestinian Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 22. Bashir Makhoul and Gordon Hon in *The Origins of Palestinian Art* exemplify this sense of orientation with Elia Suleiman's film *The Time That Remains* (2009) the main character gets in an Israeli cab whose driver gets disorientated after a storm hits. See:

destination is a common thematic feature of contemporary Palestinian art. For example, artist Noor Abed in her performance *"Where to?"* (2011) cycles on a bike anchored in the middle of the sea that goes nowhere. Similarly, her video work *We Both Know* (2012) documents a journey with an unknown destination where horizon is not within the frame. Khalil Al Mozayen's video works about torture *No Way Out* (2007) and *Scene Failure* (2008) are filled with images that convey a feeling of claustrophobia. In *The Zone*, a lack of orientation is conveyed through the movements of the characters in set up recordings, who most often wander around or wait, and objects, which are used to create an alternate vision of stillness or a motion usually triggered by external factors.

The three main elements dominate the visual narrative of *The Zone* are set up shoots of figures walking among ruins or gazing at the city (back shots); documentations of navigations across roads and tunnels (forward movement); and still shots of the landscapes and streets (static camera). These elements are combined with archival footage, which often contrast stillness and motion as well as the directions of subjects' movements.

Moving Camera Footage	*Static Camera Footage*	*Archival footage*
Tunnels	Advertisements	Political posters
Roads	Revolutionary posters	Movement and dance
	Shrines and interiors	Singing and entertainment[15]
	Cityscape from above	
	Cityscape from below	

Bashir Makhoul and Gordon Hon, "Origin and Disaster," in *The Origins of Palestinian Art* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013).

[15] These archival footages may be said to reflect a yearning to find refuge in the home of the past. In *Jerusalem Calling* (2015), for example, Palestinian photographer Rula Halawani creates temporal disjunctions via use of archival images of Palestinian traditional musicians. *The Zone* uses archival footage side by side with the contemporary image whereas in *Jerusalem Calling*, archival image is projected on top of buildings, a combination then transformed into colour photographs. The black and white archival image is layered in the colour image, creating a contrast of the past footage with architectural forms of today. "Rula Halawani," Ayyam Gallery official website, http://www.ayyamgallery.com/artists/rula-halawani/images/7 (accessed September 2017).
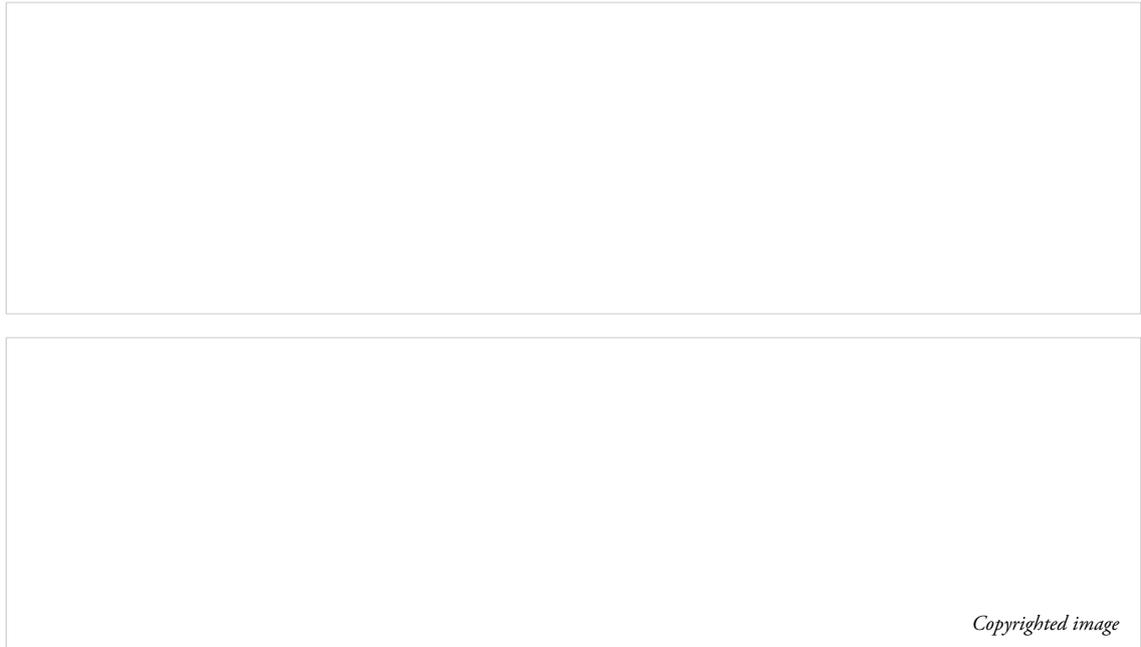
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Fig. 21&22: The direction of movement of the figure on the left screen is in contrast with that of the figures in archival footage displayed on the right screen. *The Zone* © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011.

These three separate filmic elements are combined in the diptych video in order to create contrasts in the imagery, light, and sound as a means to focus on the contrasts between everyday life, its representation and imagined reconstruction as well as those between historical resistance to occupation and the present day social constructs.

Abbas and Abou-Rahme's general artistic interest can be said to lie in the ways human movement can be used as metaphors for historical and political means of struggle.[16] These may be said to correspond both on a symbolic level to Palestinian history and its future, and to the very real infrastructural means such as roads, passages, and roadblocks, which delineate, connect (through their materiality) and separate (through their politics) the territories while at the same time operating as a means to impose legal and illegitimate levels of violence through the occupation. Israeli states' ban on the mobility of Palestinians in West Bank via the use of checkpoints and its denial of access to certain road routes by

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[16] This is through the tension between prominently upward and downward movements as in *Collapse* (2009): http://baselandruanne.com/collapse (accessed September 2017), or prominently forward and backward directions as in *Incidental Insurgents* (2012-2015): http://baselandruanne.com/Unforgiving-Years (accessed September 2017).

Palestinians[17] make roads and journeys an important symbolism for Palestinian media art. The theme of crossing checkpoints, borders or smuggling goods can be seen in video and documentary works such as Emily Jacir's *Crossing Surda* (2003), Taysir Batniji's *Transit* (2004), Jumana Emil Abboud's *Smuggling Lemons* (2006), Mirna Bamieh's *Infinite Detour* (2012) and Khaled al-Jarrar's *Infiltrators* (2012).

Roads and landscapes of cities in *The Zone* are contrasted with its subjects, and their lack of presence: human figure walking amongst the ruins (henceforth "the figure"), or his absence behind deserted landscapes dominated by billboards. The back shots with main figures work to depersonalise them. The viewer of the piece never sees the faces of the figures that pose for the camera. The gaze of the person on the screen does not meet the gaze of the viewer. For example, in all of the set-up shots with human figures, a man looks at the landscape ahead. The viewer in the gallery looks ahead, too, but to the image of the figure. Inside of the room where the video is viewed is filled with the images of outside that are displayed on the screen. Outside landscape is trapped first into camera's memory, then into the screen and, finally, it is confined to the installation space (in the case of a gallery) or viewing space (in the case of online streaming of the video). Among this maze of confinement where image/experience, outside/inside, and dark/light alternate, the viewer is taken to a journey filled with contrasts between confinement and liberation, which are most directly communicated via footages of consecutive entrances to and exits from tunnels constructed by Israelis in the Palestinian land.

The depersonalised figures' bodies in *The Zone* positioned in a backdrop of architectural forms, ruins, and against the landscape of the city are always filmed from behind. This could be considered as analogous to the characteristics of the globalisation process of a city, independent from the nation's identity.[18] The only faces that can be found

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[17] For example, see: Shmuel Groag, "The Politics of Roads in Jerusalem," in *City of Collision: Jerusalem and the Principles of Conflict Urbanism*," eds. Philipp Misselwitz and Tim Rieniets (Basel; Boston, MA; Berlin: Birkhauser, 2006), 176-184. For specific focus on Ramallah where Abbas and Abou-Rahme are based, see: Naama Baumgarten-Sharon, *The Invisible Walls of Occupation: Burqah, Ramallah District A Case Study* (October 2014), http://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files2/201410_invisible_walls_of_occupation_eng.pdf (accessed September 2017).

[18] Abbas and Abou-Rahme address larger themes of shared histories of resistance and struggle, or consumption and globalisation networks using Palestinian experience as a departing point. For example, they frame their work *Collapse* (2009) specifically points to shared histories of resistance.

in the piece are in the documentary or archival footage (as opposed to the set up recordings of the figures) and belong to those wandering in the city or along the construction sites. The figures that pose for the camera, on the other hand, always move further away from the viewer. The beginnings of their journeys are fictive, as made evident by the artists through the use of shots, and the end unknown. The only faces that pose for the camera belong to those on the images: namely, on the images of advertisements, framed photos of Palestinian politicians on the walls (namely, Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas), images around the shrines, and revolutionary posters.[19] The sound does not involve any dialogue or human voice; instead the slogans of advertisement images, positioned in comparison with and to revolutionary posters, convey articulable messages.

> "Interestingly, this space [Nablus] still carries a visible temporal disjuncture, a publicly played out tension between the old and the new dream, in this case, quite literally translated in the spatial division between the old and new city of Nablus. At the outer limits of the old city a meeting of these two moments happens, a temporal overlay."[20]

The artist research into, and benefit from the interplay of different concepts of time. Their uses of proximity and static images have references to historical times of struggle, which then translate into the emotions that the artwork conveys. The static camera that is directed at a revolutionary image or shrine provides a perspective on the permeation of past into the present whereas it provides a perspective on a promise of future within the present when it is directed to advertisements. What obviously and painstakingly conveys a feeling of disorientation is the footage of walking figures that follow paths that lead nowhere. A sense of loss in the video freezes the time within the stillness of the space and subtle movements of objects. This is achieved through a timing of the images in relation to their content.[21]

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[19] Excluding the archival footage.

[20] Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, "The Zone," Designing Civic Encounter, http://www.artterritories.net/designingcivicencounter/?page_id=633 (accessed September 2017).

[21] The length of the scenes with back shots of the figures waiting, wandering, or gazing at the cityscape are usually longer than the average scene length in the video, except for the first 40 seconds of the introductory section where scenes transitions are more frequent compared to the rest of the video. See: Left screen 01:16-02:13; left screen 04:31-5:15; right screen 11:30-11:56; left screen 12:06-12:55.

The present time in *The Zone* is that of a reality that is clearly distinct from the present promises of the future. '[N]ew lifestyles, desires, senses of self mingle and collide with a persistent denial of the disasters of Palestine's current situation.'[22] The two different kinds of time awareness are simultaneously present while the starkness of the contrast between a promised world and a painfully real world is made visible through imagery. The discrepancy between the simulated worlds of future constructed through advertisements vis-à-vis Palestinians' actual everyday experiences are communicated via juxtapositions of images in video diptych, both side by side and, at times, within each screen.

The images of reality and a representation of a future life offer a close up to the contradictory discourses of consumption 'the fantasy of a pleasurable, prosperous existence, blind to the increasingly visible violence of the colonial situation, sharply contrasts with the brutal reality of the Palestinian social, political and urban landscapes.'[23] Images of destruction and instances of violence are brought side to side with the intact forms of real objects and objects of desire.

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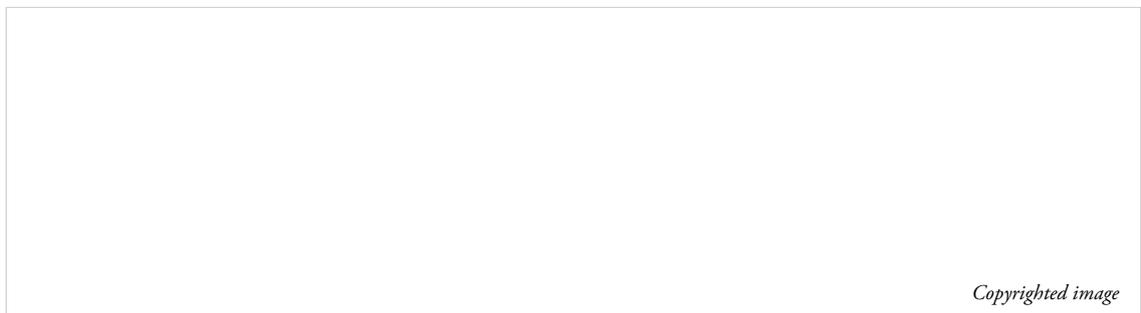
Fig. 23: Video still from *The Zone* © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011.

In the above sequence, for example, the difference between historical or current events and their foreshadowing by promises of future are achieved through the diptych nature of the video installation.[24] The image on the left screen contains a family who look

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[22] Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, "The Zone," Designing Civic Encounter, http://www.artterritories.net/designingcivicencounter/?page_id=633 (accessed September 2017).

[23] Exhibition brochure for *The Zone* at the New Art Exchange (2 June 2011), 4, https://issuu.com/newartexchange/docs/577.1_nae_summer_24p_a5_brochure_artwork_singel (accessed September 2017).

[24] A video extract is hosted in Vimeo, where the diptych form is kept.

in awe at the idea of their (comfortable) new home. Their gaze is not directed to the object of desire, but to the consumer/viewer who is presented with a demonstration of *present* joy about the *future* prospects of happiness. The image contains the real building that stands next to the advertisement. In front of the advertisement is a car in its intact form, almost as a haphazard way to describe a perfect middle class family who owns a house and a car. A house as represented in the image, and a house in real life are with a car in real life. This image combination stays on the video for 19 seconds between 07:18 and 07:36, during the first ten seconds of which three cars pass in front of the parked car one after the other. However, when the viewer's stare follows the right screen, they see a demolished car with smoke in the horizon, a possible outcome of violence. The imagery of violence is there to remind the viewer of the violence of occupation while at the same time pairing the image of the ideal with the politics of destruction.

In Abbas and Abu-Rahme's own words, the artwork looks at "the blur between your actuality and your imaginary."[25] Imaginary futures, imaginary present constructed through the idea of a future, and masking of political violence through networks of consumption are where the artists touch upon in order to bring the audience's attention back to reality of the violent situation.

The ideas of being, or acting normal both become an artistic theme from the work produced in the region, and tools through which state bodies assume normalcy. Another artist from Palestine, Larissa Sansour, quite often uses the language of science fiction in her oeuvre to produce such satirical works as *The Nation Estate* (2012) where Palestinians live the "high life" in one single skyscraper where every floor is a different part of the country. As much as Abbas and Abu-Rahme attempt bring audiences' gaze back to the violent reality, Sansour uses the opposite technique of constructing a surreal and abnormal imaginary in order to address through humor the potency of imagination. In *Where We Come From* (2003), Palestinian artist Emily Jacir fulfills the everyday wishes of Palestinians who do not have access to the regions that the artist does. In this case, normalcy is a means to create a moment of desire through the artist's own body and deeds.

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[25] Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, "Personal and Political," interview with Rachel Spence, *Financial Times Weekend*, 12-13 March 2016.

3. The Urge to be Normal under Extraordinary Circumstances

The Zone reflects some of the prominent aspects of Abbas and Abou-Rahme's artistic style: layering of text and the images[26], emphasis given on the presence of the human face (or its invisibility, for that matter), direction of movement of the documented subjects, back shots of figures, shots of the remnants of walls, and the use of archival footage. Below section will give some examples of these artistic patterns across Abbas and Abou-Rahme's work.

The artists use text in *The Zone* by placing on the video footage Palestinian political song lyrics from the 1970s ("In my heart there is no fear") or slogans of the old revolutionary posters, juxtaposing these images with advertisements of today in the video diptych.

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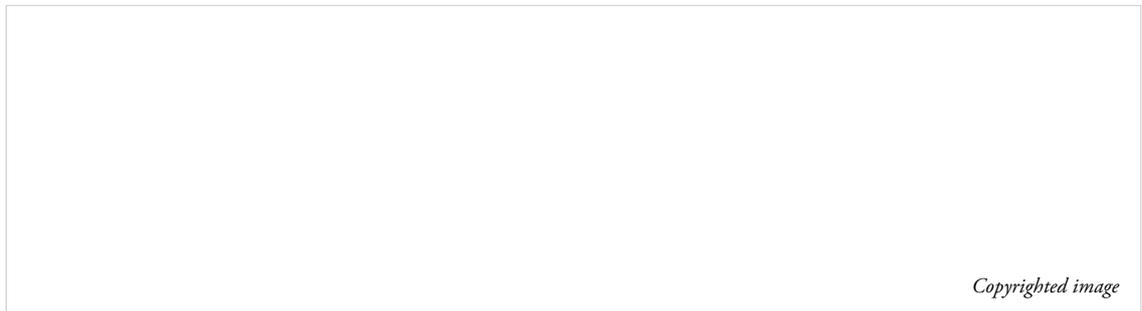
[26] The stylistic approach to text is consistent in *Only the beloved keeps our secrets* (2016), *The Incidental Insurgents* (2012-2015) series with yellow or red letters in capital appear in large fonts in English and Arabic take up either the center, or a considerable amount of the screen. In *Lost Objects of Desire* and *The Zone*, where the main recording is not staged action, but rather, archival or documentary footage, the text is subtler. See the artists' official website for videos: http://baselandruanne.com (accessed September 2017).

Fig. 24&25: Above: Video still from *The Zone*. © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011. Left screen: "This is our path to a new dawn."
Below: "Our path to a new dawn" written in Arabic and French on Fatah (Palestinian National Liberation Movement) poster designed by Mustafa Al Hallaj, c. 1969. Source: The Palestine Poster Project Archives.

Fig. 26&27: Above: Video still from *The Zone* © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011.
Left screen: "Oh mountain, the wind can not shake you". Right screen: "You and your belongings are safe."

Below: "Oh mountain, the wind can not shake you." PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) poster designed by Mustafa Al Hallaj to mark the 14th anniversary of launching the Palestinian revolution, 23.5" x 35", 1979. Source: The Palestine Poster Project Archives.[27]

Copyrighted image

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Fig. 28&29: Above: Video still from *The Zone* © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2011. Left screen: "We will be born anew."
Below: "Despite the massacre we will be reborn anew." Fatah poster designed by Amin Areesha for marking the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacre, 1984. Source: The Palestine Poster Project Archives.

The tension between face and visibility may be most openly observed in their video installation *And yet my mask is powerful* (2016) where a group of young people are recorded wearing hacked and 3D-printed Neolithic masks of the West Bank and surrounding areas.

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[27] Yasser Arafat calls this expression his motto in an interview that he did with Saida Hamad of the daily *Al-Hayat* (London) on October 5, 2002. Hamad said: "It is known that the Israeli army planned to expel you from the Palestinian territories, to a remote area," to which Arafat responded: "To a remote area! That is, to the desert! They are most welcome. 'O Mountain! the wind cannot shake you.' Have you forgotten my motto? They will not take me captive or prisoner, or expel [me], but as a martyr, martyr, martyr." The interview, originally published in Arabic was translated into English by The Middle East Media Research Institute (No. 428) on October 11 2001. See: Saida Hamad, "Interview with Yasser Arafat," *MEMRI* 428 (2001), http://www.memri.org/reports/interview-yasser-arafat#_edn1 (accessed September 2017). This slogan may have been coincidentally referenced in *The Zone* through a shaking of the camera (00:00-00:02), or through a close up of tree branches moved by the wind (04:11-04:31).

Creating almost a temporal osmosis, the piece confronts 'the apocalyptic imaginary and violence that dominates our contemporary moment' and weaves 'a counter-mythology to the dominant mythologies of the present.'[28]

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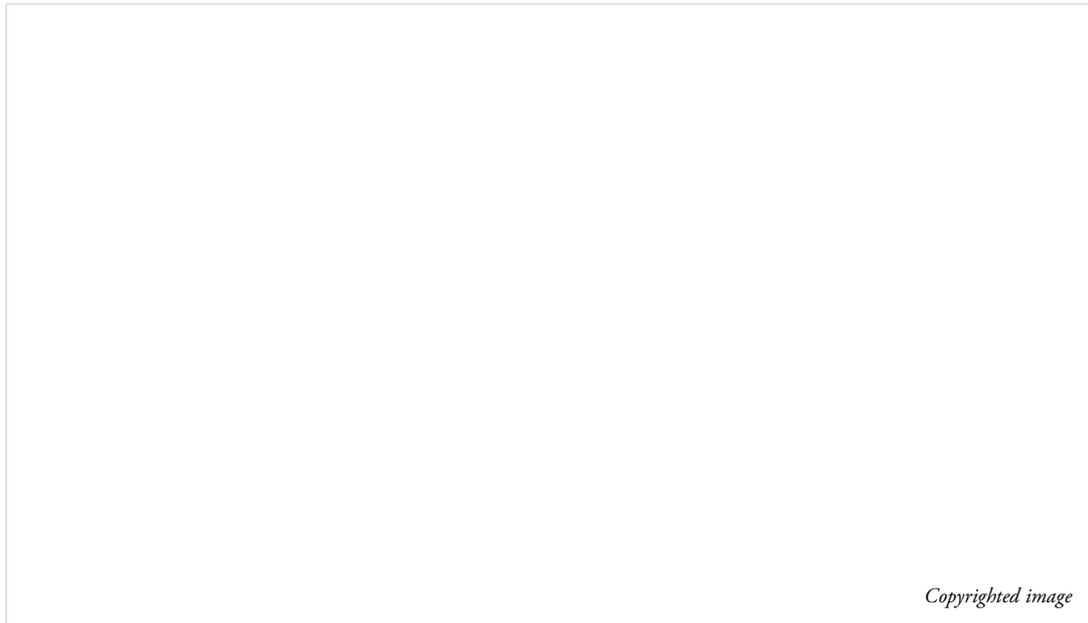
Fig. 30: Installation view from *And yet my mask is powerful* (2016). As seen from the video still, back shots and remnants of destroyed walls similar to the one in the video still can be observed in *The Zone*. © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2016.

In terms of using movement to reflect upon violence, the artists' work *Collapse* (2009) is the one that uses movement as the central element of their narrative. Subjects in the documentary, archival, real and fictive scenes of *Collapse*[29] constantly fall or go down[30], and get back up. In some cases where the subject cannot get up after the fall, footage is

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[28] "And yet my mask is powerful", Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme official website, http://baselandruanne.com/And-yet-my-mask-is-powerful-2016 (accessed September 2017). This could be compared with Bouchra Khalili's attempt to create alternative cartographies. See the case study on *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011).

[29] "Collapse," Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme official website.

[30] The centrality of the language of movement to can also be observed in *And yet my mask is powerful* (2016), where the subjects go down into a cave with the masks, while the following text is superimposed on the image:

I go down

The oxygen

immerses me

I

go

down.

reversed to give the viewer a false sense of not having fallen in the first place. These scenes elaborately come together through techniques of superimposition, blur, repetition, simultaneous scene transitions, focus, and embedding. Video is used to create a sense of delusional, alternative realities to address the gap between the reality and the desire.

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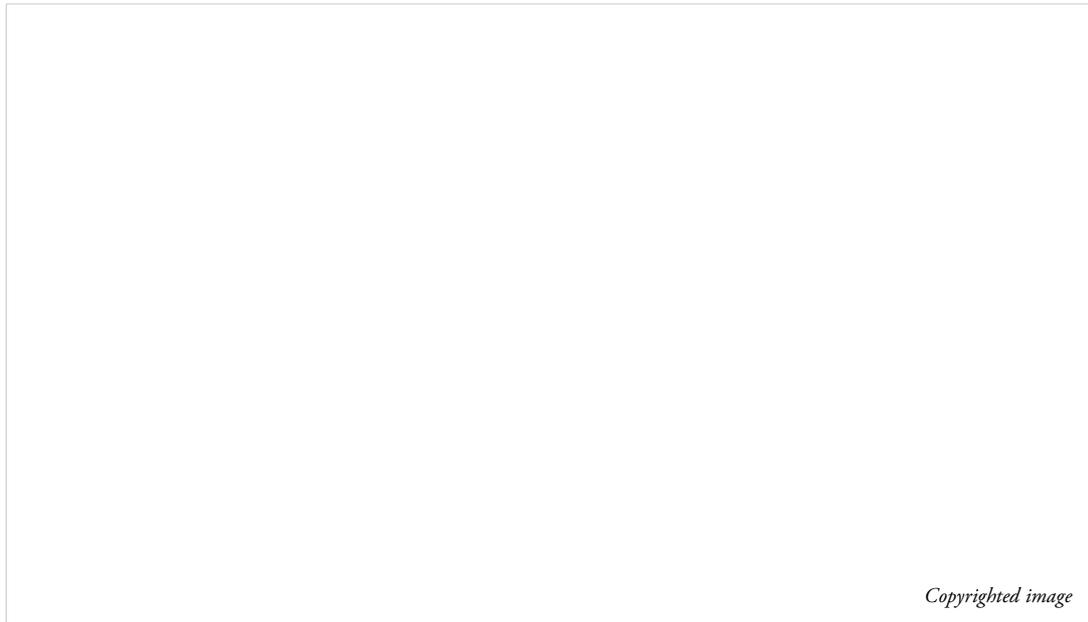
Fig. 31: Video still from *Collapse* (2009). © Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, 2009.

Nowhere is this interplay between the reality and desire is, however addressed more starkly than in *The Zone*, where, this time the piece is a self-reflection on the Palestinian systems of power as well as the emotive tension resulting from occupation.

All collective desires have historical roots, and the desire for a capitalist sense of development is no exception. The current manifestation of an urge to "normality" in Palestine reveals itself via the language of the media and interpellation[31] to the developmental ideas of Ramallah within the global context, whose historic transformation into a city, and subsequently to a cultural center in Palestine begins only in the 20th

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[31] In Louis Althusser's sense of the word: "[I]deology hails or interpellates individuals as subjects." See: Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 175. For an analogy between Slavoj Žižek's concept of objective violence and Louis Althusser's ideological state apparatuses, please see the Literature Review.

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century.[32] In the case of Palestine, part of this desire may be said to respond to the Western colonial "making the desert bloom" myth.[33] *The Zone*'s perspective on the city's current development within the 21st century capitalism point to the permeation of physical violence by unmasking the facets of assumed normality.

The Zone is a very clear example for different forms of violence feeding into each other in that it lays out overt and covert types of political violence that simultaneously work through networks of oppression and economies of destruction and dispossession. In looking at checkpoints, which hinder Palestinian's free movement, Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir propose the idea of an "imaginary line" drawn by Israel that is abstract enough to make it flexible while at the same time fragile enough to justify violence against those who violate it. An example they give is a person being shot at a checkpoint when they cross the imaginary line, which then gives way to order instead of pure chaos. 'It seems that while the mechanisms producing order produce also their own failure (a disorder justifying the appearance of violence), violence facilitates the reinstitution of order.'[34] The limits of normalcy are set either through law or through administrative decisions of the Israeli

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[32] Looking at the history of Ramallah, Lisa Taraki and Rita Giacaman say that Ramallah was a village until the end of the 19th century since it was not a cosmopolitan center such as Jerusalem, Haifa, or Jaffa, nor was it an established city as Nablus or Hebron. Early part of the twentieth century has seen an expansion of the city into town. It then gradually became a regional center, due to the historic and socio-political processes. See: Lisa Taraki and Rita Giacaman, "Living together in a nation in fragments: dynamics of kin, place, and nation," in *Living Palestine: family survival, resistance, and mobility under occupation*, ed. Lisa Taraki (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 20-28.

[33] Looking at the historical foundations of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, geographer Gwyn Rowley demonstrates the colonial discourse of the "the native problem" of Palestine, whereby the locals of the region were represented as backwards, uneducated, and brutal by the West. Rowley states: 'We question the generality of the "making the desert bloom" myth, even with the injection of Western capital into a peripheral society. Even more heinous is the implicit suggestion that advanced capitalist societies have a right to occupy and colonise an area because of supposed superior levels of capital resources and technology, and to oust a population from a land.' It could be argued that the historical relics of the accumulated formulations of this racial tension and violence of historical affirmations has led to the contemporary situation in Palestine addressed in *The Zone* whereby the assimilation into systems of consumption is a way to prove the worth and capability of the society to develop. See: Gwyn Rowley, *Israel into Palestine* (London: Mansell Publishing, 1984), 33-34.

[34] Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir, "Between Imaginary Lines: Violence and its Justifications at the Military Checkpoints in Occupied Palestine," *Theory, Culture and Society* 28, no. 1 (2011): 63, http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276410380940.

authorities in a way that is open to interpretation.[35] This ambiguity that gives way to discourses and practices justifying violence for order's sake intentionally work to sustain the continuity of the biopolitical regimes. The moment within which less overt violent processes of setting illegitimate legal rules[36] turns into a practice of violent oppression, the subjects exposed to violence are taken through another covert violent procedure of having to respect the authority of the oppressor.

Looking at the flip side of the coin, the land of the occupier, in the context of the 21st century, the existence of art can be claimed to be used as yet another tool to create a mask of normality. Israeli artist Shuka Glotman's words on the construction of normality through art point to the problem of art's role in denial of political violence:

> Even in less violent and dramatic days, I felt that the situation in Israel stretched the role of the artists to the point of paradox…. By helping to create a seemingly normal world, in which there is room for ideological dissent and criticism, the artist reinforced the existing social order. In this way, the artist served as a regulated and supervised channel of drainage for the public's aggression.[37]

Glotman then goes on to express how art is welcomed by the heads of the Israeli state, who see it "as proof of the society's ability to endure Palestinian terror."[38] One can thus conclude that art in Palestine and Israel not only mediates, but also communicates through their very existence and the context within which they are produced. In this sense, the existence of media art and its tools sit in an idiosyncratic space in the Mediterranean. The simulation of normalcy under a regime of occupation and long-standing violence are both achieved, and challenged through production of art, which may not be said to be the case elsewhere in the Mediterranean region.[39]

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[35] Israeli video artist and filmmaker Avi Mograbi's video *Detail* (2004) captures a moment of encounter where Palestinians in an emergency situation are mistreated by Israeli soldiers. See: Avi Mograbi, "Detail," Video Data Bank, http://www.vdb.org/titles/detail (accessed September 2017).

[36] Cf. Walter Benjamin violence that posits law and violence that preserves law.

[37] Shuka Glotman, "Back to Normal," in *What Remains to be Seen. Art & Political Conflict: Views from Britain, Israel, Palestine & Northern Ireland*, ed. Gordon Hon (London: Multi Exposure, 2004), 19.

[38] Ibidem.

[39] The United Nations Buffer Zone in Cyprus between the Turkish and Greek sides of Cyprus marks another example of a divided country from the Mediterranean, after the Turkish invasion of the island in 1974. Even

As seen from the above examples, a mask of normality may happen through the use of more direct traditional means such as advertisements, capitalistic discourse, consumption networks[40], and broadcast media as well more vanguard means such as art (through content or as art's mere existence, depending on how it is situated), and an elaboration in the technologies of control. Daniela Mansbach shows how Palestine checkpoints' transformation into so-called "terminals" endowed with better technologies is a misleading normalisation carried out by the Israeli authorities.[41] This transformation from a traditional checkpoint to a more contemporary terminal marks a normalisation of covert violence, a complex control mechanism disguised in technological systems, that operates through the networked biopolitics of the contemporary surveillance systems and tools.

The Zone bears in itself network motifs through it being a product of networks of violence and at the same time through its unraveling of networks of consumption. Different layers of the artwork's operation –through its content and its circulation (both in galleries and online) – embody the central points of access in the questions posed by the connected nature of violence. These include the roads and tunnels as networks both connecting and cutting off transport and communications, which is very much analogous to the Mediterranean Sea both connecting and cutting off the land it is bordering as well as to networked media which, through underground wires connect and separate its users from their own temporalities. These dichotomies of spatial and temporal bridging as well as the

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though historically, politically and topologically the situation in present day Cyprus is drastically different from Palestine, the common denominator is the divided nature of the country due to long-standing conflict in the region. Nonetheless, the artistic response to border within the divided country assumes a similar category of analysis than those works about closed nation-state borders. Cypriot artist Christina Georgiou in her project *Mapping the Body - Embodying the Map*: *a corporeal taxonomy into a topographical transformation at the border of Nicosia* (2013) has carried our performances where she has made interventions such as sewing the shape of the border on her dress, or measuring the border with her body. See: Christina Georgiou, "Mapping the body, embodying the map: a corporeal taxonomy into a topographical transformation at the border of Nicosia" (MA thesis, University of the Arts Helsinki, 2013), https://helda.helsinki.fi/handle/10138/42354.

[40] For example, Israeli artist Gilad Ophir, in his chromogenic print series *Shopping Center, Kibbutz Gan-Shmuel* (2003) documents a suburban shopping center; the rapid incursion of wealth in a region that was once defined by great expanses of uninhabited terrain, putting it in the context of the Israeli urbanisation and consumption cultures. See: Susan Tumarkin Goodman, *Dateline Israel: new photography and video art* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2007), 27.

[41] Daniela Mansbach, "Normalizing Violence: From Military Checkpoint to 'Terminals' in the Occupied Territories," *Journal of Political Power* 2 (2009): 255–73, http://doi.org/10.1080/17540290903072591.

separation of land from its inhabitants also provide a ground to the biopolitical nature of the networked violence in the Mediterranean, which is exemplified by the surveillance regimes of the Sea as well as the bans on the freedom of movement of the Palestinian people.[42] All roads connect designated points but also act as barriers. In Palestine, the walls along roads only reveal this covert, ubiquitous exclusion.

4. Dark, Light, and Lighter... and Time Passing

Metaphors of light and darkness are emblematic of Palestinian media art.[43] Khaled Jarrar's 12-minute video work *Journey 110* (2008)[44] is based on the interplay of darkness and light as symbols and as journeys. The roadmaps of connection and separation and of how legality and infrastructure are violently used as a tool to rob Palestinians of their freedoms are narrated through the recording of a journey of West Bank Palestinians crossing through a 110-meter sewage tunnel between Old Beit Hanina in the West Bank and Beit Hanina, which is part of East Jerusalem. Similarly, Ala Younis's video installation *Over Jerusalem* (2009) and Yazan Khalili's photography and video project *Landscape of Darkness* (2010) reflect upon freedom of and barriers to movement through aerial landscape shots and ground recordings of the tunnels and passages, respectively.

Within the larger context of Palestinian media art, *The Zone's* idiosyncratic place is its play with the darkness and light via *video diptych*, which works to point out the

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[42] The Separation Wall, erected in 2002 through West Bank and Gaza, has been the subject of many an artwork from Palestine. Among them are Rula Halawani, *Intimacy* (2004), Catherine Yass, *Wall* (2004), Khaled Jarrar, *Football* (2012) and Khalil Rabah, *3rd Annual Auction of Wall Zone* (2004). Rabah's work fits in a type of Palestinian media art that displays patterns of surreal satire. For example, Larissa Sansour's video work *A Space Exodus* (2009) references Stanley Kubrick's 1968 science fiction film *A Space Odyssey* while telling about her imaginary travel to space. Sharif Waked's *Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints* (2003) consists of specially designed garments that facilitate the process of body-search by Israeli military easy. In both Sansour and Waked's artworks, the feeling of absurdity of the violence in contemporary Palestine is conveyed through a display of practices that are not part of the every day: space travel in the former and a fashion show in the latter. In another one of his work, Khalil Rabah satirically brings a legal case to Swiss court to grant citizenship to trees that have previously been transferred from Palestine and planted in Switzerland.

[43] For a study on light in Palestinian video art, see: Sean Cubitt, "The Light at the End," in *Palestinian Video Art: Constellation of the Moving Image*, ed. Bashir Makhoul (Jerusalem: Palestinian Art Court – al Hoash), 52-63.

[44] "Journey 110 Trailer," Khaled Jarrar's personal blog, http://khaledjarrar.blogspot.co.uk/2010/03/journey-110-trailer.html (accessed September 2017).

oppositions, various symbols of Palestinian experience, and realities of day and night, and dark and light. Then, what role does the multiple screen nature of the presentation of the work play in conveying its themes?

Other artists from Palestine use multiple screen format in their video work. Jumana Emil Abboud created triptych video in her *An Untitled Life Drawing* (2007) to juxtapose her process of drawing, a still life, and the name of the described object. The image in the middle is static whereas the name and the drawing slowly appear. (The timing of transitions, though, is used in a distinct way to that in *The Zone*). These also include signs of symbolic values for Palestine, such as an olive tree or a home.
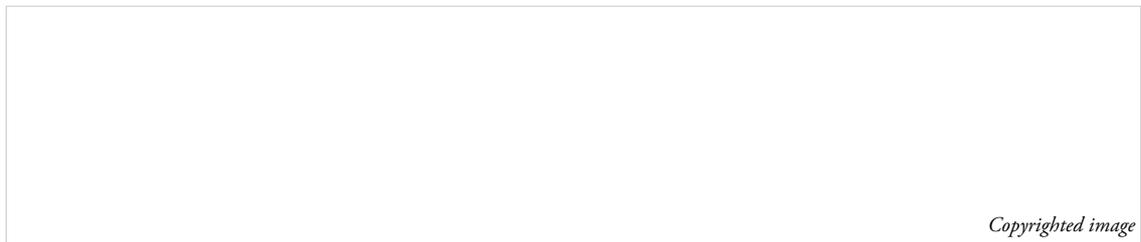
Fig. 32: Jumana Emil Abboud, *An Untitled Life Drawing*, 10'20". 2007. Three channel video installation. © Jumana Emil Abboud, 2007.

Others such as Larissa Sansour and Youmna Chlala in their work *Trespass the Salt* (2011) juxtapose three screens to project different moments from a table of feast with political conversation about the Middle East by five people from Palestine and Lebanon. Basama Alsharif's *Farther Than the Eye* (2012) is created in multiple screen form, but this time 'in a fashion that prevents the viewer from being able to view them all simultaneously.'[45]

The Zone starts with a synchronised display of diptych moving images at the beginning.[46] Later, this gives way to various combinations of footage appearing on the screen following one another. What do the symmetry and the lack of it between the images tell us? The artists through the use of black screens guide the way the gaze follows the

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[45] Chris Meigh-Andrews, "Location and dislocation, site and architecture: video installation by Palestinian artists," in *Palestinian Video Art: Constellation of the Moving Image*, 127.

[46] Distinguishing sound and its different combinations/overlays are more difficult during the viewing experience.

presentation of images. These may come in the form of footage of dark spaces while at the same time with intentional insertion of black screen to create a heightened sensation of a wait, perhaps similar to the one for peace in the Palestinian land. In a polysemic sense, decay may have also been used as a symptom for desire (a desire for peace and land, and against the appearance of instant satisfaction from consumerism).

The Zone's imagery points to a double layering of temporality where some images within the video are deliberately presented images (such as in the case of advertisements or revolutionary posters) and video is presented as an image component of the installation. There gallery setting and the screen adhere to different temporalities. Archival shots themselves are clearly signaled as being in a different time. Time of playback is a machine time partly dictated by the media display tools.

In terms of the time of the image within the footage, temporal ellipses, daytime-nighttime controversy as well as in-between moments between day and evening potentially convey the feelings of transition through the amount of light in the footage. Overexposure is a means to amplify the amount of light captured in the camera and it can be thought of as a metaphor of dormant or less overt violence that is at times amplified and hence rendered visible. It may also be considered as the brisk eruption of violence (versus those forms of violence that happen over time in a sedimentary manner). If darkness gives a sense of delay and waiting, it can be contrasted with the over-exposure as the overwhelming moment of now.

Overexposure of a night scene towards the end of *The Zone* gives the viewer a feeling of suspension. The viewer, aware of the Palestinian setting, knows that overexposure could turn into a representation of a moment of explosion. Nonetheless, in the video the sky is clear from the tensely anticipated moment of violent attack. The artwork communicates violence through the moments that signify the threat of violence, which again points to the importance of the political and gaps between physical violence: 'In contemporary war, the principle of proportionality has become the main translator of the

relation between violence, law and its political meaning.'[47] The potential of physical violence, manifested as threat, is an extension or dormant version of actual physical violence.

The overexposure of daylight in the outside space instead of an overexposure at the end of the tunnel introduces a visual narrative that does not work on the contrast of dark versus light, but rather, of light versus lighter. The outside space becomes a hidden symbol for the inside: survival does not always come with visibility, but the lack of it. Visible may be lethal in war. Daylight, darkness and the lack of visibility of the tunnels in *The Zone* follow as the areas between each tunnel mark hope and disappointment.

The loss of hope in *The Zone*, the destruction of dreams (which is implicit in consumerism) in occupation results in an attempt to replace revolutionary values by a consumerist discipline.[48] In this respect, the work may be said to capture a crisis of hope. The advertisement images in the video often offer a promise of comfort, an idea that is strongly disproved by the everyday experience. The promise of a home, of peace, of family directly speaks to what many Palestinians across the world seek: return to a comfortable, safe home. This contrasts with the reality of homes being destroyed in Palestine due to the Israeli occupation, by bombing and punitive demolitions. According to statistics provided by The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories B'Tselem, 21 houses in occupied territories were demolished for punitive reasons by official order until 27 October 2016, leaving 144 people homeless.[49] The illusion of protection from danger, of normality, and of aspirations to a middle class way of comfortable living in the midst of physical violence of the occupation is almost an illusion for its own sake. The

[47] Eyal Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza* (London: Verso, 2011), 41.

[48] Hans Bouteille in his book *The Safety Utopia* demonstrates how the market plays a growing role in the safety utopia. See: Hans Bouteille, "Democratic Safety Policy," *The Safety Utopia: Contemporary Discontent and Desire as to Crime and Punishment* (Dordrecht; Boston; London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), 119-132.

[49] "House Demolitions as Punishment," B'Tselem - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories website, http://www.btselem.org/punitive_demolitions/statistics (accessed September 2017). House demolitions in Palestine has been practiced by the Israeli state since the beginning of the occupation at varying degrees over the years, heightening during Intifadas. For a study on the legal aspects of house demolitions in Palestine, see: David Kretzmer, "House Demolitions," in *The Occupation of Justice: The Supreme Court of Israel and the Occupied Territories* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 145-164.

sides involved in the transaction are all inherently aware of this fragility. Nonetheless, the imagery is used as a means to confront the political realities of today. The advertisements, on the other hand, deploy a discourse of passivity and a false sense of immunity from the violence of occupation.

5. Erasure of Memory: Temporality of Biopolitics in *The Zone*

> "It is also here that we begin to witness a moment that is passing, a *violent* transition as it actively happens."[50]

Basel Abbas and Rouanne Abou-Rahme expresses in a most distinct manner the importance of different guises of violence as being present in landscapes and in the movement of objects. In the work, spatial and temporal aspects of biopolitics translate into emotions. The fear which political violence invokes both belong to a space, i.e. the actual sites being destroyed, and time, i.e. the horrific memories of the past and the precariousness of a future. Biopolitical administration of data through surveillance and other means at checkpoints and boders in Palestine operate at a level that display the existence of disciplinary controls that historically preceded biopolitics. In this sense, Palestine's history of violence being so prevalent in the public space echoes the different disciplinary and biopolitical controls that operate simultaneously.

> But the violence, in its political and physical incarnations, cannot be ignored. It's in the intensifying colonial structures, the ever evolving technologies of control and surveillance; walls; watchtowers; bypass tunnels… the spatial 'rearrangements' that are taking place at the imposed limits of Palestinian centers.[51]

The violence that the artists are expressing the presence of is not only physical and material, but also political and ideological. The politics of violence reflect a colonial history while at the same time being fed from the technological developments and infrastructures

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[50] Abbas and Abou-Rahme, "The Zone," Designing Civic Encounter. Emphasis is mine.
[51] Ibidem.

that work to define a particular living experience for Palestinians. Immaterial violence is mediated through creative and structural means such as various architectural elements as well as through the abuse of Palestinians' aspiration to lead a "normal" life. The present is caught in tunnels and walled roads, which marks the multiplicity of times. Present is an over-exposure while at the same time a perpetually delayed desire. Consumerism is an aspect of the structural violence that destroys dreams in order to replace them with biopolitically managed desires for (present) commodification, and not (future) hope.

It is at this moment of translation that the question of latent violence becomes relevant.[52] The methods and tools that mediate various levels of political violence from cellular, biopolitical, structural and discursive points of view are part of the meta-narrative of physical harm and destruction caused by the military interventions.

Latent violence is embedded in those practices of surveillance, control, and domination that not only create a distinctive lived experience for Palestinians, but also to prepare the grounds for its temporal extension whereby the heritage of violence will be embedded in memories as well as in ideological, political, economic, and legal frameworks. In this respect, architecture and buildings are essential as the loci of semi-permanent habitats for human experience and existence. Buildings' symbolic destruction is a less common event than the taking down of a leader's monument, so architectural forms have the potential to live beyond events of violence as repurposed and renamed buildings, or at the very least, as representations of styles or art historical reference points. Violence accumulates while at the same time architectural forms sediment. Separation walls are ramifications that fall between the two categories of buildings and monuments as symbols of violence.

'The more "civilized" regime of occupation, with its ongoing modes of domination and control, is the brain behind the periodical outbursts of violence even when they radically depart from the arsenal of the everyday means of coercion.'[53] Modes of

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[52] For a discussion on latent violence, please see the literature review and methodology sections.

[53] Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanafi, "Introduction," in *The Power of Inclusive Exclusion: Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, eds. Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanafi (New York: Zone Books, 2009), 19.

surveillance at the checkpoints, the restrictions on the mobility of Palestinian peoples in occupied territories, restricting the operation of infrastructural needs (such as gas) are among them. Architecture is among these, too, as demonstrated by Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman on the publication of their previously censored architectural catalog *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture* (2003) where they state 'The slow process of building and the lengthy bureaucratic mechanisms of planning are […] a part of the scene on which territorial conflicts are played out.'[54]

Latent violence is closely linked to the temporal biopolitics witnessed in Palestine. *The Zone*'s presents this by pointing to the replacement of old revolutionary posters. The artists evaluate the erasure of revolutionary posters from two aspects of erasure of past memory as well as the presentation of what replaces them in the public space.

> The images and discourses that had dominated the Palestinian landscape up until after the end of the Second Intifada- mostly political posters, graffiti or murals, have been for the most part systematically erased from the public space. Of course this not only raises questions about what is allowed or permitted to be displayed, but also how this visibility or its lack is shaping a radically different public imaginary at complete disjuncture with past narratives.[55]

The artists argue that the advertisements that can be found across West Bank cities, some of which are featured in *The Zone*, share a visually similar narrative to the old revolutionary posters. Indeed, they argue that the advertisements' construction is based on a deliberate decision to benefit from the history of the visual cultures in Palestine. Old symbols provide visual cues for eliciting an emotive reaction based on an affinity with historical practices of seeing. Nonetheless, this affinity is steered towards the opposite

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[54] Rafi Segal, David Tartakover and Eyal Weizman, eds. *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture* (Tel Aviv-Jaffa, London & New York: Babel and Verso, 2003)*, 19.
This catalog is the outcome of Segal and Weizman's project that won an architectural competition organised by Israel Association of United Architects. Segal and Weizman were asked to do an exhibition at the Berlin Union Internationale des Architects (UIA) congress in July 2002, but later, due to disagreements about the role of the architecture in engaging with politics, their exhibition was cancelled and the steering committee prevented the catalog from being distributed. The censored catalog was then republished as a book by Babel and Verso in 2003.
[55] Abbas and Abou-Rahme, "The Zone," Designing Civic Encounter.

direction to revolutionary ideas: the attempt to displace revolution and Palestinian liberation not only comes with the violence of arms and physical force, but rather, with an allurement towards simulated desires.

The use of archival imagery in *The Zone* could be considered as an attempt to counter the erasure of a past from public memory. The video work looks at the present day West Bank cities to talk about the promised futures of landscapes while at the same time discussing the erasure of revolutionary imagery from the public imaginary. The artists' counter narrative operates through those moments of archival footage woven into the work to create heightened emotions compared to the footage recorded in the present where time flows more slowly.

The presentation of the flow of time in *The Zone* is layered to evoke different senses of history, present, and future. Time of the original footage in the work often moves slowly, such as a construction site being built, a man walking slowly among the ruins, or a dog walking on the garbage hills. The time of the camera guides moments of darkness and light that falls on the city through time-ellipses.

The biopolitically administered amnesic operation on the public imagination in Palestine attack the political inheritance of the past ideals of revolution through erasure and reconstruction of memory.[56] Advertisements featured in *The Zone* promise a fake sense of placement, belonging and home that requires nothing more than mere financial transaction. 'In *The Zone* we confront a land which is dreamed of but, like the revolution, the paradise of the movies, or the games of children, has never become fully real. In its place there rise billboards and more dreams, dreams of a future that can be bought or invested in.'[57]

Through the landscape views, *The Zone* at times features an almost deserted West Bank. The human figures posing for the camera are distanced from the cityscape. Close up

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[56] This ties in with the arguments of immunity and protection from possible future threats, as seen in the case study on *Biennale.py*, for viruses as well as in the discourses of immigration threat that can be found across the political discourses of human mobility and migration.

[57] Cubitt, "The Light at the End," 54.

shots of the city feature tunnels, roads, and construction sites that lack human presence to a great extent. As the artists describe their artworks via an emphasis on the dystopian landscapes of Palestine, it would be fair to assume that the choice of not featuring large numbers of people along the deserted cityscapes is intentional. This adds to the contrasts of the current scenery with revolutionary public gatherings. One may observe transitions between *communitas* and *immunitas*, in Roberto Esposito's terms, in the public imagination of Palestine. Home is constructed as a place immune to the dangers of the occupation and oppression. The walls of these homes in question, nonetheless, are as fragile and prone to destruction, The Separation Wall itself.

6. Conclusions

Gannit Ankoti in her book *Palestinian Art* (2006) said, from an "in-between" space, 'Palestinian art has the power to undermine hierarchies, to invent new categories, to rupture the East-West divide, and to *Dis-Orientalize* vision.'[58] Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme describe certain media and artistic languages about the representation of occupation "stagnating"[59], and strive to destabilise certain conceptions through their art. Even though the decolonisation and dis-orientalising of vision may be a crucial aim that can be achieved by media art, and is in congruence with many Palestinian media artists' practice, it is an aim that needs to be fuelled across larger production and consumption networks of media.

Just as the previous case studies in this research, namely, *Biennale.py*, *The Mapping Journey Project*, and *Networks of Dispossession*[60] uncovered viral networks, immigration

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[58] Ankori, *Palestinian Art*, 219.

[59] During an artist talk in June 2016, Basel Abbas says: 'Both in the media and even in artistic circles, visual and aural production was sort of stagnating. The potency of the situation had been lost because of repetition. What I mean is whether it's an image of a checkpoint or an image of a soldier, especially during the second Intifada the images were circulating so much that they had completely lost their potency even though they were very important situations. I think our search for trying to bring back that potency and make it speak again was very important for us.' See: "Salon l Artist Talk l Sound Practices," Art Basel YouTube channel, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-r4o-PC3fY (accessed September 2017).

[60] *Networks of Dispossession* started as a project and then it turned into an art piece. However, The Zone started as an art piece and turned into a project. The transition between different formats and descriptions of the artworks are a feature of new media art, which can be presented in a variety of contextual frameworks, as opposed to more traditional forms of contemporary art.

networks, capital networks within the context of urban regeneration, *The Zone* makes visible[61] the networks of consumption under occupation. It dis-orientalises vision by providing a perspective on a process of social shift.

The imagination of Palestine is as much about the land itself as its diaspora. Biopolitics within the space operates through the presence of violence as much as the absence of the people of the land. The merging point of biopolitics of time and space in Palestine could be traced in its imagination across different Palestinian populations that have been scattered around the world. In this respect, Palestinian question poses a micro concept of the wider Mediterranean question. Palestine is one of the most densely populated countries in the Mediterranean. Media expands, but here Palestine shrinks and shrivels, and parts of it disappear. Palestine, as much as the Mediterranean itself, is flexible. It dilutes and concentrates, as in the case of fragmentation of the country between Gaza and other areas.

Palestine could be taken as a micro eco-system of the Mediterrranean problems at large. What is once conceived of a region is now going through a phase that denies the existence of that very same region. The memories of past violence, embedded in the religious, political, ideological, and social contrasts extend through and beyond the times within which it has been committed. Whether it be occupation, dictatorial regimes, or anti-democratic practices, the nation-states of the Mediterranean have been encountering the problematics of violence by attempting to transform it. In the case of Palestine, this turned into an imaginary aspiration of a future as a very human response to feel fit within a picture of the world that is constructed as stable. Time is at stake again: eradication of place by new constructions means eradication of dreams. This is a process of sacrificing the past for a piece of the present, which also seems to mean sacrificing the future through, in Léopold Lambert's words, 'a sacrificial urbanity that symbolises and enforces the acceptance of the

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[61] An analysis of manifestations of violence through media and media art can take as the starting point an oscillation between the power of visibility of violence and power of invisibility of the parties involved. In the context of this research, this manifests itself in particular in Bouchra Khalili's *The Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011), where the illegal migrant's identities were hidden to protect them. A similar power of invisibility may apply to the stories of people without documents passing through tunnels from Palestine to Egypt.

price to pay by many for a few to access to the freedom of a complicit capitalized existence.'[62]

Networks of Dispossession works outward from Gezi protests to the ruling class; *The Zone* works inwards from global consumerism and investment to Ramallah and into the intimacy of destroyed dreams. Therefore, it condenses the big themes of Mediterranean biopolitics and it brings us to a full circle from virus to the inside of people's minds (through an evocation of desire).

Memory is about place as much as it is about time, even more so in the Palestinian case. The previous chapter on immunity and virus discussed the ways in which biopolitical violence is constructed through an administration of people's fear of unpredictability and insecurity. The very system, which feeds into the insecurities of the people, at the same time, uses those insecurities to reproduce itself economically and ideologically.

[T]he newness of the Ramallah market does not index instability, but instead points towards a set of practices that attempt to bound instabilities into possibilities. In various ways, debt, falling wages, and PA wage instability control the dynamics of consumption and manage the market; and the political relationship of the PA to Israel keeps the West Bank market subordinate to Israel's.[63]

Lived in the memories and past experiences of the Palestinian people, the idea of a homeland is both a construct of past, i.e. Palestine as it was living in the memories of its people, and of future, i.e. what is to happen with the homeland. As the memories of a past with revolutionary ideas begin to fade, the construct of future changes, too.

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[62] Léopold Lambert's writes this in the context of the new city of Rawabi, which began to be constructed in 2010, 'at the climax of the politics of development' and sits between Nablus and Ramallah. Léopold Lambert, "Palestine Report Part 4: Rawabi, The Architectural Prophecy Of An Unequal Palestinian State," *The Funambulist*, 4 August 2017, https://thefunambulist.net/architectural-projects/palestine-report-part-4-rawabi-architectural-prophecy-unequal-palestinian-state (accessed September 2017).
[63] Kareem Rabie, "Ramallah's Bubbles," *Jadaliyya*, 18 January 2013, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9617/ramallah's-bubbles. (accessed September 2017)

Chapter 7 Conclusion: *Medius* of Media and the Mediterranean

*For what boundaries can be marked when we
are dealing not with plants and animals, relief
and climate, but men, whom no barriers or
frontiers can stop?* [1]

Fernand Braudel

Etymologically sharing the same 16th-century Latin root "medius", meaning "middle" or "between"[2], the analogy of media and the Mediterranean is both literal and metaphorical. The Mediterranean Sea acts as a mediator, a medium, a transition system, and an enabler of communication. Networks beneath, through and beyond the Mediterranean Sea extend towards the bays, shorelines, islands, port cities and hinterlands, providing a connected and networked space. Violence permeates and is enforced and resisted via these networks where its geographies and histories are embedded.

Any piece of research that bears a region's name in the title has to justify the grounds on which the area in question has been chosen. This becomes more challenging as the discussions on the relevance of regions in the context of globalisation deepen. Obstacles on delineating the borders of a borderless area as well as the presence of words such as "ever-changing", "fluid", "multi-layered", and "complex" often found in contemporary cultural area analyses become temptations for shortcut conclusions. The political contestations of such a literally and metaphorically fluid and borderless entity as Mediterranean proves to be another additional challenge to resist these shortcuts. Hence, the Mediterranean in its current context has had an enormous variety in its conceptualisations, with its proponents and critiques providing competing judgments.

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[1] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and The Mediterranean World in the age of Philip II* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press: 1995), 169.
[2] Media is the plural form of medium, the neuter of *medius. Oxford English Dictionary*, version 2.2.1 (156).

A considerable amount of scholarly literature written on the Mediterranean as a geographical, cultural or human area has come from the disciplines of history (in particular its sub-category of ancient history).[3] It was historian Fernand Braudel who published the single most influential work that inspired the contemporary Mediterranean Studies, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* in 1949. In Braudel's work, among the factors that delineated the Mediterranean's characteristics in numerous accounts were geographical formations such as coastlines and hinterlands,[4] types of cultivation such as olive and vine[5] or dietary habits such as olive-eaters and butter-eaters.[6] Since Braudel, Mediterranean's regionality led the path to discussions that spanned from those with a focus as narrow as one only on the sea itself[7] to the effect of globalisation in a wider context in the rise of the Mediterranean.[8] Braudel's work also gave way to further analyses of "Mediterraneans", those geographical areas in between lands, such as the Mediterranean of the Sahara and the Mediterranean of the North (Baltic and the North Seas) or the Far East.[9]

Some used Braudel's models to discuss the Mediterranean's human geography and history[10] while others adopted a more skeptical approach, seeing the concept as a leftover

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[3] In the fields of media and cultural studies, regional discussions do not necessarily focus on the idea or the existence of a Mediterranean region *per se*. There are, however, works that discuss new media from specific countries or clusters in the region. A prime example would be Anthony Downey, ed. *Uncommon Grounds: New Media and Critical Practices in North Africa and the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

[4] Braudel in *The Mediterranean and The Mediterranean World in the age of Philip II* states: 'The Mediterranean is not even a *single* sea, it is a complex of seas; and these seas are broken up by islands, interrupted by peninsulas, ringed by intricate coastlines.' See: Braudel, "Preface to the first edition," *The Mediterranean*, 17.

[5] Ibid. 168-70.

[6] Ibid. 234-238.

[7] Limiting the area study to the sea and its imminent surroundings is a way to avoid the problem of defining the Mediterranean. That being said, the role of the sea should not be underestimated. "The best witness to the Mediterranean's age-old past is the sea itself. This has to be said and said again; and the sea has to be seen and seen again." Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean in the Ancient World* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 11.

[8] Ian Morris, "Mediterraneanisation," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (2003): 30-55, http://doi.org/10.1080/0951896032000230471.

[9] For example: David Abulafia, "Mediterreaneans," in William V. Harris, ed., *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 64-93; Thierry Fabre "Metaphors for the Mediterranean: Creolization or Polyphony?" *Mediterranean Historical Review* 17, no.1 (2002): 15-24; François Gipouloux, *The Asian Mediterranean: port cities and trading networks in China, Japan and Southeast Asia, 13th-21st century* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011); Achim Lichtenberger "Sea without Water" – Conceptualizing the Sahara and the Mediterranean," in *New Horizons: Mediterranean Research in the 21st Century*, eds. Mihran Dabag, Dieter Haller, Nikolas Jaspert, and Achim Lichtenberger (Hg.) (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink/Ferdinand Schöningh, 2016), 267-284.

[10] Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).

from 1980s academic discussions, and awed at its existence in the following decades.[11] In short, the idea of the Mediterranean itself has largely been debated over the past two decades, very much pulsing like the networks in the sea, and the sea's networks.

Following Braudel's steps, historians Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell co-authored the seminal *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* in 2000. Their work was largely based on Mediterranean's connectivity and fluidity. Even though *The Corrupting Sea* did not originally dedicate a large section on the discussion of the Mediterranean region as a theoretical concept, Horden and Purcell later published responses addressing the discussions and concerns in the field that followed their work.[12]

Is the construct of a Mediterranean a relic of European colonial thought, an imperial chimera, a micro scale of globalised thinking patterns, a revolutionary dream of borderless regions, an outdated academic exuberance, or yet another culinary and touristic byproduct of consumerist capitalism? The answer, as one may expect, is not one, but many.

Discussions on the Mediterranean in the literature can be largely separated into three overarching themes: Mediterreanean as a region, Mediterraneanism as an approach to both area studies and cultural formations, and Mediterraneanisation as the process of becoming of the Mediterranean in a global context.

Mediterraneanism proposes that Mediterranean cultures share distinctive characters.[13] Positive or negative connotations of Mediterraneanism are dependent on the context as the concept itself does not propose one.[14] Some of the critique against

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[11] Michael Herzfeld, "Practical Mediterreanism: Excuses for Everything, from Epistemology to Eating," in *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. William V. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 45-63.

[12] Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, "The Mediterranean and 'the new Thalassology'," *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (2006): 722-740, http://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.111.3.722; P. Horden and N. Purcell, "Four Years of Corruption: A Response to Critics" in *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. William V. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 248-376; P. Horden, "The Boundless Sea of Unlikeness? On Defining the Mediterranean" *Mediterranean Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (2003): 9-29, http://doi.org/10.1080/0951896032000230462.

[13] Horden and Purcell indeed state that they are not Mediterraneanists. See: Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, "The Mediterranean and "the new Thalassology"," *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (2006): 722–740, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.111.3.722

[14] For example, David Ohana sees the idea of Mediterranean as a way to bridge the cultural intricacies that his native Israel is surrounded by. Situating Mediterraneanism as a third option for Israel to being an isolated and

Mediterraneanism is rooted in the fact that it does little more than recycle Orientalist ideas. Among the most notable opponents of Mediterraneanism is Michael Herzfeld, who sees it as an outdated remnant of the academic debates of the previous decades.[15]

Mediterraneanisation, on the other hand, proposes that the interest in the region as a hub of connectivity mirrors the economic and political trends of globalisation. Ian Morris traces the existence and development of the idea of the Mediterranean, separating the academic approach of the 1970s as having strict borders compared to those form the 1980s onwards that emphasise fluidity. The critical outlook that the identification of Mediterraneanisation provides aims to situate the popularity of the region in a context.

Even though Mediterraneanism should be problematised as to what imperial or otherwise oppressive connotations it may lead to, the fact that the possibility of Mediterraneanism exists in and of itself cannot be the grounds for the dismissal of the Mediterranean as an area of analyses. As a construct that has the potential to be romanticised, demonised, or commodified, it may be vulnerable to being imbued with exoticism or marginalisation. Nonetheless, the same holds true, in varying degrees, in the constructs of other formally defined entities, such as nation-states. This may be observed from larger policy or international relations perspective to everyday actions. In this sense, the risk of an Oriental or oppressive Mediterraneanisation are to be taken as scholarly warnings rather than justifications for the dismissal of the field. The Mediterranean Sea and the lands around it exist with its flora and fauna, port cities and hinterlands as well as often mentioned sunshine, olive trees and vine; but it at the same time it does so with environmental and human richness, a sense of political in-between, histories and practices of violence, gender conflicts, religious massacres, human rights violations, imperial invasions, separations, occupations, civil wars, volcanoes, earthquakes, storms, floods as well as with relatively lesser internationalised literature, art and other creative output. Thus,

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local Middle Eastern country or a remote global existence, this approach implies two states of thinking: it both has the potential to think through regional formations rather than nation-states, but at the same time favours one cultural area over the other, using the idea of Mediterranean as a passage to be more European or Western rather than Middle Eastern. "Mediterraneanism is a dialogue between East and West and not an ideology of Orientalism…. It is too ancient, important, and central to be one more reason for ethnic denial or for the nursing of sectorial interests, folkloristic tendencies, or sentimental longings.' David Ohana, "A Bridge over Troubled Water," in *Israel and Its Mediterranean Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 4.
[15] Michael Herzfeld, "Practical Mediterreanism."

research on the Mediterranean need not come with a prepackaged essentialism, Imperialism, Orientalism, romanticism or cynicism.[16]

Discussions on the Mediterranean and its construction form around the axes of connectivity and its opposites: separation and fragmentation.

1. Connectivity, Separation, Fragmentation

'*The Mediterranean has no unity but that created by the movements of men, the relationships they imply, and the routes they follow.*' [17]

Fernand Braudel

Historian Peregrine Horden, who co-authored the seminal *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* with Nicholas Purcell in 2000 gave a bite-sized formula of their 776-page work 16 years later. In a chapter published in 2016, Horden said, 'The ultra-executive summary of *CS* (*The Corrupting Sea*) is: Mediterranean history = fragmentation + connectivity."[18]

The connectivity in and of the Mediterranean Sea and the region brings up two major questions. The first is an epistemological divide about the role of the sea that contrasts connectivity with separation, such as in the claim: "The Mediterranean Sea *separates* while at the same time it *connects*." The second is ontological and is about the region's fragmentation versus its connectivity. The state of being fragmented does not necessarily bear a separation element. Indeed, quite the opposite: fragmentation can feed into connection.

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[16] At the end of 1990s, curator Karin Adrian von Roques did a formal survey among international gallerists as to why very few Arab artists were represented at international art fairs. The survey, von Roques states, showed that Arab art suffered from biases, stereptypesi and clichés, along with the question: "Does contemporary art even exist in Arab countries?" Karin Adrian von Roques, "On Art and Photography: A Situation Report," *View from Inside: Contemporary Arab Photography, Video, and Mixed Media Art* (Houston, TX and Amsterdam: Fotofest and Schilt, 2014), 23.

[17] Braudel, *Mediterranean*, 276.

[18] Peregrine Horden, "Mediterranean Connectivity: A Comparative Approach," in *New Horizons: Mediterranean Research in the 21ˢᵗ Century*, eds. Mihran Dabag, Dieter Haller, Nikolas Jaspert, and Achim Lichtenberger (Hg.), (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink/Ferdinand Schöningh, 2016), 212. .

The separation that the Mediterranean Sea provides sets a challenging example vis-à-vis the conventional constitution of land typologies. Unlike the delineation of nation-states, the Mediterranean Sea does not operate on the basis of physical borders. As a geographical entity, it separates coastlands from each other, and port cities from hinterlands. The latter is a separation (that Horden terms "net introversion") where 'connectivity between micro-regions has generally been more intense around and across the sea's coastlands than between those coastlands and their continental neighbours.'[19] Mediterranean's net introversion could be read as a model for analyses based outside of traditional presets, such as nation-states, from modernisation onwards.

The Mediterranean Sea's *separates* while at the same time it *mediates*. This dual role is a reflection of contradictions that the region presents in terms of religious and ethnic divides, migration paths and nautical routes, transmission of diseases, network structures, among others, beneath, above and around the sea. As with any reflection on the water, the image of this dual role is distorted and cannot be reconstructed by merely a process of reflecting it back.

Separation comes in the macro scale such as geography, economics, and politics as much as it does in the micro scale. Separators can be constructs such as walls, borders, fences, and barbed wires while at the same time they can be legal entities. Nation-states are separated with border markers. Separation is sometimes literal and diplomatic, as in the cases of The Separation Wall stretching across Palestine or the United Nations buffer zone in Nicosia, Cyprus. Other examples from the region include the steel border barrier between Egypt and Gaza Strip in Rafah (which began to be constructed in 2009), separation wall around the Ain al-Hilweh camp in Lebanon (2016), barrier on the Tunisia and Libya border (2016) and the barrier wall between Turkey and Syria (due to be completed in 2017). Refugees from Syria escaping the ongoing civil war that started in 2011 are separated from the rest of Europe via the countries they take refuge in. Other times borders are more economic and symbolic, as in class-based and gender-based divides across the region, or in the divide between religious vs. secularist or ethno-nationalist

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[19] Horden, "Mediterranean Connectivity: A Comparative Approach," 214.

groups (such as in the case of the religious divide between the Bosnians, Croatians and Serbians who speak the same language). Bodies are separated from life via the water.

The Mediterranean in the 21st century *mediates life and death* in terms of Foucault's distinction between "let die and cause to live" and Mbembe's "let live cause to die." It is through this mediation that much of the violence in the region, in its visible and invisible form, exists in transformative forms through time.

Separation, very much like violence, usually denotes a dialectical opposition between forces whereas fragmentation is about those aspects that both bear historical trajectories of colonisation and oppression (those relatively recent historical moments which left an impact on the politico-social unity of the region such as the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the break out of the world wars, de-colonisation processes and national independence wars) and at the same time bring to the fore how fragmentation can be a means to connection. [20]

What constitutes a connection then? William V. Harris argues in *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (2005) that it is '[n]ot only cabotage, long-range trade, piracy and migration, but many other forms of human and also non-human movement, including the spread of plants and of diseases.'[21] The region's history is a constellation of human and non-human movement (such as viruses) and the constructs around these. The types of connection and separation that are introduced by the Mediterranean Sea are not only an indication of our contemporary relationship to media but also of thinking boundaries and borders. This becomes particularly pertinent when thought about in terms of networks.

The Mediterranean and networks share similar characteristics. Both the Mediterranean and networks expand and shrink, densely populated and otherwise, have their various centers, and it is difficult to denote their borders. They are both welcomed and romanticised while at the same time criticised and exposed to various levels of

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[20] Horden furthermore suggested that connectivity is one of the major factors that help define the Mediterranean as a region. (Ibid. 214). "Connectivity was always there even when Med was most fragmented." See: Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*, 160-172.
[21] W. V. Harris, "The Mediterranean and Ancient History," in *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, 23.

skepticism in terms of their functionality. They are *surveilled spaces* through extra-surveillance and intra (self)-surveillance methods via a linkage of specific vectors from sovereign, disciplinary, and biopolitical/necropolitical regimes.

Furthermore, the Mediterranean and networks are both physical entities, and yet they are abstracted in terms of their structure and borders/limits. Networks are based on physical infrastructures and yet they are immaterial. As is the Mediterranean region, which exists in its physical form, yet at the same time with immaterial and historically changeable borders that operate at a symbolic level to underscore this physicality. Networks' immaterial existence has implications for the region is real spaces (for example, in the case of organisation of large scale social mobilisations in the region around 2011 or organisation of the Mediterranean as a logistical space).

The Mediterranean's dual role as a prospect of a borderless region as well as its position as a dangerous physical border is yet another example of the contrasts among which it is situated. Either side of the sea is filled with diplomatic constructs and conflicting territorial interests. Governance patterns show a unique blend of the biopolitical and (necropolitical) with the sovereign.[22] The dissipation of public resources on systems of security and surveillance gives way to a contemporary form of biopolitical governance, the administration of which is heavily dependent on sovereign discourses. Mediterranean biopolitics, from a historical point of view, precedes a type of mature biopolitical governance and blends it with the existing structures that have been reminiscent of traditional sovereign states.[23]

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[22] 'It [Biopolitical border] forms a machine with an assortment of technologies, simple and complex, old and new. […] But this machine does not emerge fully formed, nor is it static. It is a matter of many different practices, each with their own history, their own technical and political precon- ditions, their own temporality, and of how these will be assembled in a functioning unity.' William Walters, "Mapping Schengenland: Denaturalizing the Border," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 5 (2002): 572, http://doi.org/10.1068/d274t.

[23] An example for this may be police forces asking for access to the content of civilians' phones, a practice seen in Turkey following the coup attempt in 2016 as well as at the US border in 2017. A fully developed biopolitical alternative would be to have access to this information at a corporate level, from the data sources itself. Nonetheless, the sovereign/biopolitical blend demonstrates the importance of grand and granular gestures of the display of state power in contemporary administration.

Much of the unity lies in the contrasts of the region. Nonetheless, talk of political unity has been on a (debated) discursive level. What do attempts such as the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which was put forward by Paris Summit for the Mediterranean in 2008 (as a follow up of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995), tell us in terms of a potential unity in the Mediterranean today? The question becomes pertinent also in terms of the extent of political disagreements from the actors in the region. French president Sarkozy's plan for the Union, for example, was not welcomed by countries such as Turkey, which saw the Union as a barrier to the ongoing European Union accession process as well as Libya, which was not happy with the deviation from the original plans for keeping a relatively smaller regional union that did not include the whole of the EU as well as the Middle Eastern countries.

'[T]he frontier-like character of the Mediterranean is hardly amenable to unification projects, whether political or academic, which bank on (putative) cultural affinities, common pasts, shared environmental destiny, and even economic interdependence….[T]he Mediterranean is neither a region in its own right nor a border: it is a fuzzy space in-between.'[24]

Separation in the Mediterranean has its geographical as well as historical roots. Major political changes include the collapse of the Ottoman Empire through to the World War II, the foundation of the European Union, the establishment of an Israeli state in Palestine and the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli wars, the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Gulf Wars in Iraq and the civil war in Syria with the contemporary migrant crisis.

Even if the presence of trans-maritime networks vindicated notions of historical and cultural connectivity, and cosmopolitan port societies survived, they were too feeble to subvert the overpowering drive towards homogenization within nation-states, which drew borders across pre-existing regions. The demise of the Ottoman Empire, the emergence of modern nation-states and mandate regimes, and the

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[24] Dimitar Bechev and Kalypso Nicolaidis, "Introduction: Frontiers, Memory And Conflict in The Mediterranean," in *Mediterranean Frontiers: Borders, Conflict and Memory in a Transnational World*, eds. Dimitar Bechev and Kalypso Nicolaidis (London: IB Tauris), 3-4.

collapse of maritime economies destroyed the material basis of trans-Mediterranean linkages.[25]

Rather than a political unity, the Mediterranean stands as a construct that can be filled in with an array of cultural conditioning. Examples of these are the Euro-centric approach of Sarkozy and the romantic notions of the Mediterranean as a third option to Euro-centrism and globalism. The Mediterranean's borders are a theoretical notion, a dialectical argument, a tourist attraction, and a romanticised version of regional realities that go beyond North-South and East-West axes. Nonetheless, both the defenders and the critics implicitly know about the impossibility of dealing with its geographical borders. The Mediterranean's figurative temporal borders, its formations, re-formations and destructions extend beyond political union attempts. The temporal aspects of the formation of the Mediterranean and temporal aspects of violence bind them together.

The Mediterranean region is by no means politically or culturally unified in contemporary times. Nonetheless, patterns in media art show contradictions and shared histories of violence. While the histories of colonisation point to particular trajectories in terms of the circulation of media art, regimes of mobility underlie those of violence that are incorporated in the everyday. This is the case with the undocumented immigrants' flow in the Schengen area, or border regulations within separated countries or occupied lands such as in Cyprus or Palestine. The denial of mobility and a suspension of free flow are essential components of biopolitics of networked violence. Territoriality is contrasted with bios, whose temporality is marked by accumulation, delay and decay.

2. Flow and Transformation

As this section on the case studies of media art from the Mediterranean and networks of violence were forming, a most lighthearted small project that is not (yet) exhibited as media art was launched. On 16th of April 2017, as Turkey was voting in a referendum on transition from the parliamentary system to a presidential system,

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[25] Kerem Öktem, "The Ambivalent Sea: Regionalizing the Mediterranean Differently," in *Mediterranean Frontiers*, 17.

expanding the president's powers and reducing the parliament's, the citizens were given the options to vote yes or no. While the supporters welcomed the idea of the current president Erdoğan's increase of powers, the opposition critiqued it as paving the way to a dictatorship.

In the wake of this massive historical change in the country's governance model, a piece of code for "Ballot Paper Photo Generator" demonstrated in a nutshell what a lot of the media art from the Mediterranean aspire to do: challenge sovereign and/or hybrid sovereign-biopolitical systems by subverting the discourse using media. The project page on GitHub said: "Ballot Paper Photo Generator. Prepared by Midori Kocak by using HTML5 and Javascript. #NO."[26] The project initially started as an experiment to protest the idea of some workplaces asking from workers and civil servants a photo of their ballot papers marked with a "yes".
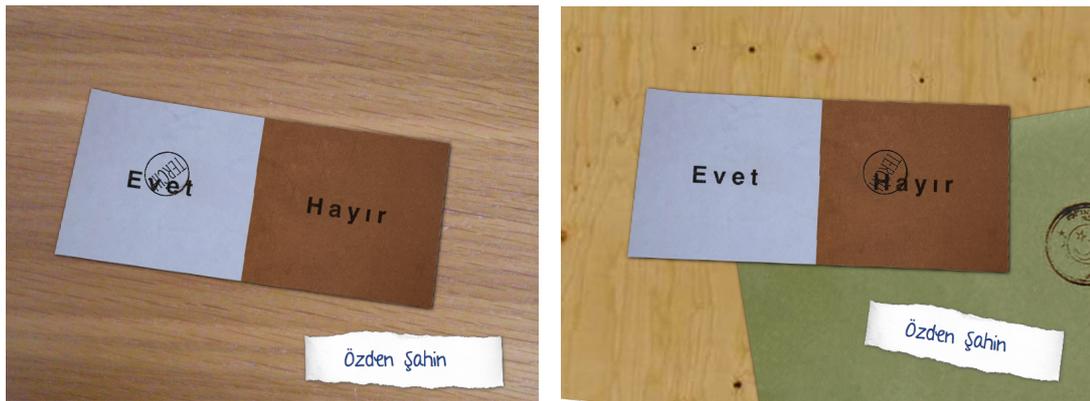
Fig. 1: Two fake ballot papers with "yes" and "no" answers prepared with Ballot Paper Photo Generator.

While the aesthetics of the images makes it obvious that they are fabricated, the artist indicated that there was a popular demand for the ballot paper photo generator following the referendum.[27] The photo generator as a small-scale project is a witness to the historical realities of unspoken violence and human creativity as response to it.

What does it mean to create, produce, circulate and consume media art that discusses violence in its manifold temporal forms and through its present and future

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[26] "Oy pusulası fotoğrafı yapıcı," GitHub, https://midorikocak.github.io/pusula/ (accessed September 2017).
[27] Personal correspondence with Koçak.

repercussions? Is violence merely a theme, or possibly a process whereby the medium asserts itself, or a byproduct, from an ethical perspective? Finally, what do these mean in the context of Mediterranean public media art space? In terms of its international circulation, does Mediterranean media art mirror the global pathway?

Especially in the fields of art and visual culture, there may be said to be a tacit agreement that in order to contest the visual regimes of violence, there needs to be a production of counter-visibility from the side of the oppressed in order to challenge the selective highlight of violence. These studies usually come in the form of analyses of visual and other forms of art that set out to challenge the oppressive visions. Even though this has the benefits of pinpointing analytical, tactical, or activist forms of art and media, the discussions leave out questions on the formations of media art in question. This is to say, artistic and other creative works in the conflict zones are used as a potential within which alternative realities can be constructed. The more overt violence penetrates, historically and otherwise, in the region, the less advanced media tools get and the more intensely their potential is used. The scope of the artworks at times has a tendency to permeate into real life, becoming interventions for public good.

Media art from the Mediterranean that discusses networks of violence is at times more focused on context and content of political realities than on the transformative potential of the media tools and means it uses. A resulting criticism of the creative production in the area could be that even the subversive forms of art use status quo means within established political contexts. This way of arguing, even though may have legitimate grounds, can be too easily applied to any contemporary form of production. If one is to dismiss every form of resistance that comes in the form of art (in the sense that it *becomes* resistance by its very existence as art under conflict or occupation zones), then what alternative is there to left discuss? If it is impossible to subvert the gaze merely because of the media that these artists from the Mediterranean are using, then is it legitimate to produce apolitical art only?

As in Istanbul, art in Beirut is still the performance/activity of a handful and not a total culturisation, as in New York, London, or Berlin, where "change through art"

has become purely utopian. There is still a certain promise of social change in the air and the artists can still have an effect, especially when they invite the people to consider the spatial and social interdependence of the private and the public, of the state and the citizen.[28]

The Mediterranean is a microcosm of a contemporary art world that clusters around the major art centers where capital is accumulated. The presence of a political unity such as the European Union bordering it has had conceptual and logistic impact on the Mediterranean media art space in terms of funding, mobility, and cultural exchanges, where some aspects of the workings of biopolitical violence is hidden.

Both networks and Mediterranean *enable* (and hinder) flow, which leads transformation. They do so using media tools in the most general sense of the word: whether it is the hardware to establish network nodes or the cargo ships that float across the sea. The sea, in itself, acts as a medium of communications. The satellite-based communications systems do not diminish the sea's role in communications considering the extent of the network infrastructures beneath the sea.

The four case studies that have been conducted in this research[29] specifically take into consideration the relations of flow and transformation that characterise the contemporary media art space of the Mediterranean. These four case studies respectively take virus, maps, dispossession networks and consumerist capital as the focal point of flow through which transformation happens. A virus spreads and transforms the host body (as well as itself). Its encounter with the host body creates discourses around the way such an extraordinary twenty-first century phenomenon becomes a container for historical ideas of external threats. Maps as representations of space connect spaces of flow of movement (of people and otherwise). The human flow through maps transforms spaces, population and policies. Dispossession networks transform urban spaces, aggrandizing wealth and transforming the barriers of inclusion and exclusion in the public space. Capital through a

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[28] Beral Madra, *Mediterranean metaphors II: contemporary art from Lebanon* (Istanbul: Borusan Gallery, 2000), 7.

[29] Namely, *biennale.py* (2001) by Eva and Franco Mattez, *Mapping Journey Project* (2008-2011) by Bouchra Khalili, *Networks of Dispossession* (2011) by Burak Arıkan et al., and *The Zone* (2011) by Basel Abbas and Rouanne Abou-Rahme. Please see the case studies 1-4.

metaphorical flow of constructed ideals of consumerism, transforms histories of resistance. In all of these cases, flow of people, money, goods and data overlap and transform the networked nature of media art in relation to their production and circulation circumstances, and all of them speak to specific media (in viral, cartographic, software and video forms).

These circumstances are informed by historical changes such as presence of the former coloniser and colonised creating ecologies of media art space with incommensurable standards of production technologies.

> The circum-Mediterranean today is a space of ambivalence, characterized more by dividing lines and ruptures, than by connecting networks or a 'common heritage'. Acknowledging these divisions and the competing nature of regionalizing discourses, but also the diversity and distinctiveness of smaller sub-regions, would help liberating the Mediterranean debate from tacit imperial longings, quests for domination and neo-colonial designs. This could be a first step towards the construction of the Mediterranean as a non-hegemonic space, in which colonizer and colonized, deported and deportee, can face each other as equals to confront and transcend the divisions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Considering the situation on the ground, however, there is no reason to believe that the realization of such a vision is imminent.[30]

That the political and structural unity around the Mediterranean does not exist may inform a counter-argument to the inclination to define media art from the region as "inherently postmodern"[31] as the latter should be considered in relation to the situating of Mediterranenisation within global constructs. The postmodern characters observed in media art from the region does not stem from intended patterns and conceptual dispersion, but from the inherent fragmentation and fragility of the region as well as its experience of history as a bricolage of discrete atemporal fragments. Violence is central to the political aspects of these.

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[30] Kerem Öktem, "The Ambivalent Sea: Regionalizing the Mediterranean Differently," in *Mediterranean Frontiers*, 34.
[31] For example, see B. Madra, *Mediterranean metaphors II*.

Violence flows and transforms through time, and the duration of the transition from one form of violence to another is biopolitical. The current manifestations of violence are a result of the interplay between *transitions* from living to dead, and the administration of the process in between rather than removing the relics of a dead political era. Violence and aggression against the historical symbols of a past era usually mark a turning point of history in collective remembrance and imagination. Contemporary media art has not yet been prominently present in this process of massive eruptions of violence that has collective reverberations. The change in the symbols of the past, albeit integrated with media in various fronts throughout the process, is still very material and object-based. The immaterial aspects of media art sit at the junction of political implications of a violence that lives through its manifold forms across time. Both persistence and abolition of the past values can turn into violence.

The ongoing conflicts in the Mediterranean have created political economies around violence such as war profit, reconstruction entrepreneurship, management of instability, migrant labour and smuggling of art and artifacts[32]. The effect of violence on historical artifacts may be counted as a metaphorical tie in with the historical dimensions of biopolitics. The general micro-time of change in biopolitical rule (e.g. abrupt transformations in shifts of power resulting in a change in biopolitical dynamics) may be thought of against the backdrop of a macro time of history (as in the accumulation of historical events taking a longer time). A lot of the media art from the Mediterranean region incorporates the place of the history and memory, especially because history is prone to be effected by stark changes, which encompass biopolitical violence, in conflict areas.[33]

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[32] For example, Lebanese artist Ali Cherri in his video installation *Petrified* looks at the fetishisation, looting and the trafficking of artefacts in conflict zones in the Middle East. "Petrified," Ali Cherri official website, https://www.acherri.com/copy-of-fragments (accessed September 2017).

[33] Palestinian artist Larissa Sansour's video work *In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain* (2016) constructs a future archaeology of a fictional civilisation in order to look at issues of belonging, history, and identity. "In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain (2016)," Larissa Sansour official website, http://www.larissasansour.com/Future.html (accessed September 2017).

Much of the research based on the formulation and scaling of violence directs its gaze to those scalable or non-scalable aspects that are measured to formulate its severity.[34] For example, intensity has different meanings for the victim, witness and perpetrator, and yet another dimension in *its present and future formulations*. These present and future formulations will eventually embed a temporality that may be predictable or otherwise.

One exquisite example to explain the temporal dimensions of violence is Adi Ophir and Ariella Azouray's concept of suspended violence Ophir and Azouray in their essay "The Monster's Tail"[35] situate the administration of the Separation Wall in Palestine as a mechanism for long-term control using the threat of violence.[36] Taking Ophir and Azouray's argument further, it is argued here that this suspension will transform into and inform other forms of violence. This has been the case, for example, with the postcolonial situation whereby the inhumane administration of race-based violence has assumed subtler forms.

Violence does not follow a predictable pathway. Therefore, its analyses have at times run the danger of certain types of generalisations from political as well as cultural analytical points of view.[37] The direction of anger coming from the side of the archetypal

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[34] An exception could be the work of Hamit Bozarslan, who in his book *Violence in the Middle East* (2004) has a three-layer hypothesis about the nature of the mainstream political violence in the Middle East. Bozarslan argues that violence in the Middle East results from the power structure, and hence, violent movements are directed towards changing the power relations. Secondly, the violent movements in question weaken at a later stage, but give birth to "fragmented and privatised forms of violence." Thirdly, the observes a transformation in the nature of this violence into "nihilistic, sacrificial, and/or messianic forms." Hamit Bozarslan, *Violence in the Middle East: From the Political Struggle to Self-Sacrifice* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2004), 8-9.

[35] Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir, "The Monster's Tail," in *Against the Wall: Israel's Barrier to Peace,* ed. Michael Sorkin (New York, NY: The New Press, 2005), 2-27.

[36] Please see the literature review for a definition of "spectacular" versus "suspended" violence in Azoulay and Ophir's work.

[37] For example, based on nationality. While wiring about the Separation wall, Gil Z. Hochberg argues that the Wall in Palestine indeed is conceived differently by Palestinian and Israeli societies, and its physical construction also allows a different perception from either side. "Engrained in a psychic of fear, the Israeli dominant field of vision superimposes a fantasy of radical separation between Israelis and Palestinians. Within this fantasy, the Separation Wall, like all other military apparatuses such as checkpoints, sieges, and separate roads, is seen not as sign of military force or aggression but as a legitimate and protective border against terrorism and suicide bombers. Seen through this prism of fear, even the image of an armed Israeli soldier pointing a gun at a group of young Palestinian children is seen as an image of self-defense. From the Palestinian viewpoint, things obviously look different, with all of the examples mentioned above, seen as "visual evidence" of Israeli brutality." See: Gil. Z. Hochberg, "Introduction," in *Visual Occupations: Violence and Visibility in a Conflict Zone* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2015), 9. The focus may

victim or the oppressed is different to formations of violence that are part of processes such as building the nation, making the state and expanding the market.

Instances of macro level overt political violence are inherent to the development of capitalism. Military expenses, arms trade, entrepreneurship profits reliant on reconstruction are examples. Secondary effects include migrant labour and as well as the bureaucratic and operational management economy. War economy as an aspect of violence is among the biggest obstacles to resolution of the macro scale side effects of overt political violence. In this sense, the potential benefits of the flow (of capital and data) replaces the ideals of a positive transformation of the community with a systemic reconstruction of violence.

The speed of certain forms of biopolitical violence is based on the speed of networks. The administrative protocols of network systems are based on a modularity that avoids loss of economic value and time. Within the framework of micro changes and alterations in the logic of the capital as well as massive changes in world political scenes, it is argued here that the most important aspect of the biopolitical violence of neoliberalism is its organised manner of administration *that exceeds time barriers*. It is like a body that cares for itself and its existence through different time periods, whether a historical longue durée in Braudel's sense or a slowly violent destruction as Rob Nixon indicates. This is why the temporality and transformation of violence can be a useful focus point rather than its impact.

Turning back to the etymological presence of the root *medius* in media and the Mediterranean, it could be argued that the twenty-first century media art from the region proves that neither media nor the Mediterranean are in the middle. Rather, they permeate through networks, and they at times resurface where they are physically absent. This geographical analogy holds true for the workings of violence, but in temporal terms since it is both present as much as it is potentially in the future. The middle does not exist exclusively as connection but also as fragmentation and shared contradictions in the Mediterranean. The space is difficult to define due to constant penetrations of violence and

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have been, instead, on the commonalities that bring together different aspects of societal segments of Palestinians and Israelis rather than claiming a formulated vision of the wall based on nationalities.

the transformations that follow, which are constituted through the mediation between nodes. This process of defining takes the pace of a completed definition of the region.

The region reconstitutes itself through its imagination, which are informed by economic, communicative and natural ties, shared myths, (labour) migration, drugs and arms dealing, and regional economic projects. Both violence and media arts, because they employ history and geography —cartography, regionality, relationality— as processes, produce imaginations of one or many Mediterraneans. This unending process of reconstituting the Mediterranean imagination is a quality of the public media arts space, perhaps providing the grounds for re-imagining the Mediterranean, or perhaps becoming an unending process itself.

3. Regional Imagination and Mediation

The intellectual's role generally is dialectically, oppositionally [...] to challenge and defeat both an imposed silence and the normalized quiet of unseen power wherever and whenever possible.[38]

Edward Said

The imagination of the contemporary Mediterranean, which contains both geographical and temporal boundaries, is ruptured with violent events. The characteristic of these boundaries is that their intersection with the artists' trajectories and their subject matter constitutes (metaphorical) nodes at which events occur. Violence in an image (also as an image, in the form of an image) finds its representational possibilities in artistic imagination while at the same time violence as an event (also in an event, in the form of an event) mediates between nodes.

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[38] Edward Said, "The Public Role of Writers and Intellectuals," in *The Public Intellectual*, ed. Helen Small (New York, NY: Wiley, 2002), 31, http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/BPL_Images/Content_store/Sample_chapter/0631231978%5 C001.pdf (accessed September 2017).

Discourses around justifications of political violence in the region resort to the idea of new beginnings as temporal nodes. Mediation under contemporary conditions is networked; decentred networks operate through nodes. Nodes are/can become crisis points in network flows. The lines from one node to another in some cases constitute and in others transgress borders and boundaries. An event is temporary, so an event node is not a fixed node. Therefore, it is more prone to crisis. The current Israeli occupation in Palestine is an urge to settle to a permanent home, eternally. Jihadi ISIS's destruction of historical monuments, including remnants of ancient cities and mosques, is a belligerent take on an origin story for a new Islamic history. Examples of vilification against the Western modernity project of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Turkey by the current conservative government connote the dream of a neo-Ottomanist beginning. These countries, differently geographically placed around the Mediterranean rim, experience different histories with different meanings.

The colonial histories of the Mediterranean region partly explain the contemporary physical borders of the nation states around the sea. At the same time, biopolitical components are contemporaneous with the remnants of its colonial past. Spatial border regimes of today inherently consist of a routine temporal dimension: that of acceleration and deceleration. The territoriality of *bios* as well as its denial put into question different modes of temporality. Biopolitics of time is administered at the grand supranational level as well as the granular cellular level.

In his preface to the first edition of *The Mediterranean* in 1946, Fernand Braudel pioneered an extraordinary challenge: 'The final effect then is to dissect history into various planes, or, to put it another way, to divide historical time into geographical time, social time, and individual time. Or, alternatively, to divide man into a multitude of selves.'[39] The Mediterranean he was talking about is a temporal geological formation, a malign space of violent storms, floods, earthquakes, droughts, and the like with a human history. Contemporary human experiences of natural disasters are political and politicised, and thus

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[39] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (London: Collins, 1972), 21.

regional as well as biopolitical.[40] Intensity of an earthquake, for example, is not necessarily a numerical predictor of the damage it brings. Much more depends on the investment on infrastructure, or the necropolitical places of the relatively short-term histories of profit-making and urban development. Long-term examples for natural disasters may include the surreptitious impact of persistent bad weather conditions on crops, potentially leading to crises and violent conflicts.

Transformation of violence is inevitable, relational, paced, gendered, and most importantly, temporal. Its becoming as an event is surrounded by capital, security, religion and economies of destruction. Its effects can be observed on the collective, individual, capillary, and structural levels. It mediates time biopolitically, and is mediated through time. The next passages aim to illustrate these in more detail.

The longue durée of the Mediterranean is segmented, marked and disrupted with geological formations, natural catastrophes, seismic activity (the presence of an earthquake zone from Turkey, the Balkans, Greece to Italy that contrasts with the relative stability of North Africa or the desertification in the Sahel vs. Southern Europe's relative fertility are as important as linguistic and religious differences), and human violence (the longue durée of religious wars and colonialism). In a similar vein, the longue durée of violence traverses the contemporary.[41] Clashing temporalities of movement and stasis mark the nodes of violence. Contagion spread through networks creates an instance at the very least or an event at its most extreme capacity, with a side effect of wars, epidemic breakouts, sanitary cordons, and the like. Biological conditions translate into political paranoia that is often exploited

[40] Even though the concept of biopolitics originally is not rooted in a particular regional narrative, historically, it came to involve regional variations. 'Whereas Foucault's account of biopolitics focused primarily on the politics of national populations, the rise of regional economic governance in Europe in the late twentieth century led to growing political concern with the characteristics of populations at regional and sub-regional scales, resulting in the emergence of what might be termed 'regional biopolitics'. Joe Painter, "Regional Biopolitics," *Regional Studies* 47, no. 8 (2013): 1236, http://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2011.653333.

[41] This does not only include the overtly violent events such as those stemming from exploitation of oil in the Middle East, but also manifests itself in the ecological knowledge production effected by the postcolonial conditions. In an introduction to the *Environmental Imaginaries of the Middle East and North Africa* (2011), Diana K. Davis explains how environmental orientalism –the environmental imaginary of the Middle East by mainly the British and French colonial powers and the traditions they represent– has been engrained in the ecological studies. This I believe poses another example of latent violence where the remnants of the overt violence of colonialism of the past can be traced in the present imaginary. Diana K. Davis, "Introduction," in *Environmental Imaginaries of the Middle East and North Africa*, eds. Diana K. Davis and Edmund Burke III (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2011), 1-22.

economically. Slow destruction of nature leads to both subtle encounters and great eruptions of violence. Braudel's model of layered human experience is a function of distinct regional, social, cultural, and economic practices of mediated violence.

Trajectories of violence extend beyond human time, yet congeal in the human spaces of exclusion and inclusion. Histories of exploitation, colonisation, gendered conflicts and oppression find their counter force in opposing resistance movements. Media artists of the Mediterranean see the potential of this resistance to make visible the invisible violence, and construct an alternative imagination of the region while at the same time keeping a critical eye[42] on the regimes of visibility.[43]

One of the greatest examples for the latter is artist Maria Ruido's video work *le rêve est fini/ the dream is over/ el sueño ha terminado* (2013-2014), where she says: 'through the tracks and footprints of those who remain in its maritime tombstone, obscenae, those who have to stay invisible in order to uphold the simulacra of democracy, neo-colonialism and the necropolitics of human rights.'[44] Invisibility of certain bodies is a condition of violent histories and hence, I argue, sustaining the latency of biopolitical violence. Another example is Nermine Hammam's video *Metanoia* (2009)[45] which is based on the artist's experience of seeing the bad practice in Abbassiya, a state mental asylum in Egypt and being banned from visiting the asylum as well as the consequent censorship on her photographic series by the Egyptian State. Igor Grubic's *East Side Story* (2006–8)[46] makes

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[42] Galtung's critiques were right: political violence survives not merely because it is hidden, but it is also sometimes out in the open. The latter inevitably causes habituation. Because some forms of media art expose this habituation, media art has an important role in our century. The question is whether it would like to take it or not.

[43] Burak Arıkan of *Networks of Dispossession*, for example, expresses the relations of violence that have political, economic, and environmental consequences: 'The corporations who get big construction and energy contracts from the government are also the holders of mainstream media companies. […] The partnerships that are established through legal concessions between media oligarchs and the governmental institutions render mainstream media a mere marketing tool and keep the public uninformed about processes that dispossess us of our air, our water, our soil and our public spaces.' See: Berin Gölönü, "Discussion with Burak Arıkan about "Networks of Dispossession," *Open Space Journal* 7, http://www.openspace-zkp.org/2013/en/journal.php?j=7&t=46 (accessed September 2017).

[44] Maria Ruido, "le rêve est fini/ the dream is over/ el sueño ha terminado," 2013-2014, http://www.workandwords.net/en/projects/view/599 (accessed September 2017).

[45] Nermine Hammam, "Metanoia," 2009, http://www.nerminehammam.com/films.html (accessed September 2017).

[46] Igor Grubic, "East Side Story," Tate website, http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/grubic-east-side-story-t13651 (accessed September 2017).

visible gendered violence through an interpretation of violent attack on the gay pride events in Belgrade in 2001 and Zagreb in 2002. All these artworks deal with remembrance of a past violence, and implicitly have an impact on the transformations of these different types of violence in the future.

The time of display, feedback, movement, spread of an artwork sits against the backdrop of the longue durée of the Mediterranean, its violent histories and presence, and the sedimentation and transformation of violence, and its manifestation in different densities. Since networked art mirrors the trajectories, boundaries and nodes of the longue durée it is uniquely well placed to take up these violent mediations and at times to show patterns of hope and resistance shadowed by swift and open destruction as well as slow and covert change. With *Anatomy of a virus (Displaced Legal Application #2)* (2011),[47] artist Nuria Guell creates a website that is devoid of content, but attracts pornographic and gambling advertisements in order to protest the Catalan Government practice to fund those artworks which generate revenues. Daniel García Andújar's *x-devian (2003/2008)-Individual Citizen Republic Project™: El Sistema*, presented as an installation across several exhibitions, is a bootable operating system that, according to the artist, 'represents a comprehensive conceptual and practical reconfiguration of the economics of mainstream software culture.'[48] Time underpins these practices in making the invisible visible.

As people, places, and objects cease to exist through ethnic wars, civil wars, displacement, or at a more symbolic level, iconoclasm, contemporary media artists from the Mediterranean also show an interest in erasure of histories. A feeling of loss, a lack of being, a sense of homelessness and displacement can be seen in many of the thematic threads of art from the region. In terms of narrative description, fading and decay of the image are arguably the most noticeable and prominent way to convey these feelings visually. Images on the screen start display, end, and decay. Scene cuts, playback loops, and image fading are meticulously timed in video works. Sound is intrinsically a very prominently temporal aspect of the audio-visual art forms. Interactive art offers an added component by bringing

[47] Nuria Guell, "Anatomía de un virus (Aplicación Legal Desplazada #2)," 2011, http://www.nuriaguell.net/projects/21.html (accessed September 2017).
[48] Daniel García Andújar, "x-devian," 2003-2008, http://www.danielandujar.org/portfolio/x-devian-2004/ (accessed September 2017).

to the fore interpretive aspects as well as the demonstrative ones. Machine time is combined with human time to engage with the histories and ruptures of violence.

Network time is real-time, which is a type of machine time that is faster than human time of movement and interactions. Contemporary biopolitics is partially based on observational data monitoring on humans' movements and action patterns. Numerical translations (and representations) of these patterns are biopolitically distinctive. As Jussi Parikka writes in *A Slow, Contemporary Violence: Damaged Environments of Technological Culture* (2016) '[t]emporal, synchronizing management of complex materialities in relation to the territorial organizational situations becomes mediated through time-critical computational events.'[49] Time-criticality of computation and the control over real-time can be a matter of life and death, as, for example, in the case of migrant boats monitored in the Mediterranean Sea by national, European Union, and non-governmental agents.[50] Nonetheless, biopolitical data collected through (self-surveilling) networks are nowhere neutral. The data collected from the sea is used to calculate migration risk (hence increase the level of security controls against the flow of immigrants).

A decentred network does not have a middle, in which case the *medius* as in-between is the decentred middle, which circumscribes the metaphorical nodes around the Mediterranean Sea in its spatial and temporal constructs. First comes the mediation, followed by event nodes, presenting an added temporal layer to the relationship. Changes of/in the nodes alter the characteristics of mediation. If the contemporary Mediterranean is a medium, its mediation context works through the contradictory nature of sovereign, disciplinary, biopolitical forms of governance operating around the constellations of languages, religions and nation-states.

'At first approach, an event is thus the effect that seems to exceed its causes – and the space of an event is that which opens up by the gap that separates an effect from its

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[49] Jussi Parikka, *Contemporary Condition. A Slow, Contemporary Violence: Damaged Environments of Technological Culture* (Berlin: Sternberg Press), 27.
[50] For a study on the Mediterranean's transformation into a military-humanitarian border zone, see: Lorenzo Pezzani, "Liquid Traces. Spatial practices, aesthetics and humanitarian dilemmas at the maritime borders of the EU" (PhD diss., Goldsmiths, University of London, 2015).

causes'[51], writes Slavoj Žižek in his book *Event: A Philosophical Journey through a Concept* (2014). An event is inseparable from its place and time because of the temporal cause and effect relation. Moreover, Žižek's positioning of the event is through a spatial metaphor, i.e. that of a gap. Forces converge and conflict with each other for the causal relationship to come into being, forming the gap. Any given event is a unique instance of a node in the network.[52]

Event has found its place in the contemporary media art from the Mediterranean region in the 21st century as profound and historical changes have taken place against the backdrop of spaces where different temporalities are experienced. The speed of network traffic has the potential to be an addition to the three types of times Braudel defines, namely, longue durée, biographical, and événementiel. The network time is beyond human perception. Slowing finance down to speeds at which it can be perceived is a feature of the 1st, 3rd, and 4th cases.

Means and methods by which artistic material have been presented across the four case studies in this study can be given as examples of patterns for artistically presenting the event. While circumscribed events can be made visible via still images, those events spanning over a longer time period found a place in alternative forms such as data visualisation and cartographic work. In *Biennale.py*, the computer virus attack as an event explicitly happens in network time. In *Mapping Journey Project*, the event of migration captured in a very specific time period is presented both in cartographic and video formats. This is in tandem with the presentation of the time-specific movement of immigrants in video as well as the overarching, long-standing histories of immigration as maps. Slower urban transformation problematised in *Networks of Dispossession* has to be constantly fed data as the artwork expands for it to capture the speed of violence. A video work such as *The Zone* attempts to pace the moving images in direct relation to the narrative it is telling – and thus to the time of human action and thought.

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[51] Slavoj Žižek, *Event: A Philosophical Journey through a Concept* (Brooklyn, NY; London: Melville House, 2014), 12. The definition is followed by a question: "Our first tentative definition of event as an effect which exceeds its causes thus brings us back to an inconsistent multiplicity: is an event a change in the way reality appears to us, or is it a shattering transformation of reality itself?" See Slavoj Žižek, *Event*, 14.
[52] The development of media tools and our engagement with them changed the representation of event as well as the pace within which we as the spectators interact with them.

Art mediates and sometimes communicates. In certain cases where the very creation of art is a political gesture in itself, it communicates through its very presence, regardless of its content. Having looked at the relationship of art to the event, a further question can be posed in relation to mediating and communicating aspects of art. Besides mediating and/or communicating, can art become an event? While the answer is not completely negative, it is more likely that art has more potential to be a driving force behind the becoming of an event rather than being an event. 'In an Event, things not only change, what changes is the very parameter by which we measure the facts of change, i.e., a turning point changes the entire field within which facts appear.'[53] In the instance that art actually interferes with political realities and actually changes them, it has a great potential to provide the framework for the changing parameters. For example, Yves Degoyon's *MapOMatix: A Collaborative Platform For Tactical Cartography* (2005) as an artwork as well as a tactical mapping platform attempts to construct de-centralised databases for collective history and memory.[54] Nicolas Maigret's artwork *PING MAP* (2011)[55] uses network access time in order to visualise the hierarchies of information flows.[56]

An event ruptures the ordinary by exceeding its cause. It is a supplement, additional to the pre-existing. Art has the potential to open the rupture and observe the change, and seek out new forms of imaginations. This may mean bringing about a new artwork event that will exceed the artwork as cause.

For any form of art to fuel an event against biopolitical violence, it will need to take into account its own temporal aspect as well as that of the violence it opposes. In event nodes that mark the four case studies in this research, networked biopolitical violence meets the counter force of a networked (artistic) communication. This idea of communication in the aforementioned cases, however, is to the communication of the artist with the work (e.g. network tools or those agents creating and changing the network) or the audience (e.g.

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[53] Žižek, *Event*, 178.
[54] "MapOMatix," Sourceforge, http://mapomatix.sourceforge.net (accessed September 2017).
[55] Nicolas Maigret, "PINGMAP (2011…), http://peripheriques.free.fr/blog/index.php?/works/2011-ping-map/ (accessed September 2017).
[56] With the artwork *Post-network neo-topologies* (2013-2017), Christophe Bruno follows a reverse path whereby he uses analogue means to draw attention to the issues with the digital. https://christophebruno.com/portfolio/post-network-neo-topologies-2013-2016/ (accessed September 2017).

exhibition visitors or public). Instability –including the temporal instability of competing forms of temporality– and presence/threat of political violence damage the possibility of a stable, regional public media art space in the region.[57] Moreover, they lead to patterns in trajectories of artists, partially rooted in colonial histories.

> '[W]hile it would be incorrect to assume that cultural influence is a one-way process, it is true that many contemporary and emerging artists based in different, including so-called, peripheral Mediterranean contexts, tend to develop strategies for locating their work in more global, rather than national, networks.'[58]

Anticipation of violence follows a threat and consequence order. A violent act in the becoming becomes a threat when the potentiality for its recurrence is imminent. Recurrence needs a mirroring, a close enough symmetry for it to be an anticipated threat. In this instance, its annihilation is a relatively straightforward process. Nonetheless, the evolving and transformative nature of political violence is what allows it to permeate. Some artists from the region question the stability when overt political violence was relatively less common. For example, "98weeks Research Project was initiated in 2008 with Beirut Every Other Day, a series of workshops on Beirut's urban space."[59] Similarly, latency of violence is on Walid Sadek's artistic agenda due to the experience of Lebanese civil war.[60]

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[57] That said, there are significant media art initiatives and events for the Mediterranean public space. Examples include YASMIN, a moderated email list for art-science-technology interactions around the Mediterranean Rim: https://www.leonardo.info/isast/YASMIN.html (accessed September 2017). *Méditerranées: Des grandes cités d'hier aux hommes d'aujourd'hui* was one of the major events of the European Capital of Culture in Marseille in January 2013. *Mediterranean BODIES* exhibition in 2016 sought "to foster connections and exchanges between young artists in the Mediterranean countries Greece, Cyprus and France". See: http://www.dropsofbreath.com/the-actions/mediterranean-bodies-an-exhibition (accessed September 2017). Contemporary and media art space grey) (area put forth as a long term objective the 'development of international cooperation in the Mediterranean region, actions in defined fields of non-institutional culture, art production, independent science and social development according to the values of civil society.' See: http://grey-area.org/pages/o-nama (accessed September 2017).
[58] Raphael Vella, "Translating the 'Mediterraneans': Art, education and understanding'between the lands'," in *Mediterranean Art and Education: Navigating Local, Regional and Global Imaginaries through the Lens of the Arts and Learning*, eds. John Baldacchino and Raphael Vella (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2013), 88.
[59] "98Research: Beirut Every Other Day," http://www.98weeks.net/p/beirut-every-other-day.html (accessed September 2017).
[60] "Walid Sadek," Dutch Art Institute, https://dutchartinstitute.eu/page/5083/walid-sadek (accessed September 2017).

Different temporalities apply to operations of violence. Rights acquired after histories of struggle can be lost overnight. Diplomatic crises can lead to sudden loss of rights and extended barriers or, alternatively, to a stricter control over humans' and goods' mobility, posing a low-level pressure that brews potentially violent outbursts in the event nodes. In an exhibition entitled "Piramida" at Tirana Ekspres in 2012, for example, artists looked back on the changes in the economic system of Albania in 1992, the springing up pyramid schemes for accumulation of capital and their consequent fall, leading to poverty and violence.[61]

Biopolitical administration is an elaborate resurfacing of certain modes of colonialism, respecting the economic fundamentals of capitalist dispossession and commodification of labour. Capital, embedded with the potentialities and actualities of overt and covert violence, currently flows through the networks in its fastest capacity. Capitalism bears with it contradictions stemming from relations of production and destruction. 'Capital invests in certain temporalities—that is, capital caters to the clock that meters the life and lifestyle of some of its workers and consumers. The others are left to recalibrate themselves to serve a dominant temporality.'[62]

Biopolitical violence is both grand and granular. It is grand in its scope to view human beings as species; and granular in terms of the level of detail at which it operates. Its power comes from an intricate balance of the grand and granular informed by precise management of time.

Medius is thus to be understood in its spatio-temporal aspects for the mutating violences of yesterday's clash counter-attacked with the evolving artistic hopes for tomorrow. A substantial question for art from the region is how to situate *medius* in an age of slow, structural and systemic violence in the face of biopolitical and necropolitical realities. This is not to give any form of art the duty, or even the burden, of politics; but to designate the patterns of our present for those art practices seeking to be political.

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[61] "Albanian Pyramids: An ArtScience Research Project," Exhibition page. https://albanianpyramids.wordpress.com/exhibition/ (accessed September 2017).
[62] Sarah Sharma, *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 139.

Foucault's suggested method is to problematise the assumed neutrality of institutions where violence works in less visible ways:

> It seems to me that the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticise the workings of institutions, which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticise and attack them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight against them.[63]

Institutions' assumed neutrality is part of what constitutes the violence of capital, along with relations of production and relations of destruction (which at times bear with them relations of production if the relation of destruction is about reconstruction). Violence is embedded in relations of production, as Marx put it, and it floats through capital transactions, movements, encounters, and histories of its flow and transformation. In a parallel vein, destruction comes with its reconstructive economy. Even in the metaphorical sense, destruction of revolutionary dreams (as in we have seen in *The Zone*, problematizing the Palestinian case) has a structural economic practice around it. The word sanguine shows both facets of violence in its double meaning: bloodthirsty and hopeful.

Hope is not undifferentiated. The precise nature of the hope espoused in a particular (political or artistic) event demarcates particular practices. Is "the hope" in question towards perfection, the perfect security and a homogenous, sterile environment that is yet to come? Is it for immunity and membranes that separate one from border or security (which gives a temporal as well as a spatial dimension)?[64] Is it the slicing of dreams

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[63] "Human Nature: Justice versus Power. Noam Chomsky debates with Michel Foucault," 1971. https://chomsky.info/1971xxxx/ (accessed September 2017).

[64] The other side of the immunity story is an example of covert violence in its most naked form. The UN Refugee agency report on the Mediterranean in 2015 states that: 'Prior to recent changes in the law, refugees and migrants crossing the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were not authorised to use public transport, and as a result, they have been walking on the railway tracks and walking or cycling along the emergency lane of the highway, resulting in various tragic accidents. A new law allows people to travel legally in the country for up to 72 hours after registering and receiving documentation.' UNHRC, "The sea route to Europe: Mediterranean passage in the age of refugees," 1 July 2015, http://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/5592bd059/sea-route-europe-mediterranean-passage-age-refugees.html (accessed September 2017).

into bite-sized, manageable administrative instances in order to exterminate them? Alternatively, is it a hope towards new communicative possibilities and a potential of providing new event frameworks? Is this hope going to flourish through the network or despite the network? Is the network intrinsically open, democratic, social, and therefore subject to accumulation by dispossession? Or is the network already a means for dispossession and yet another powerful tool to extract data, adding value to slow violence of a biopolitical regime?

Biopolitical gesture is the new power of the sovereign leader in the Mediterranean. This may be in the form of self-shielding immunity or of legal tools and discourses that surround issues of reproduction, wellbeing, and health. There are at least two layers of time-sensitivity here. One is about the timing and administration of biopolitical data resulting in dominance of certain temporalities over the others. The second is about the time of the biopolitical gesture of the sovereign leader: the timing of the gesture, the length of its presence in policy or mediated environment, and the moment that marks its end.

All violence by its very nature is temporal as it is mediated. This holds true for the introduction of rules, a process which, in Foucault's terms, may be read as an originary violence. (Mediation's becoming violence is a form of communication, even though it is at times a brutal form.) Therefore, violence can act on the history, contemporary, and I argue, on the future.

Eradication of being does not stop the medium of violence from existing; it comes as prepackaged with a temporal aspect that has the potential to turn into something else. These can be in the form of counter-attacks to the history, to the contemporary, or to the contemporary realities stemming from the history.[65] An exquisite video work that points to

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[65] For Foucault, the ground zero of the existence of rules is violent. Their re-making also involves struggles of claim to history. By that reasoning, erasure and resistance can be counted as the natural effect of becoming the triumphant of history. "Rules are empty in themselves, violent and unfinalized; they are impersonal and can be bent to any purpose. The successes of history belong to those who are capable of seizing these rules, to replace those who had used them, to disguise themselves so as to pervert them, invert their meaning, and redirect them against those who had initially imposed them; controlling this complex mechanism, they will make it function so as to overcome the rulers through their own rules." Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 151.

the different types of violence at the grand and granular level across time is Ammar Al-Beik's *The Sun's Incubator* (2011)[66] where the artist portrays a family getting ready to protest. On the TV in the background are the stories of demonstrations against Hosni Mubarak in Egypt and the death of Hamza al-Khateeb, a 13-year old Syrian boy tortured to death after having been arrested during protests in Daara, Syria in 2011. Differentiating sounds over static images lead the viewer take notice of the aural environment where the autobiographical, fictional, journalistic are woven into each other.[67] The scenes of a baby's birth follows the news footage. While some may interpret the birth of the baby as hope versus destruction, it is equally possible to imagine the imminent necropolitical violence that the baby is born into. The latency of the violence is yet to come.

The Mediterranean can be thought as a medium that works against the background of the conventional construction of borders as rigid entries that divide lands, people, and slow down movement. Nonetheless, the becoming medium of the Mediterranean reveals how, through artistic imagination, a geographical entity can show us the various ways in which the structural dichotomies can be replaced by an idea of flow and the subsequent transformation that it may bring about. Its metaphorical dissolving into the non-material realm situates medius, its space/time of mediation. Its longue durée traverses the confined temporalities of violent instances and can help us situate the historical changes in the mediation of violence. Mediterranean as a medium gives visibility to violence's latency that lies beneath its amorphous topologies.

The Mediterranean pulsates as an imaginary. Territory, though bound by legality, is more than a mere judiciary space. Territory is marked and shaped with belonging, which gives way to the region's new imaginations. The Mediterranean region is a logistical space (flow of capital and biopolitical software), a data space (observed cellular and satellite communications) as well as a narrative space (in its political, discursive and artistic forms). Its longue durée is a continuum of the invention of different times perpetually integrated with media. *Medius* is durational as well as spatial. *Medius* is the space/time of mediation. It is no longer the middle, but an in-between. The micro-second of a financial transaction or

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[66] Ammar al-Beik, "The Sun's Incubator," 2011, https://vimeo.com/40351473 (accessed September 2017).
[67] Indeed, some of the background noise soundscapes in the video bear great resemblance to those in *The Zone*.

a micro-cellular level of biological information equally construct the *medius* of biopolitical violence. The macro histories of the Mediterranean and its longue durée are witnessing an exemplary period in the 21ˢᵗ century where the stratification of violence in sovereign, disciplinary and biopolitical forms collide. Media art provides a new framework of looking at the events. Moving away from the event as a picture, which is frozen in space and time, the event does not occur in the classical sense. Rather, under biopolitical terms it is dispersed through the network which is capable of dissimulating it. In the network diagram, the conjunctural forces are the central fact. Media art is moving in-between (networks, images and events look at time in different ways), to imagine temporalities from a microscopic view of the cellular level to the grand scales of destruction, annihilation, transformation, and reconstruction, without finding stable and defined platforms for its own networks of existence in the public space. Communication as an artistic and regional comeback to regional biopolitics in the Mediterranean has the biggest potential to start a new way to imagine the becoming of event nodes through media and art.

Appendix

Ongoing major conflicts in the Mediterranean

Data retrieved from Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research:
http://www.hiik.de/en/

Country	Parties	Start date
Algeria (Berbers / Kabylia)	Berbers vs. Government	1963
Algeria (opposition groups)	opposition groups vs. Government	2011
Egypt (Islamist groups / Sinai Peninsula)	Ajnad Misr et al. vs. Governmentt	1992
Egypt (Muslims -- Christians)	Muslims vs. Christians	1952
Egypt (opposition groups)	opposition vs. Government	1954
France	FLNC, Corsican regional government vs. Government	1975
Greece (left-wing -- right-wing militants)	left-wing militants vs. right-wing militants (Golden Dawn)	2013
Greece (social protests)	left-wing militants, social groups, workers unions vs. governmentng militants, social groups vs. government	2010
Israel (Hamas et al. / Palestinian Territories)	Hamas et al. vs. Government	1988
Israel (Hezbollah)	Hezbollah vs. Israel	1982
Israel (PNA / Palestinian Territories)	Palestinian National Authority vs. Israel	1948
Israel -- Lebanon	Israel vs. Lebanon	1948
Lebanon (Fatah al-Islam et al. -- Fatah)	Fatah al-Islam, Palestinian Islamist groups vs. Fatah	2007
Lebanon (Sunni militant groups)	Jabhat al-Nusra / Jabhat Fatah al-Sham, Sunni militant groups vs. Hezbollah, government	2014
Libya (inter-factional violence)	Tibu vs. Awlad Suleiman tribe vs. Qaddadfa tribe vs. Tuareg vs. Zuwayya	2012
Libya (opposition groups)	opposition groups vs. government	2011
Morocco (POLISARIO / Western Sahara)	POLISARIO vs. Government	1975
Morocco	20 February Movement, AMDH, Justice and Spirituality, labor rights activists vs. Government	2011
Syria (inter-opposition violence)	Jabhat al-Nusra vs. Ahrar al-Sham vs. Islamist groups vs. NC	2013
Syria (Kurdish groups)	KDPS, PYD vs. Government	1962

Syria (NC, Islamist groups KSC / Kurdish regions)	NC, Islamist groups vs. KSC	2012
Syria (opposition groups)	NC, FSA, Jaish al-Fatah vs. Jaish al-Islam, government	2011
Syria -- Israel	Syria vs. Israel	1948
Turkey (opposition movement)	opposition groups vs. Government	2013
Turkey (PKK / Kurdish areas)	PKK, TAK vs. Government	1974

Past major conflicts in the Mediterranean (end date 1990--2013)

Data retrieved from Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP):
http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/search.php

Algeria	GIA (Groupe islamique armée: Armed Islamic Group) and AIS (Mouvement Islamique Armée: Armed Islamic Movement)	1995-1998
Algeria	GIA - El Ahd Battalion - GIA - El Khadra Battalion	1998
Algeria	GIA - El Forkane Battalion - GIA - El Khadra Battalion	1998
Algeria	AQIM - civilians	2004-2009
Algeria	GIA - civilians	1993-2003
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bihacka Krajina	1993-1995
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina: Croatian population	1992-1994
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina: Serb population	1992-1995
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina - civilians	1992-1993
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Croatian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina - civilians	1993-1995
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina - civilians	1992-1995
Croatia	Croatia vs. Serbian population	1992-1995
Croatia	Croatia vs. Civilians	1993-1995
Croatia	Yugoslavia vs Croatia	1990-1991
Egypt	Egypt vs al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya	1980-1998
Egypt	Copts (Egypt) - Muslims (Egypt)	2011
Egypt	Government of Egypt - civilians	2005
Egypt	al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya - civilians	1995-1997
Egypt	Tawhid wal Jihad - civilians	2004-2005
Israel	Israel vs. Southern Lebanon	1985-2006
Israel	Fatah - Hamas	2006-2007
Israel	Government of Israel - civilians	1989-2006
Israel	AMB - civilians	2002-2003
Israel	Hamas - civilians	1994-2004
Israel	PIJ - civilians	2001-2005

Lebanon	Lebanon vs. Government	1948-1990
Lebanon	Alawites (Lebanon) - Sunnis (Lebanon)	2012
Lebanon	Amal - Hezbollah	1989-1990
Lebanon	Brigades of Aisha - Hezbollah	2013
Lebanon	Fatah - Fatah Revolutionary Council	1990
Lebanon	Hezbollah - PSP	2008
Lebanon	Hezbollah - SLA	1992-2000
Lebanon	Lebanese Army (Aoun) - Lebanese Forces	1989-1990
Libya	Government vs opposition	2011
Libya	Fighters from Zintan, Gontrar tribe - Mashashia tribe	2012
Libya	Government of Libya - civilians	1989-2011
Morocco	Salafia Jihadia - civilians	2003
Slovenia	Yugoslavi vs. Slovenia	1989-1991
Spain	Spain vs. Basque	1959-1992
Spain	GICM vs. civilians	2004
Syria	Government of Syria vs. civilians	2011-2012
Turkey	Government vs. Leftist Groups	1978-2005
Turkey	PKK vs. Civilians	1989-1999

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