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Western capacity to render the agony of vulnerable groups intelligible has been critiqued by many humanitarian media and communication scholars who have pointed out underlying hierarchies structuring humanity and its mediation (Bimbisar, 2018; Chouliaraki, 2013, 2015; Fassin, 2010; Orgad & Seu, 2014; Ticktin, 2016). The use of humanitarian discourse (Ticktin, 2016) to render visible the vulnerability of victims of war, women and children in particular, has generally relied on rather narrow emotional constellations: compassion, pity, and benevolence. Technologization of communication, in Lilie Cho

This paper is aligned with the aforementioned emphasis on the role of digital media in id

world (Trend, 2013). Mark Deuze (2012; cited in Peters, 2014) takes this view even further in arguing that not only do we create through digital media, but we are collectively subsumed by it while it empowers us; a subject can no longer function outside of media.

As much as the digital complicates making sense of the external (Simecek, 2017) and challenges internal external boundaries, to witness something may now be experienced through affect, which can be understood in terms of subjective moods, feelings, and emotions. Affect can grant us access to information that is unrepresentable in language: what escapes linguistic meaning may be captured by affect. For example, subjecting a body to extreme forms of violence, such as torture, results in pain and trauma that is beyond accurate linguistic expression (Simecek, 2017).

The VR response to the need to attest to the veracity of experience of wartime violence and displacement has recently been to elicit aff

meanings. The linguistically imaginative potential of such affects and perceptions arises from radical withdrawal from those of our external environ. The virtual can potentially facilitate a profoundly transformative becoming

In Karen Simecek the most painful experiences, which are ultimately felt corporeally; affect causes us to gravitate toward what we need to attend to, which can also be globally and politically significant. This is especially pertinent in the context of challenging the dehumanizing practices of exclusion and indifference that, in Didier (2010), perpetuate inequalities of lives. Yet predisposing one

an object desired by another. Desire is also violence triumphant as the same object is desired by another, except that desire is har

1. language and movement project trajectories for social interaction and affective constitution 1 1 in the quest for virtual intimacy
2. rivalry 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

Language and movement

1 and at the same time, it must articulate ways of transcending an intimate experience of becoming a displaced 1 in order 1 to avoid becoming fully disintegrated by such becoming. How intimacy comes to be realized in the context of **The Displaced**, in the following, thematically discussed through the unfolding of 1 and 1 displaced child while the modalities of a child, such as innocence, are available for rivalry and (re)attachment to other bodies. In the **Fight for Fallujah**, intimacy is discussed through the exposure of 1 the loss of meaning from which possibilities of mobility /subject to subtle rivalry /can uplift. In both VR environments, o capacity to intuitively 1 fully realized in 1 with the means to transcend this realm as the violence triumphant.

To mobilize theoretical and methodological ideas discussed previously, I experienced both **The Displaced** and **The Fight for Fallujah** several times as a whole, without interruption, and then broke them down into segments that were determined by textual cues, which I also transcribed. In the following, I first describe each VR experience, and then subject them to closer analysis.

The Displaced

The Displaced is a portrait of three children, eleven-year-old Oleg from Ukraine, twelve-year-old Hana from Syria, and nine-year-old Chuol from South Sudan; all were displaced by wars and persecution. Currently, almost thirty-one million boys and girls are displaced by the same or similar circumstances (Silverstein, 2015; UNICEF 2018). Rather than presenting a narrative or a story, **The Displaced** alternates between images and voices of the children, and ends with each

the kind of children they no longer are, yet long to become again; they also address their loss through the lost lives of their close relatives. Part of the dramaturgy of the VR experience is the positioning of the children at the threshold of lost and retained childhood innocence through references to the pas 1 ě 1 1 Ć 1 ě1 1 1 1

childlike use of metaphors, such as using animals to explain themselves:

When they attacked, we fled into the swamp ~~we could~~. What I know is that if I am eaten by a crocodile, it may be a slow death, but it is better than being killed by the fighters.

Here 1 1 Chul provides a scenic tour of the swamp

practices of warring with little organization and lack of matching uniforms, or spending their downtime simply waiting for action to take place. The segment ends with Iraqi fighters posing for the local media with a captured ISIS flag.

Part two is titled 'The Aftermath,' and features the crumbled city, jail cells, and materials left behind by ISIS, as well as a beheaded soldier who had been dragged by his feet and is now photographed with Iraqi soldiers. The focus shifts from the fighters to the civilians in the refugee camp outside of Fallujah, and two families are introduced to live in the camp. The VR engagement with the fight for Fallujah ends with a note on the role of Iraqis in the victory over ISIS in Fallujah, as well as the future of its people amid ubiquitous violence and devastation.

Fallujah at first sight is constituted by a borderless universe of a town of rubble requires for the possibility of affective formation

approach to objects and places, as well as spatial coordinates, in addition to text, music, and other sounds, such as the sound of gunfire. Predominantly, references to this there then and now come to constitute the texture of Fallujah: dialogue like This ; [0]erein this v nBTs] TJETQq0.00000.<

Small cages like this one are about the same size as a dog crate. The taller ones are high enough that you can stand, but too narrow to lie down. There is a thick smell hanging in the air. On the floor, bits of meat for the prisoners are still left out.

Reporter: These people had lived under a brutal regime for two years. For the last month of it, they were shelled and bombed regularly even though the conditions were extreme here. Most of them were grateful to be alive.

Um Madhira: This is heaven, there is food, we have been well fed, the dust 1 we have lived under the bombs and airplanes. God is gracious.

As the realm of a city is no longer merely tied to its location but is increasingly technologically communicated (Aielle, Tarrantino, & Oakley, 2017), 1 1 1 1 1 Fallujah are spatially produced in its virtual form; 1 1 the qualities of life in this city through his or her mobility, acting out that which is desired by the refugees who nevertheless remain immobilized and stagnant in their city-making, or texturing, as some find contentment in the spiritual realm instead.

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In this paper, I have attempted to examine possibilities for virtual intimacy in the context of the VR of migration. In the two VR experiences discussed, the relationship between a physical and phenomenological body is up for negotiation in terms of a subtle avoidance of preconceived ideas of 1 1 in association with 1 modalities. To further explore this, I drew upon the Girardian notion of mimetic desire, with the embedded notion of rivalry, as informing possibilities for virtual intimacy in this area, first, by investiga 1 1 1 1 or her quest for virtual intimacy, and second, by examining how rivalry over what is constructed as desirable in becoming a 1 s virtual intimacy.

Virtual intimacy poses a paradox here: it is effectively enabled through employing affect and corporeality in order to turn to another; yet it is also effectively evaded by the absence of an idea for mutual transcendence. Search for virtual intimacy with another in the affective realm

The linguistically articulable, politically relevant idea of concomitant mobility and nonviolence would, however, be essential for the meaningful creation of virtual intimacy with another in its fullest sense. The mutual articulation of a politically relevant idea, in the context of

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