
Between Visibility and Invisibility: Diagram of Landscape in Harun Farocki's Film Works

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abstract

This paper will discuss what I would like to call the diagram of landscape. The word «diagram», etymologically derived from the Latin *diagramma* and from the Greek *diagraphein* (to mark out by lines), is the intellectual tool for illustrating structure or location in an abstract way with the aid of both words and images. The word, and especially the act of diagramming, are used ubiquitously in wartime. Mapping land and placing troops are common uses for diagrams in the military. The nature of diagrams would seem irrelevant to the complex character of landscape that I have just mentioned, as the diagram is generally considered an objective tool rather than subjective expression—a measurement of calculation rather than an object of aesthetic appreciation. However, John Bender and Michael Marrinan's 2010 book *The Culture of Diagram* asserts that the diagram is also developed at the crossroads of art and science, subjectivity and objectivity, and aesthetic appreciation and scientific observation. It is a visual device where words, numbers, and images are arranged so that people can understand the structure of the real world with the aid of simulacra of the world made with different types of schema, description, and illustration.

My particular interest here is especially to consider under what conditions this diagram can be read as war landscape through film works of Farocki. It may be paradoxical to pronounce the concept «diagram of landscape», because if the landscape hides its nature under the veil of natural appearance, the diagram is something which unveils this natural appearance to show the essence. However, three premises will solve this paradox. First, the war landscape does not necessarily have a natural appearance. Second, we can also misunderstand or fail to see what the diagram shows and hides under its conceptual appearance, as we can do for the landscape. Third, every image produced by human hands, including landscape, is more or less indissociable from the use of diagram.