INTRODUCTION

Two Images/Two Spaces

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

FIG. I.1. Still from *London*, dir. by Patrick Keiller (UK, 1994).

Another space, a different film. Here, we are presented with a shot of a flat metallic structure nestled in amongst some shrubland. Two small antennae extend vertically from the centre of the metal block. The camera moves and shakes slightly, occasionally panning left and right to reveal more of the structure's surroundings. Over this image, a voiceover explains that we are looking at a seismological measuring station, which sits atop the Maastricht geological formation in the Netherlands. This site is the proposed location for the Einstein Telescope, which 'is not a machine for looking out, or for looking up, or even for looking at light, it's a machine for looking back'. This is a device that seeks to better comprehend the nature of gravitational waves and gain further insights into the origins of the universe. The narrator suggests that gravitational waves can be used to 'echo-locate' and 'perceive the motion of the universe itself'. A moment's pause, then the narrator states:

> In Patrick Keiller's *London*, there's this line where Robinson is staring at the river and he says that if he could only look deep enough into the surface, we would be able to perceive the molecular basis of historical events, and thus also he would be able to perceive the future.

Fig. I.2. Still from *Se ti sabir*, dir. by James Bridle (UK, 2019).

Patrick Keiller's *London* (1995), focused on the changing nature of urban and ex-urban environments under the interrelated conditions of neoliberalism and late capitalism, and James Bridle's *Se ti sabir* (2019), which explores themes of artificial intelligence, surveillance, and the techno-industrial complex, are documentary works that focus intensely on material space. Throughout both, a consistent focus on specific sites and spaces — typically presented through protracted, deep focus shots — becomes their central and structuring foci. The aim of such visual examinations of material space is to forge connections between the particularities

of these localised sites and broader political, economic, social, and, crucially, *spatial* formations of power. For example, in Keiller's *London*, the extended shots of the city are juxtaposed with meditations on the wider geopolitical recomposition of the country under Thatcherite to Blairite neoliberal politics. In Bridle's *Se ti sabir*, the site-specific examination of the measuring station opens the film up to a wider consideration of how new modes of technological surveillance and artificial intelligence have rearticulated our relationship to material space. For these filmmakers, an intense focus on, and engagement with, specific spaces and landscapes serves as an entry-point into unearthing connections to wider global dynamics and power relations. Thus, within both these works, a form of intensely spatial interrogation of the material environment becomes an entry-point into a wider examination of the machinations of larger socio-political forces and events.

Of course, from the very origins of the documentary form there has been an inherent tendency to document places, spaces, and landscapes. We need only to think of the early actuality films of the Lumières or Georges Méliès to see that protracted examinations of material sites, spaces, and architectures drew the attention of the moving image from its earliest moments. As Gerry Turvey suggests, 'actuality films were, in a sense, about location, whether it was the views of rural, urban and foreign landscapes in the "scenics" or, in the case of "topicals," the sites of public spectacle'.[1] Whilst primarily focused on the profilmic actions of bodies labouring, playing, and socialising, material spaces and environments were also a source of fascination within these early actualities. From the flowing movements of the trees in *Le Repas de Bébé* (1895) to the layered and cavernous architecture of the factory in *La Sortie de l'usine Lumière à Lyon* (1895), there was a (perhaps coincidental) engagement with specific material sites and spaces. However, what happens when such a focus on material landscapes and spaces become the *structuring focus* of the documentary form; no longer a container or backdrop, but instead the primary area of focus, investigation, and critique?[2] Moreover, what happens when such engagements with material space aim to expose and engage broader socio-political formations of power? Are Keiller's and Bridle's films unique in their specific exploration of the spatial and its connections to broader forms of political contestation, exploitation, and violence? This book argues that they are not.

The aim of *Spatial Violence and the Documentary Image* is to examine the emerging intersections between the spatial and political in contemporary documentary practice. This book contends that there has been an increasing engagement with the spatial across a broad range of documentary media practices invested in an intense investigation of the increasing *spatialisation* of the political and, concomitantly, the *politicisation* of the spatial.[3] Exploring the interconnections between these two dynamic fields, this book argues that this trend in contemporary non-fiction media culture emphasises the crucial role that space and place play in contemporary forms of political violence, exploitation, and injustice. Indeed, spatiality has increasingly been perceived as a site of contestation and conflict under contemporary social, economic, and political conditions and their interrelated power relations. As a result, forging new ways of visualising and witnessing such spatial machinations has

become crucial. Thus, this book aims to examine a disparate group of contemporary documentary works, all of which operate in similar ways to Keiller's and Bridle's films — focusing on particular spaces, sites, and landscapes as a way to open up to an examination of larger formations of contemporary state and corporate power and violence.

More broadly, this book aims to interrogate the origins, practices, politics, and potential future directions of this contemporary trend within non-fiction media culture. Crucially, *Spatial Violence and the Documentary Image* maps out a new genre of non-fiction media practice and theorises its aesthetic and political potentialities by examining distinct spatial constellations and forms of power. It is my contention that the adoption of such a critical spatial perspective — what we could term a 'spatio-political aesthetic' — within contemporary documentary practice still needs to be effectively surveyed and theorised, and it is this crucial work that the book aims to undertake. Moreover, the book examines how non-fiction moving image practice might be particularly well-suited to undertaking such spatio-political work. What are the specific properties of the moving image that might make it a privileged medium for exploring such forms of spatio-political conflict? More specifically, how is it that a concentrated investigation of diverse political spaces and sites of contestation and conflict might help to reveal the layers of spatial violence, exploitation, and injustice embedded within them? These works emerge from, and engage with, a geographically diverse set of sites and spaces: First Nations lands in Canada and the Philippines; oil pipeline infrastructure running through Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey; logistical sea ports in Rotterdam, Los Angeles, Hong Kong, and Athens; a mine-turned-concentration camp in the village of Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina; infrastructures of migrant detention and removal in the UK; military 'resettlement' villages in northern Argentina; and the unstable and deadly corridors of migrant movement across the Mediterranean Sea. Although diverse in terms of their geographies, aesthetic approaches, methodologies, and politics, these works all share a desire to take up their chosen spaces, sites, and infrastructures as catalysts to interrogate broader formations of political, economic, social, and *spatial* power.

Michael Pattison has suggested that within such spatially-attuned documentary works, 'considered framing' and an attention to the 'arrangement of existing features, emphasises landscape and/or architecture as a thing to be looked at, investigated, studied'. For him, the aim of such a spatialised moving image praxis is to 'unearth some of the material strata and spectral traces still present in the manufactured landscapes and architectures of the recent past'.[4] To date, Pattison's short essay 'Steady-Stare Surveillance, or the Spatial Turn in Nonfiction Films' is the only sustained examination of this contemporary trend in documentary practice. *Spatial Violence and the Documentary Image* aims to build on this crucial intervention, providing a more comprehensive survey and theorisation of this contemporary turn, helping to build a rich portrait of its theoretical, methodological, and political concerns. By examining the different strategies and techniques taken up by these works, I aim to answer several interrelated questions. How can contemporary non-

fiction moving image practices represent, and concomitantly critique, the spatial operations of contemporary power relations? What are the different aesthetic, discursive, and political approaches that are utilised to conduct such spatialised work? How do these works interconnect with broader theoretical and political concerns with the spatial? What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped?

By forging connections between these works, the book not only highlights the presence of such a spatio-political tendency, it also aims to examine the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. Consequently, through this mapping of documentary's contemporary spatio-political turn, I also wish to map out some lines of flight for its continued critical development. I also want to think through how such spatio-political works force us to reflect on wider social, economic, and political power formations that have restructured our contemporary world in profound and fundamental ways. Thus, this book also aims to do more than just provide a taxonomy of the different forms and techniques of spatial analysis (aesthetic, political, discursive). It also aims to utilise these works as crucial points of entry into a broader examination of the different spatio-political forces that structure our contemporary world.

Approaching the Spatial

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

After mapping out this historical and theoretical trajectory of the spatial turn, I will then examine previous intersections between spatial theory and the moving

image. Here, my aim is to focus on previous theorisations and practices that have read the moving image in relation to material space from a variety of divergent perspectives. This groundwork will also allow me to lay out my own theoretical approach to the contemporary spatio-political trend in contemporary documentary practice. How does it develop or extend from these previous moments of theoretical and conceptual convergence around the spatial and the moving image? Where does it diverge and differ? Consequently, I do not see the spatial turn within moving practice as something that has developed in isolation. It is heavily influenced by a wider theoretical and conceptual thinking across a range of disciplinary formations: human geography, political science, cultural studies, amongst others.

My aim across this book is to add to this more expansive theoretical history, placing this non-fiction turn within a broader interdisciplinary context. At the same time, it is also important to consider how this non-fiction turn to the spatio-political potentially enriches or reorients these broader theoretical and methodological approaches to the spatial. In what ways does the development of such a spatio-political praxis in documentary culture supplement the wider theories and methodologies generated by the spatial turn? Thus, by bringing together a geographically disparate collection of non-fiction practices that are working in this spatio-political mode, I aim to examine what new theoretical perspectives and forms of praxis they can bring to this expanded theoretical and conceptual realm.

A Spatial Turn

From the 1970s onwards, we have witnessed a 'spatial turn' in social and cultural theory, which has sought to emphasise the crucial role that space and place play in contemporary forms of political violence, exploitation, and injustice. Spatiality has increasingly been recognised as a site of contestation and conflict under contemporary social, economic, and political conditions and their interrelated power relations. As Edward Soja has suggested, this spatial thinking has aimed to understand 'how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology'.[5] Similarly, Doreen Massey has suggested 'not just that the spatial is political [...] but rather that thinking the spatial in a particular way can [...] contribute to political arguments already under way'.[6] Within these broad summations of the spatial turn, we can see a desire to politicise the study of spatiality and geography. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, these areas of geographical inquiry became concerned not only with the ways in which political, economic, and human activity reshaped material space and landscapes, but also how particular formations of the spatial and geographic impact and restructure human existence. Thus, for a range of scholars working at the intersection of political science, economics, and cultural studies, geographic enquiry had been politically ambivalent for too long; not sufficiently invested in trying to understand how multifarious social and economic forces rearticulate spatial and geographical relations.

Ultimately, geographical and spatial studies had sidelined a materialist-political perspective, privileging instead the study of broader physical geosystems or physiographies. For a range of these contemporary human geographers, there was a need to reassert a critical and political spatial perspective within geographical theory and practice. Ultimately, these spatial theorists aimed to expose how contemporary power relations operated in increasingly spatialised and geographical ways. Space could no longer be read as a neutral or empty container, rather it was increasingly reshaped by human, economic, and social activity, and often with specific formations of power dictating the ways in which such dynamics played out. Thus, within this period, understandings of spatiality and geography shifted considerably. Space was now something being actively reshaped, contested, and exploited by different social, political, and economic actors and formations of power.[7]

Particularly influential for such contemporary conceptualisations of the spatial was the Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre and his seminal work *The Production of Space*. Lefebvre defines space as a 'social product,' suggesting that the spatial 'is social: it involves assigning more or less appropriated places to social relations [...] social space has thus always been a social product'.[8] Lefebvre was at the forefront of reasserting a critical and theoretical spatial perspective, and his work in this area had a significant influence on a range of other disciplinary formations. For him, spatiality was not simply an empty vessel, a zone within which social relations and activities took place. Rather, it was a site of constant contestation and reconstruction, where spatial relations were actively produced by myriad social, economic, and cultural forces. Space then, for Lefebvre, was not a neutral zone of activity, rather it was an *actively produced* social product — a complex amalgamation of forces that had to be understood as always in flux. Indeed, as Christian Fuchs has suggested, one of the key ideas of Lefebvre's social theory is that 'humans not only produce social relations and use-values, but in doing so also produce social space'.[9] Thus, we can see here the influence that Lefebvre's theorisation of spatial production had on those theorists at the forefront of beckoning in the spatial turn, where they wished to put forward a similarly critical spatial perspective that could confront the myriad rearticulations of space and geography in the contemporary world.

As we can see from these initial summations of such theorisations, such spatially-attuned thinking was certainly not produced within a theoretical or academic vacuum. It is important to understand how the spatial turn within these theoretical realms was the result of tangible shifts in political, economic, and social realities on both global and local scales. Fundamentally, the embrace of such a critical spatial perspective aimed to respond to broad shifts and transformations in global power relations from the 1970s onwards: neoliberal governance, late capitalist economic rationality, neocolonial forms of state power, and the global fragmentation of labour, to name but a few. As the previously delineated spatial theories point out, these upheavals had specifically spatial and geographical articulations and impacts. Thus, shifting social, political, and economic realities were forcing a reconsideration of how to approach the study of space and geography. Ultimately, in a world increasingly shaped around significant transformations of geopolitical

relations, there was a need to come up with new spatial theories and methodologies to examine and expose these new formations of power.

These various shifts in the shape and operations of global power dynamics can be bracketed under the notion of 'globalisation'. Key transformations in global political and economic rationality led to a world that was seemingly more interconnected than ever. For example, the 'opening up' of national markets to global trade, an embrace of wholesale global financial speculation, and the increasing global fragmentation of labour — extending from both neoliberal political hegemony and late capitalist economic rationality — have led to what David Harvey terms 'the production of new forms of uneven geographical development, a recalibration and even recentering of global power'. For Harvey, the role of late capitalism in such spatial rearticulations cannot be understated. As he suggests, within the epoch of late capitalism's unrelenting expansion, its increasing globalisation requires spatial placeholders to both absorb the surplus of overaccumulation and to create new strategic centres for further movement, expansion, and accumulation. Harvey's examination of this global expansion — primarily developed through the notion of the 'spatial fix' — leads him to claim that late capitalism 'could not survive without being geographically expansionary'.[10] Similarly, Neil Smith, emphasising the decidedly spatialised nature of late capitalism's operations, formulated the notion of 'uneven development' to describe capital's inherently contradictory and uneven diffusion across material and economic space. For him, regular instances of capital crisis, flight, and deindustrialisation have material and infrastructural impacts on specific territories and spaces. The crucial role played by late capitalism within the wider logics of globalisation is explored in more detail within Chapter 1. For now, I simply want to signal the key role it plays within the dynamics of contemporary globalisation, and how it has been crucial to the development of such spatialised thinking from the 1970s onwards.

Ultimately, these new forces of globalisation have fundamentally reshaped the world we live in and its centres of power and control — realigning geopolitical and spatial relations in significant and structural ways. Around this time of global upheaval, many suggested that alongside such fundamental shifts in global power relations and the increasing interconnections present in the world we live in, there had been an interconnected annihilation of space and geography. With the planet becoming more interconnected, proximate, and reachable, there was an argument to be made that the spatial might have ceased to exist as an important zone of study. With rapid advances in communications technologies operating alongside the neoliberal and late capitalist logics mapped out above, some argued that we were witnessing the 'death of distance'.[11] Was it still possible to study the spatial and geographical in meaningful ways, when the forces of globalisation were so preoccupied with eradicating any sense of spatial specificity and difference? However, such claims of the 'death of space' were ultimately overridden by stronger theoretical perspectives that called for a renewed examination of spatiality in the face of such globalising logics. Instead of eradicating the importance of the spatial, the multifarious processes of globalisation made spatial and geographical investigation

and theorisation even more crucial. For example, as Barney Warf and Santa Arias suggest, 'far from annihilating the importance of space, globalization has increased it [...]. As neoliberal capital operates ever more effortlessly on a worldwide stage, small differences among regions become increasingly important'.[12]

Consequently, the spatial and geographical became crucial sites of theoretical and political interrogation, precisely at a moment when globalisation might have led to a reading of space as theoretically unimportant, or — more dramatically — 'dead' and 'dying'. Rather than the forces of globalisation leading to a decrease in the importance of the spatial and geographical, they have instead made the development of such spatially-attuned theories even more necessary. Moreover, as the interconnected forces of globalisation, neoliberalism, and late capitalism began to morph and shape the globe on an unprecedented scale, such spatially informed theorisations did not remain the exclusive property of urban theory or human geography. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a wider range of disciplines across social and cultural theory underwent similar 'spatial turns', embracing the work of these human geographers to understand the contemporary transformation of the world through decidedly spatialised conceptual frames. The aim of this book is to suggest that a similar spatial 'reorientation' has occurred within the realm of contemporary non-fiction moving practice. In a moment where spatialised thinking has become a prominent zone of theoretical enquiry, a significant strand of contemporary documentary practice has embraced a similarly spatialised perspective. Its position within this wider theoretical constellation must be mapped out, and it is this work that I wish to undertake in these pages.

A range of theorists have also argued that the spatial turn in social and cultural theory aimed to react against the historical dominance of strictly *temporal* understandings of the social and political. As Soja suggests, within social and cultural theory, 'primary attention is [typically] given to social processes and social consciousness as they develop over time in comparison to what might be called spatial processes, spatial consciousness, and spatial development'. He continues to suggest that, for at least the last century, 'thinking about the interrelated historical and social aspects of our lives has tended to be much more important [...] than emphasising a pertinent critical spatial perspective'.[13] From Bergson to Marx, an overdetermined reliance on temporally-inflected readings of the social and political had led to a significant marginalisation of spatial thinking. As Foucault writes, 'space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic'.[14] Consequently, through an enduring reliance on temporality, spatial thinking had often been equated with mere representation; lacking its own 'fecundity, life, dialectic'. Thus, for many of the theorists who embraced the need for a critical spatial perspective within social and cultural theory, there was also a desire to push back against the dominance of the historicist thought that had dominated critical thinking for decades.

Once we move away from a mode of thought that sees the spatial as simply a mirror of the representational, we can begin to apprehend the socio-political potentiality of spatial thinking. Thus, Massey argues that it is 'not just that the

spatial is political [...] but rather that thinking the spatial in a particular way can [...] contribute to political arguments already under way'.[15] For Soja, the spatiality of human life must be interpreted and understood as 'a complex social product, a collectively created and purposeful configuration and socialization of space that defines our contextual habitat, the human and humanized geography in which we all live out our lives'.[16] Through this understanding of space as a 'complex social product' Soja offers up the notion of 'spatial justice', where thinking spatially allows for the creation of 'strategic pathways for reclaiming and maintaining an active and successful democratic politics, the foundation for achieving justice and reducing oppression and exploitation of all kinds'.[17] Massey's and Soja's Lefebvrian-informed theorisations of the spatial aim to shift our understandings of space away from a simplified equation with mere representation and, moreover, they aim to reassert its equal theoretical footing next to more strictly temporal understandings of the social and political. Fundamentally, across all these theorisations, there is a continual emphasis on the need to repoliticise examinations of the spatial. Here, spatiality is read as a complex amalgamation of different political, economic, and social forces.

As this book will argue, the non-fiction moving image works to be examined take up markedly similar approaches in their engagement with the spatial. They consistently resist a rendering of the spatial as 'fixed', 'dead', 'undialectical', or merely representational. Rather, within these works, the spatial is continually understood as that 'complex social product' suggested by Lefebvre: an assemblage of social, political, and economic relations continually in tension with each other. The moving image is not an apparatus to simply visualise such spatial dynamics, but also a critical tool for examining and interrogating these complex power formations. For Foucault, such a Lefebvrian-informed approach to the spatial can 'draw us out of ourselves [...] [it is] the space that claws and gnaws at us [...] a heterogeneous space'.[18] This contemporary trend in non-fiction practice similarly confronts the spatial as a heterogeneous amalgamation of different power relations. And, for artists and filmmakers working within this spatio-political mode, the unique aesthetic, visual, and temporal qualities of the moving image make it particularly well-suited to dissecting such complex spatial relations. The moving image as a 'not quite' spatial *or* temporal medium might make it a particularly useful tool for engaging with the spatio-political as something 'fluid', 'alive', and 'dialectical'. Indeed, Massey, writing on another of Patrick Keiller's spatio-political works, suggests that through non-fiction moving image engagements with the spatial, 'we see the landscape differently: not closed down into a familiar satisfaction but opened up to reinterpretation'.[19] Here then, spatiality is not 'closed down' to fixed or undialectical representation, instead, when rendered visible through the moving image, there is a potential for the spatial to be visualised as a complex and heterogenous social product, riven through with social, political, and economic conflict.

Within Massey's formulation of the relationship between the cinematic and the spatial, we can begin to sense how the moving image as a form of aesthetic praxis might be particularly well-equipped to undertake such spatial investigations; operating perhaps as a privileged tool for confronting the political heterogeneity

of the spatial. Within this section, I have begun to point towards how this contemporary trend in non-fiction moving image practice extends from, and builds upon, such broad theoretical work on the spatial. Before developing this analysis further, I think it is crucial to zoom in a little, examining previous instances where moving image practice and theory and studies of the spatial have intersected. Within the next section of this introduction, I will more specifically delineate such moments of conceptual convergence. Where have these two theoretical realms previously intersected, and crucially, what is the role of the aesthetic in such non-fiction engagements with the spatial? How does this contemporary trend in non-fiction practice extend from these previous moments of convergence? I open here by addressing the question of documentary aesthetics in relation to this contemporary spatial turn, as it will help to more concretely situate this wider body of literature on the moving image and the spatial. Unpacking the theoretical moments where the moving image and the spatial have previously intersected will help to lay some of the crucial theoretical groundwork for this book's examination of this contemporary spatio-political trend.

Moving Image and Spatial Aesthetics

Spatial Violence and the Documentary Image aims to refocus and recentre the importance of an aesthetic engagement with the documentary image. I argue that within this corpus of contemporary documentary works, emergent forms of aesthetic praxis are functioning as crucial methodological tools for engaging with the politics of the spatial. More precisely, these are documentary practices that are cultivating and experimenting with new and emerging forms of aesthetic practice to render visible and critique myriad material sites and spaces and their embedded and interconnected power relations. However, does placing the aesthetic at the centre of our study of such spatial works simply return us to Massey's critique of the historical conflation of spatiality with mere representation? I argue that it does not. Through the forms of aesthetic experimentation and attunement in these works, their engagements with specific spatial sites and formations always foreground them as 'fluid', 'alive', and 'dialectical' nodes that must be connected to broader spatio-political formations of power. Thus, in a perhaps peculiar double-move, I want to emphasise that a renewed attention to the aesthetic is crucial to wrest the spatial from its historical association with the representational.

Crucial to this argument for recentering the aesthetic as a method for capturing the political 'aliveness' of the spatial is Matthew Fuller and Eyal Weizman's theorisation of 'investigative aesthetics'. Moving away from historical definitions of the aesthetic that emphasised a capacity for the 'cultivation of a sensibility and meditation on experience', or the 'subjective experience of pleasure', the authors instead put forward a formulation that is centered around a political form of 'sensing and sense-making [...] affect and effect'.[20] Fuller and Weizman see the contemporary political landscape as one that is now registering different forms of power and violence in almost every facet of material space: infrastructures, architectures, environments,

ecologies, topologies, etc. Indeed, the spatial is a key theoretical node within their matrix of investigative aesthetics. As Weizman has suggested elsewhere, we cannot read the spatial as a 'static thing'. Rather, for him, 'physical structures and built environments are elastic and responsive. Architecture [...] is 'political plastic' — social forces *slowing* into form. This is true on the scale of a building and also on that of larger territories'.[21] To understand the spatial as a form of 'political plastic' it must be better sensed aesthetically. Fuller and Weizman thus propose that an emphasis on both 'sensing' (feeling, experiencing) and 'sense-making' (producing meaning, political legibility) could constitute a new form of politically-responsive and sensitive aesthetic praxis that is attuned to the politics of the spatial.[22] Thus, they argue that such a form of aesthetic analysis is emerging as a powerful tool for spatial-political contestation in a moment where the material world is riven through with contesting formations of power that are typically undetectable or obfuscated. To be attuned to the aesthetic is therefore to try and both 'sense' and 'make sense' of these multitudinous manifestations of power and violence that now surround us almost completely. Thus, the aesthetic and spatial are instrumentalised as tools for 'sensoring' particular forms of political violence.

Ultimately, for Fuller and Weizman, aesthetic engagement can be activated as a decidedly politicised activity, no longer infused with its historical reputation for detached appreciation, mediation, or indulgence. This theorisation of a mode of aesthetic investigation extends from Weizman's broader conceptualisation of a mode of emergent 'forensic architectural' praxis, which itself engages more explicitly with the spatial. Here, the forensic and architectural are taken up as interconnected methodologies that read spatial relations not as 'isolated' or 'discreet' surfaces or objects, rather they always function as a set of 'relations, associations and chains of actions' that uncover socio-political thicknesses in material space.[23] These attentions to the aesthetic perceive it as a decidedly politicised sensor of material spatialities that are increasingly riven through with contesting and obsfuscated formations of power and violence. By employing forensically-attuned techniques, such as the investigation of traces, patterns, and material evidence, this architectural and aesthetic practice unveils hidden narratives, power dynamics, and political implications embedded within material spatialities. This approach enables an unveiling of the complexities and underlying ideologies of spatial configurations, architectural designs, and urban landscapes. Weizman's use of forensics as a tool for spatial and aesthetic analysis allows for a deeper understanding and critical examination of the socio-political dimensions inherent in our surroundings. Thus, both the forensic architectural and aesthetic modes of investigation put forward by Fuller and Weizman aim to read political and social relations within and through material space.[24]

This book argues that such an approach to the aesthetic holds a particularly powerful, and renewed, ability for sensing and sense-making in relation to the spatial, precisely at a moment where material space is more intensely politically-infused than ever before. More precisely, these documentaries' aesthetic engagements with the spatial allow for politicised forms of sensing and sense-making to come

to the fore.[25] Thus, by taking up, and building upon, the forensic and investigative approaches mapped out by Fuller and Weizman, this book places their theoretical scaffolding in dialogue with the emerging spatial-political tendency in broader documentary practice. By centering the aesthetic, the book aims to emphasise how an engagement with documentary's aesthetic potentialities has recently served to confront some of the key spatial concerns of our late capitalist, neocolonial world.

Whilst this book argues that the spatio-political tendency in contemporary documentary practice has yet to be properly theorised, engagements with theories of space and landscape in moving-image practice and scholarship certainly have a much longer historical trajectory. As I suggested in relation to early actuality films earlier in this introduction, moving-image practice and scholarship has been concerned with questions of spatiality from its earliest years. Moreover, there has been a consistent scholarly emphasis on understanding the moving image as an inherently spatialised medium, perhaps perfectly equipped for visualizing, examining, and interrogating the spatial. For example, as John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel suggest in their edited volume *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*, 'our experience of the moving image is intimately connected to our experience of place'.[26] Similarly, Tom Conley in his book *Cartographic Cinema* suggests that the moving image often encourages us to 'think of the world in concert with its own articulation of space'.[27] Within these and other theorisations, the moving image's unique visual and temporal properties are understood as being particularly well-suited to rendering visible the spatial.[28]

Much of this spatialised discourse within film and media studies scholarship extended from the wider spatial turn in social and cultural theory mapped out above, aiming to bring such spatialised thinking to bear on the moving image. However, it also originated from within the discipline itself, chiefly in the shape of Gilles Deleuze's much-cited theorisation of the shift from the 'movement-image' to the 'time-image'. For Deleuze, moving image practice was dominated by the 'movement-image' from its origins up until World War II. The movement-image describes filmic practices marked by logical temporal causality and a unity of filmic space. Typically, these works were narrative films that maintained a coherence of diegetic time and space, working through a causal chain of events and a classic story arc. The time-image came to dominate post-World War II, and was marked by inverse characteristics; an emphasis on discontinuity, duration, and temporal ellipses. Scholars have suggested that the shift mapped out by Deleuze was a reaction to wider post-war socio-political events. In a world marked by rapid urbanisation, industrialisation, and globalisation, new forms of cinematic expression and visual representation were needed to make sense of the increasingly unstable world around us. This is where, for Deleuze, the time-image intercedes. Indeed, as Conley suggests, the shift from the movement-image to the time image was marked by:

> The fact that film could 'no longer transcribe completed events but had to attain events in the process of their creation,' in other words, become consonant with the 'event as it was happening'. The new cinema brought forward the site of what [Deleuze] calls an 'open totality'.[29]

Thus, the slippage away from causality and unity and towards discontinuity and duration are perhaps symptomatic of the wider challenges posed by a post-modern world that was increasingly hard to render visibly in coherent and legible ways. As the complex social, political, cultural dynamics of the world became harder to readily comprehend and render visible, alternative — and often antithetical — aesthetic and visual modes of address needed to be developed.[30]

For Tom Conley, as the new aesthetic and visual forms offered by the time-image came to fore, 'space enter[ed] the field of view, isolating certain events in certain areas of the frame and allowing others to take place, simultaneously, in others'.[31] Here then, as the contemplative and durational potentialities of the moving image were pushed to the fore, cinema's capacity to render the spatial was also foregrounded. Thus, building from Conley's analysis, the 'time-image' might also be described as the 'space-image', privileging deep and protracted engagements with the spatial.[32] In many ways, Deleuze's move towards the forms and aesthetics of the time-image dovetails conceptually with the forms of aesthetic sensing and sense-making of this contemporary spatio-political trend in non-fiction practice. Within this contemporary trend, the forms of aesthetic investigation into sites and spaces riven through with formations of political power and violence are drawn out through extended surveying of, and engagement with, diverse material environments. Durational and observational strategies come to the fore here, allowing the spatial to 'enter the field of view' more concretely. However, this contemporary trend differs in two crucial ways from Deleuze's formulation. Firstly, the attention to the spatial within these contemporary practices has political aims and objectives that are absent within Deleuze's formulation of the 'time-image'. Mediated observation in these contemporary spatio-political works allow for the forms of spatial sensing and sense-making of socio-political events and power relations to come to the fore. Thus, this contemporary mode of practice is charged with a decidedly political rationale.[33] Secondly, Deleuze's formulation of the time-image predominantly focuses on a selection of narrative-based fiction films. Documentary practices and their spatial potentialities have almost no place within his conceptualisation.

Indeed, a dominant trend within spatially-informed film and media scholarship has been undertaken predominantly in relation to narrative cinema. A significant body of literature has been generated that focuses on cinematic depictions of specific spaces and landscapes; however, little of this work touches on non-fiction practices.[34] Of interest to these scholars are the moments in which a fiction film's location or setting seemingly 'exceeds' the narrative flow of the work, operating above and beyond the diegesis. For example, Martin Lefebvre — engaging with Victor Freeburg's notion of 'narrative subordination' — suggests that material spaces and landscapes have the potential to 'interrupt the forward drive and flow of narrative with 'distracting' imagery [...] thus replacing narrativised setting with visual attractions and unwanted moments of pictorial contemplation'.[35] Consequently, the role of the spatial here exists in a subservient position to the film's narrative, able at times to exceed its 'flow' and 'enchainment', but only in 'small units' or as 'unwanted moments'. A camera may linger on a specific location,

or consider a space or landscape worthy of significant diegetic attention; however, these moments of excess are eventually subsumed into the film's overall narrative arc. The aim of this book is to shift the discursive focus on place and landscape away from its perceived 'interruptive' function within narrative cinema to a focus on its structuring potential within these spatially-attuned non-fiction works, and how such refocusing draws forms of spatio-political sensing and sense-making to the fore. Within the spatio-political documentary trend that this book engages with, specific landscapes and spaces are not just a coincidental backdrop or setting that can be read as occasionally exceeding or complimenting the narrative flow of a work; rather, they are the primary zone of interest and investigation, operating as sites of political contestation and violence that can be aesthetically sensed.

The aim of this book is to take up such aesthetic concerns with the intersection between the spatial and the moving image and reorient them around this contemporary set of spatio-political works. By making this move, it is my contention that similar formal and aesthetic strategies to those mapped out above take on a radical political potentiality within this contemporary trend in non-fiction practice. Within this contemporary turn, deep examinations of the spatial mean that it is not only 'a thing to be looked at, investigated, studied', but also an intensely aesthetic-political political formation to be sensed and made sense of, *pace* Fuller and Weizman. Thus, my aim across this book is not to provide a simple taxonomy of aesthetic tropes or political concerns shared by these works. Instead, I see this spatio-political turn as a slippery and amorphous trend in documentary practice and only through a slow and methodical examination of a range of works operating in this mode can we delineate its political and aesthetic potentialities. Thus, my analysis will build upon the aforementioned works that place an emphasis on the moving image as an inherently spatial medium, but it will also push these conceptualisations further, examining how a politicised spatial moving image has developed in contemporary non-fiction practice of late.

Documentary Spatiality

This is not to say that theoretical work on the intersection between spatiality, politics, and non-fiction film has not been undertaken. Here, I want to map out several other works (scholarly and practice-based) that have examined the intersection between these theoretical areas, focusing on the interactions between spatiality and documentary aesthetics. Examining aspects of these sporadic engagements with space and documentary will help me to better situate my analysis of this spatio-political trend in documentary practice. Elizabeth Cowie's 2011 article entitled 'Documentary Space, Place, and Landscape' examines how documentary media might be particularly well suited to exploring the 'immanent becoming' of specific spaces and landscapes.[36] For her, there are three different ways of experiencing landscape and space through the moving image. The first and second experiences centre on cinematic spatiality as both 'pictorial' and 'immanent', with a 'freeing of depicted time from the temporal causality of cinematic representation' within the

shift from the first to second forms of experience.

These two different Deleuzian-influenced readings of documentary's spatial potential are then drawn together in the conceptualisation of her 'third way'. Here, she writes that documentary film, in its:

> Presentation of scenes of landscape and space, thereby also organizes these to produce a place of view for the spectator as a cognitive and emotional experience, so that we participate both as observers and as engaged in identifying, and this constitutes a third way in which we may encounter landscape.[37]

Ultimately, for Cowie, what she terms the 'documentary time-image' provides us with 'an anthropology of place and space insofar as our dwelling in place and space involves our dwelling *with* both a landscape and fellow people, and thus a community'.[38] Cowie's analysis is certainly pertinent to this book's delineation of a spatio-political aesthetic, particularly the tension she draws out between detached observation and more intimate spatial and place-specific identification. Moreover, within her delineation of the 'third way', we can see interconnections with Fuller and Weizman's forumulation of an investigative aesthetic that centres on both 'sensing' and 'sense-making'. Cowie similarly emphasises the particular sensorial capacities of the documentary image's engagement with spatiality — its ability to operate both affectively and effectively. Though her emphasis is placed more upon anthropological, emotional, or communal forms of spatial sensing, this argument is still underpinned by an assertion that a concentrated study of material sites and spaces can open onto a wider examination of broader forces and networks of power.

There are other sporadic examples of theoretical and practical work interested in examining the intersection between spatial representation and documentary. For example, a focus on landscape and space in the cinema of the 1960's Japanese political avant-garde offered an 'analytic mode of investigating the immanent relations of power that are found within a historically specific social formation', enabling filmmakers like Oshima Nagisa and Masao Adachi to provide 'a visual "diagram" of social and economic relations, especially those of domination, at work', precisely within a social milieu that was witnessing a rising interdependence between 'the increasing control over territorial space and the consolidation of postwar democratic state capitalism'.[39] Such a mode of engagement was called the 'fukeiron' [landscape] theory. The primary film associated with this theoretical work was Adachi's 1969 work *A.K.A. Serial Killer*. The film was composed of predominantly long static shots 'of urban and rural landscapes from the tip of the northern island of Hokkaido to the southwestern cities of mainland Japan'.[40] Through these shots, the filmmaker hoped to critique the 'microphysics of power' embedded within these seemingly innocuous spaces, exposing the 'invisible relations of power that produce such homogenized landscapes'.[41]

For Yuriko Furuhata, the increasingly uniform landscapes of urban and rural Japan that are presented in *A.K.A Serial Killer* spoke to the wider 'serial mass production and standardisation of commodities' that was radically rearticulating social relations and working conditions within the country.[42] Therefore, an interrogation of landscape and space was undertaken to reveal connections to wider

power formations, specifically the transformation of social relations and labour conditions by capitalist economic rationality within post-war Japan. Although not drawn upon directly within this book, the 'fukeiron' landscape theory certainly shares many points of interconnection with the spatio-political aesthetic being delineated here. Across both, there is a sustained attention to the ways in which the moving image can survey and examine spaces and landscapes to sense and make sense of broader spatial power dynamics. Across these brief engagements with the intersection between documentary and the spatial, we are given a fleeting sense of how non-fiction cinema can operate spatio-politically. By examining this contemporary trend in documentary practice — which shares many of the conceptual approaches mapped out here — the aim of this book is to build a more substantial theoretical picture of this broader turn to the spatio-political.

Perhaps the most crucial scholarly intervention that examines the intersection between spatiality and the moving image is Rhodes and Gorfinkel's edited volume, *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*, mentioned briefly above. Their volume argues that space, place, and geography structure and ground our understanding of moving image media in crucial ways. For Rhodes and Gorfinkel, understanding the complex entanglements between spatiality and media not only helps open new avenues of enquiry within media and film studies, it can also help to reshape and rearticulate spatial and geographical discourse and theory. Their study is twofold, concerned with both the politics of pro-filmicly rendering visible spaces, places, and landscapes, as well as how film and media literally 'take place' — embedded within material space through processes of production, distribution, and exhibition. Early in the introduction they ask, 'how can a political and politicised practice of attention to the place of the moving image serve to reanimate the practice of politicised image making more generally?'.[43] Their formulation of a 'politicised practice of attention' develops quickly throughout the introduction, as they draw out the ways in which film and media are always intimately tied up with the spatial. They write of a desire to wrest 'place from its status as mere setting and narrative "support" [...] focus[ing] on the generative structures, aesthetic conditions, and political implications of the profilmic, drawing background to foreground, periphery to center' (echoing Lefebvre's notion of the 'intentional landscape').[44] Here then, Rhodes and Gorfinkel are concerned with examining the political potentialities of how film and media can render visible particular spaces and places — not simply as pictorial landscapes, but rather as shifting, politically-charged spatial formations infused with uneven power dynamics.[45] Their theorisation of the relationship between the cinematic and the spatial has clear resonances with Fuller and Weizman's notion of investigative aesthetics. For Rhodes and Gorfinkel, such cinematic engagements can push beyond a simple rendering of the spatial as 'fixed', 'dead', or merely representational. Rather, the moving image can allow the spatial to be interrogated and sensed as a complex and heterogenous social product — riven through with social, political, and economic conflict.

This book aims to examine a range of non-fiction works that build on the spatialised theories mapped out by Rhodes and Gorfinkel, and Fuller and Weizman.

The works to be examined are centrally concerned with 'drawing background to foreground', focusing intently on particular spaces to sense and make sense of wider formations of spatial power and political violence. Through an analysis of the aesthetic and political concerns of these works, I aim to answer Rhodes and Gorfinkel's call to 'reanimate the practice of politicised image making' — mapping out the contours of this spatio-political turn in documentary practice. Crucially, the editors also emphasise that the volume's focus on the spatial aims to resist the 'pervasive discourse that proclaims the purported death of place in the era of late (or global, post-industrial) capitalism'. Instead, they suggest that taking such a definitively spatial or place-based stance:

> Might serve as a tactic (and even a topos) with which to resist the forces (ideological, material, rhetorical) that have threatened to flatten our notion of the uniqueness, the power, and the political potential of both place and the moving image.[46]

In many ways, this specific emphasis draws us back to our earlier contention that the spatial turn is in fact a direct response to such global shifts and dynamics, reinforcing the importance of spatialised studies at a moment when space and geography might be perceived as being eradicated. The works to be examined in this book share a similar desire to reassert the importance (ideological, material, political) of embracing a critical spatial perspective. Thus, it is within Rhodes and Gorfinkel's work that we arguably get the most thorough examination of how a particular form of spatio-political praxis can effectively sense and make sense of broader forms of power and violence. In many ways, their theorisation most closely connects to the aims and objectives of the spatio-political aesthetic to be examined across this book. A 'politicised practice of attention' to different material sites and spaces across this body of works allows for better forms of aesthetic sensing to be opened up.

As we move through the different chapters of this book, we will see that the works under analysis pull their individual engagements with the spatial in different directions through different forms of aesthetic experimentation. Essayistic modes of cinematic address bump up against radical forms of new media experimentation. Protracted, deep focus engagements with material sites are contrasted with simulated and artificial tours of other spatial formations. Whilst the aesthetic strategies at work across this body of works vary, I hope to indicate that such a spatio-political turn in contemporary documentary practice is united around a consistent focus on the particularities of certain spaces, sites, and landscapes. These localised examinations then allow for a broader exploration of larger formations of contemporary political and economic power and violence. Through a sustained engagement with these differing aesthetic, discursive, and political forms, this book aims to map out contemporary documentary's increasing spatialisation of the political and, concomitantly, the politicisation of the spatial.

Whilst important and extensive bodies of academic literature have been generated in relation to the geographical and spatial exploitations and mutations wrought by contemporary power relations, I argue that corresponding work within moving

image practice and theory has only recently begun to emerge. This book argues that non-fiction moving image practice has the potential to play a crucial role in undermining the apparently 'seamless' functioning of a logistified neoliberalism, globalisation, and state power, helping to throw into sharp relief their fissures, cracks, and contradictions. By surveying a variegated set of works that have made steps towards such a critical visual praxis, this book hopes to map out some lines of flight for its continued critical development. It is the contention of this book that moving image practice must become a radical tool to fight against the spatial machinations of contemporary power relations. By mapping out the presence of a spatio-political tendency in experimental non-fiction practice, this book aims to highlight the importance of continuing its development by finding new and radical forms of praxis.

Chapter Breakdown

This book is structured around three chapters, each of which centres on a different thematic concept: capital, carcerality, and borders. The works to be examined within each chapter all centre around one of these concepts, interrogating the spatialised power dynamics at play within each. More specifically, it is my contention that these three concepts — and their complex material entwinements with landscape and space — have been radically transformed by contemporary shifts in economic, political, and social power relations. Crucially for this book, these transformations have decidedly spatial impacts. A significant number of the spatio-political works that form part of this wider non-fiction media trend have coalesced around these conceptual and political themes; a clear sign that they are areas of marked interest to such spatially- and politically-minded practices and methodologies.

There is not space in this introduction to delineate and define these three overarching concepts that structure each chapter. Instead, a fuller theoretical orientation for each will come at the start of each chapter, providing the necessary groundwork to then examine how the non-fiction works under examination both gather around, and respond to, these wider conceptual frames. For the moment, I want to provide a brief road map of each chapter, examining both the wider theoretical and conceptual frameworks to be employed, as well as delineating the case studies that will be under examination within each chapter. As we shall see, although these three conceptual categories are addressed separately (allowing me to compartmentalise these works into different thematic chapters) there is in fact much cross-contamination between them and the moving image practices that explore the power dynamics and spatial logics intertwined with them. Therefore, the shifting regimes of late capitalist exploitation, carceral expansion, and border multiplication and proliferation are not discrete events and categories. Rather, it is often the case that similar constellations and formations of power are driving their spatial impacts and rearticulations. Thus, whilst I am keeping these categories separate, it is more for the sake of maintaining an organisational logic; the spatial impacts of these different areas frequently intersect and overlap. Similarly, the works

to be examined across these different chapters also intersect in their analytical, aesthetic, and methodological approaches. Here, in a little more detail, I will flesh out the focus of each chapter.

Chapter 1, 'Visualising Late Capitalism's Landscapes', examines several moving-image works that aim to visualise and critique the various impacts of late capitalist economic exploitation, including the exploitative practices of natural resource extraction and logistics. Capitalism has undergone radical spatial transformations under the political hegemony of neoliberalism and late capitalist economic rationality. Under these new formations of political and economic power, regular instances of capital crisis, flight, and deindustrialisation have had material and infrastructural impacts on specific territories and spaces. How can the operations of transnational late capitalism be visualised within non-fiction moving image practice? What role can non-fiction moving image works play in the fight against the savage encroachment of transnational global capital? What strategies of visualisation and critique have been developed? Which remain underexplored or underdeveloped? By focusing on a variety of non-fiction works that all share a concern with examining late capitalism's exploitative spatial logics, this chapter seeks to answer such questions. The chapter begins by defining the notion of 'late capitalism', suggesting how processes of neoliberal deregulation, financialisation, global labour fragmentation etc. are all constituent parts of its wider economic logic. Such processes also lead late capitalism to appear as an increasingly unclear and pervasive system: 'an abstract, intangible but overpowering logic, a process without a subject or a subject without a face'.[47] The chapter then examines various geographical-Marxist theories that have examined the particularly spatial dimensions of such late capitalist machinations. Through a synthesis of these theories, it is suggested that late capitalism requires ever more 'spatial fixes' to satisfy its accumulatory and inherently contradictory logics, and therefore it must exploit material geographical space on an ever-increasing scale.

From this initial contextual work, the chapter moves on to ask, how can we visualise a system that is both increasingly hidden but also spatially exploitative? The chapter takes up Fredric Jameson's notion of 'cognitive mapping' as a methodology that offers a way of visually and aesthetically countering such spatialised and 'overpowering' economic logics. For Jameson, a new aesthetic form is needed to dialectically visualise and critique late capitalism's increasingly opaque spatial operations. Indeed, as Toscano and Kinkle suggest in relation to Jameson's theorisation:

> To propose an aesthetic of cognitive mapping under conditions of late capitalism could be taken as an attempt to force into being a certain kind of political visibility and thus to counter the objective, material effects of a dominant regime of representation.[48]

The chapter then moves on to analyse several contemporary experimental, non-fiction works that — either explicitly or implicitly — embrace the theory of cognitive mapping laid out by Jameson. These case studies offer an opportunity to interrogate the political potentialities of such spatio-political praxes. The works examined here

share a desire to dialectically synthesise different scales of visualisation and mapping — a crucial structuring element of Jameson's theoretical framework. Thus, across the works, we find a shared preoccupation with constructing cognitive maps that dialectically oscillate between micro and macro spatio-politics.

The first work that is analysed is Thomas Kneubühler's *Land Claim* project, which examines the displacement of First Nations communities in Northern Quebec and the Philippines by multinational natural resource extraction companies. Here, I argue that within the moving image works that form part of this larger multimedia project, the speculative flows of global capital encounter the materiality of the landscapes they wish to exploit. By embracing the Deleuzian notion of the 'stratigraphic image', I argue that Kneubühler's work cognitively maps the relationship between abstract financial speculation and a topographical engagement with its proposed sites of future spatial fixing and exploitation. Next, the focus shifts to Ursula Biemann's *Black Sea Files*, a work that explores the socio-geographical recomposition of the territories carved apart by the creation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline — which extends from the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli oil field in the Caspian Sea to Ceyhan, a port city on the south-eastern Mediterranean coast of Turkey — and the connections to national and supra-national governance. Here, I argue that Biemann utilises an aesthetic of 'soft montage', originally conceived by filmmaker and theorist Harun Farocki, to oscillate between the micro and macro spatial-geographical injustices wrought by the pipeline's construction. Such a strategy ultimately aims to bridge the gap between larger homogenised forms of financial and governmental power and their impact upon the myriad 'local textures' and communities along the route of the pipeline. Finally, I examine Allan Sekula's photo essay *Fish Story* and Sekula and Noël Burch's *The Forgotten Space*, both of which focus on visualising the logisitification of maritime space. Here, I argue that Sekula's concept of 'critical realism' structures his (and Burch's) attempt to cognitively map the materiality of human labour in increasingly automatised and logistified spaces of circulation. All these works move between micro and macro spatio-politics in their attempts to map the matrixes of contemporary domination. It is through such modes of aesthetic sensing and dialectical mapping that the spatial is rendered in all its complexity and contradictions — an alive form of 'political plastic'. It is within these sites of tension that we can begin to tease open the fissures, cracks, and contradictions embedded within the operative logics of late capitalism.

Chapter 2, 'Carceral Geographies: Spaces of Exception and Internment', considers how the mass reduction of social welfare provision and infrastructure and the related rise of unemployment, homelessness, and poverty globally have led to the care of the state often being replaced by increasing disciplinary state action and mass incarceration. The resulting expansion of carceral spaces and infrastructures has also been motivated by both broader economic shifts towards prison privatisation and attempts to download social costs onto the individual. Since the year 2000, carceral internment has risen by roughly 20% globally. This rapid expansion of carceral populations and infrastructure over the last half century has brought about a 'punitive turn' within the humanities and social sciences, generally concerned with exploring

the 'historical, political, economic, and sociocultural roots' of mass incarceration 'as well as its collateral costs and consequences'.[49] Understanding the infrastructural and spatial transformations wrought by this expansionary development of the prison industry has become a chief preoccupation for economic and human geographers over the past twenty years. Indeed, this research has developed into a subfield of its own, carceral geography. Most broadly, carceral geography — as an area of theoretical and political enquiry — involves a geographical engagement with the spaces, practices, and experiences of confinement. In addition, geographers working within this field attempt to situate the carceral within wider social, economic, and geopolitical infrastructures, aiming 'to counter the imagination of a closed-off and sealed carceral institution, discussing instead the liminal spaces "betwixt and between" the inside and outside of prisons'.[50]

This chapter examines several experimental non-fiction works that — in a manner much akin to the carceral geographic turn — seek to visualise and critique the shifting spatial and infrastructural relations of carceral spaces. Here, I focus on works that aim to unpack how, under the conditions of globalisation and neocolonialism, carceral spaces increasingly impact and structure sites beyond their physical borders. In addition, I also examine works that focus on practices of internment that are more directly connected to the acceleration of states of exception that have become permanent rules: migrant detention centres, concentration camps, holdings sites for political prisoners, to name but three. Across all these works, there is a clear emphasis on not only visualising carceral spaces that are increasingly occluded from site, but also understanding their tight interconnections with larger judicial and biopolitical structures of power. In addition to examining works that engage with the contemporary mutations of carceral spaces, I also look at filmic practices that engage with the transformation of historical sites of carcerality, often appropriated as radical political gestures or exploited for financial gain.

The chapter opens with an examination of Susan Schuppli and Steffan Kraemer's *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*, a twenty-seven-minute video work that interrogates the historical and contemporary function of the mine-turned-concentration camp in the village of Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Here, I argue that through the dialectical juxtaposition of the material landscapes of extraction and the sites of sovereign violence, the film interrogates the shifting function of these spaces. Ultimately, Schuppli and Kraemer's film focuses upon how the appropriation of an already established spatial infrastructure clearly would have aided the occlusion and concealment of its new function. From here, I move on to examine James Bridle's 2015 work *Seamless Transitions*, which attempts to visualise the occluded infrastructure of UK migrant removal and detention centres in the UK. I suggest that Bridle's film points towards the deliberate occlusion of sovereign power and violence within these sites of detention and removal through the strategic mixing of public and private infrastructure and labour. Finally, I focus on Jonathan Perel's 2015 film *Toponimia*, which examines the historical and contemporary conditions of four military 'resettlement' villages in northern Argentina. The formal structure of the film emphasises not only the occluded sovereign control and surveillance over these spaces, but also their reclamation post-dictatorship. The work also points

towards the ways in which such processes of reclamation were facilitated by the structural neglect of contemporary neoliberal governance.

All these works understand that such carceral sites and spaces can never be read as hermetically sealed, they always operate at the border with — and in relation to — larger structures of power and discipline, both geographically and historically. In a manner akin to the previous chapter's examination of works interrogating the seeming abstraction of late capitalism's spatial operations, the works examined in this chapter perceive a similar occlusion and fragmentation of carceral space. Consequently, similar questions drive this chapter: how can carceral spaces that are increasingly fragmented and hidden from sight — intentionally masking sovereign state violence and control — be visualised within moving image practice? These works respond to such processes of violent masking by attending to the seepages of carceral violence beyond the confines of their material infrastructures. Once again, the attunement to the spatial and aesthetic within these works is aimed at excavating those embedded relationalities of carcerality that might not be readily visible at first glance, but which are productive sites of tension, and of potential resistance.

Chapter 3, 'Border Regimes: Labour, Ports and the Sea', contests that borders are no longer what they once were, or, at least, what they were once perceived to be. They have proliferated, shifting from the periphery to the centre of our social, economic, and political lives. They have also become markedly less visible systems of control and surveillance, often functioning beyond (yet still alongside) their traditional roles as the markers of geopolitical sovereign boundaries. Under the conditions of transnational global capitalism, understandings of borders as solid sovereign, geopolitical 'boundaries', 'walls', or 'barriers' have shifted.[51] In addition, the concomitant rise of both an increasingly fragmented global division of labour and the rise of neocolonial forms of extra-sovereign governance have changed the function and understanding of the border in myriad ways. The aim of this chapter is to examine how the documentary image has attempted to articulate this contemporary reconstitution of borders as heterogeneous, shifting, and proliferating regimes of spatial control. How is it that we can attempt to represent mechanisms of control — of bodies, labour, and capital — that are increasingly fragmented and often withdrawn from sight? Thus, it is evident that borders striate the social landscape in heretofore unexplored ways, becoming productive mechanisms in the exploitation of labour and the acceleration of late capitalism's accumulatory movements. Border regimes operate both within, across, and outside sovereign territorialities, relentlessly exploiting and reconstituting bodies, environments, and labour pools. However, once we do away with a conception of bordering regimes as something strictly sovereign — the wall, the fence, the barrier, which marks the limits of a nation state — attempting to render visible their intricate operations and functions become more of a challenge. Moreover, as the border becomes something extra-sovereign, a plethora of new actors and forces come into play, reshaping the function and operations of different bordering regimes. And, as the number of actors increases, locking down the responsibility for violence and exploitation across these new regimes of power and control also becomes more of a challenge.

Within the first section, titled 'Logistical Peripheries', I focus on Anna Lascari, Ilias Marmaras, and Carolin Phillip's *Piraeus in Logistical Worlds*. This work investigates how logistical spaces — ports, transportation corridors, storage facilities etc. — materially impact the sites that they border and interact with. I argue that the work examines how logistical spaces cannot be read as materially and geographically detached from the spaces at their peripheries. Instead, such sites and infrastructures of contemporary logistics create new, messy, and violent forms of extra-sovereign bordering. The second section of this chapter, entitled 'Regimes of (In)visibility', examines Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani's multimedia work *Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat*. This work examines the fragmentation and related proliferation of bordering regimes across the Mediterranean Sea. Here, I focus on how Heller and Pezzani's project unpacks the structural interconnections between these new forms of oceanic bordering/securitisation that striate the sea and the intensification of visibility and surveillance across these same spaces. With a multitude of sovereign and extra-sovereign actors now involved in the control and securitisation of this space, new technologies of visualisation and surveillance now exist to document movement across this oceanic area. Across both case studies, there is a keen focus on how the large-scale power dynamics of logistics and border control have material impacts on those fragmentary sites at the peripheries of these spaces. Such a visual focus on the fragment or detail once again draws us back to this book's emphasis on a politically-responsive and sensitive aesthetic documentary praxis that is attuned to such sites of spatial fragmentation and heterogeneity — helping to visualise, and simultaneously critique, the structures of violence upon which they are ultimately predicated.

Conclusion

Whilst there is an emerging body of work examining the intersection between the moving image and the spatial, this book marks the first comprehensive theorisation of such a spatio-political trend in non-fiction practice. By forging connections between these works, the book not only highlights the presence of such a spatio-political tendency, but also examines the future aesthetic and political potentialities for such a critical visual praxis. By bringing these spatio-political works together, *Spatial Violence and the Documentary Image* argues that they constitute an entirely new genre of political non-fiction media practice. Thus, by undertaking this crucial groundwork — mapping out the origins, politics, and potential future directions of this critical practice — this book hopes to open the door to a whole new area of documentary study focused on such spatialised practices. By delineating the boundaries of this field of practice, the book aims to create a fertile space for further scholarly research and investigation within documentary and moving image studies. However, the conceptual and theoretical groundwork conducted by this book also aims to extend beyond such scholarly realms. This research also aims to have wider resonances across the interdisciplinary area of spatial studies, opening new avenues of conceptual and methodological enquiry into the spatio-political.

To date, *Spatial Violence and the Documentary Image* is the first book to concretely and theoretically interrogate this new trend in documentary media practice. It is a crucial contribution not only to documentary media theory but also the wider fields of spatial studies, human geography, and new media. It therefore has a wider-reaching audience of readers beyond the disciplinary boundaries of film and media studies. Moving image practice offers up a whole new range of techniques for interrogating the politics of the spatial. By bringing together spatial theories, radical political theory, and documentary aesthetics, the book offers a sustained analysis of key trends in recent non-fiction media-making in relation to some of the crucial political challenges of our time.

Notes to the Introduction

1. Gerry Turvey, 'Panoramas, Parades and the Picturesque: The Aesthetics of British Actuality Films, 1895-1901', *Film History*, 16.1 (2004), 9-27 (p. 9).
2. Here, it is important to note that I am drawing on important work done by John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel in their volume *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*. A central objective of the volume is to 'wrest place from its status as mere setting and narrative "support" [...] focus[ing] on the generative structures, aesthetic conditions, and political implications of the profilmic, drawing background to foreground, periphery to center': 'Introduction', in *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*, ed. by John David Rhodes and Elena Gorfinkel (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), pp. vii–xxix (p. xii). A more thorough engagement with their theorisation can be found in the section 'Documentary Spatiality' in this chapter.
3. Here, I am building on crucial work associated with the 'spatial turn' that has emerged in the social sciences and humanities from the 1970s onwards. The section 'A Spatial Turn' in this chapter more fully articulates the rise of such a spatial focus and its increasing prevalence within documentary practice.
4. Michael Pattison, 'Steady-Stare Surveillance, or the Spatial Turn in Nonfiction Films', *Sight and Sound* [blog], 9 September 2018 <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/comment/unfiction/steady-stare-surveillance-documentaries-spatial-turn-nonfiction-cinema-uppland-home-resistance> [accessed 2 November 2023].
5. Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 2011), p. 6.
6. Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005), p. 9.
7. Such spatialised thinking also extended into broader theoretical and political realms: feminist accounts of domestic space and labour (e.g. Federici); queer and trans theory (e.g. Halberstam); and colonial theory (e.g. Fanon), amongst others.
8. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), pp. 186-87.
9. Christian Fuchs, 'Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space and the Critical Theory of Communication', *Communication Theory*, 29.2 (2019), 129-50 (p. 135).
10. David Harvey, 'Globalization and the "Spatial Fix"', *Geographische Revue*, 2 (2001), 23-30 (pp. 25–26).
11. Frances Cairncross, *The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution is Changing Our Lives* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2001).
12. Barney Warf and Santa Arias, 'Introduction', in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. by Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 1–10 (p. 5).
13. Edward Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), pp. 2, 3.
14. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon and others (New York: Vintage, 1980), p. 70.

15. Massey, *For Space*, p. 9.
16. Soja, *Seeking Spacial Justice*, pp. 17–18.
17. Ibid., p. 7.
18. Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 22–27 (p. 23).
19. Doreen Massey, 'Landscape/Space/Politics: An Essay,' *The Future of Landscape and the Moving Image* (blog), 14 April 2011, <https://thefutureoflandscape.wordpress.com/landscapespacepolitics-an-essay/> [accessed 2 November 2023].
20. Matthew Fuller and Eyal Weizman, *Investigative Aesthetics: Conflicts and Commons in the Politics of Truth* (Brooklyn: Verso, 2021).
21. Eyal Weizman, *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2012), p. 7.
22. Fuller and Weizman, *Investigative Aesthetics*.
23. Thomas Keenan and Eyal Weizman, *Mengele's Skull: The Advent of Forensic Aesthetics* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), p. 9.
24. A closer engagement with Weizman's specific theorisation of the forensic will come in Chapter 2, when we engage with the work of his research agency, Forensic Architecture.
25. The section 'Between the Extractive and Necropolitical: Carceral Geographies in Forensic Architecture's *Omarska: Memorial in Exile*' in Chapter 2 explores in more detail the relation between the aesthetic, evidentiary, and spatial, particularly as it relates to modes of human rights activism and investigative journalism.
26. Rhodes and Gorfinkel, 'Introduction', p. viii.
27. Tom Conley, *Cartographic Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. 1.
28. It is important to note that within Rhodes and Gorfinkel's examination of cinema's relationship to the spatial they do not remain strictly at the level of the aesthetic and representational. They not only consider cinema's wider 'real world' infrastructural impacts on material sites and places, they also problematise precisely what constitutes spatiality (preferring the term 'place'). I will return to their work later, as it forms a crucial theoretical touchstone for this project.
29. Conley, *Cartographic Cinema*, p. 9.
30. Here, it is important to note that I am conscious of the historiographical inaccuracies that such a draconian split (pre-World War II and post-World War II) activates; however, I still feel it functions as a useful descriptor of the large-scale shift towards a more contemplative set of aesthetic tropes, which simultaneously privileged a heightened engagement with the spatial.
31. Conley, *Cartographic Cinema*, p. 9.
32. Deleuze perhaps hints towards such a spatial articulation with what he has elsewhere termed 'any-space-whatever [...] a space of virtual conjunction, grasped as pure locus of the possible': Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement-Image,* trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986), p. 109).
33. I will return to this political potentiality shortly, examining other scholarly intersections between the spatial and political in moving image practice
34. There are, of course, several notable exceptions to such a general scholarly focus on narrative cinema when examining cinematic depictions of landscape and space. For example, early actuality films (by the likes of Auguste and Louis Lumière and Alfred C. Abadie) often engaged with specific sites and landscapes of urban modernity, and they have been extensively theorised. Similarly, the early 'city symphony films' (by the likes of Manoel de Oliveira and Dziga Vertov) were hybrid experimental-documentary works produced mainly in the 1920s and aimed to capture the rapid urbanisation and modernisation of city spaces. Again, these have been well theorised.
35. Martin Lefebvre, 'On Landscape in Narrative Cinema', *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, 20.1 (2011), 61–78 (p. 65).
36. Elizabeth Cowie, 'Documentary Space, Place, and Landscape', *Media Fields Journal*, 3 (2011), 1–21 (p. 2).
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 10.
39. Yuriko Furuhata, 'Returning to Actuality: Fûkeiron and the Landscape Film', *Screen*, 48.3 (2007), 345–62 (p. 348).

40. Ibid., p. 346.
41. Ibid, pp. 353–54.
42. Ibid, p. 354.
43. Rhodes and Gorfinkel, 'Introduction', p. xii.
44. Ibid., p. xi.
45. It is important to note that Rhodes and Gorfinkel wish to make a conceptual shift away from the notion of 'space' and towards that of 'place', suggesting that the latter term offers a greater potential for 'resonant and forceful political intervention'. For them, conceptions of 'place' are replete with 'tensions between ontology and codedness,' in ways that 'space' is not. Whilst I fully embrace this conceptual reorientation, my theorisation remains at the broader level of the spatial, where I believe similar arguments over ontology and codedness remain extremely pertinent, especially in the realms of social and political geography (for example, the questions of fixity, representation, and the undialectical, explored previously).
46. Rhodes and Gorfinkel, 'Introduction', p. xii.
47. Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute* (London: Zero Books, 2015), p. 39.
48. Ibid., p. 26.
49. *The Punitive Turn: New Approaches to Race and Incarceration*, ed. by Deborah E. McDowell, Claudrena N. Harold, and Juan Battle (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), p. 2.
50. Dominique Moran, *Carceral Geography: Spaces and Practices of Incarceration* (Farnham: Routledge, 2015), p. 90.
51. It is crucial to emphasise that contemporary attention should still be directed towards physical sovereign border practices, especially concerning the persistent existence of robust borders like Israel's illegal separation wall, the northern border of Mexico, US travel restrictions, and the emergence of 'fortress Europe'. Physically identifiable borders continue to play a pivotal role in various manifestations of spatial violence.