

## AGAINST GLOBALIZATION

# Picturing the world—cinematic globalization in the deserts of *Babel*

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### Abstract

Globalization remains a challenge for the art of cinema. No art form is more suited to the task of showing clashes between cultures and the internal conflicts of a society, but as films are both narratively and physically dependent on locations—even if these can be multiple and dispersed throughout the world—and because of the logistics and the finances required for the production of film, cinema has almost always been placed in a national or regional framework. Reflecting the totality and networked nature of the globalized world seems more readily attainable for more conceptual forms of art. This article discusses Alejandro Gonzales Iñárritu's 2006 film *Babel*, often cited as the “first film of globalization,” asking the question of whether this claim can be substantiated alone with reference to the networked narrative of the film and use of multiple locations, suggesting that the relationship between cinema and globalization should in fact be understood on the terms of the medium as a visual reflection of images of the globe. Drawing on theories on the visual nature of globalization by Arjun Appadurai, Martin Heidegger, and W. J. T. Mitchell, this article thus argues for a different conception of cinematic globalization rooted in the history of cinema rather than in theories of globalization.

**Keywords:** *visuality; complexity; opacity; landscape*



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Globalization remains a challenge for the art of cinema. No art form is more suited to the task of showing clashes between cultures and the internal conflicts of a society, but as films are both narratively and physically dependent on locations

(even if these can be multiple and dispersed throughout the world), because of the use of spoken language, and because of the logistics and the finances required for the production of film, cinema is most often placed firmly within a

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national or regional framework. Reflecting the totality and networked nature of the globalized world, it may seem more readily attainable for more conceptual forms of art.

Even if there is something in the nature of the medium that encourages an interest in location, this does not mean that filmmakers have renounced the task of depicting the globe. Alejandro Gonzales Iñárritu's 2006 film *Babel* is often mentioned as "the first film of globalization" because of the complex whole of the film—intertwining stories from three different continents in a storyline jumping with sophistication in both time and space. *Babel* is a film on globalization because it not only thematically but also structurally mirrors the complex realities of a globalized world, thus overcoming the limitations of the filmic form and its link to location.

However, I would like to propose the idea that *Babel* is a film about globalization not primarily due to adaptation of the network structure but, on the contrary, because it counters the idea of globalization as network by exploring the way in which globalization appears as a concrete yet distant possibility in the lives of people in the world. *Babel* is thus a prototypical film of globalization exactly because it resists the ideas of globalization as complexity and engages in an exploration of the intimate relationship between location and globality as it plays out within the confines of the cinematic image. In *Babel*, cinema depicts globalization exactly through its foundation in location and language.

## GLOBAL NETWORKS

This is not to say that *Babel* is not a complex film. Structurally, thematically, and in the institutional framework surrounding the production of the film, *Babel* is without any doubt a prominent example of what Hamid Naficy has termed *multiplex* cinema, a new genre of cinematic productions adapted to the dual globalization of displacement and migration and new digital media through the use of "multilingual dialogue, multicultural characters and multi-sited diegesis."<sup>1</sup> These traits are a near description of *Babel*, which is also emphasized by Naficy as a founding moment for the upcoming genre.

The film consists of three basic storylines taking place in Japan, Morocco, and the Mexico-US

border region. The storylines are not presented to us chronologically, but the film cuts unsystematically between them and leaves it to the viewer to reconstruct the plots and, not least, the connections between them. It comprises more than 2500 camera setups and approximately 4000 edits, and it includes dialogue in at least seven languages (English, Spanish, French, Japanese, Japanese sign language, Berber, and Arabic), mixing well-known actors from the United States, Mexico, and Japan with amateurs.

The film is presented as a Mexican film, directed by Iñárritu; written by his compatriot and long-time collaborator, Guillermo Arriaga; and marketed by Iñárritu's own production company, Zeta Films, based in Mexico. But as Paul Kerr has described it, the production of the film is the result of an international collaboration with its main sources within the American production system.<sup>2</sup> The bulk of the funding for the film comes from three American companies (American Media Rights Capital, Anonymous Content, and Paramount Vantage) and the French distribution company Central Films, all companies that, on different levels, specialize in the production and distribution of so-called independent and international art house productions aimed at a global market. Even though films like *Babel* are in this way an extension of the Hollywood system, Kerr convincingly argues that the globalization of capital as an opportunity to create international cooperation is a necessary condition for the production of the kind of global networked narratives that *Babel* exemplifies. The cooperation provided the institutional framework in different parts of the world that is needed for producing and selling this particular genre of film, for instance by securing access to the important Japanese market by hiring the local star Kôji Yakusho for a role in the Japanese subplot. Using the network form makes it possible to make films readable and relatable in many different parts of the world, thus opening up supplementary sources of income outside the heavily contested American home market.

This is obviously an important point: the complex story is constructed with great skill, and in its networked totality it mirrors certain aspects of globalized society in both a thematic and a commercial sense. However, this correspondence must not lead us to think that multiplex films are

about everything at once. The networked narrative does not make a film global, and even though *Babel* is a complex film, it is structured around a few main components, and a singular incident serves to tie the storylines together. Two young boys accidentally, or at least unwittingly, shoot an American woman in Morocco with a gun which, it is later revealed to us, was given as a gift from the protagonist of the Japanese storyline to the father of the two boys in Morocco, and this event, subsequently, causes the developments of the Mexican subplot. The gun used thus serves as the central metaphor tying the different threads of the story together and marking a curious relationship between singularity, universality, and complexity in the structure of the film.

What are we to make of this gun? Is it simply a serendipitous interlinking of disparate fates in a complex globality? Do the linked persons form a constellation within this whole? Or should we understand the film in the sense that the connections caused by globalization in fact add coherence to individual existences lacking foundation? The answer to this question is hardly clear, although the character development in the individual stories in most cases seems to suggest the latter, namely, that connectivity does in fact allow the persons to locate the essential, the ground in their lives, with the Mexican subplot as a marked exception. In any case, the relationship between local lives and global order is a complex one in which the global not only affects local cultures but also pervades the most intimate parts of people's lives and affects both the way they see the world and the way they see themselves. In order to understand these relations, it would, however, be a good idea to get a more precise understanding of the concept of globalization, or, more precisely to have a look at how the concept of globalization can be used in relation to the cinematic image.

## IMAGINING THE GLOBE

Globalization is and will remain one of the central buzzwords of the time in which we are living for the very simple reason that it provides perhaps the best description of it. The term may feel over- and misused, imprecise, and overly enthusiastic regarding the changes affecting the world today, but the fact is that no term more convincingly describes the demographic, economic, technical,

and cultural developments that we have experienced over recent decades. If the term is unavoidable, the challenge then is to make an operational definition of its use, in a given context, here in relation to the art of cinema.

One of the more challenging descriptions was made 15 years ago by Arjun Appadurai in his *Modernity at Large*, when he famously describes globalization as a process generated by the disjuncture between what he terms "five dimensions of global cultural flows."<sup>3</sup> Appadurai terms these dimensions "scapes," distinguishing between ethnoscapas, mediascapas, technoscapas, financescapas, and ideoscapas, providing what could be read as an updated version of the levels of society, as known from Marxist theories of historical materialism, that is capable of addressing the complex reality of globalization.

The model builds upon Benedict Anderson's imagined communities, but with a marked shift from the print-based imagination in Anderson toward the visual as the basis of the construction of imagined worlds, as he terms it. Both ideoscapas and mediascapas consist if not entirely then predominantly of "images," with the visual serving as the domain in which all other media can be represented, be they textual, audial, digital, or pure thought. This is, of course, also the reason for the use of the term "scape," employing a visual metaphor to the different levels in Appadurai's model: "The suffix *-scape* allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes."<sup>4</sup> The landscape is of course not an innocent model, but a historically laden form of vision suggesting a romantic dialectic between fragmentation and unity, a strong sense of perspective, and perhaps even an ocular-centric worldview. Understanding globalization as a (however disjuncted) transforming and layered landscape implies an effort to *see* the world as an intelligible whole. Or, more precisely, it entails that the world is always seen from somewhere, that any take on globalization is always limited in scope, but also that Appadurai's model is in fact an endeavor to see it all in one view, taking in the globe.

An interesting point here is that this very endeavor to see it all is closely linked to the idea of globalization as complexity when Appadurai continues to argue for "the need to combine a fractal metaphor for the shape of cultures (in the plural) with a polythetic account of their overlaps

and resemblances.”<sup>5</sup> Here, visibility is translated into opacity in a figure that is simply too complex to be seen, even though the desire for rendering the globe visible is still alive in Appadurai. This dialectics is well known, for example in descriptions of global finance, which is in turn described as a transparent global network and as a system of total obscurity, depending on the success rate for investments it seems.

Hinging this verdict on the choice of a specific metaphor in Appadurai may seem a bit hasty, but the fact is that visual metaphors abound in descriptions of globalization, and Appadurai here serves as a both useful and interesting case in point. In a short essay, W.J.T. Mitchell traces and categorizes the different visual representations of our totality as globe, planet, cosmos, earth, and world.<sup>6</sup> Mitchell’s vantage point is Martin Heidegger’s famous analysis of the modern world as the age of the construction of a “world picture,” a *Weltbild*, by the forces of technology and reason:

World picture, when understood essentially, does not mean a picture of the world but the world conceived and grasped as a picture. What is, in its entirety, is now taken in such a way that it first is in being and only is in being to the extent that it is set up by man who represents and sets forth.<sup>7</sup>

Heidegger understands modernity as the age in which man for the first time places himself at the center of existence, thus constructing not only a new vision of the world but also a conception of existence: in the modern world, only that which appears to us as if in a picture is accepted as part of the world.

Heidegger’s essay dates back to 1938 and has been read as a rejection of the tripartite ideology of modernism that was threatening to throw the world into war under the headings of communism, capitalism, and, of course, National Socialism,<sup>8</sup> three ideologies constructing exactly an image of the world based on technological advancement. This is no place to discuss the degree and nature of Heidegger’s involvement with the latter of these, but on the point of the advent of a world picture, time has been kind to his ideas.<sup>9</sup> Through the technological advances instigated by these ideologies, we can now see the world as if it was put before us, as it in fact was in 1946 when Clyde Holliday, a NASA engineer, strapped a camera to a captured German V2 missile and gave

us the first grainy image of Earth as seen from an altitude of 65 miles; and in 1968, when *Apollo 8* gave us the first clear image of Earth as seen from space—the famous “Earthrise” images as a direct result of the space race with the Soviet adversary.<sup>10</sup> Through the technological development stimulated by the ideologies pointed to by Heidegger, the world became available to us, no longer as the outer frame of our existence, but as an object placed before us, and, subsequently, with the possibility of imagining it as something put in our hands, as something that can be put to use in its totality. Following Heidegger’s analysis, you could argue that this is exactly the ideology of globalization as a convergence of these three ideologies which comes to itself in the political and economic discourses of neoliberalism: the idea that the globe, as it presents itself before the cameras of *Apollo 8*, is a smooth medium for the establishment of a borderless economy based on advanced technologies of computing and communication, rather than situated production.

This line of thought has been pursued by numerous thinkers, for example Jean-Luc Nancy, who in *The Creation of the World, or, Globalization* reads globalization as the endpoint of the historical performance of capital, a state of total and world-encompassing commodification in which there is no longer room for the existence of lived worlds outside the domination of global capital: “How are we to conceive of, precisely, a world where we only find a globe, an astral universe, or an earth without sky?”<sup>11</sup> Or Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who, throughout her later writings, seeks to discard the ideology of globalization in favor of situated comparative studies: “The globe is in our computers. It is the logo of the World Bank. No one lives there.”<sup>12</sup> Spivak resorts to the figure of the planet as the alternative figure to the globe, and Nancy sticks with the phenomenological *world*, but they both seek an alternative to Appadurai and other sociological theories on globalization. The two different models represent not only two different takes on the state of the world today but also two fundamentally different approaches to the visual nature of conceptual representations of the globe. On the one hand, Appadurai and others use visual metaphors to highlight the “global” aspect of globalization; on the other hand, Heidegger, Nancy, and Spivak criticize the idea of the globe as visible, calling for

descriptions founded in a broader spectrum of sensual and cognitive approaches.

## SMOOTH ZOOMS

Mitchell chooses a more pragmatic approach. He dismisses Heidegger's account through the reasonable argument that worldviews are as varied and abundant today as they were before the advances of technology. He thus gives credence to Heidegger's analysis of the introduction of a new form of globality, but he emphasizes that the transparency of the neoliberal world order is only one aspect of this reality. Instead, Mitchell points exactly to the convergences between these different aspects as points of interest:

There is no way to "zoom" smoothly and precisely from the global to the local, in other words, or from the heights of abstract infinity to the minute particular – the perspective must pass through a vortex which imposes a new regime of observation – up close and personal – on the spectator.<sup>13</sup>

The abstract heights of Google Earth or the view from the bomb freefalling in the air over Iraq are not translatable to the realities on the ground when the bomb falls, or when Google Street View accidentally exposes a car on fire or a deer hit by the Google Street View car.<sup>14</sup> The two levels are equally real, and both are indisputably expressions of globalization, but this does not mean that they relate unproblematically to each other. This is of course a matter of perspectives, as described by Appadurai. The landscape of global warfare is not the same as the Iraqi landscapes below, and the disjunction between them is clearly a part of the story of globalization.

However, even this explanation may be a simplification of the problem, or, perhaps rather, an overly complicated solution to the problem, because the fact remains that even though there is no way to translate the two experiences into each other, these two distinct perspectives remain tied to each other as experiences of globalization. The bomb is there, and the Google Street View car is there because of globalization, and because of demands formulated on the global level; and, conversely, Google Earth and the war on terror are there as more or less pertinent answers to real or perceived problems "on the ground" (e.g. the very real problem of having the finances, the gas,

and the navigational tools to transport yourself from one place to another). Both Mitchell and Appadurai operate with a model of globalization that consists, fundamentally, of layers of visibility reduced to obscurity by the vorticoose disjunctures between them. But the interrelatedness between the levels could suggest, as described in this article, not only that they are connected but also that it is exactly this connection that is characteristic of globalization—that globalization can be understood as a specific way in which one set of images, on the ground so to speak, relates to the idea of a world picture.

## BABBLING ABOUT THE WORLD

Although cinema is challenged by globalization on the structural, organizational, and linguistic levels, it is perhaps the art form most readily suited to reflect different visual representations of globalization. After all, film epitomizes the technological production of images of the world that is the objective of Heidegger's critique, and as such it is always caught up in the conflict described here. The medial auto-critique of contemporary film can to a certain extent be interpreted as an investigation of the role that film plays in the establishment of world pictures. This can be seen if we return to our first example, the reflection of globalization in *Babel*.

*Babel* is clearly not only a film about globalization, but first and foremost a film about different perspectives on the world of today. The different parts of the film may not constitute a coherent whole, but they do without a doubt present the viewer with a series of perspectives that do not readily translate into each other. Iñárritu says as much in a 2007 interview on his film with *New Perspectives Quarterly*: "*Babel* is about the point of view of others."<sup>15</sup> As simple as that. The networked nature of film allows the director to provide us with different worldviews, to show us connected or related situations as they are perceived within different cultures.

But these worldviews are of course not only contrasted but, on the contrary, brought to interact. The film is not only about different cultural perceptions of the world but also about a reflection on the nature of seeing in an intercultural, global space, and, I would argue, on the

contrasting of exactly different world pictures in a globalized world.

Let us for a moment return to the key scene of the film. The scene of the shooting, or rather the set of scenes that depict the act of shooting, in which the gun serves to tie together the different storylines, is not only central because of its structural function but also because it stages the connection as one that is grounded in differences in perspective and visual scope. The scene falls into two parts presenting the event from each of the two different perspectives: the unobstructed view of the boys from a hilltop overlooking the road on which the bus carrying the woman is driving, and the viewing point of the tourist looking out on the locals through the glass panes of the bus. Both viewing positions are characterized by a seeming clarity that veneers obscurity.<sup>16</sup> In the bus, it is the large, clear windowpanes which give the tourists an unobstructed view toward the landscape they pass through and the locals who inhabit it, but which of course also act as a barrier separating the tourists from the world they are travelling to experience. The glass barrier in this central shot is a metaphor for the psychological detachment from the world that the woman is feeling after her husband and she have lost a child, just as it points to the cultural separation and to the fundamental separation between reality and cinematographic image. But the shot gets its distinct significance in contrast with the corresponding shot from the boys' point of view. Whereas the woman is placed in a confined space, the two boys stand in the open with a vast, unobstructed view of the landscape before them. However, as it becomes clear, this does not mean that they have any real knowledge of what lies before them. Seen from this distance, the bus appears as nothing but an abstraction, a target to be shot at like a piece of rock or the archetypical empty can of beans in a Western, an illusion that is broken only when the bus comes to a halt after the shot. The limitlessness of their point of view causes a delusion of mastery, which is comparable to the delusion of the world picture as described by Heidegger.

In both cases, space shows itself as structured around a fracture between visibility and obscurity that is equivalent to the vortex between different regimes of observation described by Mitchell, but

this fracture takes on different forms in the two cases. In the bus, it is the panes of glass, which with their doubling of the motive (by both letting through and reflecting light, as glass does) act as a visual membrane between two worlds. And on the hilltop, it is the dusty desert air that adds a tactile quality to the apparent clarity of the view. The view of the boys is unlimited, yet the dustiness gives the scenery an air of mirage. These motives appear in different variations throughout the film, not least in the glass-dominated city of the Japanese storyline, but by contrasting the two different perspectives the shooting scene provides the most concentrated example, emphasizing the scene as not only a structural but also a visual axis of the film. The scene serves not only to create narrative connections but also to reflect upon the ability of film to create connections on a purely visual level, to reflect upon the abilities and limitations of the filmic medium when it comes to showing the point of view of others.

The parallel to the Western is not misleading. The space constructed in the scene is, as with most cinematic deserts, heavily indebted to the mythologies of the desert landscape and the frontier as they were developed in the American Western tradition as a mirror relation between the Indians as the image of human otherness and the landscape as an image of the nature as other. The Indian embodied the highly libidinal role of the both feared and desired nature within man, invoking fantasies of the purity and impurity of the mind and of the blood. And there was an equally ambiguous relationship with the landscape, conflating pictorial beauty with the voracity of nature, to the point of implicating a libidinal relationship between man and nature through the cinematographic gaze.<sup>17</sup>

Similar connections can be drawn in *Babel*. The shooting scene is clearly sexual in content at both ends of the shot, most clearly perhaps in the case of the two young boys, as illustrated by the scenes leading up to the shooting, where we first see the youngest of the two boys peeping on his naked sister through a small hole in the wall and later masturbating behind a rock in the desert just prior to the shooting. This scene is contrasted with the shooting, which from its privileged, open vantage point succeeds in performing the penetration, which is barred in the

first case. After having pierced the membranous panes of the bus, the bullet is received with a slight sigh by the woman without any instant drama. The film thus contrasts two forms of looking related to two different contexts: the incestuous gaze looking in toward the family, the identical, and the rapacious view toward the other.

There is thus a connection between visuality, the landscape, and the libidinal that has filmic historical precursors, but the economy of these connections is thoroughly changed. This is first of all because *Babel* shows us both sides of the equation; the other becomes the same, and vice versa. And accordingly, because there are and can be no embodiment of nature. There is no frontier to act as an other to civilization, and no Indians to disappear into the landscape. On the contrary, both sides are barred from the landscape and have neither access to it nor control over it. In fact, it could be argued that it is exactly the landscape as totality that threatens and allures the characters, rather than that which the landscape hides or represents. And further, we are today in a situation where it is exactly the global that is the otherness that threatens the security of our home, or where, following Spivak, “the discursive system shifts from vagina to the planet as the signifier of the uncanny.”<sup>18</sup> In times of globalization, the *unheimlich* is not the embodied other, or nature within, but the totality that threatens the stability of the social order from the outside.

What is the desert if not the place where Earth appears at its most planetary, stripped of life like the images from Mars or the Moon?<sup>19</sup> And perhaps this was always the case. It could be argued that this transference already occurred in the classic Westerns of John Ford, that the Western is exactly the genre that shows us the movement from inner to outer nature. But in *Babel* and other more recent films, the connection becomes more explicit and connected to a new world order in which the frontier can no longer be used to amalgamate national identity. In a time of globalization, the planetary is no longer metaphorized as a geographical and racial other (except for in science fiction), but it is present as an ungraspable reality in our everyday lives, or, as Spivak phrases it elsewhere: “globalization makes us live on an island of language in an ocean of traces, with uncertain shores ever on the move.”<sup>20</sup>

## IMAGING THE WORLD

This analysis signals a pronounced shift from Heidegger’s critique of the world image: even though we can now see the world in one view, this does not mean that it is in our hands. On the contrary, it means that the planet is present as that which is beyond our grasp in a way that it was not in earlier times. This shift is, of course, also dependent on the development in our understanding of the nature of the image. In the last chapter of Gilles Deleuze’s two books on cinema, he offers an analysis of the complexity of the cinematic image in its development from silent film, to talkies, to contemporary cinema. Specifically referencing the cinematic deserts of Pier Paolo Pasolini and Michelangelo Antonioni, Deleuze describes this development as the passage from the viewable to the readable image:

It is as if, speech having withdrawn from the image to become founding act, the image, for its part, raised the foundations of space, the ‘strata’, those silent powers of before or after speech, before or after man. The visual image becomes *archaeological, stratigraphic, tectonic*. Not that we are taken back to prehistory (there is an archaeology of the present), but to the deserted layers of our time which bury our own phantoms; to the lacunary layers which we juxtaposed according to variable orientations and connections.<sup>21</sup>

Through its technological development, the cinematic image has developed into a complex form that is able to show us different layers of our visual and cultural present. It is an archeology of the present, far removed from the vision of transparency through technology underlying Heidegger’s analysis. And it is exactly these powers that make cinema apt for the exploration of the visual structures of a globalized world, as is done in *Babel*, by contrasting two barred visions of a landscape within a single scene. The desert seems to be a privileged space for these kinds of exploration, not only in the films of Iñárritu, but further study could be made on the many films on globalization set in the deserts of Iraq or Afghanistan, on the sexualized deserts of Bruno Dumont, or on the relation between intimate spaces and open landscapes in Abbas Kiarostami’s films.<sup>22</sup>

In all these cases, the space of the desert acts as the setting in which the intimate is confronted

with the global. This is in psychoanalytical terms, following Spivak, as the making *unheimlich* of everyday existence in a globalized world, or, following Deleuze, as the visual archeology of the power structures of globalized society. In both cases, we are far removed from the transparency of the pictures of the world envisioned by Heidegger. The Earth or planet is not nature, not an origin, but a construct that acts as an other in relation to a perceived home or belonging. In *The Origin of the Work of Art*, written shortly before “In the Age of the World Picture,” Heidegger sums up the role of the work of art in a short phrase: “In setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth.”<sup>23</sup> In these contemporary films, that relationship is reversed. By setting forth the Earth, by traversing it and letting it traverse our lines of sight, the work of art destabilizes the world, opens it up, and lets it interact with other worlds. In its engagement with tactile images of specific locations, it becomes possible for cinema to reflect on the relationship between the totality of globalization and its influence on the everyday lives of people in different parts of the world. By picturing the planet in such a manner, the film shows us our world.

## Notes

1. Hamid Naficy, “Multiplicity and Multiplexing in Today’s Cinemas: Diasporic Cinema, Art Cinema, and Mainstream Cinema”, *Journal of Media Practice* 1 (2010): 11–20, 15. David Bordwell has launched the concept of the “network narrative” to describe this genre, thus focusing on the complexity of the narrative instead of the broader range of multiplicities included by Naficy. David Bordwell, “Mutual Friends and Chronologies of Chance”, in *Poetics of Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 189–252. Almost every article on *Babel* highlights the use of network narrative. See e.g. Juan Pellicer, “Bridging Worlds: Transtextuality, Montage and the Poetics of *Babel*”, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 2 (2010): 239–49; Todd McGowan, “The Contingency of Connection: The Path to Politicization in *Babel*”, *Discourse* 3 (2008): 401–18; Richard Locke, “Globalization and Its Discontents”, *The American Scholar* 2 (2007): 114–18; and Svend Erik Larsen, “Fletværk: fortællinger i en globaliseret kultur”, in *Hvad er verdenskunst?* eds. Mads Anders Baggesgaard et al. (Aarhus: Klim, 2009), 39–66.
2. Paul Kerr, “*Babel*’s Network Narrative: Packaging a Globalized Art Cinema”, *Transnational Cinemas* 1 (2010): 37–51.
3. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 33.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 46.
6. W.J.T. Mitchell, “World Pictures: Globalization and Visual Culture”, *Neohelicon* 2 (2007): 49–59.
7. Martin Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture”, trans. William Lovitt, in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper, 1977), 129–130.
8. Thomas Sheehan, “Heidegger and the Nazis”, *The New York Review of Books* 10 (1988): 38–47.
9. It is worth noting, though, the problematic linking of the horrors of the Holocaust to a general philosophy of technology in the infamous remarks by Heidegger, who mentions the Holocaust only twice, in two lectures both held on December 1, 1949: firstly in a comparison with the industrialization of agriculture, mentioning the “manufacturing of corpses in gas chambers”; and secondly in a comparison with Chinese hunger victims, describing the victims as “mere quanta, items in an inventory in the business of manufacturing corpses” (ibid., 41–42). See also Julian Young, *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 171–213.
10. And in 1972, *Apollo 17* produced the first full-Earth image, widely known as “the Blue Marble.”
11. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Creation of the World, or Globalization* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 47.
12. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Imperative to Re-Imagine the Planet”, in *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 338.
13. Mitchell, “World Pictures”, 56.
14. See Streetviewfun, <http://www.streetviewfun.com/2008/i-said-coolant-not-koolaid/> (accessed October 19, 2013) and <http://www.streetviewfun.com/2009/google-streetview-kills-bambi/> (accessed October 19, 2013).
15. Alejandro González Iñárritu, “Hollywood Must Portray Point of View of Others” (interview), *New Perspectives Quarterly* 2 (2007): 7–9.
16. In the vein of Alberto Moreiras’ reading of globalization as, citing Althusser, the way that “‘a foreign consciousness’ developed ‘as a veneer on a real condition’.” Alberto Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 52.
17. See e.g. Jim Kitses, *Horizons West: Directing the Western from John Ford to Clint Eastwood* (London: BFI, 2004), 11–14.
18. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 74.
19. In contrast to the image of Earth, the lunar landscape has been explored since Galileo’s invention of the telescope more than 300 years ago, and it was

- well known as a landscape of destitution long before the first Westerns were made. David L. Linton, "Lunar Landscapes", *Geographical Journal* 136, no. 3 (1970): 344–64.
20. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Sign and Trace", in *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 493.
  21. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II, The Time Image* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 234–5.
  22. And interesting counterpoint would be a study of the way in which the jungle acts as a reservoir of opposition to globalization in films by e.g. Apichatpong Weerasathekul or Werner Herzog.
  23. Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 172.