

Brian Baker

“Here on the Outside”: Mobility and Bio-politics in Michael Winterbottom’s *Code 46*

This article takes as its focus the representation of mobility and bio-politics in contemporary sf cinema. Globalized networks of mobility in late capitalism have been haunted by the figure of the globally mobile terrorist and by the possibility of global pandemics such as the SARS epidemic of 2002-03 or the H1N1 swine flu panic of 2009 which resulted in the UK government stockpiling anti-viral drugs in case of the spread of a “killer virus.” In an increasingly mobilized world, anxieties about movement of people, transmission of data and disease, and terrorism produce systems for policing and regulating mobility. These anxieties are articulated in contemporary spy thrillers, zombie films, and outbreak or transmission narratives.¹ In what follows, Michael Winterbottom’s *Code 46* (2003) serves as a diagnostic text for the analysis of figurations of globalized mobility and bio-politics, and this article uses the work of Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, and Hannah Arendt to investigate *Code 46*’s mapping of exclusion and inclusion, of the refugee and the citizen, within regulatory systems for the control of mobility in a near-future, post-catastrophic world of globalized capital.

Code 46 begins with shots of the desert, of roads, and of dispersed settlements taken from a low-flying airplane. These vertical shots (desert analogues of the vertical shots of Manhattan or other North American cities that are a staple of contemporary crime film and television) render landscape as geometry, not as *lived* space from a human perspective (*using* perspective) but from an impersonal, “God’s eye” point of view. The shots vary in scale, indicating that the plane is coming into land but also suggesting abstraction or dislocation. The desert itself is flat and featureless; it offers none of the sculpted dunes that characterize the desert in a parallel opening sequence from *The English Patient* (1996), in which the curves of the dunes resemble the musculature of the human body and emphasize the text’s thematic mapping of body and land in its investigation of the colonial gaze and colonial discourse. The airplane in *The English Patient* enters the shot diegetically with Almasy’s (Ralph Fiennes’s) biplane returning from its mission of rescue, but with a fatal cargo that compromises the desert as a zone of freedom or romance and re-scripts it as a terminal space; in contrast, *Code 46* cuts between the shots of the desert and of Tim Robbins, playing the investigator William, gazing out of the window of a passenger jet. At once, the agency (albeit doomed) of Almasy’s flight is re-presented in *Code 46* as carriage, with mobility as the state of *being a passenger* rather than being a pilot; the passenger is transported between places/states at the behest and through the power of others.

Over the shots of the desert are superimposed titles: the phrase “Code 46” and its explanation. Code 46 is a legal prohibition enforcing an incest taboo in a world in which cloning and *in vitro* fertilization predominate. (William, it is revealed later in the film, is an *in vitro* subject.) Code 46 not only prohibits sexual relations between humans with too-close genetic proximity, but it also enables the sovereign bodies that organize this world to intervene in the lives of code 46 transgressors to terminate relationships or embryos. I use the somewhat awkward phrase “sovereign bodies” instead of “states” because the very notion of the state is under erasure in *Code 46*. William is not a state operative, but an investigator for a corporation named Westerfields which, with the symbolic entity called “the Sphinx,” manages a system that regulates global mobility through the issuing of travel documents. These are not state-issued passports, but are legal/financial documents called papelles. These papelles are the concrete manifestation of a system of risk management operated by Westerfields that uses genetic information to predict possible predispositions to disease, infection, or other potential problems. Prohibition of travel is explicitly proposed as a structure of prophylactic benignity in which “if people can’t get cover, there is a reason.” That the papelle is “cover” (insurance against risk) indicates the extent to which the agency of the human subject is multiply limited in *Code 46*, not only in terms of physical mobility, but also in terms of the constitution of an *informatic* body (DNA as code) which may be read as a deterministic understanding of future risk. (The film in fact compounds the sense that the Sphinx is right: when a young scientist obtains a forged papelle to travel to India to study bats—legitimate cover being unobtainable through his genetic predisposition to a disease endemic but not fatal to the local population—the result is his death.) As Jackie Stacey has noted in *The Cinematic Life of the Gene*, in *Code 46* mobility and genetic code are deeply implicated: “The notion that the genetic code will render the human body transparent contains traces of the desires motivating the mapping of modern urban architectures to regulate subjects through optimum visibility” (138). The transparency or visibility of the human body as DNA code is coterminous with a system of control of mobility determined by assessment of future risk based on that genetic code. Not only is there a “spatial isolation of temporality” (Stacey 139) but also time (as the future) is itself collapsed onto a system of total visibility and control of *the present* (the body) through control of bodies in (present) space. Both physical constraints on mobility and the code 46 injunction are, in a sense, attempts to forestall a problematic future.

Robbins arrives at Shanghai Airport, a space filled with plate glass, electric light, chrome and steel, LCD displays, and a predominantly blue palette, and surrounded, for the purposes of the film, by desert; these shots were filmed in Dubai. This spatial dislocation, to create a kind of post-catastrophic fictional space, works generically but also politically: the very disjunction of desert and Shanghai Airport stages the rupturing of continuous time-space in late modernity, the jet-age compression identified as a signal characteristic of late modernity by David Harvey, Fredric Jameson, and others. It is significant that

the film begins with arrival at an airport, since the airport is a diagnostic space for the dislocations of globalized capital and late modernity, the accelerated flows of bodies and material in transnational circuits enabled by globalized patterns of economic activity. The airport has itself been theorized multiple times and has become, if not a *contested* site of discourses of spatiality and mobility in the last 20 years, then at least a significant space through which critiques of contemporary formations can be articulated. J.G. Ballard, for instance, in a 1998 article published in the British newspaper *The Observer*, proposed that “airports and airfields have always held a special magic, gateways to the infinite possibilities that only the sky can offer” (11). “I welcome its transience,” Ballard wrote, “[its] alienation and discontinuities, and its unashamed response to the pressures of speed, disposability and the instant impulse” (11). In typical fashion, Ballard celebrates the potentialities of this “new kind of discontinuous city” to enable a spatial depoliticization of the subject wherein “we are no longer citizens with civic obligations, but passengers for whom all destinations are theoretically open” (11). To leave the *polis* has implications that I will return to later, but the “virtual abolition of nationality” (seemingly reflected in *Code 46*) results not in an increase in securitization but, for Ballard, in an increased openness (Ballard 11). To be a passenger, to be in transit, is necessarily to be *between* states, nations, and subjectivities. Parallel to the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Ballard offers a kind of metaphors of flow, where a loosening of national and spatial boundaries offers the possibilities of translation to a transcendent alterity. Ballard’s airport is oriented to the future in a way impossible for the antiquated and rooted spaces of London, the world city it serves, “the city devised as an instrument of political control” (Ballard 11). Ballard, famously antithetical to the urban, here celebrates airports as a means by which to leave behind the atavistic retreat to spatial “enclaves that seemed to reconstitute mental maps of ancestral villages” (11), a recurrent motif in his later works from *Running Wild* (1988) to *Kingdom Come* (2008); to “become true world citizens” is to negotiate or master the spatio-temporal discontinuity that is embodied in the very fabric of the airport (Ballard 11).

The airport is a diagnostic space of late modernity, and a contested site in terms of its theorization. The anthropologist Marc Augé, in his well-known *Non-places* (1998), identifies the airport with the “non-places” of “super-modernity, “a world that’s surrendered to solitary individuality, to the fleeting, the temporal and ephemeral” (78), that indicates the *erasure* of the markers of lived space in “airports and railway stations, hotel chains, leisure parks, large retail outlets” (Augé 79). This list, which could come from a late Ballard screed, indicates the locus of Augé’s critique: sites of consumerism and tourism and networks of contemporary communications, all of which dislocate and atomize the subject, casting her adrift from history and its traces in lived space. Manuel Castells, whose theorization of a network society has influenced contemporary figurations of the space of flows, saw the first-class departure lounge as a paradigmatic contemporary space of flows, a system or network that allowed the free passage of travelers (if, of course, one has the

right documentation). Contrary to Castells, the sociologist Tim Cresswell asserts that airports are structured by a “kinetic hierarchy” that produces different kinds of mobilities, from the “privileged business traveller” to “immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers” whose experience of the same space are markedly different (Cresswell 223). “The suggestion,” Cresswell argues in *On The Move* (2006), “that airports erase class and nationality seems, frankly, bizarre in an instrumental space where you are literally divided into classes and [where you] are so frequently asked to show your passports as evidence of where you come from and where you are allowed to go” (Cresswell 223).

Where Augé diagnoses the instructional signage of the airport as a marker of individuation and control, Cresswell insists that the airport space works plurally, organized to operate differently for a spectrum of differently marked passengers whose mobility is itself differentially enabled. John Urry, in *Mobilities* (2007), goes further still, arguing that “air travel and its visible inequalities are a synecdoche of the increasingly global pattern of inequality deriving from huge variations in network capital” (152). Rather than celebrating the “networked space of flows” or the airport as a “simulated metropolis ... inhabited by a community of nomads” (Iain Chambers qtd. in Cresswell 45) or as a space of untrammelled freedom, analysis of the potentialities of contemporary mobility for new social formations” must be balanced by analysis of the disruptive, dislocating effects of globalized mobility. If the network society has been acknowledged as a new cultural and social formation, the implicit neutrality of its conceptualization toward a neo-liberal, free-market capitalism as a naturalized or unseen structure which enables these flows is deeply problematic and is challenged by mobilities research. Films such as *Code 46* bring these structures into view by positing futures where control of population movement, and ideologies of inclusion and exclusion, have become much more explicit.

In this, *Code 46* anticipates the debates about migration that have become much more politically visible in Europe since the accession since 2004 of new EU member states to the east. Ginette Verstraete, in 2001, wrote of the increasing control of external borders in the development of the EU at the same time as internal borders were becoming more porous: “the freedom of mobility for some (citizens, tourists, business people) could only be made possible through the organised exclusion of others forced to move around as illegal ‘aliens,’ migrants, or refugees” (29). Verstraete argued that since the Schengen Agreement of 1985, the EU (formerly the EC):

has implemented the gradual abolition of national border controls (which became common frontiers), and replaced them with limited passport and other document checks.... The Schengen agreement was meant to: minimise delays caused by traffic congestion and identity checks; stimulate the free and competitive flow of goods, money and people; create a common European market at a scale that would improve productivity, distribution, and consumption; attract large foreign investments; and enable Europe to compete with the USA and East Asia. (Verstraete 28-29)

Until the events of 2008, the credit crunch (liquidity crisis) and subsequent global economic recession, the dominant model of free-market capitalism stressed liquidity and mobility of both finance and data. The flows of data and finance, however, were not accompanied by corresponding flows of economic migration, except within economic and political blocs whose external borders were closed. While Schengen space enabled greater mobility for white Europeans, this was predicated on the policing and exclusion of non-European others. Since 2004 and the accession of new EU states to the east, these striations have become more marked in terms of economic productivity as well as in terms of race and ethnicity, and systems of differentiation have turned inwards to other Europeans: in Britain, the figure of the Eastern European economic migrant (the Polish plumber or benefit tourist) has become the locus of social anxieties about unregulated mobility. The distinction Verstraete makes between citizens and refugees has become more complicated, but anxieties about who is a citizen and who is not, and who is entitled to remain inside the border, have if anything become even more urgent. Later, I will return to these distinctions in terms of bio-politics, and Giorgio Agamben's theorization of *homo sacer* and "bare life." In *Code 46*, the economic consequences of spatial exclusion are all too clear.

In one of the spatial dislocations that mark the film, William is driven along deserted highways (empty because the full sun is assumed to be dangerous) until he reaches a checkpoint, a controlled and second point of entry into the space of the city. His limousine is surrounded by poor favela dwellers on the outside—*afuera* in the polyglot language of the film—who try to sell goods to the privileged traveler. This second boundary, a kind of *cordon sanitaire* around the city, indicates not only the securitization of the imagined world of the film, but also William's privileged mobility through these barriers. (He is shortly to circumvent security at the Sphinx factory by playing an empathic game with a member of the security staff, his ability to guess her password enhanced by a tailored virus he has taken.) The city of Shanghai (the film makes no reference to the PRC) has become a walled city, prey to the kind of securitization and enclosure diagnosed in Los Angeles by Mike Davis in *City Of Quartz* (1990), but more recently, in the work of Wendy Brown, investigated as an effect of globalized capital. Brown, in *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (2010), argues that the

new nation-state walls [along the Rio Grande, or separating Israeli and Palestinian] are iconographic of [the] predicament of state power. Counter-intuitively, perhaps, it is the weakening of state sovereignty, and more precisely, the detachment of sovereignty from the nation-state, that is generating much of the frenzy of nation-state wall-building today. (24)

For Brown, the "global landscape of flows and barriers" (23) is foundationally interconnected; in seeming paradox, the political fantasy of a "world without borders" and of a hyper-mobilized global migration is always accompanied by physical barriers, "exclusion and stratification" of populations, and "networked and virtual power met by physical barricades" (Brown 20). As

Brown notes, however, in contemporary globalized capitalism, the threats to the nation-state come not from other nation-states but from “nonstate transnational actors—individuals, groups, movements, organisations, and industries” (21). The walls are in fact “icons of erosion,” indices of the waning sovereignty of the state, and an “increasingly blurred distinction between the inside and the outside of the nation itself” marked by “eroding lines between the police and the military, subject and *patria*, vigilante and state, law and lawlessness” (Brown 25).

The *physical* walls of *Code 46* actually prove effective barriers to migration (though how the porous desert boundaries are policed, rather than the road-blocking checkpoints, is left unexamined), partly through the film’s insistence on mobility as mass transportation: William and Maria (Samantha Morton) travel by car, plane, metro, and riverboat at key points in the film. Still more effective, of course, is the system of *genetic* profiling and control that itself relies upon strongly maintained physical barriers to mobility through nodal points such as airports or road checkpoints. *Code 46*’s walls are virtual (and bio-medical) as well as physical, even though the nation-state appears to have withered away.²

Significantly, it is Shanghai that figures in *Code 46* as the future urban zone, a city which is, in Jackie Stacey’s words, “the location for a story about the regulation of highly dispersed populations through rigid, centralized modes of genetic and surveillance technologies” (146). The city’s skyline has become a visual index of modernity *as futurity*, embodying the dizzying energies of late capitalism and displacing Tokyo or Los Angeles as the pattern for Hollywood’s (and sf cinema’s) imagination of the future megalopolis. For the purposes of this essay it is doubly significant, because Shanghai, Stacey suggests, “condenses the tensions between fluidity and mobility on one hand, and restriction and state control on the other hand” (146). Both *Mission Impossible III* (2006) and the latest Bond installment *Skyfall* (2012) feature action sequences set in Shanghai, and the latter’s scenes, where Bond tracks a would-be assassin through an unused floor of a Shanghai skyscraper, insert the secret agent into *Blade Runner*-esque visual spectacle. While stalking the assassin, Bond manoeuvres through a labyrinth of plate-glass walls, and the lights of opposing tower blocks (and an advertisement projected onto the sheer glass wall of the building in direct homage to Ridley Scott’s film) are reflected multiply in the shifting planes of glass. Bond is even able to hide in this space by moving the angle of a glass door to emphasize its reflectivity rather than its transparency. The sequence as a whole is deliberately dislocating and disorienting, and ends with a moment of vertigo as the assassin falls to his death.³ Bond is rarely seen at an airport, but the glass and light of the skyscraper echo the architectural imperatives of the space of the Shanghai airport in *Code 46*, the airport itself operating as a synecdoche for the city as a whole: a dizzying labyrinth of reflected light, shifting planes, and errant perspectives.

Code 46 offers a rather conflicted critique of a global system of spatial exclusion, albeit one that is clearly proximate to our own. When Maria is sent

for her code 46 termination, the spiky attendant of the “Westerfields” clinic tells William that “here on the outside, we do not have access to pleasures freely available in the city,” which at once uncomfortably skewers William’s privileged position (and his assumptions of authority) and validates the assumption that life only exists in the city itself. When William and Maria travel to the Middle Eastern city-state of Jebel Ali (actually in Dubai), this seems to represent a kind of Orientalist fantasy of escape, a temporary holiday from the real to which the couple are inevitably returned. Life does indeed exist here, in teeming abundance; but we still really only see it from the point of view of the outlaw Western tourists, for whom it figures as a backdrop to their romantic intoxication. In an article on *Code 46* and Dubai, Yasser Elsheshtawy indicates how Dubai itself is striated and plural, a geographical fact obscured by the collapse of specific locations throughout the film: “these scenes were shot in the alleys of Deira—Dubai’s historic center—across the Khor (Creek) from and in the shadow of its skyscrapers” (Elsheshtawy 24). *Code 46* hybridizes Dubai and Rajasthan to represent Jebel Ali, but largely effaces the signs of modernity that are signified instead by Shanghai’s skyline. The Orientalism of the romantic narrative is deeply ironic considering that *Code 46*’s conception of the future city based on Shanghai articulates a transnationalism that tends to visually de-localize its sequences.

Winterbottom enforces the dislocating figuration of space as spectacle by largely shooting the city at night. The inhabitants of Shanghai fear and shun daylight, believing it to have some malign property. The *mise en scène* of bleached-out desert highways and empty city streets places it on a continuum with contemporary sf disaster scenarios such as in *Contagion* (2011) and *28 Days Later* (2002), but the nocturnal world is as busy as our own. Just as Maria is a version of the double, a destabilizing and ultimately tabooed self/other in relation to William, Shanghai is itself doubled, day/night, dead/alive, empty/over-full. Shanghai is ethnically diverse *and* predominantly Chinese; it is modern, a city of glass and neon signage, an emblem of globalized capital, yet it is a kind of enclave in a world of other enclaves. Shanghai, then, is at once inclusive (polyglot, multi-ethnic) and excluding (entry requires papelles, others are *afuera*), and its denizens are not citizens (engaged as subjects of *civis* and *polis*) but assume a temporary and attenuated relation to the enclave in which they live: banishment to the outside is a legal potentiality that informs the lives of many of its inhabitants. (William’s return to his wife and family in Seattle at the end of the film, despite his own infraction of the code 46 prohibition, perhaps suggests that some citizens are more protected by the law than others.)

The crucial doubling in *Code 46* is not Shanghai/Dubai (Jebel Ali), or even William/Maria, but inside/outside. When being driven from the airport to the city at the beginning of the film, William comments: “a lot of people live out here,” to which his driver replies that “It’s not living, it’s existing.” This distinction between life as an inhabitant of the city and existence outside, *afuera*, approximates the distinction between *zoē* and *bios*, between “bare life” and political existence, or between *animal* and fully *human* life, that Giorgio

Agamben elucidates in *Homo Sacer* (1998). In that book, drawing upon the work of Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition* (1958), but ultimately upon the difference between forms of existence proposed by Aristotle, Agamben makes a deeply influential intervention into the field of bio-politics and bio-power. Where Michel Foucault, in his lectures to the Collège de France and in the first volume of *The History Of Sexuality* (1978), suggests that a decisive transition in modernity can be said to come at the point at which “bare life,” *zoē*, previously excluded from “political life” (the fully human), was drawn into the sphere of the political, Agamben suggests that the implication of *zoē* and *bios* is actually foundational to sovereign power: “Western politics first constitutes itself through an exclusion (which is an inclusion) of bare life” (11).⁴ Sovereign power, according to Agamben, is identified with “he who decides the exception” (both *homo sacer*, the figure excluded from law, and therefore one who is prohibited from being sacrificed but who may be murdered without punishment; and the sovereign himself, both within and outside the law) (13). In deciding the exception, that which is excluded (*homo sacer*), the sovereign re-includes the excluded. At this point politics comes into being. Agamben writes:

the fundamental categorical pair of Western politics is not that of friend/enemy but that of bare life/political existence, *zoē/bios*, exclusion/inclusion. There is politics because man is a living being who, in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion. (12)

Modern democracy, then, “is constantly trying to transform its own bare life into a way of life and to find, so to speak, the *bios* of *zoē*” (Agamben 13). The world of *Code 46* seems to be structured by a radical division between *zoē* and *bios*, between the bare life of those *afuera* and the political existence of those within the city: between exclusion and inclusion.

Agamben’s work has been very influential on bio-political readings of contemporary popular texts that consider the representation of catastrophe and biological transmission, and in particular Danny Boyle’s *28 Days Later* (2002) and its sequel *28 Weeks Later* (2007), and the film version of *Children of Men* (2006). The zombie—what Eugene Thacker calls “the living dead, the mass of living corpses that are only bodies, that are *only bare life*”—and in particular the excluded, abject figures of George Romero’s *Dawn of The Dead* (1978) and *Day of The Dead* (1985) have been the focus of sustained critical work (9). Read through Agamben, the zombie becomes emblematic of bare life, the excluded or killable subject which, in Thacker’s words, represents “an infestation of death into life, a disease in which the very distinction between life and death is effaced” (10). Fred Botting, who refers to Thacker’s work in the course of an article on “Zombie London,” draws not only on the concept of bare life but also on Agamben’s notion of the “exception” to mark the contemporary zombie film’s staging of bio-politics:

In bio-political discourse, the establishment of the new world order’s legitimacy requires a sovereignty predicated on exceptionality, on life stripped

down to its most basic level and located in “a zone of indistinction” that allows for “the circulation of life as an exception.” “At once excluding bare life from and capturing it within the political order, the state of exception actually constituted, in its very separateness, the hidden foundation on which the political system rested.” When borders blur, Agamben argues, bare life “frees itself in the city” as a “place for both the organization of state power and emancipation from it.” ... For Thacker, zombies serve as an image of bare life’s exceptionality. (Botting 167, quoting Agamben, from *Homo Sacer*, 12)

Botting goes on to suggest that the equation between zombies and bare life works only up to a point: “bare life becomes absorbed, like zombies/civilians, onto and into the reflexive plane of Empire’s operations and exposes a barer life beyond it” (167). This insertion of bare life into political, crucial to Agamben’s (and by extension, Foucault’s) understanding of bio-power and bio-politics, is articulated by Thacker in terms of epidemiology: “a life (*bios*) that is always undone from within by a disease (*nosos*) that threatens order and law (*nomos*)” (92). For Thacker, the *diseased* (rather than dead) zombie of the contemporary zombie film (*28 Days Later/28 Weeks Later*) indicates that the disruption to the bio-political subject is always already *within*, not without.

The zombie, therefore, can be used to disrupt conventional figurations of the subject (especially in relation to the Other), and in their “Zombie Manifesto,” this is what Sarah Juliet Lauro and Karen Embry propose. Reading the subject in the lee of Donna Haraway’s well-known “Cyborg Manifesto” from the 1980s, Lauro and Embry suggest (although their use of Agamben avoids the *zoē/bios* dyad) that the zombie is an “antisubject,” rupturing the boundaries of human self-definition:

Humanity defined itself by its individual consciousness and interpersonal agency: to be a body without a mind is to be subhuman, animal; to be a human without agency is to be a prisoner, a slave. The zombie(i)/e [?] is both of these, and the zombie(i)/e (fore)tells our past, present and future. (90)

Lauro and Embry’s focus is upon the zombie as a *laboring* subject, and draws explicitly from Agamben’s debt to Arendt’s *The Human Condition*. Arendt argues that the condition of slavery “was not a device for cheap labor or an instrument of exploitation for profit but rather the attempt to exclude labor from the condition of man’s life” (84). The *animal laborans*, distinct from *animal rationale* or *homo faber*, is the condition of the subject (slave) excluded from citizenship, who occupies bare life, a household inmate but whose relation to the domestic, to the citizens for whom the slave labors, is one of *political* exclusion. The “distinction between labor and work” (Arendt 85) that Arendt identifies is the difference between Maria and William in *Code 46*, between slave and citizen, between those inside and those outside (even if temporarily allowed to labor within). Maria’s job in the factory making papelles for the Sphinx is in marked difference to William’s work. She is de-individuated, framed in a working environment which is underlit and which emphasizes technology, hygiene, and process. The power of the Sphinx as employer and as “eye”—Maria and her fellow workers are subject to constant

surveillance—is total: she is moved from her job and then removed to the clinic and from Shanghai completely, by processes that are so perfectly administered that they move beyond representation itself. There is no police, no “force” here, only administration. Maria’s gesture of resistance, to steal papelles and sell them to those who have been denied cover, is, she says, motivated by money, but surely also by a restoration of agency, albeit on a small scale. Maria attempts to redefine herself as *animal rationale* rather than *animal laborans*, but this ultimately results in her expulsion. William, by contrast, *works* (rather than labors) for the Sphinx, is part of the administrative structure and helps to operate its processes. In his role, he is not subject to exclusion because he is a citizen; Maria is always already outside (like the slave, the zombie, *homo sacer*).

Agamben’s interrogation of bio-politics is profitably supplemented by Foucault’s consideration of bio-power. In the lectures to the Collège de France and in *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault extended his analysis of power and discourse conducted in earlier texts such as *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Foucault’s analysis of the regimes of punishment and discipline playing across the human body, particularly in post-Enlightenment discourses of law or medicine, is extended to suggest that power “gave itself the function of administering life,” “the ancient right to *take* life or *let* live was replaced by a power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death” (*History* 260, 261; emphases in original). Sovereignty is exercised not in *deciding the exception*, or in “the power of death,” but in “the task of administering life” (261; emphases in original). Foucault then supplements an analysis of “the procedures of power that characterized the *disciplines: an anatomo-politics of the human body*” with “an entire series of interventions and *regulatory controls: a bio-politics of the population*: (Foucault, *History* 262; emphases in original?). These were then “the two poles around which the organization of power over life was constituted” (262).

This additional focus—not only upon the *subject*, but upon *population*—is a significant extension of Foucault’s analytical framework. In terms of *Code 46*, bio-power is extended to Maria both in terms of her body and in terms of her condition in relation to the city. When impregnated by William in violation of the code 46 prohibition, Maria is removed to a clinic *afuera* where her fetus is terminated and the memories relating to William are excised, a double exercise of power and a doubled violation. Maria’s body is subject to the anatomo-politics of a world of *in vitro* reproduction and of “cloning” of the human genetic code (the human body reproduced by technical means) to create new subjects, both inside and outside. The fact of fetal termination, dealt with clinically by female operatives, displaces a patriarchal reading of this sequence. Both the receptionist whose cynical response to and dismissal of William’s viral “intuition” provides the title of this article—“here on the outside”—and the doctor who administers the procedure are women. Instead, the film presents a totally administered system where even William’s mobility and agency ultimately prove ineffective (from within). The transparency of Maria’s genetic coding is opposed to the almost total opacity of the bio-

political machinery that operates in *Code 46*. In a world of glass and neon, it is very difficult to see what is going on.

The centrality of Maria's (reproductive) body to systems of anatomo-political and bio-political control is significant when counterposed to Heather Latimer's reading of Alfonso Cuarón's *Children of Men* (2006), a film that has (like *28 Days Later* and *28 Weeks Later*) produced an interesting body of critical work that considers science fiction, nation, and the bio-political. Latimer's use of Agamben is central but critical: she follows feminist theorists who "have noted a critical absence in Agamben's work when it comes to women and gender, and have argued that we are not all subject to bare life in the same ways" (51). Latimer argues that "the reproductive body is a blank spot in Agamben's definition of bare life" (53), and she reads the film through the centrality of the female refugee. Kee, the young woman in *Children of Men*, whose pregnancy is both a biological miracle and a (bio-)political phenomenon in a world of zero fertility, focalizes a "direct correlation between infertility and terror, and pregnancy and hope" (60). Latimer argues that the film "critiques the politics of bare life: it is *only* through Kee's ability to carry the 'super-person' or 'unborn citizen' ... that Kee is able to access any type of political agency" (68). The refugee (*homo sacer*) and the "fetal citizen" (the as-yet-unborn child whose subjectivity throws into bio-political relief that of its mother and of citizen "terrorists" who try to claim them both for political ends) are limit cases of what is considered to be "living," and it is here, Latimer argues, that the film "highlights how it is often on the level of reproductive policy that bare life takes on its gendered and racialized dimensions" (68).

Maria Gonzalez in *Code 46*, marked as Spanish in her name but played by a (white) English actor, Samantha Morton, is another limit-case of bare life and, as in *Children of Men*, we can read this in terms of gender. In *Code 46*, pregnancy itself does not disrupt or exceed the condition of the mother as citizen/*homo sacer*: the reproductive policy is entirely a function of the technical administration of code 46 laws, based upon ancient taboos but framed as instrumental arbiters of the genetic health of the human gene pool (re-)produced by artificial means. Maria is not even a vessel, like Kee, of something Other to the political system: both she and the fetus are under the operational power of anatomo- and bio-politics. If Maria is, like Kee, *homo sacer*, then "outside" represents not the possibility of escape or freedom, or the forging of a different kind of bio-political condition, but a return to the conditions of bare life compounded by the knowledge of what she has lost: "I miss you," she says at the film's end. William and Maria have differing relations to power, indicated by the ultimate exclusion or inclusion, although both are subject to the same law (code 46) and both are agents of the infraction. Gender and ethnicity are crucial distinctions in the operation of power in *Code 46*, to inside and outside, to citizen and "slave." As Heather Latimer argues, Agamben's conceptualization of *homo sacer* is insufficiently attuned to social, economic, gender, and ethnic striations. We may all be *homines sacri* but, as Fred Botting suggests, the revelation of bare life may

indicate an even “barer life” beyond. We are not all equally *homines sacri* before the law.

In a doomed attempt to re-assert the priority of the romantic couple, as in *The English Patient*, the narrative sequence at the end of *Code 46*, where William “rescues” Maria from the clinic, is inverted. Now William has become subject to the code 46 prohibition. His memories to do with Maria are erased, and his wife and son come to retrieve him. Maria, however, has been expelled from the city: she is now (once again) outside, *afuera*, inhabiting the desert favelas that circle the city in *Code 46*’s imaginary geography. Yasser Elsheshtawy reads this in surprisingly positive terms:

In the final scene of *Code 46*, Maria has been relegated to *afuera*. She is lonely, aged, and desolate, but finally free and liberated, as can be glimpsed from the glimmer in her eyes and her fond remembrance of William. This is contrasted with his mindless existence—induced by forced amnesia—in Seattle, going about his daily routine in the midst of gleaming towers and an immaculate apartment. (30)

I find it difficult to agree with this reading: exclusion is not liberation. The final shots of the film intercut William making love to his wife, an officially sanctioned (and genetically appropriate) coupling, with Maria walking alone, finally sitting facing away from the camera, while the voice-over provides the means by which to process the image: Maria still remembers William and this, in exile, compounds her punishment. I will return to the voice-over again shortly, but here I would like to stress that the end of the film is literally punctuated by Maria’s final lines, addressed (like the rest of the voice-over) to William: “I miss you.” Perhaps, though, it is also the city, and thereby possessing more than bare life, that she misses.

The end of *Code 46* evacuates the possibility of installing Maria and William in what Kurt Vonnegut calls in *Mother Night* (1961) “*das Reich der Zwei*” [the nation of two] (23).⁵ The *Reich der Zwei* is the imaginary community of the romance narrative, the condition of inclusion and belonging that abrogates all other ties and which itself may not be abrogated. Peter Marks suggests, in an article on *Code 46* and surveillance, that “William and Maria’s most romantic moments occur outside [the] boundaries of the city” (233); more tellingly, he also argues that the film “romanticizes this space and makes it clear that the majority of this environment is miserably poor as well as dangerous to the point of being lethal” (233). *Code 46*’s revision of both the spaces of romantic escape—there is no Cave of Swimmers like the one Almsy can occupy with Catherine in *The English Patient*—and the dynamic of the romantic plot’s inevitability is crucial to mobility in the second half of the film. In fleeing to the free port of Jebel Ali by airplane, and then by riverboat or ferry, on foot and by car, there is still no escape from the code 46 prohibition, nor from the regulating controls, the bio-politics of population that enforce them. Although the hotel owner asserts that “you can’t get cover here,” this seemingly symbolic space *outside* the regime of cover is still conditioned by the anatomo-politics of the viral programming of Maria’s body

to violently reject William's. Thus, the sexual act must be, in Jackie Stacey's words, "consensual rape" (169). As Stacey adroitly diagnoses, the "dream narrative" Maria experiences, where she will meet William on a metro train, proposes William as a "soul mate," the romance gaining "a sense of destiny," "both against the odds and yet meant to be, risking everything and yet predetermined" (167). While the proleptic effect of the sequences reinforces a sense of romantic predestination, the deeply unsettling sexual consummation insists upon the multiply programmed nature of their sexual attraction (through genetic proximity and William's viral/empathic abilities) as well as upon the programmed nature of Maria's response (to telephone the authorities). The fateful implications of the mobility of romance are made plain in their final flight across the desert: there is nowhere to go and their *Reich der Zwei* ends with a car crash.

The world of *Code 46* is clearly analogous to our own and offers an estranged representation of contemporary conditions: a globalized and hybridized world of flows, of hyper-mobility and spatial dislocation, striated by differences in ethnicity and gender, and organized through border controls and regulatory bio-political systems that organize a relation to the state through differentiated citizenship, or rather between citizen and *homo sacer*, inclusion and exclusion. In its securitized spaces and bio-medical coding of human beings, it is also clearly produced in a post-9/11 political and cultural context. *Code 46* is not overtly a War-on-Terror text, though it shares in that period's ideological circuits and anxiety about ethnic difference, law and policing, and threats to national integrity. As stated above, the nation-state seems barely visible in *Code 46*, its functions superseded by transnational actors, in particular Westerfields and the Sphinx. To read the film as a dystopia, then, as Peter Marks does, is to reinscribe the text into a generic form that is insistently nation-state based; one might recall that the act of King Utopas in Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) is to dig a trench to create the very island of Utopia, cutting the state off from the rest of the isthmus, the ideal state predicated on the construction of boundaries.⁶ Of British twentieth-century dystopias, the most influential, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), articulates a particularly national imagination of ideological control systems (IngSoc) in relation to a nascent Cold War politics. A dystopian film such as *Children of Men* not only negotiates the bio-political emphases of the twenty-first century, as already discussed, but interrogates the constructions of the British nation-state (and its dystopian, repressive, xenophobic, militarized control systems) amidst a global catastrophe. *Children of Men* is a dystopia produced through the ideological contestations of the War on Terror but, as Fred Botting, Linnie Blake, and others have suggested, the contemporaneous zombie revival (particularly, *28 Days Later* and *28 Weeks*) also offers representations of a catastrophized London, and in *28 Weeks Later* returns the military zones of exclusion and organization that characterized the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq directly to the metropole (and former Imperial center). *Code 46*'s move to the margins, and its focus on mobility and borders, is politically significant in this context.

In an article considering *The Road to Guantánamo*, Bruce Bennett argues that Winterbottom's cinema self-consciously stages its interventions into the contemporary geopolitical fabric through an intentional transnationality (not least in the transnational funding of films such as *Code 46*). Bennett suggests that an apprehension of transnational vectors is apparent in the *textual* fabric of Winterbottom's films, most notably in what Bennett calls the "double perspective" at work in *The Road to Guantánamo*, in tensions between gazes (the tourist's gaze and that of refugees, for instance) and in the recurrent "strateg[ies] of internal doubling (and a consciousness of context) [that] may be found elsewhere in Winterbottom's work" (113). I noted the doubling of Shanghai/Dubai (Jebel Ali), or inclusion/exclusion, above; another of the aspects of doubling or internal tension crucial to *Code 46* is language, and in particular its use of voice-over.

At a banal level, the transnationality of *Code 46* can be seen to be expressed through its linguistic mash-up of English, Mandarin, Arabic, and Spanish, though, as Brian Michael Goss notes, this hybridity is limited and in fact locates English as the "base" language with non-English words "lexically airdropped" into the dialogue at key points: *afuera*, *si*, *claro*, and so on (73). More profoundly, access to language and speech is a critical marker of citizenship and inclusion/exclusion in the bio-political work of Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben. Language, as Hannah Arendt argues in *The Human Condition*, is a crucial component of Aristotle's definition of the human. The *zōon politikon*, man as a "political animal," "can be fully understood only if one adds his second famous definition of man as a *zōon logon ekhon* ('a living being capable of speech')" (27). Aristotle

formulated the current opinion of the *polis* about man and the political way of life, and according to this opinion, everybody outside the *polis*—slaves and barbarians—was *aneu logou*, deprived, of course, not of the faculty of speech, but of a way of life in which speech and only speech made sense and where the central concern of all citizens was talk with each other. (Arendt 27)

As Malcolm Bull explains, "what makes gregarious animals political is a shared way of life to which all contribute, and what makes humans even more political is having *logos*, for rational communication permits common activity of greater social and moral complexity" (16). Gregariousness *without* language is possible, but it is the possession of both that marks a distinction between *zoē* and *bios*. In *Code 46*, the importance of the voice-over—by Maria, addressing William (and the audience)—to the textual operation of the film should be emphasized here. Not only does the tension between sound-track and image-track express the "double perspective" that Bennett identifies, but it also demonstrates incontrovertibly Maria's possession of gregariousness *and logos*, love *and* speech. Maria inhabits *zoē* rather than *bios*. That she addresses the viewer at the same time as William indicates another doubling, this time drawing the viewer into the circuit of inclusion and exclusion and emphasizing the film's estrangement effects. Maria's exclusion to the barer life beyond in the favelas, *afuera*, signifies the fundamental contiguity between she who

speaks and we who listen, between Maria (the refugee) and William (the citizen) and *us*: if she is *homo sacer*, so then we (the viewers) are also *homines sacri*.

The mobility encoded in Winterbottom's films, their transnationality rather than post-nationality, seems to mark their difference from a British national cinematic tradition, and even from the concerns of recent British sf and horror film, as noted above. The emphasis on borders, mobility, and systems of exclusion and inclusion (and of bare life) can be found elsewhere, however, as in another recent British sf film, Gareth Edwards' *Monsters* (2011), suggesting that contemporary sf cinema offers a means by which to critique the globalized systems of late capital that goes beyond the boundaries of the (dystopian) nation-state. *Code 46*, if not able fully to articulate the experience of the Other in contemporary globalized capital, at least accedes to its plural and striated forms of mobility and life through the double perspectives of science fiction.

NOTES

1. See Wald, *Contagion: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative*.

2. Brian Michael Goss suggests that this imagination of a post-national world has important consequences for the film's analysis of cultural and political difference: "metropolises are named within the film's dialogue (Shanghai, Seattle) but nation states are not. The artistic choice to jettison nations foregrounds the international class divide—Inside/Outside—over geopolitical terms such as *American*, *Chinese*, *Brazilian*, and so forth. Hence, in *Code 46*, class trumps nationality as the essential class divide" (73; emphasis in original).

3. I have written elsewhere on Bond, mobility, and vertigo. See "'Gallivanting round the world'."

4. See Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life" (264) and Bull (8-9).

5. Vonnegut's narrative of a Lord Haw-Haw-style broadcaster acting as an unknown double agent during WW2 is itself a narrative of expulsion and of a kind of bare life.

6. See Jameson (100-101).

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ABSTRACT

In Michael Winterbottom's *Code 46* (2003), recurrent motifs of global mobility and securitization encode contemporary anxieties about mobility, migration, and terrorism through motifs of genetic, biological, or viral disruptions of national and bodily boundaries. These can certainly be located in terms of the 9/11 and 7/7 events, but also in terms of Anglo-American overseas involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, in the consequences of these actions for indigenous and US/UK populations, and in the ethical and ideological distortions they produce. This article uses the work of Giorgio Agamben, Hannah Arendt, and Michel Foucault in the field of bio-politics and bio-power to analyze *Code 46* in terms of its representations of subjectivity, inclusion and exclusion, and systems of regulatory control. Like other contemporary sf and horror films that focus on bio-politics, *Code 46* presents a world of globalized mobility striated by class, gender, and ethnic difference.