

Death, Grief, and Mourning in an ICTY Film: Exploring Relational and Non/Living Worlds

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International criminal justice is filled with living, dead, and dying bodies. While witnesses detail atrocities in the courtroom, such testimonies are largely considered for their evidentiary value to establish innocence or guilt. In this article, I explore how death, grief, and mourning are represented at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). I focus on the ICTY documentary, *Crimes Before the ICTY: Višegrad*, to analyse how filmic representations of international criminal justice register dead, dying, and grieving bodies. Drawing on Queer Death Studies and relational ontologies, I explore the more-than-human and non/living worlds through which death, grief, and mourning are represented in the film. A queer relational approach reveals and challenges the construction of the dead as evidence and death worlds as crime scenes. This approach illuminates how the natural world and buildings, bridges, and artifacts are vestiges, witnesses, and sites of death and grief in Višegrad. My analysis explores how these representations in the ICTY documentary reinforce civilizational logics and reductive representations of violence at the same time as they illuminate relational encounters of death and dying in international criminal justice, thus enriching attempts to see, know, and feel loss in the wake of violence.

La justicia penal internacional está llena de cuerpos, tanto vivos, como muertos o moribundos. Si bien los testigos detallan atrocidades en la sala del tribunal, dichos testimonios se tienen en cuenta, en gran medida, por su valor probatorio para establecer la inocencia o la culpabilidad. En este artículo, estudiamos cómo la muerte, el dolor y el luto están representados dentro del Tribunal Penal Internacional para la antigua Yugoslavia (TPIY). Nos centramos en el documental del TPIY: *Crímenes ante el TPIY: Višegrad*, analizando cómo las representaciones filmicas de la justicia penal internacional registran los cuerpos muertos, moribundos y en duelo. Estudiamos, partiendo de la base de los estudios *queer* sobre la muerte y las ontologías relacionales, los mundos más que humanos y no vivos a través de los cuales la muerte, el dolor y el luto están representados en la película. Usamos un enfoque relacional *queer*, el cual revela y desafía tanto la construcción de los muertos como evidencia como la concepción de los mundos de la muerte como escenas del crimen. Este enfoque arroja luz sobre cómo el mundo natural, así como los edificios, puentes y artefactos, son vestigios, testigos y lugares de muerte y dolor en Višegrad. Nuestro análisis estudia cómo estas representaciones en el documental del TPIY refuerzan las lógicas civilizatorias y las representaciones reduccionistas de la violencia al mismo tiempo que iluminan los encuentros relacionales de la muerte y del morir dentro de la justicia penal internacional, enriqueciendo, de esa forma, los intentos de ver, conocer y sentir la pérdida a raíz de la violencia.

La justice pénale internationale compte nombre de corps vivants, morts et mourants. Alors que les témoins racontent en détail des atrocités au tribunal, on s'intéresse surtout à ces témoignages pour leur valeur de preuve quand il s'agit de déterminer l'innocence ou la culpabilité. Dans cet article, je m'intéresse à la représentation de la mort, de la peine et du deuil au sein du Tribunal pénal international pour l'ex-Yougoslavie (TPIY). Je me concentre sur le documentaire du TPIY intitulé « Crimes jugés par le TPIY : Višegrad » pour analyser la façon dont les représentations filmiques de la justice pénale internationale incluent les corps morts, mourants ou en deuil. En me fondant sur les études queers de la mort et les ontologies relationnelles, je m'intéresse aux mondes plus qu'humains et aux mondes (non) vivants grâce auxquels la mort, la peine et le deuil sont représentés dans le film. Une approche relationnelle *queer* révèle et remet en question la construction des morts comme preuves et des mondes de la mort comme scènes de crime. Cette approche met en lumière que le monde naturel et les bâtiments, les ponts et les artefacts constituent des vestiges, des témoins et des sites de la mort et de la peine à Višegrad. Mon analyse s'intéresse à la façon dont ces représentations dans le documentaire du TPIY renforcent la logique civilisationnelle et les représentations réductrices de la violence, tout en mettant en lumière les rencontres relationnelles entre les morts et les mourants dans la justice pénale internationale. Aussi enrichissent-elles les tentatives de voir, connaître et ressentir la perte à la suite de violences.

Introduction

This used to be the best town that I had ever known. It was a small town, a nice, beautiful town, people were living well, relationships between people were good. I spent the best part of my life in this town... My family was here, I had a house in the Pionirska neigh-

bourhood in Višegrad, not far from that pyre where my folks were burnt, seventy civilians there in that house...

– Huso Kurspahić, *Crimes Before the ICTY*:

Višegrad

Death, grief, and mourning are difficult to express; they linger and oppress in often unspeakable ways. Words are never enough to hold such loss, as the memories of lives grieved materialise in affective, relational, and physical worlds, in moments of remembrance, in the fragments of bones, in the soil and the river. In Višegrad, Bosnia, for those lives left in the wake of violence to make sense of and grieve

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the targeted destruction and massacre of their loved ones, death is mired in the town's landscape: buildings in ruin, lakes and rivers that hold the dead, and in the memory of the town itself. Attempts to make sense of loss are difficult, complicated, and unpredictable, and yet international criminal justice mechanisms have been established as sites of accountability, as ways of "tabulating loss" in the wake of atrocity (Wagner 2010). The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ("ICTY" or "the Tribunal") was established in 1993 by the United Nations Security Council to investigate and prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes of genocide, and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions committed by individuals in the former Yugoslav territories. As a site of accountability, the ICTY engages with the dead to establish criminal responsibility, adjudicate legal judgments, and make juridical interventions that both depend on, denounce, and enact violence. While witnesses and survivors detail death, dying, and atrocities in the courtroom, such testimonies are largely considered for their evidentiary value to establish innocence or guilt. Death, grief, and mourning exceed these legal scripts, and yet they are marshalled by prosecutors, attorneys, and judges in ways that reduce complex experiences of loss to courtroom evidence. Justice, then, cannot be achieved through prosecution (alone), as survivors remember and grieve for the dead through embodied, more-than-human, and spatio-political worlds.

In 2016, the ICTY released the documentary, *Crimes Before the ICTY: Višegrad*, a film that represents stories of death, grief, and mourning in the town of Višegrad. The film is just one in a series of documentaries created by the ICTY as part of its Outreach Programme, which aims to "mak[e] the ICTY's work more visible and comprehensible" (ICTY "Documentaries," n.d.). These documentaries represent an alternative way of accessing the Tribunal's work and provide first-hand accounts of atrocity, but they are not unproblematic, nor should they be romanticized for their affective appeal to spectator audiences who watch "the horrors of the less fortunate ... [but] who can choose to be unaffected" (Tascon 2012, 872). The creation and circulation of these films must be seen within the civilizational logics that animate the ICTY. Atanasoski argues that the filmic techniques of the ICTY documentaries construct the former Yugoslavia as a site of "'terror' and illiberal values' [that can be] expunged' through international justice (2018, 69). While attentive to these issues, this article proceeds from Simić's provocation that the visual might "represent an appropriate way of remembering and visiting the dead" (2009, 288), in ways that might challenge the limited tabulations of loss in the courtroom. I ask: How are death, grief, and mourning represented in the film, and what can a queer relational reading of these representations reveal? I argue that the ICTY documentary engages in both violent *and* generative representational practices, insofar as the civilizational, objectifying logics of the film exist alongside more complex and relational stories and visualities of loss. I therefore reaffirm Atanasoski's critique of the ICTY documentaries while also recognizing that relational representations of death, grief, and mourning often perpetuate but also offer an important counter to more reductive representations of loss in the film.

In this article, I explore some of the ways that death, grief, and mourning are represented in the ICTY film, *Crimes Before the ICTY: Višegrad*. Drawing on Queer Death Studies (QDS) and relational ontologies, I trace the more-than-human and non/living worlds through which death, grief, and mourning are represented in the ICTY documentary,

with the aim of illuminating more nuanced representations of loss that exceed the limiting frames of the courtroom. While death and grief are plurally embodied and represented in the documentary,¹ a queer relational approach guides my attention to non-normative and unexpected ways of grieving the dead. Such an analysis embraces the relational and entangled encounters of death and dying in the film, and in international criminal justice, enriching attempts to see, know, and feel loss in the wake of violence. However, even in these moments of alterity, these more complicated, (more-than)-human(ized) representations of death, grief, and mourning exist alongside, and sometimes reproduce, Višegrad as a crime scene and as civilizational Other. Thus, while relational ontologies and QDS can illuminate the enfolded, non/living worlds through which loss is legible in the film, these audio-visual and narrative representations reinforce the civilizational logics of the film, even as they offer important insights into the plural ways death and grief are experienced.

The article has two core contributions. First, it illuminates the power of international criminal justice and the international criminal justice documentary to both simplify and complexify experiences of death, grief, and mourning in the wake of atrocity. My analysis of the ICTY film through a queer relational approach highlights this split subjectivity of international criminal justice and films made by/about them, and the important ways they both deny and allow relational and non/living representations of suffering. Second, by embracing QDS in this article, I contribute to a growing body of International Relations (IR) scholarship that takes the dead seriously as political subjects. While the queer approach I adopt in this article is just one way of queering death, grief, and mourning, my intervention offers opportunities to expand how the dead and non/living are understood in international studies, as interrelated and entangled with the more-than-human life-death worlds they inhabit.

The article proceeds as follows: I situate my queer relational reading of death, grief, and mourning within scholarship on the dead in global politics, as well as relational scholarship on death and more-than-human ontologies. The relational scholarship I review forms the foundation and departure point for my use of QDS as an analytical approach in this article. I then introduce QDS to engage death, grief, and mourning in the ICTY film. I use queer concepts of the non/living (Radomska 2016, 2020a, 2020b) and the split subject (Heathcote 2018, 2019) to trace how death, grief, and mourning are represented in relation to nonhuman worlds. I also situate my analysis of the ICTY in conversation with existing work on documentaries in global politics and international criminal justice. I then briefly outline the film, before analysing three ways in which death, grief, and mourning are represented in the film: as crime scenes, as entangled with the natural world, and as memorialized in buildings, bridges, and artifacts. These representations perpetuate civilizational logics about the former Yugoslavia at the same time as they offer humanizing moments in their connection to relational and non/living worlds. My findings are complicated by Bosnian survivors' support and criticism of the Tribunal; the film honors the wishes of survivors and the dead for their stories to be heard, even while it simpli-

¹Death, grief, and mourning are represented in the film in numerous ways. My analysis engages with three representations: crime scenes, the natural world, and buildings, bridges, and artifacts. I focus on these three as they were the most prominent representations, in my view, of death, grief, and mourning in the film. While other representations were also prominent (e.g., genocide denial, perpetrators), the three discussed in this article were also most clearly illuminated through a queer relational reading, which I deploy in my analysis.

fies narratives of loss. These representations reflect the split subject(s) of the film, of the violent, plural, singular, fracturing, and relational ways of remembering the dead. This finding offers an important opportunity to expand and challenge how death, grief, and mourning are tabulated in international criminal justice, ushering space for (more-than-)humanized stories within and beyond these legal grammars.

Making Sense of Death, Grief, and Mourning

The dead figure across international law and global politics, and yet their visibility and value as political subjects remain largely obscured (Auchter 2016, 2020; Heath-Kelly 2016). Grieving and mourning for the dead drive transitional justice processes, including the turn to international criminal courts and tribunals as ways to deal with atrocity. While there is a growing body of scholarship attentive to grief and the dead in global politics, these contributions frequently seek out anthropological and relational insights from outside the discipline of IR. I turn to these diverse approaches that make sense of death and dying through relational and more-than-human ontologies. This allows me to trace how death, grief, and mourning are represented in the ICTY documentary in ways that exceed (at the same time as they reproduce) human individuality, life-death binaries, and are intimately connected with non/living worlds. I argue that more attention needs to be paid to more-than-human, non/living relationalities of death in global politics, and that anthropological scholarship and my own approach to QDS in this article offer such a contribution.

Death and Grief in Global Politics

Within IR and political science, the dead have received relatively little attention. There are, however, some important contributions to this small but growing area of research (e.g., Heath-Kelly 2016; Stepputat ed. 2014), including those that explore the visual politics of the dead (Auchter 2021), necroviolence (Gregory 2016; de Leon 2019), forensic humanitarianism (Moon 2014; Conley 2021), and the role of transitional justice processes (Verdery 1999; Rojas-Perez 2013; Shah 2017). In these analyses, the dead are political subjects of grief and memorialization (Auchter 2016, 2020; Edkins 2003; Rojas-Perez 2013, 149). Auchter's (2014, 2021) work on the politics of haunting and the global dead is an important contribution to the broader study of the dead in global politics, exploring the memorialization and grievability of the dead in sites of transitional justice, as well as the visual representation of corpses and their ethico-political effects. Auchter argues that "viewing the dead can be human-making and humanizing—by spurring an affective and emotional response to the dead—and can also be destructive of the human, human dignity, and human empathy—by rendering the dead an inert commodity for our visual consumption" (2021, 3). This visual politics of the dead resonates with my own analysis of death in the ICTY documentary. I contribute to this literature by exploring how visual representations can offer more complicated and enfolded experiences of death, grief, and mourning and reproduce voyeuristic, reductive depictions of suffering at the same time. Auchter's contributions reflect an approach to the dead that recognizes both the limitations and potential of a visual politics of death, grief, and mourning. However, there are also opportunities within this scholarship to consider the more-than-human and non/living relations of

death in global politics, and my contribution in this article speaks to this element.

Grief and mourning have received little attention in the study of global politics, apart from their relationship to transitional justice and legal mechanisms (Auchter 2020, 107). In these legal sites, such as international courts, grief and mourning are legible through "a legal sensibility ... [that] ritualizes grief and the feeling of loss" (Elander 2013, 96). These practices of "institutionalized grieving" (*Ibid*) frequently homogenize and reduce grief to evidence in the courtroom, failing to comprehend the complex, embodied experiences of loss. For those contributions that do address loss beyond the legal frame (Auchter 2014, 2020, 2021; Edkins 2003; Pollack 2003; Ibreck 2010; Heath-Kelly 2016; Duriesmith 2018; Mercieca and Mercieca 2022), grief and mourning are powerful "ethico-political practices" (Auchter 2020, 107), "personal ... and social construction[s] of memory" (Garrard-Burnett 2015, 181), and ways that bereaved communities mourn their loved ones (McEvoy and Conway 2004, 554). In their treatise on the powers of mourning and violence, Butler contemplates that "What grief displays ... is the thrall in which our relations with others hold us, in ways that we cannot always recount or explain" (2004, 23). While these interventions offer important insights into the relationality of grief and mourning at a human level, IR scholarship has much to learn from anthropological contributions, which have a much longer lineage within relational and more-than-human ontologies. I now turn to this body of scholarship as I seek more-than-human encounters with the dead.

Death, Dying, and More-than-Human Ontologies

Death, grief, and mourning are intertwined with the living (Cielemeńska 2015; Molina Vargas et al. 2020), evident in the ways that those who remain grapple with loss. Relational approaches "depart from a biopolitical register that distinguishes between life and death" (Lyons 2015, 64), instead seeking out more-than-human relations of living/dying. My analysis of death, grief, and mourning in the ICTY documentary is attentive to the more-than-human and relational worlds through which loss becomes legible, evident, for example, in connections to waterways and the entombing of suffering in ruined buildings. Relationality refers to "the multiple strands of materiality, kinship, corporeality, affect, land/body connection, and multidimensional connectivity" (Yazzie and Baldy 2018, 2). Drawing on Indigenous ontologies of relationality, interconnectedness, and connection to place (see Muller et al. 2019; TallBear 2019; Querejazi 2022), relational approaches ask "what it might mean to live in a world that is relational, that co-becomes with us and each other, that is knowing, that is alive—even in its death" (Bawaka Country et al. 2016, 456). There are also other, interrelated approaches to relationality, including (feminist) posthumanism (Haraway 1997; Barad 2003; Sundberg 2011; Braidotti 2013; Jones 2023) and queer ecologies (Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson eds. 2010), that inform my approach to the living and the dead as existing relationally with more-than-human others. My arguments in this article are directly informed by this literature, which takes the more-than-human and non/living seriously in matters of life and death.

Relational perspectives on death dissolve distinctions between human and nonhuman (Cielemeńska 2020; De Leon 2019; Henriksen and Radomska 2015; Molina Vargas et al. 2020; Sundberg 2011; Radomska et al. 2020). Sensing the dead as figures who transgress the human/nonhuman bi-

nary, these approaches value how life and death are connected to place, land, and nonhuman subjects (Bawaka Country et al. 2016; Tallbear 2015; Hromadžić 2022). Moving beyond a distinction between human/nonhuman and culture/nature, more-than-human ontologies reframe the natural world as “knowledges, organisms, landscapes, institutions, and mobilities that come together in contingent ways to produce particular configurations of life and death” (O’Gorman and Gaynor 2020, 719). As I explore in my analysis of the ICTY documentary, the dead and grief are entangled with (in) the landscape, as human and nonhuman subjects alike embody the trauma of loss in Višegrad.

Taking non/human relations seriously means acknowledging that even in sites of death, “life emerges in these injured landscapes” (Hromadžić 2022, 265). As Cielemecka asks, “How does grass dare to grow on mass graves? ... How do flowers blossom so beautifully, growing in the shadow of a nuclear power station, in a garden nurtured by a dying man?” (2015, 243). Life and death are not separate, but intimately bound to the other. Death seeps into these landscapes (Rojas-Perez 2013, 162; Theidon 2022, 7), just as they are animated by life, joy, and memory. In the town of Bihać, Bosnia, Hromadžić writes of a “devastated, besieged city of ruins ... [where] meaningful life materialized from more-than-human relations ... [of] the entanglements between humans and nonhumans—in this case, between Biščani and the Una River” (2022, 265). Like the town of Bihać, in Višegrad, more-than-human connections infuse death, grief, and mourning; the Drina River, as I discuss later in this article, is at once a watery grave, a witness, and indeed a subject of death and life.

Taken together, the contributions from these relational, more-than-human ontologies, as well as scholarship on death and mourning in global politics, provide the foundations for my own analysis of the non/living and relational worlds through which the dead are legible in the ICTY film. The literature I have discussed in this section informs my theoretical approach in this article, one that draws on QDS to analyse how the documentary visually and audibly narrates loss in Višegrad, and in international criminal justice more broadly.

Queering Death: A Theoretical Approach

In this article, I use QDS to analyse how death, grief, and mourning are represented in the ICTY film, and to trace the effects of these representations for understanding the violence in Višegrad and the politics of international criminal justice. I use QDS rather than a broader relational perspective such as those reviewed above. While both engage life/death as entangled, material, and more-than-human, queer approaches more explicitly embrace the destabilizing, discomfiting, and queer (i.e., peculiar, strange) worlds of the dead. QDS is an emerging, transdisciplinary body of scholarship (ranging from art, bioethics, and sociology) that destabilizes normativities of death, grief, and mourning (Radomska et al. 2020; see also Cielemecka 2015; de Araújo 2019; Radomska et al. 2019; MacCormack et al. 2021; Petricola 2021; Radomska et al. 2021). It emerged out of the Queer Death Studies Network established in 2016 by a group of Swedish-based scholars, artists, and activists. Informed by a longer tradition of queer theory, poststructuralism, and new materialism, QDS extends these perspectives and their insights to the realm of death and dying. Thus, while QDS is relatively new, the questions these scholars engage in are not; indeed, matters of life and death have been subject to sustained queer theorising. Queer

necropolitics, a similar yet distinct body of scholarship from QDS, uses “queer critique [to] bring[] into view everyday death worlds” (Haritaworn et al. 2014, 2), including but not limited to the inhospitable and lethal worlds that target queer and trans lives for death. For example, queer scholar-activists writing on the necropolitics of the AIDS pandemic have provided powerful reflections on “the insurgent uses of mourning” for queer, trans, Black, and “ostracized” communities as a way to counter the homo/transphobic, racist, ableist, and classist structures of slow death (Woubshet 2015, 4; see also Gill-Peterson 2013; Gossett 2014). QDS is attentive to the lived encounters and practices of grief, of “how remembrance builds post-mortem forms of intimacy that linger on affectively long after the dead intimate other has left the material world” (Alasuutari et al. 2021, 602). QDS also extends to mourning, “queering what it means to care for others not only in life but also in death” (*Ibid.*). In my analysis of the ICTY film, this queer perspective illuminates the intimacy of grief and its embodiment in the people, nature, and townscape of Višegrad.

The queer reading I deploy extends existing relational approaches but adopts a queer agenda, one that disrupts binaries and embraces multiplicities and non-normativities. QDS deploys queer in plural ways, so that QDS research may focus on “death, dying and mourning in the context of queer bonds and communities” and/or use queer as “going beyond and unsettling (subverting, exceeding) the existing binaries ... and normativities” of death (Radomska et al. 2020, 89; see also Haritaworn et al. 2014, 3; MacCormack et al. 2021, 575–76; Radomska 2020b, 160; Radomska et al. 2019, 6). This means that QDS can but need not “focus on gender and sexuality as its exclusive concerns” (Radomska et al. 2020, 89). I engage in QDS predominantly as a disruptive methodology, although I am also attentive to the gendered dynamics of death and suffering, evident in discussions of the Vilina Vlas rape site. I use the QDS concept of the non/living to consider how “life and death, human and nonhuman, nature and culture are not radically dichotomised, but totally continuous” (Radomska et al. 2020, 96; see also MacCormack et al. 2021, 579). The non/living, articulated as such, destabilises the slash, the assumed distinction between life and death (Radomska 2016, 35; see also Giffney and Hird 2008, 3; Shildrick 2020, 171), and reframes the terms relationally, “where the processes of living and dying are always already intertwined” (Radomska 2020a, 128; see also Quinan and Thiele 2020; Shildrick 2020; Radomska 2020b; Lykke 2022). Moreover, the concept of the non/living offers “an alternative relational, transcorporeal, nonexceptionalizing, posthuman feminist and *deeply queer* approach to death, embracing it as an inevitable aspect of being a vibrant part of the more-than-human world” (Lykke 2022, 11, emphases added). I use this concept to explore the entangled relationalities of life and death in the film and in Višegrad, with an attention to the more-than-human ways death, grief, and mourning are articulated.

I adopt QDS as it has been developed by these scholars, and apply it to a new empirical focus (i.e., the international criminal justice documentary) and a different disciplinary audience (i.e., IR). While my use of QDS mainly adheres to the approach as it has been developed by QDS scholars, I also engage with the “split subject.” A concept from feminist and queer legal studies, the split subject has been developed and applied to international law and concerns “how legal subjects exist in both connection and separateness from others” (Heathcote 2019, 17; see also 2018, 9), maintaining “a range of splits, fracturing, connections, and relationships that make the boundaries of the subject inherently messy”

(*Ibid.*, 124). The split subject is attentive to plural and diverse subjectivities (*Ibid.*, 93, 122), and I extend this thinking to the dead, dying, and grieving as political subjects. I characterize the ICTY film itself as split(ting), insofar as the representations of death, grief, and mourning I trace in the documentary reinforce civilizational logics of Bosnia and provide alternative, more-than-human encounters of life and death. The split subject shares with queer approaches an “orientation towards self-shattering—the deconstruction of easy boundaries between body/world/self/other” (Løvås Kristinnsdottir et al. 2021, 717), an orientation that is intimately attuned to how death and life are at once intertwined and fractured. Paired together, the queer concepts of the split subject and the non/living draw attention to the ongoing, relational, and more-than-human life/death worlds that constitute violence, even as more complicated and humanized representations of loss emerge alongside the film’s tethering of criminality to former Yugoslavia. This queer theoretical approach resists life/death binaries and normativities and instead finds (more-than-)humanness, intimacy, and connection in how communities deal with loss.

The International Criminal Justice Documentary

I extend these concepts and insights from QDS to an analysis of *Crimes Before the ICTY: Višegrad* (2016), an international criminal justice documentary. Within IR, there is a growing body of research attentive to the documentary as a site of global politics (Harman 2019; Auchter 2021; van Munster and Sylvest eds. 2015), with scholars increasingly focused on the atrocity film in particular (Philpott 2017; Canet 2020; Jara 2020; Simić and Volcic 2014; Tascon 2012). The international criminal justice documentary is a film genre that represents a “reality ... to tell a story, and to develop an argument about international criminal law” (Stolk and Werner 2020, 588; see also Fuhs 2014, 781; Schwöbel-Patel and Werner 2018, 429). These films are often produced by the international courts and tribunals themselves, serving as a form of education and outreach about the activities and achievements of international criminal justice (Simić 2009, 279; Yoshida 2015, 87). The ICTY documentaries are produced and commissioned by the ICTY Outreach Programme, and “are part of the Tribunal’s broader campaign to educate the population of the former Yugoslavia” and beyond (Atanasoski 2018, 70). The decision to make a documentary about Višegrad coheres with this educational goal of the Outreach Programme, given that genocide denial and misinformation persist in Višegrad. While there have been documentaries made about other international criminal justice mechanisms, such as the International Criminal Court (see Werner 2013), the ICTY produces these documentaries themselves, with support from local civil society and international NGOs. These documentaries extend the international criminal justice project beyond the courtroom, with “audio-visual representations” curated to construct a linear, comforting narrative of law’s role in criminalized locales of violence (Stolk and Werner 2020, 583; see also Rush and Elander 2018, 22).

This effect is achieved through the expository format of the international criminal justice documentary, which uses techniques such as “the use of text appearing before images are shown, the use of an impersonal, invisible voice-over (“voice of God” narration), and the construction of a coherent argument via the voice of one of the main characters in the film’ in addition to “the presentation of contrasts” (Stolk and Werner 2020, 589–90; see also Atanasoski 2018, 70; Werner 2013, 327; Yoshida 2015, 111). These expository

techniques are evident in the ICTY film, which I explore in the following section. The expository documentary and its attendant techniques often produce reductive and simplistic representations of victims and survivors. As Werner argues, the dominant depiction of dead bodies as human remains (e.g., skulls, skeletons), as “primarily ... suffering bodies” (2015, 172–73), strips them of “their socio-political lives” (2016, 1051). As objects of evidence, and sometimes speaking subjects, their main use in the documentary is “to underscore the need to end impunity, because otherwise crimes will be repeated” (Werner 2015, 172–73). These are documentaries that represent atrocity, but they are also marketing tools for promoting anti-impunity and carceral responses to violence, and for denouncing certain racialized, civilizational others as criminals and subject to international (criminal law) intervention (see Atanasoski 2018; Schwöbel-Patel 2021).

My analysis of the ICTY film is therefore suspicious of the civilizational logics and promotion of criminal justice in filmic depictions of death, grief, and mourning. But my reading of the film must be situated within a broader ethics of visualizing the dead and the associated risks of voyeurism in representing the suffering of Others to/from a Western gaze (Duffy 2018, 787; Gregory 2016, 959; Philpott 2017, 263; Shah 2017, 554; Tascon 2012, 872). It is also important to recognize that documentary films, as with all visual texts, are *representations* of reality rather than reality itself (Fuhs 2014, 798). As such, my analysis of death, grief, and mourning in the ICTY film traces how “images, perspective, sounds, pace, plot and narrative” reproduce particular stories of loss while precluding others (Werner 2015, 168; see also Fuhs 2014, 783; Werner 2013, 326). My reading of these audio-visual and narrative practices is always already partial, shaped by my positionality within a broader white, Western gaze (Biddolph 2021, 543–45). While I seek to critically analyse and deconstruct the more violent effects of the ICTY film, as well as draw attention to the relational and non/living worlds within which death is legible in Višegrad and by the ICTY, my interpretations will always be an act of violence (Dauphine ´e 2007, 11). I therefore develop the analyses in this article with caution, but am nevertheless motivated to seek less violent, more-than-human ways of representing law and violence.

Crimes Before the ICTY: Višegrad focuses on atrocities that took place in the town of Višegrad in 1992 by Bosnian Serb forces against the Muslim population, some of which included rape, killing, and ethnic cleansing. The documentary explores these crimes in relation to cases brought before the Tribunal, interwoven with survivor testimonies and interviews with court officials. It focuses on several instances of violence: “of Muslims being burned alive in houses ... young women being raped by the Serbian criminals, and mass shootings in which bodies of hundreds of Muslim civilians were dumped into the Drina river” (Atanasoski 2018, 75; see also Karčić 2017; Simić and Volcic 2014). Using my queer relational approach, I zoom in on examples of more-than-human and non/living subjects and film techniques that make death, grief, and mourning legible in the ICTY film. This means that not all representations of death, grief, and mourning are discussed in this article. The representations I analyse are those often overlooked in conventional analyses of international criminal justice documentaries, but they deserve further attention as they enrich our understanding of death, grief, and mourning and offer insights into how the film genre might better reflect the entangled realities of violence. Informed by relational approaches and QDS, the analysis below offers an example of how the in-

ternational criminal justice documentary as a genre both reductively *and* generatively articulates life/death through representations of death worlds as crime scenes; more-than-human subjects and landscapes; and buildings, bridges, and artifacts as witnesses and embodiments of death and grief.

Documenting the Dead in *Crimes Before the ICTY*:

Višegrad

Death, grief, and mourning are represented in the ICTY film in multiple ways, some of which include the politics of grief and denial in the memorialization of genocide, and the gendered practices of mourning. Informed by relational, more-than-human, and queer perspectives to death and dying, I focus on three, (sometimes) unexpected representations of death, grief, and mourning: as crime scenes and evidence; as part of the more-than-human landscape; and embedded in built structures and the town itself. These representations, made legible through narrative and audio-visual techniques, offer more complicated encounters with the non/living, at the same time as they sit alongside an overarching narrative of Višegrad as a “traumascape” (Tumarkin 2005) and international criminal justice as the appropriate response to atrocity. Engaging the queer concepts of the non/living and the split subject, I explore the violent and generative effects of these representations for how the dead figure in the film. Such an analysis offers insights into how this genre of documentary both reinforces and challenges the reductive logics of international criminal justice, and how it may illuminate queerer encounters with the non/living.

Crime Scenes and Evidence

The ICTY documentary is haunted by the dead, their skeletal remains constituting physical evidence of atrocity that can be proven in the courtroom. Representations of death, grief, and mourning that depict the dead as evidence and atrocity sites as crime scenes are common in international criminal justice documentaries, reducing the non/living to evidentiary objects stripped of their humanness. While this classification reinforces an overall depiction of Višegrad as a place of crime, engaging the split subject allows me to sense plural fractures and relations between living and dying.

One way the ICTY film represents the dead as evidence and death worlds as crime scenes is through the visual prominence of human remains unearthed during exhumations. For example, the film documents the exhumation of Perućac Lake through a transition of black-and-white images. Sombre music overlays the passage through these photos of the exhumation site, of skulls and skeletons partially embedded in the soil of the lake, with little flags indicating sites of evidence (35.22). A piece of cloth, likely bondage, is recovered by gloved hands and sealed in a plastic zip-lock bag, evidence for the ICTY (35.03). Earlier in the film, moving footage, again overlaid with solemn music, depicts further sites of atrocity: of skulls and skeletal remains entangled with rocks and brambles, starkly highlighted by the yellow crime scene markers (8.48; see also Jurich 2016, 436).

In the same footage, the documentary shows the investigation team with shovels in hand (8.45). Through this process, “the dead are lifted from the ground, catalogued, and analyzed” (Crossland 2009, 76), as bodily remains become criminal evidence for prosecution (*Ibid.*, 71; Simić 2009, 291–92).

Exhumation sites are thus depicted as crime scenes, and this similarly manifests in the use of aerial photography in the documentary (see Duffy 2018, 802), with a color still of Višegrad capturing the town itself as a crime scene (7.39). As the “voice-of-God” narrator states at the beginning of the film, Višegrad is “Now ... known as one of the most emblematic crime scenes in a war-torn region” (1.13). Each of these representations contributes to a problematic narrative of “the Balkan landscape ... frozen as a war crime scene,” with “Decontextualized footage of the town ... thus visually conflated with criminality as the entire region is turned into a permanent site of forensic investigation” (Atanasoski 2018, 75). This representation “freezes” Višegrad as a death world: the ICTY documentary has forever captured and stored on film the non/living remains of atrocity in the town. Amidst this critique, I want to acknowledge the importance of establishing evidence and truths for victims’ families, and the role the film plays in challenging genocide denial in Višegrad. The film rightly establishes that crimes occurred in the town. Such truth-telling honors the memories of the non/living victims and survivors. Representations of Višegrad as a crime scene, then, *both* reproduce civilizational logics of “Balkan tragedy” *and* provide the evidence called for by Bosnian Muslim survivors. Such a tension reflects the split(ing) nature of the film, of its reductive and generative effects. As split(ing), the film offers both connection and separateness (Heathcote 2019, 17) by being at once a form of meaningful evidence for victims *and* a reductive account of Višegrad distanced from the realities of those who live in the town. My reading of this representation reaffirms Atanasoski’s critique of the ICTY’s films, particularly in her criticism of the films’ characterization of the former Yugoslavia as civilizationally other, criminal, and warranting ICTY intervention.

At the same time, informed by QDS, I seek to challenge the life/death normativities invested in these filmic representations, to consider how they might be deconstructed and reimagined. Here, the concept of the split subject is particularly useful for articulating the splintering, fracturing, and complicating effects of the film’s depiction of the dead as evidence and death worlds as crime scenes. While the dead are “objects of legal administration” (Moon 2014, 58), “instrumentalized as another piece of evidence of brutality” (Auchter 2021, 51), they also tell another story, of ongoing connection to more-than-human others, to life and death beyond the binary. Relational perspectives reveal how the film’s visual placement of human remains in soil (see Kušić 2022), entangled in the town’s natural landscape, challenges an individualistic and contained experience of life/death. Moreover, as articulated above, family members and survivors of the dead see the recovery of their loved ones’ remains as proof so that, as survivor Huso Kurspahić says, “people ... know how these people were killed so that there is some trace left” (25.52). As Buturovic writes, “The ongoing discoveries of forensic evidence ... act as mementos of violence and represent new locations around which Bosnian Islamic modes of remembrance are being shaped” (2016, 60). The dead might be represented as evidence, “as forensic objects” (Auchter 2021, 9), but they are also seen and held by their (more-than-)human kin as “loved ones still” (*Ibid.*).

The concept of the non/living alerts me to this simultaneous meaning vested in the dead as evidence, just as the concept of the split subject elicits suspicion over how these representations inform the Tribunal’s carceral logics. The film portrays these crime scenes and survivor testimonies as evidence to be used in the courtroom, and it

is these testimonies of atrocity in Višegrad that are juxtaposed with the accountability work of the ICTY. By representing the dead as evidence and death worlds as crime scenes, the documentary reaffirms the international criminal justice project through the construction of Bosnian victims as dehumanized, inanimate evidence and the Bosnian landscape as a perennial crime scene. This occurs even as survivors maintain a complicated relationship with the Tribunal, one that offers retributive justice by punishing perpetrators (see O'Reilly 2018, 141–43; Orentlicher 2018, 127–28). As Kurspahić notes in the film, “without the International Tribunal in The Hague, these people would still be walking around” (51.20). A queer reading reveals these contested and co-existing effects of the film. Even as there are moments where the non/living surface beyond these reductive categorizations through their entanglement with land and ongoing attachment to (living) kin, these moments are fractured by the dominant depiction of the dead as unspeaking remnants of atrocity. Such representations of death, bolstered by the sombre audiovisual techniques, reinforce *and* displace the violence of the film, addressing Bosnian calls for justice while simplifying violence within an international criminal justice framework.

Death, Life, and the River

The film foregrounds the atrocities that occurred in Višegrad, as well as the role of international criminal justice in prosecuting these crimes. In the background, however, and at times taking center stage, the natural landscape of Višegrad offers a powerful representation of death, grief, and mourning in the film. The Drina River (“the Drina”) is a central motif through which the non/living make sense of death. As the film follows survivor testimonies delivered in the courtroom, survivors speak of a creek, a brook, and the mountains surrounding the town, while ICTY investigators refer to exhumations of bodies in lakes and caves (see also Karčić 2017, 114). Here, I focus on how the river in particular, but also nature more broadly, is represented as a site and witness of death, life, and memory in the film.

The Drina is predominantly articulated as a site of death. Numerous testimonies, both from survivors and ICTY investigators tell of the “shootings, executions, every day on the Drina after 3.00 p.m. in the afternoon” (34.20), of “the hundreds of bodies pulled from the river” (6.08), and that “The Drina was all foamy with blood” (34.20; see also Karčić 2017, 118). In one example, Mevsud Poljo, a prosecution witness in the *Lukić and Lukić* case, testifies that he and a group recovered approximately 180 bodies from the river. Meanwhile, the footage transitions from Mevsud testifying in the courtroom to a moving still of the river itself, brooked by homes and historic buildings, and the surrounding mountains mirrored in the cerulean water (see figure 1). The contrast of the courtroom testimony and the tranquil image of the river is jarring—an account of violence and atrocity interwoven with the life of the river itself.

There is an explicit connection of death to the river in the film, and the examples I have identified reimagine the non/living and death, grief, and mourning in the documentary. That one survivor describes the river as “all foamy with blood” (34.20) reflects the literal entanglement of non/living humans with non/human kin; the Drina holds the dead and the living. The survivor’s reflection anthropomorphizes the river; the blood of the human dead is the blood and bleeding of the river itself. But it also decentres

anthropocentrism, revealing the agency and vitality of the river as more-than-human kin. This representation of death in the ICTY film is unexpected and defies death normativities, asking the audience to reimagine death beyond the human. It offers non/living and more-than-human insights into a core focus of international studies: war, conflict, and the embodied violences of them. However, I am also cautious of its violent as well as generative effects. With the Drina predominantly cast as a site of death and atrocity in the film, the documentary reproduces civilizational logics of Višegrad as a crime scene, forever a place of violence. Deploying the concept of the split subject can help capture some of these uneasy, plural, and fracturing representations in the ICTY film. It can illuminate the generative potential of representing death in relation to more-than-human kin (e.g., the river) while remaining alert to how such representations feed into simplistic narratives of Višegrad as purely a site of death and destruction.

As the above analysis suggests, the Drina is not exclusively marked by death; it is also characterized by life and is itself alive. QDS maintains a suspicion of life/death binaries, and here the concept of the non/living draws me to the lively and enlivening relations of and to the river in the film. In one example, Witness VG-13 tells of how she was shot in the arm and fell into a creek. As she testifies, the film cuts to footage from the ICTY investigation of the creek and its surrounding brush. In telling her story of falling into the creek to escape her death, she says, “the water revived me” (21.47) and “that water probably saved me” (22.40). The water is generative and life-giving. In another example, the film captures a memorial held on the bridge over the Drina, with mourners lowering a cradle filled with flowers into the river, commemorating the loss of the youngest victim, a two-day-old baby (51.13). While this representation of grief and mourning speaks to an incomprehensible loss with the death of this child, it also celebrates life and the interconnection of the non/living (the baby, surviving loved ones) with more-than-human kin (the river). As Karčić writes, Bosnian Muslims “view the Drina as a sacred river” (2017, 115). This memorializing of the dead in relation to the river blurs life and death, reflecting the “post-mortem intimac[ies]” and practices of care that extend to and beyond the non/living (Alasuutari et al. 2021, 602). The river is thus both a site of death and mourning, and a site of nourishment, revival, and memory. Engaging the queer concepts of non/living and the split subject reveals the relationality and fracturing of and to the natural world, of life, loss, and memory, of water and the river (see Hromadžić 2022; Suljagić 2005). QDS is an approach that dissolves life/death binaries and embraces the entangled, messy relations of those who grieve and those who are mourned. The ICTY film, evident in the representations of grief, life, and death explored above, resists singular narratives of death, instead revealing the ongoing connections with human and more-than-human kin, in the queering of life and death temporalities themselves (Varino in Beccaro et al. 2021, 645).

The death-delivering and life-giving powers of the river (and nature more broadly) are represented in different ways in the film, often in the background so that “the landscape ... [is] a witness” (Simić and Volcic 2014, 390). For example, one moving shot provides a window-view of the passing trees, the clouds, and sunlight anchoring the scene (11.18). In another, the film offers a dynamic scene of the river and its babbling brooks, its water surrounding rocks that jut out from the grassy bank, overlaid by the film’s familiar haunting soundtrack (8.38). These images serve as the backdrop for representing death, grief, and mourning in Višegrad. Bu-



Figure 1. Still from the documentary showing the Drina River.

turovic notes that in Bosnia, “where burial is the most common form of disposal, the landscape is continually recreated as the dead bodies are placed into the earth” (2016, 93). Death thus not only reshapes and constitutes the natural world, but it also “gives a broader grounding to memories and provides a panoramic domain in which to remember many connected and disconnected deaths” (*Ibid.*, 92). For survivors in the film, Višegrad’s landscape is non/living: filled with the dead, the ongoing memories that linger, and the living’s quest for peace in the wake of loss.

The film’s capturing of the natural world also reveals the agential capacity of nature and its relations with (more-than-)humans. The queer concept of the non/living reveals these more-than-human encounters with death, grief, and mourning in the film, of the entanglement of life, death, and more-than-human others. Meanwhile, the split subject recognizes the singular, plural, and fracturing of these representations and their violent *and* generative effects. That is, such more-than-human entanglements and vestiges of death connect victims and survivors, representing life/death as relational and ongoing, while the embodiment of death in the natural landscape separates Višegrad as a criminal deathscape. Being attuned to nature’s entanglement with life and death expands conventional frames for understanding death, grief, and mourning in international criminal justice, even as narratives of Višegrad as a crime scene simplify complex experiences of loss. Such insights reveal the possibilities of international criminal justice documentaries to perpetuate reductive narratives of violence, but also to depict moments of interconnectedness and nuance in representations of the dead.

The Townscape and Ruins as Vestiges of Grief

Non/living humans are not only entangled with (in) nature but are also remembered in the bridge and buildings in Višegrad, as well as stored in the memory of the town itself.

Here, I analyse how death, grief, and mourning are articulated in the film through built structures and townscapes. While these representations offer unexpected ways of imagining the dead in international criminal justice, they also, as with the other representations I have discussed, reproduce Višegrad as a death world, a crime scene for ICTY investigation. These insights extend beyond the international criminal justice documentary, providing opportunities for scholars of global politics to trace, and take seriously, the non/living and relational worlds of death, grief, and mourning.

As with the Drina, the Mehmet Paša Sokolović bridge is a central motif in the documentary. Kurspahić says in the film, it is ‘a famous bridge, over 500 years old’ (1.40), often synonymous with Višegrad itself. Just as the Drina was a site of death, the bridge was also a place where atrocities were committed. Karčić notes that “Local Serb soldiers and policemen would bring dozens of civilians ... and either shoot them or slash them with knives and eventually throw[] their bodies into the Drina River flowing under” (2017, 115). It is no surprise, then, that the bridge is visually represented throughout the film, even serving as the opening scene for the documentary (1.39). The bridge is also depicted as a site of grief and mourning; towards the end of the film, footage shows a memorial taking place on the bridge itself, lowering a cradle into the Drina (*figure 2*). Death memorials, including “funeral rites, prayers, rituals, elegies and stories” allow Bosnian Muslims to “position themselves towards death and the dead with whom they share cultural and physical space” (*Buturovic 2016*, 14–15). Indeed, each May, a memorial is held on the bridge, with 3,000 red roses thrown into the Drina by loved ones to mark the loss of life in Višegrad (*Björkdahl and Mannegren Selimovic 2016*, 326). The bridge is a vestige of death but also a place of life, mourning, and remembrance. Here, the queer concept of the non/living demands that life and death are known, lived, and felt as entangled with the non/human landscape. Such representations challenge the dominant normativities



Figure 2. Still from the documentary of mourners on the bridge over the Drina River.

of death in international criminal justice that depict the dead and mourning as passive, homogenous victims and evidence for the courtroom, even while the ICTY continues to construct Višegrad as only ever violent, and the former Yugoslavia as a site of criminality requiring intervention. These representations also challenge the dominant ontologies of violence and conflict in international studies that are devoid of such attention to the embodied and material entanglements people maintain with the non-human world through grieving and memorialization.

Similar effects manifest in representations of buildings in the ICTY documentary. The house on Piornirska Street, where approximately 70 people were burned alive, is represented throughout the film as a house in ruin. Black-and-white stills show mourners grieving at the site (14.13; 24.19; 24.28), while footage from the courtroom shows the prosecutor detailing the atrocities that took place there (17.57). The film depicts Piornirska House as a site of devastation, with the use of black-and-white photographs cementing atrocity in time, and forever in the Višegrad townscape. This is a reductive representation, one that tethers crime and destruction to the town and the townspeople. This is possible even while there are representations that fracture this narrative. For example, because the non/living are embodied in this house, the site is a place for loved ones to grieve and mourn, to remember and extend the lives of those lost in the massacre (Auchter 2014, 144–45). Such grieving and reclamation of traumatic spaces are similarly evident in Sarajevo, where the marks of mortar shelling and gunfire are filled in with red resin and transformed into roses (Mora 2020, 3). The streets of Sarajevo, pocked with the memories of violence, offer a non/living connection for those who grieve the dead. The Sarajevo Roses, as with the townscape of Višegrad, are imbued with “ritual action” that fortifies “the cultural landscape shared between the living and the dead” (Buturovic 2016, 60). Thus, beyond justice prosecuted at the ICTY and international criminal justice mechanisms, survivors also find justice, socio-political mobilization, and “radical relationality” (Arsenijević et al.

2016, 273) in the ongoing memorial and ritual practices that bind the non/living and the more-than-human together.

While ruined buildings function as memorials of atrocity and are represented as such in the film, others, like the Vilina Vlas hotel, are monuments of both death and denial. At least 200 women were imprisoned, raped, and killed at the Vilina Vlas hotel (Simić and Volcic 2014, 382). While it was not included in the *Lukić and Lukić* indictment, the violence that occurred in the spa hotel is explored in the ICTY documentary, as the *Lukić and Lukić* team leader details the crimes of sexual violence committed by Bosnian Serbs against Bosnian Muslim women (26.16). While these crimes are detailed, the documentary pans to an image of the hotel itself, surrounded by forest and greenery, with a road leading up to the building (26.27). In contrast to the ruination of other buildings in the town, the hotel is in pristine condition; indeed, it remains in operation as “a curative rehabilitation center ... with ... [a] restaurant, bar, swimming pool ... [and where] people of all ages receiv[e] physical therapy” (Jurich 2016, 441).² The evidence and testimony of rape and death contrasts with the serene setting of the building itself, where within its walls, crimes were committed. The representation of the Vilina Vlas hotel in the documentary depicts an eerie scene, “the invisible (absent) yet present sense of the afterlife of extreme violence that animates the space of the hotel and of Višegrad” (Jurich 2016, 437). By representing the atrocities that took place in Vilina Vlas, as well as the gendered nature of the violence committed, the ICTY documentary provides necessary attention to crimes that were not indicted but nevertheless life-altering for the victims and survivors in Višegrad. For example, Hotić notes that the ICTY has provided “a little piece of justice” (quoted in Orentlicher 2018, 127–28), while Madacki writes, “I hate the Tribunal but I need the Tribunal” (*Ibid*), re-

²Such denial and active forgetting of the hotel’s violent history through its contemporary use as a wellness center reflects what Heath-Kelly calls “the profane desecration of sacred space” (2016,140).

flecting the “frustrating and disempowering” effects of the court’s justice (O’Reilly 2018, 143). Filmic representations of Vilina Vlas must therefore be seen within this contested landscape. The victims are feminised, silenced, and reduced to unspeaking subjects who serve the promotional purposes of the ICTY documentary. The hotel, as with other buildings portrayed in the film, is yet another vestige of death, a site where Western audiences can baulk at the horrors that occurred in “distant,” “war-ridden” lands. The filmic representation of Vilina Vlas is one that is split(ing), caught between the recognition of (gendered) atrocities and the voyeuristic ways it serves as a site of dark tourism (see Jurich 2016; Simić and Volcic 2014), held as emblematic of a violent, “Balkan” civilisation.

The split subject(s) of these representations also manifest in the filmic depiction of the town itself. Testimonies and interviews with survivors in the documentary reveal the living agency of Višegrad as a town to mourn over. Standing against the backdrop of the Drina, the bridge, and the surrounding hills, Kurspahić laments that “It was a lovely town until that turmoil erupted” (1.40). Later, as footage shows Kurspahić being driven in a car, looking out the window onto the green scenery they pass, he grieves over what Višegrad once was, and what the townspeople have lost: “This used to be the best town that I had ever known” (11.28, see opening epigraph). The footage then switches to images of the colorful houses in the town, before fading into black-and-white darkness (11.42; 12.01). Paying attention to the relational and non/living allows me to see the more-than-human entanglements with Višegrad itself, as survivors imbue the town with life-force and agency, a home transformed into a site of loss (see Stanišić 2021, 195). Such an insight reflects the more-than-human and non/living relationalities that constitute war and violence, relations that infuse global politics. Kurspahić’s grieving of the town challenges dominant depictions of death and mourning in international criminal justice, revealing the limitations of legal visions of atrocity that only focus on tangible crimes and forms of violence.

Seeing the town of Višegrad as a witness, and indeed a victim-survivor itself, this representation expands notions of death, grief, and mourning beyond a human/nonhuman binary. However, it also contributes to a narrative of Višegrad and Bosnia as a “traumascape” (Tumarkin 2005) or “landscape[] of terror” (Jacobs 2017, 423), a crime scene and object of (filmic) gaze and intervention for international criminal justice. The non/living therefore expands and complicates representations of death, grief, and mourning, while the split(ing) nature of the documentary illuminates the violent ways these representations reproduce civilizational logics about Višegrad through the international criminal justice project. These are logics that pejoratively cast Bosnia as a crime scene and Bosnians as always only and ever criminals and victims, thereby authorizing the Tribunal as a paternal, legitimate intervener and response to “Balkan violence.” Such a depiction is troubling, given the broader civilizational and carceral logics of international criminal justice, and the Western audience the documentary attracts (despite its goal to educate those in the region).

Conclusion

In this article, I have explored how death, grief, and mourning are represented in an ICTY documentary, *Crimes Before the ICTY: Višegrad*. Such an analysis was spurred by a curiosity about how sites of international criminal justice make

the dead visually legible beyond their evidentiary value in the courtroom. A queer relational approach recognizes the salient role that nature and the Višegrad townscape played in the ICTY’s representation of death, grief, and mourning. That victims and survivors in Višegrad make sense of life, death, and grief through these more-than-human attachments encouraged me to consider how queer approaches reimagine non/living worlds. I therefore focused my analysis on three representations in the film attentive to these more-than-human, entangled life-death encounters: the dead as evidence and death worlds as crime scenes; the natural world as a site and agent of death and grief; and built structures and townscapes as vestiges of atrocity. By embracing the queer concepts of the non/living and the split subject and being informed by relational ontologies, I was able to trace more-than-human(ized) and more complicated representations of death, grief, and mourning that challenge simplistic depictions of loss in international criminal justice. The non/living entanglements with nature, the town, and the transcending of life-death binaries offered an alternative, enfolded, and multi-layered story of Višegrad.

I was uneasy at many points during this analysis, and in many ways, I still am. My discomfort stemmed from a fear that such an analysis might romanticize suffering in the town, particularly as I analysed the film as someone situated within a Western cultural gaze. At the same time, however, my analysis must reckon with the contrasting calls from Bosnian victims and survivors who have variously praised and denounced the ICTY’s work, and what this might mean as I critique the ICTY’s filmic depiction of former-Yugoslav populations as criminal, “uncivilised,” and innately violent, and the positioning of the Tribunal as the appropriate and “lawful” intervener to restore justice. Such a critique, waged by myself and others (see Atanasoski 2018), reminded me that more generative representations of death in film—such as the relational encounters with nature and more-than-human others—might contribute to international law’s violence, of casting Bosnia as a crime scene warranting international (criminal law) intervention. But it also demanded the centring of Bosnian voices who both call for tribunal justice and seek non-retributive alternatives beyond it (e.g., poetry, memorials, and storytelling). It also alerted me to the generative possibilities of more-than-human, entangled, and queer representations of death, grief, and mourning in international criminal justice. As a result, my analysis in this article offered paradoxical findings, attentive to the non/living and split subjectivities that embody death, grief, and mourning in both potentially subversive and violent ways. It contributes new insights to the study of international criminal justice documentaries, and builds upon existing IR interventions on/about the dead by considering the queer, relational, and non/living politics of death, grief, and mourning.

In this article, I argued that bringing queer, relational perspectives to bear on an ICTY film can reveal alternative, more-than-human representations of death, grief, and mourning in international criminal justice. This is an important finding because it illuminates more complicated, multidimensional, and plural ways people deal with loss in the wake of violence, in ways that transcend life/death and human/nonhuman binaries. However, I also argued that these more promising representations sit alongside a reductive narrative about Višegrad as a war crime scene, as perennially victimized, violent, criminal, and thereby warranting international criminal investigation. Audio-visual and

filmic techniques (e.g., the use of haunting music, black-and-white photographs, and voice-over narration) and the narrative focus of the film (e.g., on atrocity and promotion of tribunal justice) contribute to civilizational logics about Bosnia. Even as more relational, complicated, and more-than-human(ized) encounters with death, grief, and mourning were represented in the film, the representation of Višegrad as a crime scene—aided by the use of expository film techniques—reduces narratives of loss to signifiers of violent “Balkanness.” My conclusion is specific to the ICTY film, but it resonates with both the violences and potentials of other international criminal justice documentaries, as well as international criminal justice more broadly. Because international criminal justice deals in the currency of suffering, transforming stories of atrocity into courtroom evidence, the stakes for representing (more-than-)human lives and losses cannot be overstated. When the individual and collective experiences of those subjected to violence are reduced to caricatures of civilizational Otherness, as populations rendered always already criminal and victimised, their plural, fractured, and (more-than-)humanised relations with the non/living are forced to the periphery. A queer relational approach recentres these more enriching representations of death, grief, and mourning, while remaining attentive to the flattening effects of civilizational logics and narratives about Višegrad. In doing so, I have sought to challenge the latter while seeking out more generative, subversive, and relational ways of representing death, grief, and mourning in the wake of violence, and in international studies.

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