

Part of that alienation, in this case, is the perverse enjoyment the photographs afford of our own destruction.

The problem is that such images tend to naturalize _____¹, with a photography mesmerized by the compositional and chromatic elements of the very infrastructure responsible for our environmental destruction. Which reminds me of Walter Benjamin's oft-quoted insight about fascist aesthetics: "Its self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure."²

- T.J. Demos

Epicenter by Tobias Kaspar has been manufactured especially for the artist by one of China's largest clothing companies and uses a NASA image³ depicting the planet earth by night composed to look like a map. Borders of countries are not marked instead visible through anthropogenic and artificial light are the "human epicenters".

The brightest areas of the Earth are the most urbanized, but not necessarily the most populated. (Compare western Europe with China and India.) Cities tend to grow along coastlines and transportation networks. Even without the underlying map, the outlines of many continents would still be visible. The United States interstate highway system appears as a lattice connecting the brighter dots of city centers. In Russia, the Trans-Siberian railroad is a thin line stretching from Moscow through the center of Asia to Vladivostok. The Nile River, from the Aswan Dam to the Mediterranean Sea, is another bright thread through an otherwise dark region.⁴

Light pollution is the presence of anthropogenic light in the night environment. It is exacerbated by excessive, misdirected or obtrusive use of light.⁵ For three billion years, life on Earth existed in a rhythm of light and dark that was created solely by the illumination of the Sun, Moon and stars. Now, artificial lights overpower the darkness and our cities glow at night, disrupting the natural day-night pattern and shifting the delicate balance of our environment.⁶

¹ The here missing term and originally used by T.J. Demos is: petrocapiatalism

² T.J. Demos in *Capitalocene Violence* published on June 5, 2015 on https://www.fotomuseum.ch/en/explore/still-searching/articles/27014_capitalocene_violence

³ The image crated by Craig Mayhew and Robert Simmon of NASA GSFC is based on 1000's of satelite images made in 1994 and 1995 and has been published for the first time on October 23, 2000 at <https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/images/55167/earths-city-lights>

⁴ <https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/images/55167/earths-city-lights> last visited December 19, 2019

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Light_pollution

⁶ <https://www.darksky.org/light-pollution/>