On Geoscapes and the Google Caliphate
Reflections on the Mumbai Attacks

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Abstract

When advanced technologies of globalization that are closely associated with secular cosmopolitics are opportunistically employed by fundamentalist politico-theologies for their own particular purposes, an essential irresolution of territory, jurisdiction and programmatic projection is revealed. Where some may wish to identify an ideal correspondence between a global political sphere into which multiple differences might be adjudicated and the visual, geographic representation of a single planetary space, this conjunction is dubious and highly conditional. Instead multiple territorial projections and competing claims on space are also generative of the very qualities of the spatial as a political medium altogether. For example, the well-publicized use of satellite-based mapping and telecommunications tools, such as Google Earth, by the terrorist group that attacked Mumbai in November 2008, raises several knotty and important questions about how contrary comprehensive images of the world can make use of one another in ways that undermine the 'unitotality' of global territory. It is not that Google and Jihad are 'equivalent' or even 'translatable', but rather because they are not, they are in practice interoperable. Instead links between urbanism, cosmography, and the socialization of planetary software networks demonstrate the centrality of design to the ongoing fashioning of the territory of territories, the *geoscape*.

Key words
architecture ■ cosmopolitanism ■ computation ■ globalization ■ interface ■ terrorism ■ urbanism

Taking Mumbai

IT HAS been widely suggested that the terrorist attacks on the city of Mumbai in November 2008 signal an intensifying trend in the urbanization of war and the militarization of the city. Directed by Kashmiri irredentists, Lashkar-e Taiba ('Army of the Pure'), roughly a dozen men stormed the surfaces of a civilian city as their primary field of targets, by-passing military and government structures and attacking directly and physically everyday habitats and inhabitants. As Saskia Sassen writes in a short Op-Ed written immediately after the attacks, 'cities seem to be losing the capacity they have long had to triage conflict – through commerce, through civic activity', and have instead 'become the theaters for asymmetric war, regardless of what side of the divide they are – allies or enemies' (Sassen, 2008b). These phenomena stoke a broader military and theoretical interest in what is seen as a martial, disciplinary urbanism on the one hand and a feral, lawless urbanity on the other. The discourses and projects that emerge represent both an urbanist lens on exceptional violence per se, and a logic of the city understood as a medium of that violence (Bevan, 2006; Davis, 2009; Graham, 2006; Karant, 2004; Norton, 2003; Weizman and Segal, 2003; Woods, 1996). However, such conjunctions, if thought to be ciphers to the Mumbai attacks, may be both less and more true than they appear at first consideration. What is revealed by the *logistics* of Mumbai is less that civilian urban space is suddenly now a target than that the tangible media of cosmopolitan civil society, in this case the global city paired with mobile mapping and communication technologies, are themselves the channels and media through which contested politico-theological imaginaries take architectural and geographic shape. Further, this same pairing both challenges and supports the capacity of other media to stage such contestations. I refer of course to the widely reported use of sophisticated but 'off-the-shelf' locative social media technologies by the attackers, such as Google Earth and Google Maps, to plan, visualize and navigate the target contours of Mumbai, of satellite phones and swapped SIM cards to evade call-tracing through conventional cellular telephony networks, as well as encrypted email to maintain mission situational awareness. This was widely discussed in mainstream accounts and technology and 'cyber-security' circles, but to my knowledge nowhere seriously considered as deviating wrinkle of political geography. At the same time, the equally recognized use of SMS and the microblogging network, Twitter, by those trapped in hotels and cafes to piece together their own tactical situation awareness and emergent lines of flight should be counted as part of another significant development where social media are used as political organizational tools by nascent civil societies and oppositional groups (Philippines, Moldova and, this very week, Iran). These are understood as social technologies of spatial contestation and constitution, and through this of constructing fragile and sometimes fluid political geography. It is to this contestation, and the location of this contestation over the very possibility of locality at all, that my remarks now turn.

The Territory of Exception

Concomitant with the most neoliberal versions of cosmopolitan globality is a projection or presupposition of some consensual, secular landscape *into* which politics might take place. Representations of such a space could only emerge from a mapping platform so secular and dialogic that it could absorb and position all psycho-geographies that might course through it: something like (or not like) Google Earth. However, as Mouffe (2005), Rancière (2006), Swyngedouw (2008) and many others have argued, an alternative, more agonistic view of the political holds instead that the juxtaposition of difference is not *within* a shared parliamentarian mechanism, not a spectrum of opinion within a frame, but is itself an irreducibly dissensual array of positions without a common master plane of situation. Put another way, if the public sphere is in fact 'spherical' at all, it is only so because it extends in all possible directions at once, is bound only by the tensile capacity of its membrane, and topologically is without any master perspective. Instead, *spheres* (plural) as Peter Sloterdijk (2002) employs the term, envelope the entirety of animal, technical and earthly materials into bound ecologies.

Critically, then, this public spherical ecology is, like the earth itself, a territory *of* territories, not a given cartography *in which* design and movement occur but itself a condition that cannot not be designed and redesigned, as conditions of their habitation, without resolution and without finality (Latour, 2008a). The possibility of a total perspective is unravelled precisely by the comprehensive interrelation of the machinations populating it and governing themselves through it. Such design takes place as and through *image-maps*, both of what is and what can be designed into the world in accordance with that ideal image-map: theologic, governmental, architectural. The publicity of the sphere is that which provides for the simultaneous staging of multiple and incommensurate projections, including and especially those that deny the legitimacy or even existence of other projections occupying the same physical location. That multiple image-maps co-occupy location is not the same as their compatibility within or even *as* territories, and, importantly, it is their incompatibility, their noisy overlapping protocols overmarking the terms by which territory could be said to be mapped or even marked as territory at all, that is, in the last instance, the grammar of political design. According to this reading, the 'cosmos' is not a supervising perspective over the *polis*, but rather the political is a form/content inseparable first and always from intricate formal machinations by which territory is produced (Galloway and Thacker, 2007; Rogoff, 2000). This is in no way diluted and indeed is enforced by the important fact that master maps are constantly used to make master projections, claims of total space, even and especially if such maps and the political imaginaries of projections located through them are apparently ideologically out of sync, because it is, in many respects, this very disjunction that allows their economy to operate.

Lashkar-e Taiba has grown in capacity and stature since the beginning of the century, and has added much to its agenda beyond the reversal

of the postcolonial partition of Kashmir, including the return of Islamic rule in India, as well as the capitulation of Western globality under a planetary Caliphate. The organization is centered near Lahore but is multinational in scope, receiving funding from international Wahabist groups, running schools, cities, markets and many other local institutions. It operates with a tense quasi-sovereignty inside of another state, but does so with the explicit goal of constitutional expansion so as to contain the wider world within its own, and according to its own designation. Their manifesto, 'Why Are We Waging Jihad?', is punctuated with the striking proclamation that their goal is to 'plant the flag of Islam' in 'Washington, Tel Aviv and New Delhi'. With attention to inevitable design and redesign of political geography through projective image-maps, I maintain that such symbolism is not as metaphorical as it is *programmatic*. One need not be a neo-con or an apologist to recognize and appreciate that, in this specific but critical sense, Lashkar-e Taiba is a *design movement*, and that the attacks on Mumbai are a project and projection of this. Their project is articulated as the realization and revivification of a righteous sacred geography, and it is through other secular media of strategic territorialization that their program unfolds. It is important to gauge such politico-theological systems and their apparent practical contradictions through the register of design. To avoid doing so invites both misrecognition of the role that specific material techniques play in the formation and maintenance of culturalist projects, especially fundamentalist ones, as well as misunderstanding and misjudgment about what, if any, design solutions are to be employed to prevent or dislodge the exceptionality of terrorist urbanism, and how to gauge the complicity of a strictly defensive design imaginary with the goals of its apparent enemy.

Design, Violence and the Geoscape

Let me not invite another misunderstanding. To call a politico-theological collective willing to employ violence in the name of a regime yet to come, such as Lashkar-e Taiba, a 'design movement' and, by extension, to maintain that it itself represents a sort of urbanist *technique*, necessitates further specification of what is meant by the terms 'design' and 'movement'. Doing so does not reduce what is complex nor validate what is noxious. The partition of India and the assignment to India of rule over Kashmir was a *design decision*, and the image and map of the Pakistan that would result was constituent of a design imaginary, however practical or misguided the Mountbatten Plan may have been. Remember that within the Western European philosophical tradition, Georges Bataille defined architecture as the physiognomy of power, an actual anatomy of the social, and Walter Benjamin referred to history as a state of siege, a capturing and binding behind the fortifying wall (A. Benjamin, 2000; W. Benjamin, 1986; Hollier, 1990). It is almost axiomatic in contemporary architectural theory to cite the *partition*, the very verb and noun of cleaving space and of instantiating that gesture with a solid plane, as perhaps the fundamental grammar of territory and enclosure (A. Benjamin, 2000). The central importance of

'partition' is a scarce point of agreement on ontological matters between those associated with the deconstructive turn (Wigley, 1995) and the Deleuzian program that displaced it in architectural curricula (Cache, 1995; Grosz, 2001). More than simply recognizing that structures are structural, to scale up the partitional from a single site to the regimentation of a social system is not to reify or make abstract in any unnecessary fashion a Kantian or structural allegory as has been normal (in, for example, Parsons, Lévi-Strauss, Althusser, Luhmann), but to recognize a very direct material multiplicity. A city is a multidimensional complex of partitions, interfaces and boundaries, nested within and without each other, and its economy with the human policies of plans and projections reflects and is reflected by them. A partition, material or projective, is both nested within a larger territorial context and is simultaneously the necessary component of that context: both medium and substance. It is this dual assignment, never resolved into one, that makes the consensual plane of parliamentarian rationality always something of a representational sleight. There is always, in the geometries of partition and boundary, more than one (or less than one) geography at work in the folds of things, and for this, the ultimate cosmopolitan program is, perhaps by design, eclipsed by the plurality of its constituent political equations, a 'dissensus un-annulled' to paraphrase Jacques Rancière, overflowing the banks of an impossible closure.

   What fills and forms that space is, to augment Arjun Appadurai's now canonical lexicon, a *geoscape*: contested terrains of contested terrains. For example, according to Appadurai's schema, a *mediascape* is a configuration of technical apparatuses and audiovisual content spread across the world, linking and striating populations, diasporas and tourisms; and a *financescape* gives imaginary order to the flux and flow of capital artifacts, whose value is wrested largely from the fact of their exchange but which are nevertheless stacked and accessed in given spatial orders and in relation to given spatial expertise (Appadurai, 1990). The geoscape(s), then, is a shifting landscape comprised of shifting landscapes, image-maps, projections and plans, irredentist land claims, borders and jurisdictions, strata and striations, imagined worlds, projected homes and homelands, addressing systems, and various *terra incognita*. All and any of these can, but need not, enter into irregular public exchanges whereby such spatializations are both supplied and demanded according to a panoply of capitals. The form of form, the morphogenesis of the world picture, is content that cannot not be designed and designed for. The geoscape is a population of territories mutually interiorizing and exteriorizing each other, and which include but are not limited to *cosmograms*, projective images of the entirety of global space and the order that it is seen to frame, hold and distribute. For example, the global Caliphate, as envisioned by the Lashkar-e Taiba program, is a cosmogram, like other large and small official and unofficial systems of governable space. It moves through the geoscape of both sacred and secular projections, an irregular territory, never empty but always exactly as full as the spaces that comprise it. It is not an empty arena into which territories

would move, but a conceptual assemblage of territorial claims that, in sum, produces the assemblage and the concept. Whatever highly conditional equivalence or exchangeability that exists is not an a priori feature but the result of the real operations of encounter. Geoscapes are made and so entered into, not entered into and so made.

Armed Smart Mobs: Mumbai.kml, #Mumbai

All the more curious, then, that Google Earth and Google Maps, perhaps the most aggressively secular, pluralistic, universalizing cosmopolitan mapping technology realized to date, would serve at the center of this anti-secular, anti-democratic, politico-theological paroxysm. The attacks in Mumbai were, in the parlance of counter-insurgency, both irregular and asymmetrical. They were irregular in that the combatants were apparently civilian, armed tourists rampaging through civilian spaces until the uniformed men showed up, and asymmetrical in that the city (its buildings, its tourists, its state institutions) were assigned characterizations by these armed tourists in a fight to which they did not know themselves enrolled (perhaps this is one social definition of terrorism: war fought against enemy-people who do not consider themselves as enemy-combatants, and then as well largely against their architectural habitat as much as their persons). Within this, the Mumbai event was an unwelcome innovation on more than one level. It was a highly coordinated but direct, personal attack on the soft leisurely substance of civil society more than on hard military or politically symbolic targets, looking more like what the Malay and Javanese call *amuk* (amok), than any Clausewitzian opposition of equals. Second, we see the strategic employment of locative social media and personal mapping technologies for the C3 (command-control-communicate) project of mayhem. It is less a Netwar (Weber, 2004), i.e. the pulsing of swarm logistics or denial-of-service attacks on Estonia's systems by Russian nationalists, than a social/locative media-enabled swarming maneuver, both of and on the city engaged, itself engaged as a network of real and symbolic interfaces and here overrun by the capacities of real-time, collaborative situational awareness.

The dozen attackers used Google Earth maps and related media to see and navigate the city. One assumes that their movements were planned beforehand to advance through the overhead and tilted satellite images of the city's buildings, streets, alleys and squares. As much as classified reconnaissance, simulation and situational-awareness tools are technologies of war for states, declassified tools can be for non-state actors. The trail of geographic representation of the events is knotted: Google Earth was a mechanism of the attack itself, but news agencies also mapped the attacks in near real time on Google Earth as part of their coverage. This is another uncomfortable recursivity rendering the substance of the city into a medium for the particular attentions of the violence by those who would enact it, witness it, report it, defend against it. Google Earth's own cosmographic capacities are instrumentalized by politico-theological geographies that

exceed its intended program, such that Google Earth exists inside of them as much as they inside of it. The geoscape is not only the territorial index through which such projections play themselves out, it is itself, even before the geography it spatializes, the very means of projection and the projection's own activist, and in this case irredentist, claims.

I think part of the shock was the souring of the Friedman-esque supposition that the cosmopolitan cognitive apparatus that is Google Earth provides a world-picture that is so open, objective, materialist, dialogic – and, perhaps, because so absent of visible human bodies that might invite contentious discursivities – that it could not be compatible, interoperable, instrumental with or in the closed, naturalist, idealist imagined collective geography of Jihadist Islam (Friedman, 2007). Isn't Google Earth exemplary of all that makes the secular, technological pluralism of the West intolerable to fundamentalist institutions? It is a blank, purified vision of a planet somehow constructed as an objective integrated context onto and into which history might work, and simultaneously agnostic as to how anything arrives in its place or why. It was a jolt, I think for many, and invited speculation and declarations that a new reality in the spatial warfare of globalization had revealed itself: 'they' are not immune to 'our' most central terms and things because our modernity is also theirs; *we do not control even what we control*. But that surprise does not preclude the more unsettling and less easily articulated realization that what was put into somewhat sharper relief by Mumbai are not only disturbing trends but more fundamental pre-conditions of the geoscape: urbanity, exceptional violence, architecture, technology, projection. If Lashkar-e Taiba is, among other things surely, a sort of politico-theological urban design practice, it is one that follows maps and plans, that creates them, challenges received maps, that draws them and makes them real, and is clearly willing to die over them. Obviously their tactical use of Google Earth in providing situational awareness during the attack was a practical choice and I do not mean to suggest that it is their literal program to remap the Caliphate directly onto the medium of Google Earth, making the software some new sort of illuminated Word. Instead I wish to amplify the apparent asymmetry of these two spatial imaginaries, Jihad and Google, and suggest that, in their unlikely compatibility and alignment, something critical about how geoscapes operate above and beneath the state is to be gleaned. It is decidedly not that this interactive planetary cartography is a universal plane into which all manner of competing ontologies can be embedded and arranged, but that the polyphonous perversion of their translatability, even and especially into anti-cosmopolitan fundamentalisms, is the means by which the public sphere is given form, is designed at all, state or trans-state.

Google Earth is one 'spherical' mechanism that supports the political imagination of both state (the use of real-time satellite imagery of course has military origins, and military systems still provide content to this civilian system) and non-state actors alike (one may turn off national borders with a single click), and in the case of Mumbai was used as a guide in the

violent re-designation of enemy-occupied territory. If it does so, it does so through very specific limits and capabilities of its somewhat open/somewhat closed code base. Lashkar-e Taiba, as far as we know, made no modifications of the depopulated image-maps the software platform provides. At the level of the software theirs was a read-only usage. But the Google Earth software/hardware apparatus (application, servers, satellites) is intended to be reprogrammed by users to generate uniquely purposed spatial machines, and so they could have. Specifically, the Google Earth API (application protocol interface) has 73 applications and KML (Google Earth's file format) programmable interfaces at the last count, allowing developers to use modular code components of the larger Google Earth system in the construction of new, as yet undesigned, spatial technologies. These open channels allow the vast Google Eearth machine to be disassembled, a kind of *depunctualization* (Latour, 1999) into any number of smaller Earth techniques and technologies by and for any purpose. Some purposes may be intentionally designed and others seem to emerge on their own, in response to exceptional conditions. In the case of Mumbai, it is appropriated to serve a reactionary vanguardism, a future-historical irredentist imaginary projecting backwards into a past, rather than a future, so as to arrive, or re-arrive once again, back at the desired Islamist state condition, one of course with very different conditions for the state. As told over again, modernity is an open platform for the design and development of apparently anti-modern briefs. Modernity does not only disembed and re-embed traditional social forms, traditional and fundamentalist social forms also disembed and re-embed modernity.

The other smart mob of non-state actors at play in the Mumbai horror were those trapped by the chaos and carnage in hotel rooms, closets, cafes and whatever immediate refuge they could find. The only lifeline available to many was their mobile handset and in the crisis they put these to use. As events unfolded, I sat in my office in California watching in amazement as the #Mumbai Twitter feed chronicled in real time, first-person reports what was happening: 'hospital update: shots still being fired', 'also Metro cinema next door', 'blood needed at JJ hospital'.[1] Mainstream media outlets were left flat-footed to repeat both fact and rumor from these feeds on air and in their papers. Interestingly, the US military *almost* predicted this. The Army issued a report the month before warning that 'al-Qaeda-like' terrorists might use Twitter to coordinate an attack. Instead, Twitter became a way to mobilize a response to terrorist violence (reconnaissance, situational awareness, logistics) by civilian society itself. This telematic stigmergy was most definitely not included in use cases that Twitter concocted in advance of their launch, but is (as proven by the Iranian protests which occurred after the first draft of this article was finished) a potentially important political, urban, geographic accidental technology, appearing in direct response to the accidents unbound by Lashkar-e Taiba's appropriation of Google Earth, satellite phones and GPS. One partition folds and is folded into another, from Kashmiri valleys to hotel rooms in Mumbai, technologies and

accidents and embryonic formats of extra-state citizenship emerging from one another.

Earth, Google Earth and Extra-state Actors

If governmentality is an interior function of the jurisdictional partition, and its sovereignty is produced in that convoluted and reversible image, then extra-state actors rely upon that convolution and that inversion, but also upon partitional imagery that supersedes statist geometry. There is symbiosis in this. Governmentality is always a radically incomplete complex of smaller govermentalities (Gane, 2008) and is in that sense defined by its exceptions, both internal and external. To the extent that the state suppresses its original constitutional violence, the agents of subsequent exceptional violence against the state and through it become creatures of that first exception. Globalization both destabilizes and enforces distinctions of political topology (see, for example, Sassen, 2006), untethering ethnic nationalism and economic integration into assemblages populated by a churning plurality of non-state actors working where we would expect to locate both core and periphery. Terrorism is a lead figure in this jurisdictional drama, as its agendas of constitutional violence and the state's responses to them replay the gambit of exception over and again. For example, in the moments of direct contact, terrorists' exceptionality is mirrored by contracted non-state actors working on the state's behalf to directly interface with enemy prisoners and administer disciplines of extraction or punishment, such as Blackwater or the many other contractors who played a crucial role in the ongoing torture scandals. In this the incompleteness of the state's governmentality is defined by its *internal* exceptions as much as its external conflicts, even as the former is used as remedy for the latter. Given these perforations in its governmental authority, we might ask if there is ever such thing as a non-failed state.

Economic globalization, computational globalization and politico-theological globalization catalyze parallel and overlapping worlds. The Caliphate is a theocratic authority that in principle supervises and supersedes the domain of the state, whereas Lashkar-e Taiba is a sub-state actor, living inside a symbiotic Pakistani host, operating within the geoscape as the agent of a super-state political theology. Google, key to the logistics of this event, is another actor in the computational geoscape, and working in the emergent image of another sub- and super-state political territorialization, perhaps in the last instance an agency of greater significance in terms of the destabilization and reorganization of modern political geography than Islamic Jihad.

In 1968 the Apollo 8 astronauts took what were to be the first public images of the whole planet Earth. These iconic image-maps reframed the very figurability of territorial ground seen now from its outside, and revealed thereby a final *scale* for human culture. That scale, a vast and singular horizon folding back onto itself, was conversant with the megastructural art, architecture and design of the era. Today, that same image-map is an

interfacial front-end to the satellite data and desktop supercomputing capacity. While Google Earth is a meta-interface into an archaeological view of a virtual frozen present, the territorial politics of Google resides less in what is seen than what is not seen, and in how the latter allows the former to override traditional jurisdictional partitions (Latour, 2005).

Consider that the territorial geography of nations was always made possible by naval capacity over the omnidirectional glacis of the ocean in light of Google's recently filed patent on water-based data centers. This floating cyberinfrastructure would in principle greatly reduce the energy and cooling costs of hosting and serving the peta and exabytes of data that will constitute an eventual planetary cloud computing platform. It may also symbolize a productive crisis of territorial jurisdiction and how truly pervasive computation may demand, or activate, new forms of agonistic and/or cosmopolitan political habitats. Data-centers, the hard technical core of the internet, use a lot of energy, mostly to keep processors cool, and with something like 1.8 of the world's estimated 6.7 billion people using the worldwide web in any given month, the anticipated growth curve is steep. Where will the energy come from? Oceanic data-centers theoretically would help solve this by using both tidal and wind energy to power the stations, as well as the abundant supply of water to assist in the cooling process, but in doing so, the literal offshoring of such critical infrastructure also raises other issues about the jurisdiction and legal control of data, and the governance of the emergent territory we call the 'cloud'. What if a data-object is originated in Beijing by a Japanese citizen uploaded to a server off the shores of Vladivostok and is used by a kid at an internet cafe in Lagos to commit a crime in the USA? Does one country's data privacy and prosecution laws have any means to control this? But of course such what-ifs are already everyday problems, and in some cases Google physically separates national data on different servers or by using virtual firewalls. Is there a better physical metaphor for liquid modernity than these real but highly abstract borders?

As cloud-based computing platforms of various scales and complexities come to absorb more and more social and economic media, and do so on a planetary scale, the threads linking data-object to jurisdiction to geography become that much more unraveled. In this the rights and conditions of citizenship that were to whatever degree guaranteed by this intertwining within the interior of the state give way perhaps to the riskier prospect of a 'Google caliphate', in which and for which the terms of the ultimate constitution are anything but understood. They would need to be designed (or refused). In uncanny geographies such as these can we decipher one future state-condition of the state? To fuse the person and the data-object into the base unit of political subjectivity is to anticipate a mode of citizenship governed by hardware and software standards as much as by constitutional mechanisms (Galloway and Thacker, 2007). The modern state is also bound to a particular set of protocological interests and generative legal codes, and the membranes of their jurisdictions are thereby defined, but does the

transposition of juridical media from legislation to computation produce, almost by definition, a different, analogous spatial, territorial condition? For example, certain political positions are built already into the hardware, not allegorically but literally. On any Intel chip from the last 25 years, 'core user' is a sovereign figure who can generate subordinate administrative subjects, who in turn can control the calculative access of other terminal users (Vismann and Krajewski, 2007). No law passed could undo this polity. From constitution to end-user agreement?

Accidental Technologies and Political Design

War *is* the futurology of war. The ubiquity of what Rumsfeld called 'the security environment' has produced a permeating web of war-space and war-time, in which arms markets (large and small) are enmeshed not only with resource markets, labor markets, production markets, political markets, scientific markets, healthcare markets, theologic markets, geographic markets, but are also enrolled as forums for secular and sacred *futures markets*, driving the production of that war-space as a kind of collaborative prophecy. Terrorism is based in projective illusion and practical prophecy, and so are its counter-measures. The terrorism + counter-terrorism circuit is *designed exceptional violence*, designed for the effect of affect. In the torque of their courtship, at risk is the mutually interdependent coexistence not only of peoples but also of the political and religious fantasies that they sponsor within and as the currency of this agonistic geoscape.

What does design learn from all this? Or, what do we learn about design by examining the logistics of this numinous demolition derby? First, violence over the terms and conditions of the geoscape moves the battle-fronts to society's *interfaces* (airports, stations, itinerant websites, terminals, shipping ports, disposable cell phones, buses, embassies, financial hubs, hotels, SIM cards, interactive maps, etc.). Terrorism is normally thought to prefer to target *centers* of grounded contiguous institutions (capitols, towers, obelisks, sacred books and persons), but instead the strategic tendency is to go after crossroads, points of convergence, dilation, expansion – inter-faces – which are increasingly diffuse, civilian, urban, computational. This is exactly the shift in the literal architecture of the geoscape and the forms of cosmographic projections it can absorb: it moves from centralized to decentralized topographies. These interfaces, like the attacks upon them, work by shifting what is seen, what is not-seen, what is shown, what is not-shown. They are both functioning infrastructure and decorative camouflage. With the appearance of ubiquitous computing as a direct medium and substance of the politico-theological geoscapes, as we saw in Mumbai, the distinction between software networks and urban networks is perforated. The pervasiveness of computation reframes the city as a complex of active and inactive interfaces – strategic, symbolic, public, private – to be measured and redesigned in accordance with the demands of particular projections. The integrative posture of the global city as a composition of layered interfaces is the condition of conflict through which spatial

governance can only ever occur, and yet uncomfortably available for recapture and revision.

To the extent that they portend a more basic shift in the protocols of a geoscape, it is the proximity and adjacency of the Mumbai attacks with the burrowing ubiquity of Google geographic platforms that is particularly telling. It is instructive of what we do not know, namely how to describe and theorize this jumble of jurisdictions, and in them, what happens to states and their sovereignty when they must compete so directly for their monopoly on legitimate citizenship. What we haven't figured out, haven't *designed*, are appropriate ways for such a publicness, however 'spherical', to govern itself. In my example, as it stands today, we have no idea what the terms and limits of a cloud-based citizenship of the 'Google Caliphate' will entail and curtail: some amalgam of post-secular cosmopolitanism, agonistic radical democracy and rational actor microeconomics, largely driven by intersecting petabyte at-hand datasets and mutant strains of Abrahamic monotheism. But specifically, what is governance (let alone government) within this? It is clearly not the annulment of dissensus nor the end of politics, because in the absence of real politicization of fundamental conflict, and the proliferation of irreducible cosmographies, the only position of real dissent ends up being that of the traditionalist or the fundamentalist. That is truly unsustainable.

The forms and contents of the political is a metadesign problem, opened up as ever for revision and remaining forever a highly volatile arrangement of untranslatable situations which we have no real choice but to enter into directly. As its terms are thinned out by the erosion of nation-state guarantees, the retooling of the geoscape is the redesign of the 'political' itself: territories, institutions, constitutions, conditions of sovereignty, citizenship and their various interfacialities. As I write this article I am also, like millions around the world, keeping one eye on the #IranElection feeds from Tehran and elsewhere, watching one society nakedly implode into panicked authoritarianism, and (hopefully) another explode into the scene, both occupying the same streets, both fighting over clear channels, and both making use of the fragmented legitimacies of theology, city and state for their own ends. So then, by way of conclusion, I refer to Paul Virilio's well-known axiom, that the invention of any new technology is also simultaneously and inevitably the invention of a new accident, a process clearly at work in Mumbai (Virilio, 2003). While there are attendant accidents built into a system the day it goes online, this should be understood not only as a hidden anti-history of technology, but also as a sign that the accident is also potentially a needed productive condition. The accident also invents a new technology.

Note

1. For some detail of this coverage in the mainstream press, see: http://www. telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/3530640/Mumbai-attacks-Twitter-and-Flickr-used-to-break-news-Bombay-India.html

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