
INTRODUCTION

Global Cinemas in a Time of Networks

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The last two decades have seen both a reconsideration of the geopolitics of cinema as global art form, commodity, and industry and a sense of a world unmoored and rewritten by processes of globalization and technologization. Speaking at the Cannes Film Festival in 2000, Iranian filmmaker Samira Makhmalbaf optimistically characterized emergent digital technologies and the global reconfiguration they offered for film in an affirmative, liberatory light:

The digital revolution will surpass that imbalance. The First World will thus lose its centrality of vision as the dominant view of the world. The globality of our situation will no longer leave any credibility for the assumptions of a centre and a periphery to the world. We are now beyond the point of thinking that we received the technique from the West and then added to it our own substance. As a filmmaker, I will no longer be just an Iranian attending a film festival. I am a citizen of the world. Because from now on the global citizenship is no longer defined by the brick and mortar of houses or the printed words of the press, but by the collective force of an expansive visual vocabulary.¹

Makhmalbaf's enthusiasm for the onset of digital cinemas was grounded in a hope that more filmmakers, working in non-Western nations and outside of hegemonic, capital-intensive industries, would gain access to film technologies. The potentials of democratized access could, in her estimation, rewrite the codes of cultural citizenship—eschewing material, spatial, national, and linguistic boundaries—and point to a truly global aesthetic unbounded by location and pervasive hierarchies between center and periphery. Although

the utopian possibilities Makhmalbaf envisioned have not necessarily come to pass, the rhetorical force of her assertions—and the cinematic imaginary they construct—provide a useful point of departure for considering the status of world cinema and the discourses that have attended it almost two decades on. The notion of world cinema itself seems to have emerged as a concept, discursively, as Michael Chanan has suggested, in the context of both said digital transformation and a slightly older paradigm shift—namely, the fall of the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall in 1989–1991 and the onward march of neoliberalism after.² To take account of these technological, aesthetic, and sociopolitical transformations, *Global Cinema Networks* brings together international film scholars to discuss the aesthetic forms, technological and industrial conditions, and social figurations of global cinema in the twenty-first century. It thus engages in a conversation about the shifting sites of global cinema in an era of digital reproduction and amid new modes of filmic circulation and aesthetic convergence, taking analytic aim particularly at recent films made across Europe, Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. Alongside this investigation of contemporary forms, the volume likewise looks back at instances in film history that present points of contact between historical discourses of globalization and the “worldliness” of cinema and the bleeding edge of contemporary film practices.

CINEMA'S PLACE

The turn-of-the-twenty-first-century anxiety regarding the waning of the analog film medium has coincided with the slow attrition of a physical location for gathering, a place for cinema to collectively *take place*. Makhmalbaf's speech itself alludes to the reduced primacy of the spatial as a determinative feature of the digital. The medium's fundamental *dispositif* in theatrical exhibition has shifted and continues to move toward varied personalized and particularized modes of delivery and nodes of ever-more-granular contact with screens.³ Perhaps the narratives of celluloid cinema's loss and decline partake too much in a nostalgic alliance and affinity for the material, starkly opposed to the immaterial. Yet film theory has continually reminded us of cinema's originating virtuality and its material immateriality.⁴ It is hard to dispute that in the context of the digital era, the pragmatic coordinates of making films and watching films have reshaped the film medium—its formal features and modes of circulation, exhibition, and reception in this new century.

The spatial and temporal coordinates of contemporary life in postindustrial modernity have continually expanded and contracted as the presence and drive of instantaneity, a ceaselessly networked now-ness, organizes life and labor across scales, distances, and time zones. The “flexibility” of digital forms of watching moving images—or in less fortunate phrasing, instantly “accessing content”—makes

that have left many corners of world filmmaking practice unknown and undistributed to broader publics? What cinematic practices, shared spaces, and modes of collectivity persist or fall away in this era of increased digitization but also polarization? How does one consider what falls out of the system of mapping altogether—the nonnetworkable and unmappable? And most important, what modes and methods of analysis become salient in respects to such emergent forms of access, dispersal, and opacity? Employing a retrospective and synthetic set of strategies for accounting for both contemporary and historical iterations of global cinema, the chapters collected here conceive of the global filmic not only as a set of films, material practices, technological processes, or aesthetic categories but as an *idea* and *ideality*.

In film studies as a field, the last two decades have come with an invigorated and efflorescent body of scholarship complicating the categories of global cinemas and world film practices. Different approaches have stressed variegated iterations of notions of the global, the local, and the world and have interrogated the complexities of the national and the transnational, and of forms of translation and transit, in considering the linkages and networks between cultures of filmmaking and film reception.¹³ Chanan, Thomas Elsaesser, and others have noted the preponderance of art or auteur cinema or what Argentinian filmmakers Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas considered Second Cinema in defining the constellation of world cinema.¹⁴ Tracing the development of films, filmmakers, and aesthetics associated with art cinema, *Global Cinema Networks* follows on the work of Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover, who have productively historicized a consideration of global art cinemas in the context of “world cinema studies.” They assert the notion of art cinema as necessarily always already a global or world cinema, as they have insisted on the hybrid, impure nature of this mode, with its “ambivalent” relationality to institution, industry, location, and genre but also its geopolitical urgency in how it allows us to think about the global, the comparative, and the transnational precisely through cinematic form.¹⁵ Many of the contributors here consider films that fall under the banner of transnational art cinema.

As coeditors, collaborators, and cinephiles, we were struck by one manifestation in world cinema over the course of the aughts—that of a slow cinema aesthetic, discussed in varied ways by several contributors (Martin, Tweedie, Andrew, Blasini, Rhodes). This formal tendency employs a predominantly realist, contemplative, long-take tradition associated with midcentury and political modernisms, but it also departs from or remakes modernist aesthetics in a variety of ways. Seen in contemporary films by noted and emergent makers (e.g., Jia Zhangke, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Tsai, Pedro Costa, Kelly Reichardt, and Lisandro Alonso, among many others), it must also be contended with in the novelty of its insistence on the cinematicity of the moving image precisely as the medium

and large national industries have transitioned toward digital modes of shooting, editing, postproduction, projection, and storage.¹⁶ The durational aesthetic strategies of slow cinema makers both dialogue with modernist European canons in their formal register and also derive complexly from local specificities and indigenous modes of image making and storytelling. Their geotemporal interventions require the spectator to prioritize form and the phenomenology of filmic spectatorship while also demanding an attentive and attuned gaze.

A prominent example is the work of Thai-born Cannes Grand Prix winner Apichatpong Weerasethakul, whose diasporic travels to film school in Chicago eventually returned him to his home in Thailand, a rich site in which he has made haunting, perplexing films that embed the trajectories of a long-take style with indigenous, spiritual narrativities and allegorical figuration that bespeak recent political struggles, folk oral traditions, and ghostly tales. In the early 2000s, the modes of slow aesthetics seemed to be truly global and pervasive, circulating across national boundaries and appearing in distinct forms in films from Argentina, Thailand, Turkey, Taiwan, Iran, and Romania, among other locations. In some cases, the tendency was accused of falling into a generic or “default international” or “festival style,” bespeaking the popularity of these films at international festivals and among curators and programmers more than in the maker’s home nations.¹⁷ This critique itself subscribes to a slightly cynical, albeit deeply infrastructural and ideological analysis of the geopolitics of the festival scene as a determinative economic, taste, and aesthetic network. It acknowledges the complicated facture of the category of location or region as a useful heuristic for understanding world film practices. But could one also see the aesthetic of slow cinemas through the spirit of the “collective force” of global conventions utopically described by Makhmalbaf in her paean to the political and representational possibility of digital modes, particularly for non-Western filmmakers? And further, if we were to decenter both auteurism and nation as primary templates of meaning, what might it mean that a film might be more *of* a festival (funded, say, by the Hubert Bals Fund or made at a transnational pedagogical outpost/training ground that attracts diasporic filmmakers) than *of* a nation, national context, or a placed site—subject to the collective flows, friendships, interests, and concatenations of care and influence? With the scholarly rise of film festival studies as well as new industrial histories and analyses of production cultures and funding operations, such networks of circulation and production become eminently more legible and can necessarily be subjected to deeper interrogation.¹⁸ Emblematic of a globalizing aesthetic form that seems to both insistently inscribe and refute locality, “slow” films are testaments to the hybridized maps of festival cultures, networks of geopolitical aesthetic influence, and more dispersed and diffractive modes of distribution and circulation facilitated by the digital era. But they also, in their formal preoccupations with decelerative time,

suggest a forceful and persuasive critique of time pressure in and of a neoliberal moment as well as alternative models of attention, care, and being-with.

Looking beyond this instance of global film practices and new aesthetic forms as resoundingly global in their scope and reach, as editors we were keen to consider other such points of formal and representational convergence in global cinemas and to pose the question to the *work* of globality as equally an aesthetic and a political project. Along with the manifestation of the slow film, with its insistence on durational presence, what is made visible in the “network narrative” and “modular” multiple-protagonist films of Alejandro González Iñárritu’s *Babel* (2006) or Fatih Akin’s *The Edge of Heaven* (2007)—a mode discussed also by contributor Adrian Martin—is the figuration of human connection and connectivity. Network narratives evidence that world cinema practices are indexing something about the fractious nature of human relationality in late capitalism, and the stakes and costs of globalization seen otherwise across borders and territories.¹⁹ Such cinemas dramatize the visibility of circuits of exchange between historical and contemporary aesthetic traditions as well as the networks and connections among different regions, film cultures, and practices. In the present moment, network connectivity is itself a pervasive and pernicious discursive and ideological trope that conceals other relations of power.

In addition to tracking films that explore sensory realism and temporal experimentation and that allegorize networks, this collection seeks to understand how historical forms and styles might recur or grow recursive in ways inclusive of, but not necessarily limited to, strategies of temporal experimentation. What persists, loops, and belatedly returns in new cinematic materializations, conventions, and locations in the broad field of practice of world cinema studies? Might there be historical antecedents and conversations to be drawn from not only the network between different “waves” and periods of filmmaking but also unexpected or comparative frameworks or methodologies?²⁰ And might there be ways to think the coexistence or, as Martin suggests here, “multihistorical,” valences of “late cinema” as we know it and new digital forms with practices linked to early cinema traditions—for example, in the instance of thinking a “new silent cinema” or a cinematic atavism?²¹ And how might the very *historicity* of global cinema or world cinema as a category be complicated by such elastic geotemporalities?

MOVEMENTS, CIRCULATIONS, PROCESSES OF GLOBAL CINEMAS

Therefore, what began with an impulse to assess a very specific aesthetic formation in the context of digital networks has developed into a collection that has tasked key scholars—who have elsewhere persuasively written about world

cinemas—with addressing the multivalent changes occurring in transnational and global film culture in aesthetic and technological terms as well as through the prisms of methodology and historicity. The category of analysis of “world cinema” is a troubled and problematized one, complicated by varied accounts and disputes in film studies over the past decade. Skeptics of the category have framed a series of productive questions, among them, Is world cinema merely a way to package, intellectually or pedagogically, the film practices of non-Western nations or to append the films of the Global South by Eurocentric scholars? Is world cinema a useful category at all in light of its definitional associations with the complicated articulations of the fields of world literature or world music?²² And further, is world cinema a way to make scholars from white Anglo-European nations comfortable with what they do not yet know about distant parts of the world, collocated in a convenient package for pedagogical use? These are all compelling and persuasive questions that speak to the limitations and generativity of the concept.

While we prefer the appellation *global cinema*, which partly evades the presumption of *world*, it is instructive to adhere to what Lucia Nagib so rightly proposes in order to produce a “positive” and productive concept for the ethical category of world cinema. Nagib argues that it is necessary to think world cinema through something other than the frame of “otherizing or exoticizing”; instead, we must consider it as a “cinema of the world . . . as circulation.”²³ The framing is novel and urgent not only because it harnesses the necessary element of *movement* so central to cinema’s formal substrate but because it recalibrates cinema’s *worldliness* as a function of its capacity to move. Nagib invites us to see film itself as a form of cultural movement and transit in process. The flows and transits of cinema also align with the exceedingly speedy and instantaneous manner through which digital technology and its global networks facilitate, redirect, and sometimes confound access. Nagib configures world cinema as a formation that exceeds disciplinarity and can become a methodological project—a process as much as an object, “a way to cut across history according to waves of relevant films and movements, thus creating flexible geographies.”²⁴ Nagib invites film studies scholars to think reflexively about how we frame or engage the notion, not only in a constant state of redefinition, but also apart from the persistence of oppressive and limiting binary modes of analysis, embracing multiple and emergent theoretical frameworks.

TIMES AND NETWORKS

This volume contains diverse perspectives on an idea of a world that has expanded and contracted—made both too near and too far, moving both too fast and too slow—through emergent media technologies and processes of

globalization in a time more and more defined by the presence, operation, and permeation of networks. From file-sharing networks to social media to informatics infrastructures, cellular forms, viral contaminations, and social and political organizations, networks have become, for better or worse, one of the reigning metaphors and modes of sensemaking of the twenty-first century. The network has become seemingly the most persuasive contemporary formal model for mapping nonhierarchical, relational connections; interactions; processes; flows; and exchanges across complex systems.³⁵ In the enmeshing of users and producers in digital distribution economies and production ecosystems, the utility of networks operates as an explanatory model that seems to better account for the relations between agents and large-scale systems, sedimenting interactions and exchanges over time. Networks—as image and concept—are being marshaled to examine not only digital or communication forms but also economic, industrial, affective, aesthetic, and neural nets. Through their material and discursive ubiquity, networks reconfigure the valence, mobility, and legibility of world film practices, able to frame both historical and emergent patterns.

However, both recent developments and dark underpinnings of the digital economy have only confirmed the insights of media theorists Alexander Galloway, Eugene Thacker, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, and Seb Franklin, among others, who remind us that networks are not neutral or value-free.³⁶ Networks are always means and instruments of control, of uneven power dynamics, even as the idea or image of networks is called on to signify untrammelled freedom or autonomy. Chun articulates how networks are often made isomorphic with the “free flow” of trade in global markets and the liquidity of speculative finance.³⁷ She argues that the specific temporalities of the twenty-first-century media environment are organized by an illusion of empowered media consumption and autonomous taste building; as “producers,” we provide free attentive labor and aggregated data in our everyday browsing, working, buying, and preferential activities to media conglomerates.³⁸ Tastes, habits, consumer choices—the very materials of late capitalist consumer identity—become the iterative substrate and invisible labor of digital life. And most recently, the furor regarding the utilization of data aggregated from social media to swing and influence U.S. elections suggests that the ideology of network connectivity trades the attention-capital of user desire in service of the political manipulation of our material and social realities.

Chun, for her part, details how the imagination of the network and the desire to use networks as epistemic tools, as models for social and systemic totality, has dovetailed with the historic development of neoliberalism and the metastases, booms, and busts of global capitalism in its late financialization stage.³⁹ By identifying and ascertaining the workings of networks, contemporary thinkers aim to engage in more salubrious modes of elaborating the aesthetic in relation to the social. Chun reminds us that it was Fredric Jameson, in his notion of cognitive

mapping, who proposed that the inability of subjects to locate themselves within the unfathomable operations of global capital was the very symptom of post-modernity.³⁰ For a number of this volume’s contributors, Jamesonian cognitive mapping is evoked as an evocative, if now historical, form of analysis against which to consider and grapple anew with questions of perspective, point of view, granularity, and scale in world cinema.

To the extent that networks seem, for the time being, to address or ameliorate a desire to grasp and grapple with the unfathomable scale of global capital, Chun suggests that the epistemological desire for totality to which technological networks appeal works to conceal the true meanings of the failures and fissures of any epistemic system. The conceptual and practical value of those failures, inefficiencies, and blind spots is precisely where the political possibility of networks resides—in the linkage to imaginaries and imaginations of the collective, not as a “swarm,” but as a democratic assembly and radical collective, an assemblage and route toward political feeling and action. In another domain of humanistic criticism, the prevalence of thinking network as form, or what Patrick Jagoda calls “network aesthetics,” necessitates an interrogation of infrastructural, affective, and phenomenal components of visual media in relation to our experience of moving images.³¹ Like Jagoda, Caroline Levine takes a formalist, rather than a historical materialist, tack to a consideration of the network as a formal device that operates through expansions, crossings, chance, and intersection—one that reaffirms ways of reading the social in the “affordances” of aesthetic form.³²

What does this quandary of the tyranny and utility, the potentials and dangers, of network temporalities imply for cinema in its dispersed, diffracted, and remediated fate as it persists and reforms itself—embedded in various other intertextual media? And to what degree does the network reconfigure or erode the spatiality of the global—and indeed, of global cinema—through its temporal manipulations and colonizations of lived time with the time of technicity? A cinematic instantiation and global imagining of the affective, embodied, and unevenly lived components of a network temporality appears in the recent feature of Argentinian filmmaker Eduardo Williams, whose film *El auge del humano* (*The Human Surge*; 2016) pursues uncharted terrain in its formal and narrative experimentation. Resembling experimental ethnography as well as the laconic dream states seen in the films of Weerasethakul, this roving hybrid docu-fiction is structured as a triptych, unfolding in three locations: Buenos Aires, Argentina; Maputo, Mozambique; and Bohul province in the Philippines. The film also uses multiple formats for each segment—Super 16mm, Blackmagic digital camera reshot off a computer on Super 16mm, and RED digital video, respectively—implying a heretical, hybrid approach to platforms and the cinematicity of the image. The film consecutively follows three groups of twenty-somethings, mainly young men, as they wander through their respective towns

seeking employment, killing time, looking at their cell phones, talking in chat-rooms, and waiting and trying to “connect,” catch a Wi-Fi signal, and get online. The temporal atmosphere of the film is languid, yet its idiom is mobile, as the moving camera inventively follows and observes its subjects with both detachment and a quality of intimacy. Actors both play for and improvise with the camera within their own life worlds, shooting the shit, talking pop philosophy, and speculating. Moving from flooded city streets and cramped family apartments in Buenos Aires, to a town in Mozambique, to a rural province in the Philippines, one of the key devices that spectacularly connects one location with the next is the use of a cut that conjoins and occupies networks.

In one striking scene, the Argentinian lads pose and partake in sex acts with each other on a webcam (presumably, they do this for some precious cash); while this transpires, a zoom in on the screen links performers and their presumptive viewers, the subjects of the subsequent section of the film in Maputo. Such magisterial and showy shifts of perspective and location via a technical interface embody a twenty-first-century aesthetic invested in the dead times within networked life. They also manifest a cinematic navigation of the network form in a fusion of connective motifs—the cut, the narrative axis, and the compression, collapse, and distance between simultaneously existing geotemporal worlds. Williams cast nonprofessional actors, some of whom he met through friends and some of whom he found or friended or scouted on social media, a technological form embedded in the film’s diegetic and extradiegetic labor practices. The improvisatory, ambling, durational quality of the work is tempered with its keen sense of casual yet persistent movement and circulation, and it is



FIGURE 1.1. Laconic connectivity and the latency of the network in *The Human Surge* (Eduardo Williams, 2016)

driven by a keen understanding of precarious labor and youth culture and an affinity for temporal affects and habits in the Global South. For these youth, the virtues of the network form seem to be bound up in its promise, but in practical terms, it is in fact an architecture of failure, asynchrony, and unrequited desire.

In the final third, disparate geographical and filmic spaces are hyperbolically linked through the camera’s zoom into an anthill and reappearance in an earthy patch located in Bohul—a cosmic movement that enters into the buzzing geological loam of the earth itself. We convene with youngsters who wander through a forest, eventually landing at a swimming hole, while they discuss where they might find internet access. As dusk settles, they continue to walk, seeking a cybercafé but finding that they have all closed. The film concludes with images from a cold-surfaced, blue-tinged factory, a lab that inspects parts of tablet computers, bringing the unequal access to and the uneven temporalities of the networked age to a conclusion on images of the activated, abstracted screens themselves, the labor of their assembly or manufacture decidedly off-screen. Emblematic of the cinema that Makhmalbaf perhaps imagined, and an antidote to the romance and chronicity of connectivity figured in the more popular genre form of the network narrative, Williams’s *The Human Surge* embodies the geotemporal possibilities of a twenty-first-century global cinema finding its cinematic idiom and its form in the very material conditions and realities out of which the network imaginary is forged.

CHAPTERS, FRAMEWORKS, INTERVENTIONS

Taking up this notion of flexible geographies and geotemporalities in the contexts sketched previously of the age of the network, this collection approaches the question of world cinema through a set of frames that remain persistent and relevant despite changing priorities in film culture and film studies. These frames, specifically those of *methodology, temporality, and aesthetics of abstraction and geopolitics; of identity, history, and representation; and of generic forms and modes of kinship*, allow us to open the conversation on world cinemas to new juxtapositions, forms of analysis, and comparative interpretive and historiographic strategies.

The chapters here move through and against a set of allegorical figures, themselves models of cinema’s capaciousness as frame, window, and portal onto and of the world (Martin, Andrew). They also oscillate between conceptions of surface and depth (Rhodes, Tweedie); between horizontality and verticality (Schoonover, Guido); between the overwhelming and inherently constrained mythos of open access and the creative possibilities borne out of conditions of social regulation, restriction, and economic privation that give shape to political subjectivities (Ukadike, White, Blasini); and between the formulaic, quixotic,

and compliant and the transformative, transgressive, and violating elements of global forms and genres (Xu, Alvaray, Paik).

In all the chapters here, our contributors consider the persistence of certain units of knowledge and tropes or motifs that might guide new understandings of global cinema. Despite claims of a borderless, territorially unfixed world facilitated by technological networks and globalizing capital, the pervasiveness of spatial metaphors requires new languages to make sense of cinema's forms—in terms of the space of the social and the space of the image itself and the cinematic image as a spatial form, rendered in new times and temporalities. The chapters also foreground the question of temporality itself as a determinative quality of the global.

Although of late we have witnessed an insistence in critical theory and humanistic scholarship on the value of nonrepresentational analysis, our contributors point to the radical necessity to not foreclose on the politics of representation and the embeddedness of cinema in notions of identity, even in a discursive culture that seeks or fetishizes the asubjective or anti-identitarian. And even as some have challenged a “grand theory,” or the indulgences of theorization, our contributors remind us that the fate of humanistic inquiry lies in its capacity to understand the function of abstraction. Abstraction requires the theoretical in order to grapple with the workings of power, ideology, and their uneven and shifting relations, and our contributors engage vigorously with theoretical framings that might most productively render world cinema a new concept. Further, they examine the way that the forms and formal components of cinema are themselves politically instrumental. They show us how filmmakers such as Kiarostami, Tsai, Akin—in their use of a filmic frame, the functionality of a cut, the heft of a long take, the revision of a genre—inscribe such forms with relations of power but also the means of its critique.

The chapters here stage conversations about aesthetics, space and ideology, history, politics and identity, and generic modes. In the first part, on cartographies, geopolitics, and aesthetics, Dudley Andrew and Adrian Martin offer two diverse perspectives on cinema as a formal totality and the desire to grasp its shape through new hermeneutic tropes. Andrew revisits his earlier field-defining essays on world cinema, challenging his own reliance on the motifs of mapping and the atlas, rendering them insufficient, if still suggestive, models for imagining world cinema's forms. Mobilizing the opposition of surface versus depth and playing with the implications of networks on global art cinemas, Andrew traces some motifs of mobility, connectivity, history, and memory in the cinema of Wong Kar-wai, Jafar Panahi, and Nuri Bilge Ceylan, among others. Andrew calls for a return to depth as a way to get beyond the surface metaphors of maps and globes. This “geology of cinema” proposes a way to dig in, past instrumentalizing geographies, into the richness of moving-image practices in a widened temporal,

historical, aesthetic, and technological frame. Discussing Panahi's purloined, dissident documentary *This Is Not a Film* (2011), Andrew eloquently lays out the possibilities and trajectories of a twenty-first-century cinema that materializes and gives shape to the workings of history, even as it operates as a device of complex capture, a “mise-en-abyme” of Panahi's own filming strategies and past films and the layered histories of Iranian cinema.

Following on Andrew's reflection on the tendencies of contemporary global aesthetics, Adrian Martin in turn considers the function of the frame itself as an operative logic and operational trajectory of recent world cinema. Seeking to ascertain, from a macro view, the presence of a global cinema aesthetic and approaching the problem multihistorically across varying time scales, Martin recovers a 1948 text by art historian Étienne Souriau on dramaturgical space in theater and the preponderance of the cube and the sphere as operating principles for theatrical form. Martin deploys these insights regarding dramaturgical geometries to work through the materialization of global film styles in the twenty-first century around the question of the frame and framing. Taking the formal limit of the frame as his case and his definitional parameter, Martin suggests that recent world cinemas move in one of two directions: toward reinforcing the frame or undoing it. Examining a kaleidoscopic range of filmic examples, from Terrence Malick to Pipilotti Rist, from Michael Haneke to Ken Jacobs, Martin suggests that recent global cinemas attempt either to reframe, in a state of composing, “working the frame,” or to deframe—that is, to “shatter” it—as their millennial options in the extremes of world moving-image culture. Both Andrew and Martin, in their distinct approaches to formal construction, present ways of thinking film history and film aesthetics dialectically, in a state of revision and reinscription.

The conjunction of form with specific geospatial networks is examined subsequently by John David Rhodes and James Tweedie, who consider the function of urban geographies and of a spatial imaginary in the works of distinct groups of filmmakers that, while at odds, through the arguments elaborated here, produce many unexpected affinities. John David Rhodes considers the transhistorical formal legacy of Italian modernist art-house auteur Michelangelo Antonioni for contemporary slow or contemplative filmmakers, such as Taiwanese director Tsai Ming-liang. Taking up the spatial logics of abstraction in Antonioni's films, Rhodes makes a bold claim regarding the geopolitical nature of abstraction—refuting a rhetorical predisposition to view abstraction as an anti-political mode of mere “empty” formalism. Examining Antonioni's film *Chung Kuo—China* (1972) as a contested, controversial text, Rhodes anatomizes the cultural collisions rendered in both its reception and its form, considering the way conceptions of abstraction—from Wilhelm Worringer to Fredric Jameson's theorization of cognitive mapping—might help us understand the labor of

abstraction in Antonioni's and other artists' works. Abstraction, Rhodes claims, is fundamentally a juxtaposition between dissonant spatial and temporal coordinates indicative of the uneven logics of global capitalism, coordinates that engage and address a laboring spectator and extract a labor that is nothing if not a political form of thought. James Tweedie, in his contribution, questions the relations and interfaces between the urban and the cinematic, drawing on William Mitchell's notion of the "city of bits" to consider the politics of space and conceptual abstraction at work in the formal features of contemporary Chinese documentaries. He looks to Chinese documentaries by Jia Zhangke and Wang Bing that negotiate between the industrial ruin and the futuristic utopia while also relying on an "atavistic" mode that hearkens back to strategies of realist representation from cinema's earliest days. Tweedie explores how the stability of conditions of space itself is undermined by digital and capitalist development, which thus challenges the cartographic maps Andrew also questions in his chapter. Tweedie's chapter operates as a productive foil for Rhodes's claims and puts Jameson's cognitive mapping to a different conceptual use to understand both the transformation of the Chinese city and landscape and the shifting allegiances and strategies of documentary makers in their spatial intervention in Chinese landscapes of development, reconstruction, resource extraction, and depletion.

Extending the comparative conjunction of historical and contemporary cinemas across Andrew's, Martin's, Rhodes's and Tweedie's chapters, the second part of this book, concerning global ideality, history, and representation, moves across temporal scales to historical examples and precedents that might reframe world cinema as an interwar and postwar development—one mediated by critical spectators invested in the capacities of cinematic movement to figure and refigure the very definition of the human. The legacies of humanism are very deeply felt in the first two accounts of the specific *historicity* of world cinema, as they do the work of analyzing historical receptions as nodes and sites of knowledge production, places where new ideas of cinema's worldliness and connectivity are being forged. Laurent Guido considers critical reaction to Walter Ruttmann's *Melodie der Welt* (1929), a symphonic documentary that portends to present spectators with a "melody of the world" through a montage of affinities between starkly opposed geographical locations of human movement. As a predecessor of films such as Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi* (1982), which use vanguard techniques to compress and condense global action, Guido argues that the reception of the film reveals critics attempting to ascertain a lexicon for a worldly rhythm and, by implication, a problematized model of human universality in an era of colonial encounter, rendered through new devices of cinematic form.

In his chapter, Karl Schoonover, like Guido, deploys reception history and turns to moments of encounter in what Fred Turner has termed the "democratic

surround" created by midcentury U.S. modes of visual culture.³³ Schoonover traces the discursive construction of a postwar liberal humanist spectator, tendered through accounts of cinema as an apparatus for global, humanitarian feeling. Weaving together critical, intellectual, and industrial reception of films ranging from social-problem films, to Orson Welles's *The Stranger* (1946), to Disney's *The Three Caballeros* (1944), Schoonover synthesizes wide-ranging accounts of midcentury cinema around the emergent figuration of humanist "understanding" established in counterpoint to a notion of the American nation as stable, hegemonic ground from which to encounter the world in a new Cold War order. Tracing writing from Barbara Deming to Ralph Ellison, Siegfried Kracauer to Walter Wanger, Schoonover points to a historical moment where an idea of cinema as a global, affective form was being generated through its capacity to construct and move spectators into an engaged state of empathy and mimetic feeling, a blurring of "compassion and comprehension."

In another register of receptivity and humanism, the affective and the empathic provide some of the ground for the next two chapters, which explore representation's stakes with respects to identities and social publics. N. Frank Ukadike examines the emergence of a new Nigerian cinema commonly known as Nollywood and its conjunction of technological expediency and narrative novelty, framing it as a new moment in the history of African cinema, one that diverges from the canons of earlier African auteur cinemas and embraces both video technologies and a cinematic populism as the basis of its immediacy and appeal to global audiences. In contrast to the overt political and aesthetic aims of earlier African cinemas, Ukadike argues that the commercial motivations of Nollywood filmmakers create a distinct, populist, mobile form. Nollywood's low-budget mode of production, distribution, and storytelling offers access to new global markets and, in relying on popular modes and generic styles, provides emergence to new African voices and subjectivities.

Patricia White extends her work on women's cinema as world cinema, taking the case study of the diasporic Iranian American film by Maryam Keshavarz, *Circumstance* (2011), a film that thematizes the global circulations of lesbian identity in diasporic networks, moving between art-house publics and transnational feminist circuits. Situating the liminality of the film's director as a diasporic Iranian American subject in relation to the film's treatment of a cosmopolitan and cosmopolitical feminist lesbianism, White positions *Circumstance* as an emblematic and intersectional work, drawn from its currency as a mobile text with varied locations and significations—Iran, Lebanon, U.S. indie market, Iranian black market, and DVD and digital distribution. White illustrates the film's circulatory liminality—its usage and awareness of lesbianism as a market "hook" and signifier of freedom and human rights seen through the frames of a "humanitarian gaze," linked to what Schoonover has mapped in very different

terms in his chapter. White's account of *Circumstance*, not as a pure "foreign" film but as an independent, diasporic, and "accented" film—following on Hamid Naficy—allows us to consider the ecosystem of festival selection, global audiences, distribution networks, and notions of diasporic and sexual and gender identity constructing world cinematic meanings.

The last part of the book, which focuses on kinships, identifications, and genres, continues the prior's examination of identity formations and publics to sketch out new approaches to film genre and uses genre to frame new developments in film practice and film theory. These chapters take the shape of specific case studies of varied films, but they also make larger claims about genre as an instrument of global aesthetics. To the extent that genre houses representational tropes central to notions of family, gender, and nation, these chapters examine the central role in these locations of kinships—be they filial, taxonomic, or erotic—in constructing boundaries, territories, and power dynamics.

Luisela Alvaray explores the representation of transgressive teenage subjectivities in recent Venezuelan films *La hora cero* (2010) and *Hermano* (2010), both made by first-time directors. Alvaray locates the preoccupation with errant or rebellious youth in contemporaneous demographic and sociocultural changes in Venezuela as well as in relation to film industrial trends and practices. Examining the popularity of youth as subjects and the immense financial success of both films, Alvaray contextualizes the deployment of violent teenage characters as the operation of a social critique, one that makes visible those marginalized and oppressed through apparatuses of state power and control in Venezuela's recent history.

Peter Paik, also using a case-study approach, takes on the perverse family dynamics of South Korean cinema, exploring in depth the ways the fatal mother figure in Park Chan-wook's *Lady Vengeance* (2005) attests to the uneven path and quality of temporal compression in the nation's experience of technological and developmental modernity. The notion of moral law in relation to South Korea's uneven modernity manifests in characters that recalibrate the values and logics of the family as an absolute, absurdist, and violent order. Paik examines how Guem-ja, the avenging female protagonist, paradoxically is able to figure "universal" values while mediating the conflict between accelerating economic development and tradition.

Gilberto Blasini examines the temporal structure of Julián Hernández's films, extending a discussion of queer desire and new queer cinemas to the contemporary contexts of Latin American and specifically Mexican cinemas. Blasini explores how Hernández's films articulate queer identity and longing, providing moments of formal interruption that queer the film's allegiances to conventions of cinematic realism, the quotidian, and the everyday. Blasini's analysis attests to the geopolitics of sexuality in cinema's formal strategies and devices, as he

elaborates a notion of "temporal corrugation" to map the translocal and transnational natures of queer desire as well as the ways the irruption of desire produces a sensory, and not merely sexual, "phenomenological attraction" for the spectator that operates at a formal level as well as in relation to cultural and social codes.

In the collection's final chapter, Jian Xu proposes that we consider the field of genre as a way to rethink world cinema, examining the labile and plastic nature of the gangster genre as a modality that moves across the globe, taking on specific forms in different production and regional contexts. Engaging with debates in the constitution of world cinema as a heuristic category and returning to Dudley Andrew's earlier essays on atlases, maps, and vernaculars of world cinema, Xu offers a novel approach to reconsidering the gangster film.³⁴ Mobilizing this popular genre in particular rather than art cinema, Xu contends that the gangster film is not merely a prevalent mode of American Depression-era cinema but a form that might speak across borders, thus enacting the flexible geography that Nagib proposes to articulate new codes and alternate imaginings of kinship, fealty, and origins. Xu helps us understand the dynamics and global appeal of codes of honor and violations of social order manifested in the figure of the gangster. This cognitive mapping of the genre allows for a radical comparativist project to emerge, one that considers global forms, local vernaculars, and films as an allegorical register of the "onset of capitalist modernity" as well as its ongoing mutations in the digital, networked present in new zones and geographies in developing nations. Rather than a universal code drawn from a Hollywood origin, in this figuration of global cinema, the popular genre opens onto a polycentric world.

In conclusion, we return to what Hediger termed global cinema's "geotemporal" dimension and its capacity for emanation and duration. The questions and political stakes of cinema's capacity to *make time* as well as to *steal*, or *take time*, remain central to some of the guiding motifs of this book. What are the stakes of making and taking time for the ever-increasing variety of cinematic viewing experiences, even as the moving image itself is presented in more and more temporally truncated ways, diffused across multiple screens and locations? How might we coimplicate with screen time, as well as with the geological times of history, filmic and social? If not a shared space any longer, what remains of the *shared time* that global cinemas offer? If anything, what the contributions here reveal is the persistence of the *ideality* of global cinema, a geotemporal imaginary that houses multiple, polycentric, palimpsestic, overlapping worlds and relations.

NOTES

1. Samira Makhmalbaf, "The Digital Revolution and the Future of Cinema (2000)," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Scott Mackenzie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 580.

2. Michael Chanan, "Who's for 'World Cinema'?" (Keynote paper presented at the Wild Things of World Cinema Conference, King's College London, May 2011), <http://www.mchanan.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Reflections-on-World-Cinema.pdf>.
3. On the notion of the cinematic *dispositif*, see Raymond Bellour, "The Film Spectator: A Special Memory," in *Screen Dynamics: Mapping the Borders of Cinema*, ed. Gertrud Koch et al. (Vienna: Austrian Filmmuseum, 2012), 9–21; Adrian Martin, "Turn the Page: From *Mise-en-scène* to *Dispositif*," *Screening the Past*, no. 32 (August 2011), <http://www.screeningthepast.com/2011/07/turn-the-page-from-mise-en-scene-to-dispositif/>; Francesco Casetti, *The Lumiere Galaxy: Seven Keywords for the Cinema to Come* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Erika Balsom, "A Cinema in the Gallery, a Cinema in Ruins," *Screen* 50, no. 4 (2009): 411–427.
4. D. N. Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Homy King, *Virtual Memory: Time Based Art and the Dream of Digitality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).
5. Vinzenz Hediger, "What Do We Know When We Know Where Something Is? World Cinema and the Question of Spatial Ordering," *Screening the Past*, no. 37 (October 2013), <http://www.screeningthepast.com/2013/10/what-do-we-know-when-we-know-where-something-is-world-cinema-and-the-question-of-spatial-ordering/>, emphasis added.
6. In their discussion of remapping and reframing world cinemas, Rob Stone, Paul Cooke, Stephanie Dennison, and Alex Marlow-Mann propose a "longitudinal" and "latitudinal" approach that can account for both historical and geographical specificity and abstraction that, while using spatial metaphors of global navigation, holds the too-easy territorialization of cinema in check. See the introduction to *The Routledge Companion to World Cinema*, ed. Rob Stone, Paul Cooke, Stephanie Dennison, and Alex Marlow-Mann (London: Routledge, 2017), 1–5.
7. Hediger, "What Do We Know?"
8. Hediger.
9. Hartmut Rosa, *Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity*, trans. Jonathan Trejo-Mathys (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).
10. On cinema's historically embedded relationship to location and the function of cinema as index of place and place as index of cinema, see Elena Gorfinkel and John David Rhodes, introduction to *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image*, ed. Elena Gorfinkel and John David Rhodes (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), viii–xxix.
11. Hediger, "What Do We Know?"
12. Hediger.
13. Nataša Đurovičová and Kathleen Newman, eds., *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Song Hwee Lim and Stephanie Dennison, eds., *Remapping World Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics in Film* (London: Wallflower Press, 2006).
14. Thomas Elsaesser, "World Cinema: Realism, Evidence, Presence," in *Theorizing the Audiovisual Media*, ed. Cecilia Mello and Lucia Nagib (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 3–19; Chanan, "Who's for 'World Cinema'?"
15. Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover, "Introduction: The Impurity of Art Cinema," in *Global Art Cinema: New Theories and Histories*, ed. Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3–30.
16. Song Hwee Lim, *Tsai Ming-liang and a Cinema of Slowness* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2014); Ira Jaffe, *Slow Movies: Countering the Cinema of Action* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); Tiago De Luca and Nuno Barradas-Jorge, eds., *Slow Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015); Tiago De Luca, *Realism of the Senses in World Cinema: The Experience of Physical Reality* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2013).

17. See Steven Shaviro, "Slow Cinema v. Fast Films," *The Pinocchio Theory* (blog), accessed August 2017, <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=891>.
18. Marijke de Valck, *Film Festivals: From European Geopolitics to Global Cinephilia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011); Cindy Hik Yung Wong, *Film Festivals: Culture, People, and Power on the Global Screen* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2011); Thomas Elsaesser, "Film Festival Networks," in *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 82–107; Dina Iordanova and Ragan Rhyne, eds., *Film Festival Yearbook 1: The Festival Circuit* (St. Andrews: St. Andrews Film Studies, 2009).
19. David Bordwell, *The Poetics of Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 189–252; Paul Kerr, "Babel's Network Narrative: Packaging a Globalized Art Cinema," *Transnational Cinemas* 1, no. 1 (2010): 37–51; Allan Cameron, *Modular Narratives in Contemporary Cinema* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
20. As contributor James Tweedie exhaustively analyzes in his book on global "new waves" in the East and West: *The Age of New Waves: Art Cinema and the Staging of Globalization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
21. Paul Flaig and Katherine Groo, eds., *New Silent Cinemas* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
22. See Lim and Dennison, *Remapping World Cinema*.
23. Lucia Nagib, "Towards a Positive Definition of World Cinema," in *Remapping World Cinema*, ed. Lim and Dennison, 35.
24. Nagib, 35.
25. A recent example of thinking network as form in literary theory is Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).
26. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, "Crisis, Crisis, Crisis, or Sovereignty and Networks," *Theory Culture and Society* 28, no. 6 (November 2011): 91–112; Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Seb Franklin, *Control: Digitality as Cultural Logic* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015).
27. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, "Networks NOW: Belated Too Early," in *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design*, ed. David Berry and Michael Dieter (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 289–315.
28. Chun, 293.
29. Chun, 294.
30. Fredric Jameson, *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).
31. Patrick Jagoda, *Network Aesthetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).
32. Levine, *Forms*.
33. This extends his larger project, as seen in his book *Brutal Vision: The Neorealist Body in Postwar Italian Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), of considering midcentury liberal humanist regard vis-à-vis the corporeal operations of neorealism as a scene of global witnessing.
34. Dudley Andrew, "An Atlas of World Cinema," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 45, no. 2 (2004): 9–23; Dudley Andrew, "Time Zones and Jetlag: The Flows and Phases of World Cinema," in *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Nataša Đurovičová and Kathleen Newman (New York: Routledge, 2010), 59–89.