# The Ghosts We See From the Mountains: Scenario Planning and the Territorial Body in Time

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## Introduction / Acknowledgement of Country

As we gather here on the campus of the University of Warwick, I'd like to begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the lands that we are on and paying my respects to elders past and present. This is a form of words which I learned on the lands of the Turrbal and Jagera peoples, in the place now known as Brisbane, Australia. I'm a German-British dual national, born in London, who grew up in an English village called Drayton and went to school here in Warwick, down the road from where the Territorial Bodies conference takes place. I've just returned from Queensland, Australia, where some years ago I saw this road sign (figure 1) on the outskirts of the city of Toowoomba, on Jarowair and Giabal land, reminding us of the colonial entanglements of these places and the ongoing work of respect, responsibility, and reparation which is to be done.


Figure 1. Road sign in Toowoomba, Queensland. Photo by author.

# 1. Spatial Justice and Gago's *Body-Territory*

> *In the last days of trust, people could barely agree which way was up. Screens told the stories their viewers wanted to hear. Maps rewrote themselves to accommodate prejudice: disputed territories named according to the preference of their viewer.*
>
> *When lands could be contested, so could bodies. The language of who we are proved infinitely open to rewriting. The same flesh could be burdened or lifted by labels. The continent became a patchwork of values and beliefs: whom you could be, whom you could love, where you would be recognised.*
>
> *You've heard whispers of a place where they don't speak of men and women anymore. There are different labels there. Would they suit? It's ten days walk, and you'd have to cross the border.*
>
> "Instructions for Inhabiting Imagined Futures", Finch, 2021a.

Four visions of Europe in the year 2048: a wealthy centenarian enjoys the comforts of a smart home woven with medical technology while taking in news of refugee camps on the US-Canadian border. An Olympic hopeful prepares for events including poetry as well as athletics, in a contest which embodies the postcapitalist values of a climate-ravaged age. A logistics expert immersed in virtual space uses all of their senses to coordinate fleets of autonomous vehicles across expansive virtual and physical geographies. A lost soul who cannot find identity within their deeply regressive corner of a patchwork Europe plans to flee in search of a new home.

These characters appeared in "Instructions for Inhabiting Imagined Futures", an experimental output of the Horizon-funded IMAJINE project which used second person fiction to evoke figures from IMAJINE's scenarios for Europe in the mid-21st century.

In this paper, I explore how scenarios designed to address questions of spatial justice resonate with Verónica Gago's concept of the territorial body or *body-territory*, "a practical concept that demonstrates how the exploitation of common, community (urban, suburban, campesino, and Indigenous) territories involves violating the body of each person and the collective body through dispossession", "mapping the effects on everyday life produced by the dispossession of the commons" (Gago and Mason-Deese, 2019, p.206).

This paper is grounded in the work of IMAJINE, a Horizon Europe-funded programme of the European Commission which comprised sixteen institutions across thirteen countries; their task was to

> formulate new integrative policy mechanisms to enable European, national and regional government agencies to more effectively address territorial inequalities within the European Union, and to imagine a future for European regions in which the distribution of resources is consistent with principles of social and spatial justice. (IMAJINE 2023)

Spatial justice was the key theoretical lens through which this research was conducted across eight work packages comprising empirical research, theoretical and methodological scholarship, and strategic foresight in the form of scenario planning.

As IMAJINE researchers Goodwin-Hawkins et al. (2022) set out, the notion of spatial justice originated in the work of 1960s Marxist theorists, echoing anticapitalist protests of the time. For Henri Lefebvre (1970, translated 2003), spatial justice was a matter of people's rights to access and make use of urban space, but also to participate in transformation processes: the so-called "right to the city".

In the twenty-first century, spatial justice scholarship has evolved to focus on two main concerns: "first, how spatial patterns of inequality are produced and perpetuated; and, second, how more just outcomes might be achieved." These are accompanied by a growing recognition that "spatial in/justices may not necessarily play out in the same ways at regional and rural scales as they do within urban space" (Goodwin-Hawkins et al 2022).

The concept of spatial justice also speaks clearly to Gago's (2020) idea that bodies and territories are entwined in their exploitation, that violence and exploitation inflicted on the land repeat themselves in domestic and intimate spaces, and complex multidirectional dynamics arise between the individual body, the collective, and the various territories they inhabit.

In workshops and presentations, IMAJINE's key spatial justice concerns were outlined in three key questions:

> Do European citizens have equal rights and opportunities regardless of wherever they live?
> Are different places treated fairly?
> Is your ability to realise your rights compromised by where you live?

This focus on rights highlighted that spatial justice, and the desired formulation of new policy mechanisms, was not merely a question of infrastructure investment, relative economic performance, or different measures of prosperity between regions, but also complex geographies of cultural and social value.

Recent scholarly and journalistic work on the geographies of abortion offers an example of spatial justice's broad scope. Calkin et al. (2022) note that abortion is "a geographical issue that has been hitherto marginalized within the discipline", one whose study "offers an important new entry point to larger questions, including the relationship between the spatial and the political in questions of statehood, citizenship and power." Calkin and Kaminska (2020)'s comparison of increasingly divergent legal and cultural approaches to abortion in two predominantly Catholic countries (Ireland and Poland) demonstrates that "morality policy" also is a spatial justice issue which creates geographical inequalities, even when there are historical cultural similarities between jurisdictions.

A 2022 *New York Times* data visualisation, in the form of a "heat map" showing the distance a pregnant person would have to drive to reach an abortion clinic in the United States, highlighted the ways in which legal regimes create an overspill effect with impacts beyond a given jurisdiction (Figure 2, from Bui et al. 2022, drawing on the work of Caitlin Myers; see, for example, Myers 2021).

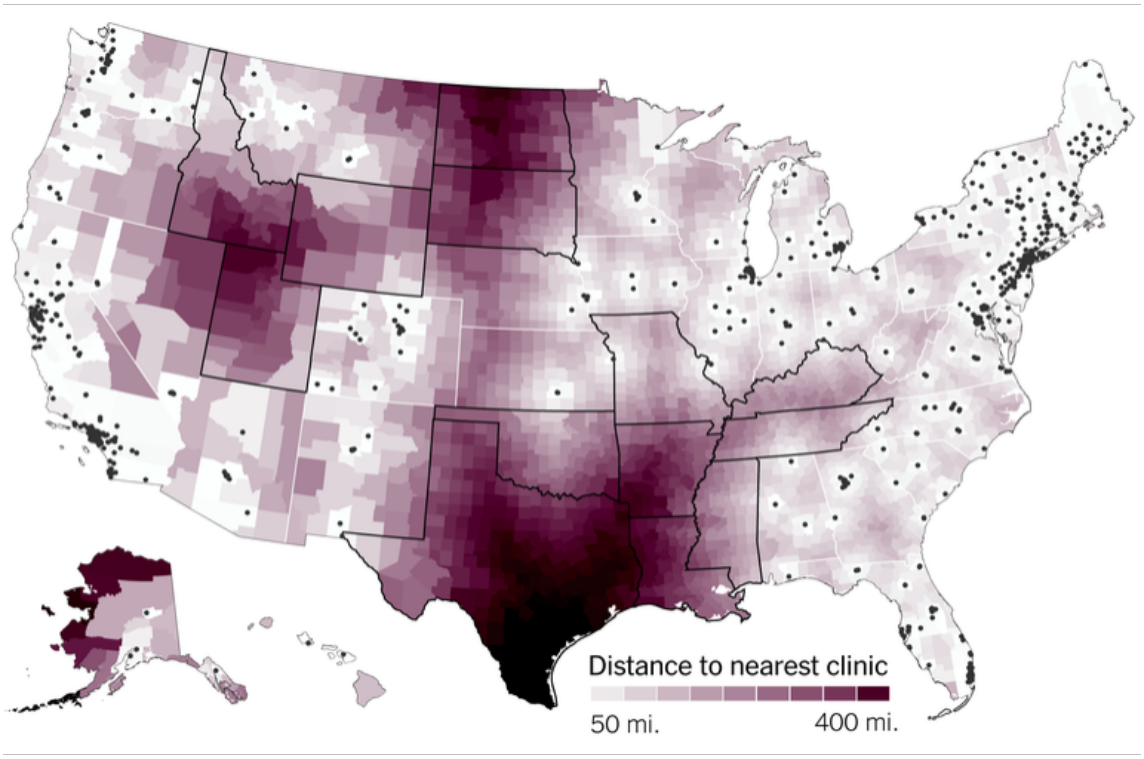



Figure 2. Heat map of distance to nearest abortion clinic in the United States. Bui et al. 2022.

Abortion access as an exemplar of spatial injustice points us to Longhurst (2000)'s foundational work in identifying the body as "the geography closest in", a legitimate site for geographical enquiry. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) point out that the physicality of the body frames all the work we do understanding the world; as Causey (2017) glosses it, "the mind interprets our surroundings *in terms of* our bodies" (p.27), the most intimate realm we inhabit, even from the outset of the development of consciousness.

This recognition is resonant with Gago's work on "the *body-territory* in the abortion debate" (2020, pp.99-103), the United States' repeal of Roe vs. Wade offering a stark example of how "making decisions about desire, maternity, and one's own life" (p.101) is subject to spatial injustice.

At the same time, the iconography of extraction, biological reproduction, and consumerism is visible in a current advertising campaign for the French water brand Evian, where a landscape of pristine snow fills the silhouette of a pregnant figure holding a bottle: the body-territory rendered as aspirational, seeking to ingest the "pure and natural" qualities of a place via an industrialised product (Figure 3).


Figure 3. Evian advertisement in Paris. Author's photograph, 2022.

## 2. Manufactured Future Contexts: Scenarios for Spatial Justice

Why is foresight so useful to spatial justice work? As Sen (2009) has argued, no single, perfectly just imaginary exists against which all circumstances can be judged. Instead, justice may be seen as a question of our capabilities and liberties within a given context. Therefore different future contexts may provide us with useful perspectives on the challenges of justice faced in the here and now.

As the author of the present paper has written elsewhere (Mahon and Finch, 2021),

> Looking at inequality doesn't just mean measuring the difference between "haves" and "have-nots" as we understand them today, and projecting whether that gap will narrow or widen. It means understanding the lenses through which inequality and injustice are defined now - and considering the way those issues might be framed by future generations.

Furthermore, justice is never computational, even when courts of law announce that they are deciding a case on the balance of probabilities (Kay and King, 2020, pp.196-214). This has implications for IMAJINE's foresight work:

> Given that justice is narratively and socially defined, it won't do to just "run the numbers" when we look at its future. We need to think, not just about how Europeans define regional inequality today, but how inequality and injustice might be understood tomorrow. No one has privileged access to the future, and it's impossible to gather data and evidence from events which haven't happened yet; even when foreseeable trends do seem to exist, the experience of COVID-19 has reminded us how easily a seemingly inevitable curve can be bent or broken by events which decision-makers had not accounted for. (Mahon and Finch, 2021)

Therefore the IMAJINE scenarios have sought to go beyond current understandings of regional inequality articulated within the frameworks set by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG-REGIO). DG-REGIO disburses funds to address regional development and territorial cohesion (Sielker et al, 2021) across Europe.

IMAJINE aimed to stretch thinking by developing scenarios for the year 2048 - after four rounds of the seven-year planning cycle which normally shapes DG-REGIO's thinking.


Figure 4 - The four IMAJINE scenarios (IMAJINE, 2021)

Using the Oxford Scenario Planning Approach (OSPA), four futures were developed (Figure 4). In each version of Europe in the year 2048, spatial justice is construed differently, and different forms of injustice and exclusion arise across future geographies which also contrast with those of contemporary Europe.

In SILVER CITADEL, an expanded and deeply centralised European power bloc uses artificial intelligence to manage economic prosperity and equity across its territories under a new state capitalism.

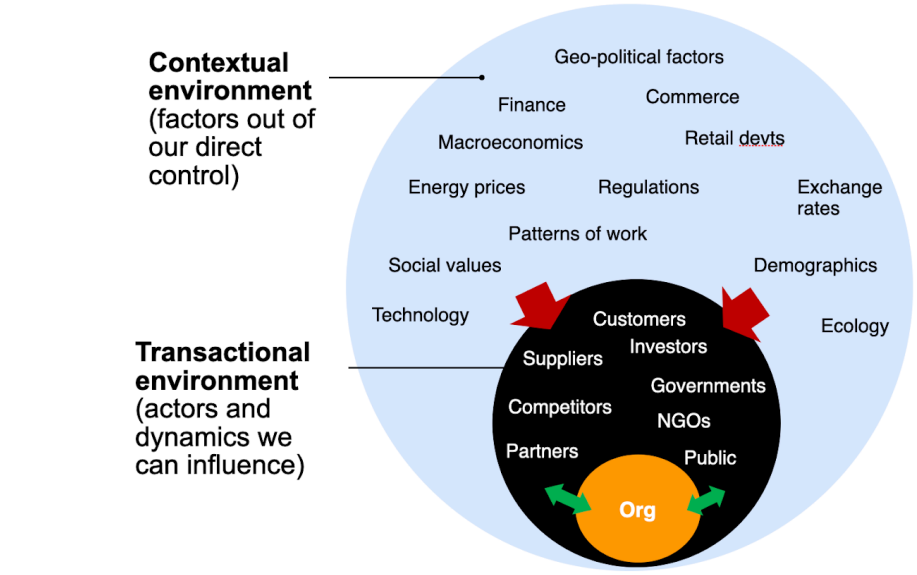
In GREEN GUARDIAN, a postcapitalist global order rises in response to the ravages of climate change, leading to a society whose overriding priorities are sustainability, survival, and wellbeing - with the economics of "profit" and "net worth" giving way to one of "yield" and "fair share".

In SILICON SCAFFOLD, social and economic life migrates almost entirely to privatised virtual spaces, and corporate city-states are ascendant powers which have eclipsed national governments.

In PATCHWORK RAINBOW, diverging and hard-to-reconcile cultural and social norms cause Europe to form a mosaic of regions which are increasingly dependent on relationships and alliances with more advanced or stable powers elsewhere in the world.

The OSPA, developed at the Saïd Business School, is set out in Ramírez and Wilkinson's *Strategic Reframing* (2016). As a working definition, the OSPA proposes that scenarios are "a small set of manufactured possible future contexts, of something, for someone, for a purpose, with a pre-specified usable interface - and used"; scenarios can also be characterised as "assessments of the future context, developed for a specific purpose, that contrast with the 'ghost scenario' (the way the future context is currently being framed)." (Oxford Scenarios Programme, 2022).

In this approach, scenarios, as imagined future contexts, are distinguished from strategy, the actions which one might take within a given context. Ramírez and Wilkinson (2016) delineate the transactional environment "which one can influence by interacting with the other actors that comprise it" (p.222) from a broader contextual environment "that is beyond the direct and indirect influence of a strategist [...], an actor (or set of actors)" (p.217). (See Figure 5).




Source: Oxford Scenarios Programme

Figure 5 - Example contextual and transactional environments - the Oxford Scenarios Programme.

OSPA scenarios are built in an iterative process by exploring multiple ways in which contextual uncertainties, perceived to be beyond a key actor's direct control, may, in times to come, change the transactional environment of relationships and dynamics which that actor perceives it can influence. Under so-called "TUNA" conditions of turbulence, uncertainty, novelty, and ambiguity (Ramírez and Wilkinson, p.222), when the past no longer serves as an adequate guide to the future, scenarios provide alternative future contexts (Scoblic 2020) to inform wise decision-making (Ramírez et al., 2019).

As Chermack (2022, pp. 35-42) emphasises, the OSPA is intended to be procedurally agnostic, offering less a method than a way to "understand and navigate the methodological choices in designing an intervention that effectively supports the purpose and capabilities of the specific scenario learner" (Ramírez and Wilkinson, 2016, p.19).

Scenarios produced using this approach are neither predictive or normative; the intention is not to express the likelihood of a given scenario coming to pass, nor to set out "how the future should be". While a desired future context might, like the expected "ghost scenario", be included in a scenario set precisely in order for it to be contrasted or critiqued, this is a distinct approach from others such as Krishnan (2022, p.94), for whom the "fundamental practice of foresight is the process of *imagining and designing what our futures can and should be*." [My emphasis].

Instead, in the OSPA, the future is understood as “part of the present; it comes to us and is expected to be different from the present as it unfolds and passes.” (Ramírez, Lang, and Peterson, 2021). The work of strategy is done in the present, and the sense of the

future is attended to “as a way of knowing the present, rather than considering the future as something that is knowable in advance” (Ramírez and Wilkinson, 2016. p.162).

Scenarios become a way, in Donna Haraway's words, of "staying with the trouble" in the here and now:

> In urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe, of stopping something from happening that looms in the future, of clearing away the present and the past in order to make futures for coming generations. Staying with the trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future. In fact, staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings. (Haraway, 2016, p.1).

The OSPA's focus on uncertainties in the present context and the currently perceived limits of agency, rather than the identification of desired or prescribed futures, does not imply passivity. Rather, the approach chimes with both Haraway's argument and Solnit's insight (2016, p.xiv):

> When you recognize uncertainty, you recognize that you may be able to influence the outcomes - you alone or you in concert with a few dozen or several million others. Hope is an embrace of the unknown and the unknowable, an alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists. Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists take the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. It's the belief that what we do matters even though how and when it may matter, who and what it may impact are not things you can know beforehand.

In the OSPA, iterative cycles of perception and reperception, refining scenarios and exploring their implications, enable users to stretch their sense of what is going on around them and what is yet to transpire, in ways that can be acted upon. This process may include addressing what Nørretranders (1998), Hara (2018), and Nazir (2020) call “exformation”, or “explicitly discarded information”; that which lies beyond the frame of reference within which we can we take for granted a common understanding. Scenarios' usefulness stems from the capacity to challenge the frames through which a situation is currently considered by its stakeholders. Like Gago's *body-territory*, the scenario in Ramirez and Wilkinson's conception is "strategic, because it is a point of analysis and of practical action" (Gago, 2020, p.95); "it expands our way of *seeing*" (p. 85).

Ramírez and Wilkinson emphasise the links between scenario work and storytelling, presenting scenario users (sometimes characterised as learners) as holding two roles, "both as the producer and the consumer of the scenario system maps and storylines" (p.44).

In the case of IMAJINE, the OSPA served to develop and assess distinct futures of European regional development and, specifically, the idea of spatial justice. By manufacturing plausible and contrasting future contexts for Europe in which spatial justice is construed differently, IMAJINE aimed to help reframe contemporary issues of regional inequality and to understand them more extensively, in a way that would be useful and actionable for policymakers and other stakeholders.

In SILVER CITADEL's version of 2048, spatial justice is framed in terms of equitable distribution of wealth between Europe's regions, calculated using artificial intelligence under the aegis of a consolidated EU's new state capitalism.

In GREEN GUARDIAN, spatial justice is understood in terms of regions helping each other adapt to change in a postcapitalist era defined by the struggle to endure climate catastrophe. As cities and coastal areas become unappealing places to live, the traditional poles of the urban-rural axis are inverted (Finch and Mahon 2021).

SILICON SCAFFOLD's notion of spatial justice means the right of regions to hold onto wealth they had generated in a world where social and economic life, migrating to transnational virtual spaces, could escape traditional jurisdictions based on physical geography.

In PATCHWORK RAINBOW, spatial justice is a cultural issue: communities' right to define their own values in a future Europe where fundamental cultural and social disagreements had emerged.

This was not so much a case of judging which future was most desirable, but rather using the future itself to gain perspective on the present. Indeed, it was even possible to ask how inhabitants of each scenario would look back on the choices, policies, and strategies of today, if their future were to come to pass. How would the 2020s be seen through the retrospective spatial justice lens applied in each scenario?

In this, the IMAJINE team were partly inspired by the German television movie *Ökozid* (Veiel, 2020), co-written by Jutta Doberstein, one of the facilitators of the Oxford Scenarios Programme. In the film, the International Court of Justice in the year 2034 decides a case on whether Angela Merkel and Gerhard Schröder are to be held culpable for policies which failed to protect the climate. As Parsons (2023) argues, moral experience is defined by our relationship to an interwoven network of moral assemblages, "the set of guidelines defining acceptable and non-acceptable actions, words, thoughts, and modes of being in any given social context or set of relations" (p.8); while comfort may be found "when we no longer need to be aware of this shifting evaluation, when we no longer need to be aware and considerate of the competing and sometimes contrasting claims as to what is and is not moral and ethical" (p.9), "[s]urrounding oneself with individuals and communities that condone behaviour we enjoy removes external evaluation and the self-reflection it often induces that makes us stop, think, and consider the ramifications of our actions" (p.19). IMAJINE, and *Ökozid*, each provide examples of imagined future contexts creating a fresh vantage point from which to question the rightness and justice of our actions in the here and now.

Precisely because IMAJINE's scenarios were constructed to be non-normative, they were free to describe and investigate troubling or ambivalent aspects of each European future. These aspects were explored through commentary from external respondents on topics such as the future of corruption in each scenario (Barrington 2022), "dark design" (Østergaard 2022), and behavioural policy interventions which could intentionally or unintentionally promote inequality and cause harm (Kaufman 2022). A response to each scenario from the European Trade Union Institute (IMAJINE 2021, pp. 33-34) created space for users to consider the perspective of the worker in each future, and the impact of each future on the labouring body.

This exemplified Ramírez and Wilkinson's argument, drawing on Carlos Fuentes' description of the novel as "a verbal search of that which awaits being written", that "the novel, like the scenario, enables conversation relations between readers and the writer in reading and rereading: 'never again should we have only one voice or reading. Imagination is real and its languages multiple.'" (p.44).

A polyphonic approach to scenario planning, with fourteen external respondents included in the main scenarios document, eleven more published on the IMAJINE website, and other informal and private responses shaping the project, allowed for the incorporation of diverse and critical perspectives. As Ramírez and Wilkinson argue, this

> can help learners to avoid what might be considered the "colonization of the future" by dominant powers or vested interests. Such colonization can occur when "the strategic agenda" is imposed from the outside or unilaterally by the powerful[.] (2016, p.47)

As Ramírez and Ravetz (2011) have pointed out, such colonization can have profound consequences. TUNA conditions do not merely arise because of forces which appear to be "natural" or "wild": indeed, corruption, greed, technocratic hubris, and the unwise exercise of power can all lead to "feral" conditions in which "human intervention create[s] an unwanted unfolding situation that could not have occurred in the wild" (p. 479). By resisting the imposition of a singular perspective and challenging existing assumptions, scenario planning

> usefully complicates the notion of 'preferred' or normative futures, design fictions, and other utopian projects through which communities and organisations imagine and advocate for whatever they consider to be a better world [...restoring] both our humility with regard to external forces that may seem almost unbearable to face, and the troubling sense that our own desires may not be pure or uncomplicated[.] (Finch and Mahon, 2022)

For Ramírez and Drevon (2005), scenarios provide spaces where "the status quo can be suspended or temporarily bracketed, freeing thinking from established here and now constraints and allowing one to look at one's current situation from an alternative point of view" (p.197). This transitional space consists not just of the meetings at which scenarios are built, but "the scenarios produced [...] are themselves also objects that can be used transitionally to enhance change" (p.211).

This change comes about through the opportunity for "strategic reframing"; Ramírez and Wilkinson (2016) argue that a set of plausible manufactured futures can yield unique vantage points, which “look back at the current context and its possible unfolding with ‘new’ eyes, unhampered by past and current conditioning and opening new possibilities” (p.127).

"A frame and the process of framing directs what attention focusses on," they explain,

> and determines what remains peripherally attended to -- and even out of the frame altogether. Frames and framing help the mind to order experiences; they also manifest what has been implicitly or subconsciously attended to -- and not. *Reframing* involves considering alternative frames. (p.222)

As Wack (1985a) put it, the effect is like looking at rain on a mountaintop and understanding that this could mean future floods in the valley below -- not anticipation or prediction, but a questioning or unlearning of assumptions (Burt and Nair, 2020) which could lead scenario users to "to change and reorganize their inner models of reality" (Wack, 1985b).

In the case of IMAJINE, this process led researchers to critique the project's original mandate to explore how policy should help to achieve more spatial justice as currently construed within the European Commission. As IMAJINE's principal investigator Mike Woods put it:

> What the scenarios really brought to light is that's the wrong question. Because there isn't just one way of thinking about spatial justice. [...T]he key question we've got to face is what type of spatial justice we want. (Imajine Project, 2022)

Alongside such critical strategic reflection, IMAJINE's distant imaginary futures are meant to be practical and applicable to choices made in the present day. The European innovation agency network TAFTIE, for example, used IMAJINE's scenarios to explore their future identities and policy options (Glennie et al. 2022, Finch et al. 2023). This included the opportunity to reflect on how the qualities and dynamics of "inclusive innovation" motivated by environmental and social aims (Klingler-Vidra et al, 2022) might evolve in each scenario.

Another IMAJINE output, with special relevance for our concern with the territorial body, was "Instructions for Inhabiting Imagined Futures" (Finch, 2021a), a collection of second-person fictions designed to put the reader in the body of inhabitants of each scenario. (An excerpt from this piece opens the present paper). Marginalized or privileged, the figures provide examples of the body-territory in each scenario.

# 3. The witch's wake: scenarios and the spectral metaphor

> *But you only realise you have a disease*
> *When you are awake enough to feel the symptoms.*
> *[...]*
> *So people don't know they are unwell.*
> *Then the disease becomes easy.*
> *Like how a coma is easy.*
> *And being awake becomes hard.*
> *Uneasy.*
> *And waking up, becomes traumatic.*
>
> Jeffrey Boakye (2021), "Why they won't be woke"

By envisaging figures which might occupy each scenario, and thereby giving us a glimpse of potential future territorial bodies, scenario work can help to identify emerging vulnerabilities or marginalizations. In making the move to identify and remedy present-day marginalization through the use of future scenarios, we draw on Peeren (2014)'s notion of "the spectral metaphor".

Peeren proposes that certain subjects in contemporary society, such as "undocumented migrants, servants or domestic workers, mediums and missing persons", can be

> likened to ghosts or related figures, on the basis of their lack of social visibility, unobtrusiveness, enigmatic abilities or uncertain status between life and death. While there are similarities between them in terms of their marginalized social position and shared association with that which escapes or exceeds the visible, they are not all ghostly in exactly the same manner or degree. (p.5)

Peeren argues that such groups, though suffering "varying degrees of dispossession", are not incapable of finding ways "individually or collectively, to acquire (a greater measure of) agency, so that they, too, may *live on*" (p.16); these ways may not even require full renunciation of ghostly status.

Spectrality for Peeren arises from "conditions that are imposed in real-life encounters, especially with vulnerable subjects" (p.16): their very invisibility and exile from the domain of the fully living and fully recognised occurs, like justice, within a specific historical and social context.

This means that, as with the different notions of spatial justice brought to light by the IMAJINE scenarios, each manufactured plausible future context can also potentially shed light on the presence of spectral figures who are marginalized or rendered wholly or partly invisible through the frame of present conditions.

In the worlds of GREEN GUARDIAN, SILICON SCAFFOLD, SILVER CITADEL, or PATCHWORK RAINBOW, who would experience marginalization, exclusion, dispossession, and disadvantage? These might range from those digitally excluded from privatized virtual life to those whose very sense of identity is unrecognised and even unnamed within the territories they inhabit.

Having visited these scenarios in the year 2048, can we see "weak signals" (Ansoff 1975, Holopainen and Toivonen 2012) of those marginalizations coming into being in the present?

Extending Wack's metaphor of the scenario planner observing rain on a mountaintop and reflecting on the potential consequences for the valley below, it might also be possible to use future scenarios to gain a fresh vantage point and survey the territory in a way which revealed figures who had previously been spectral and elusive: the ghosts we see from Wack's mountains.

Carson (2022), a respondent to the IMAJINE scenarios on the question of infectious disease in each future, highlighted how this could function in deeply pragmatic terms. She emphasised that, just as the COVID-19 pandemic

> showed up all the weaknesses of the system [...] Looking at these scenarios can identify systemic weaknesses before we have to endure the next hit; doing that work of identification and early intervention would be an honourable thing to do with these scenarios.

The vantage point of each imagined future, by revealing different vulnerabilities, injustices, systemic failures, and exclusions, provides opportunity for scenario users to identify and

intervene against potential and emergent vulnerabilities today. This is particularly interesting in the context of COVID-19, where we have been reminded that

> Epidemics end once the diseases become accepted into people's daily lives and routines, becoming endemic—domesticated—and accepted. Endemic diseases typically lack an overarching narrative because they do not seem to require explanation. More often, they appear as integrated parts of the natural order of things. (Charters and Heitman, 2021)

Charters and Heitman argue that the COVID pandemic will only "end" when the novel coronavirus has become domesticated and accepted in a given context, whatever the cost of that acceptance might be - and to whom. Scenarios offer an opportunity to explore the future contexts in which such domestication might occur.

The fresh perspectives offered by multiple imagined futures can challenge the acceptance of harms and injustices -- *what would people make, in retrospect, of our attitudes to Long COVID in SILVER CITADEL or SILICON SCAFFOLD?* -- as well as highlighting other aspects of our lives in which "spectral" injustices, exclusions, and oppressions are currently "accepted into people's daily lives and routines".

Encountering ghosts, however, can be a disquieting experience. Even in a more traditional corporate application, the kinds of recognition which come from a successful scenario engagement are not always comfortable. The target of scenario work, Wack explained, was

> the microcosm of the decision makers: their inner model of reality, their set of assumptions that structure their understanding of the unfolding business environment and the factors critical to success (1985b).

Successfully challenging the microcosm of a scenario user leads to reperception, a cognitive shift in which the mental model is altered -- sometimes called the "'aha' moment" (Ramírez and Wilkinson, p.22).

While Wack called scenarios work "the *gentle* art of reperceiving" (1985b; my emphasis), the "aha" moment is not necessarily comfortable. When it leads to the recognition of a figure, community, class, or identity which was previously "ghostly", and an understanding of their oppression, marginalization, or disadvantage, then waking up to this recognition can be challenging.

A parallel might be drawn between recognition of spectral status in a scenario, whether one's own or that of others, and the experience of systemic racial injustice. Venita Blackburn, in the essay which gives this section its title (2019), writes of the neurological experience of sleep paralysis, also known as "the witch's wake", where the dreamer returns to consciousness and finds themselves in an unresponsive body:

> The whole body becomes a tomb and the mind is a ghost, skimming the space between the living and everything else. I remember screaming when it happened, hard, loud, in tears, and yet I was silent. I say this because it is the nearest analogy for explaining not just the black experience in America, but the white experience as well. There is a seam between consciousness and sleep, between the wreckage of the body and being able to see the forces that attack it. The black American is born on that seam, that fragile space of knowing your physical self is in peril and

> being unable to act. We watch our bodies wrecked for the economic and sadistic benefit of whiteness and our screams are silenced through disbelief.

Blackburn goes on to address the equivalent experience of white Americans who wake up to the racial injustice of US society:

> To give up whiteness is to become vulnerable, to confront the deep tears in the psyche gouged over generations, to see hate in the face of a loved one and name it and therefore open yourself up to being seen and ultimately touched. [...] It is not the marginalized people, the black and brown bodies under assault, who carry the burden of saving this nation; they carry only the burden of seeing the flames first.

With exclusions and oppressions which are only potential or incipient, it may be possible for scenarios and strategic foresight work to reveal the first sparks of future flames before the burden is imposed upon the bodies of the marginalized. The contrasting vantage points of imagined futures built to explore the plausibility of different kinds of spatial justice might facilitate the painful but necessary work of awakening described in both Blackburn's essay and in Jeffrey Boakye's poem, which provides the epigraph to this section.

As Yusoff (2018) notes in work resonant with Gago's *body-territory*, we can "understand Blackness as a historically constituted and intentionally enacted deformation in the formation of subjectivity" (p.xii), created by a colonial process of severance of traditional ties and the inscription of a new, subjugated identity.

This historical aspect opens us up to consideration of novel changes to identity which might occur *in times to come*, using plausible manufactured scenarios to explore uncertainties and potential future developments in subjugation and inequity.

It is worth issuing a caveat here: this is not to equate the actual suffering, marginalization, and lived experience of those existing in the past and present with the imagined inhabitants of plausible futures, who are not even *predicted* to exist. Such an attitude would risk a double exclusion on the part of the powerful - "we don't need to take the suffering of today seriously, because our eyes are on the sufferings of tomorrow, as depicted in scenarios". Rather, the intention of this paper is to highlight commonalities in the discomfort of recognition, whether through the frame of the past, present, or plausible future.

Such work includes carefully exploring the impact of different future contexts on the bodies of the privileged as well as the marginalized, and recognising that scenario-based strategy work, by encouraging reframing and reperception, does not solely awaken the privileged to that which has been overlooked or suppressed in the frames through which they make sense of the world. It may also provide fresh perspectives for those who already occupy marginalized positions. The scenario planner Adam Kahane's experience in South Africa as it emerged from apartheid (2012, 2017, 2021) highlights how scenario planning may require every participant to "open up to the possibility that they might not have the right answer" (p.69), another discomforting variant on Wack's "aha moment".

IMAJINE's experiment with second-person accounts of different future bodies in each scenario highlighted issues such as the potential for medical technology to sustain a complacent gerontocracy in the SILVER CITADEL scenario; the pressures on sporting and cultural figures in the new sustainability-focussed cultural hegemony of GREEN

GUARDIAN; the demands and delights of a digitally augmented sensorium in SILICON SCAFFOLD; and the feeling of near-complete alienation for an inhabitant of PATCHWORK RAINBOW whose sense of identity was deeply at odds with those recognised within their territory.

More broadly, the scenarios raised other questions relevant to our future-oriented perspective on the *body-territory*:

In SILVER CITADEL, which bodies and behaviours would be penalized in a European Union whose prosperity was dependent on the social conformity of a “New European Social Model”, supported by artificial intelligence and pervasive digital surveillance?

How might Europeans' attitude to asylum-seekers and immigration shift in GREEN GUARDIAN's world, where the Netherlands had succumbed to sea-level rises and every Dutch citizen was a climate refugee?

What new disparities and inequities would develop in the world of SILICON SCAFFOLD, where citizenship was digital and "remixable", no longer tied to physical geography and with the potential for healthcare rights (for example) to be disaggregated and shared or traded? Taking Gago's perspective on the *body-territory,* how would extractive forces configure themselves and deploy in data-driven online spaces? What would domesticity look like in a virtualized world?

How might European identity evolve in the PATCHWORK RAINBOW future where Europe's poorest residents were migrating south across the Mediterranean to thriving African nations under Chinese patronage?

IMAJINE did not presume to answer these questions, but rather raise them for discussion by a wide range of users. Issues encountered in each version of 2048 could then be considered with reference to situations which might already be developing in the present.

If Sen (1981) could famously argue that "there are no famines in democracies", we can use scenarios to ask: what kinds of society are susceptible to what kinds of crisis? As Older (2022) points out, "So-called “natural” disasters are increasingly understood as the result of an interaction between natural triggers, or hazards, and social vulnerabilities." Scenarios not only allow us to explore what hazards - including novel or emergent ones - might threaten a particular society, or what forms of society might be particularly resilient or immune to those hazards; noting Ramírez and Ravetz's "feral" conditions, we can also think of societies which may be responsible for *generating* new hazards and disasters -- in the words of the poet Myung Mi Kim, "making famine where abundance lies" (Kim, 2002, p. 4).

In each of these cases, we can also ask how the *body-territory* affects and is affected by the features and dynamics of each scenario. Where can community be built in each future? Where will extractive forces be at play, what will they seek to extract, from whom or what, and at what cost? And: how do the answers to such speculative questions enhance our perception of the situation unfolding around us today?

In this way, rather than force the marginalized to "carry [...] the burden of seeing the flames first", might foresightful efforts be made to identify new marginalizations and their attendant harms before they fully emerge?

# 3. The territorial body in time

> *I made time balloon, or shrink, or do things it is not supposed to do.*
>
> Myung Mi Kim, in conversation with Kathryn Yusoff (Williamson, 2022)

In the latter part of this paper, I want to consider how the concepts of the body-territory and the scenario might usefully nourish one another in times to come. First of all, what does Gago's radical, activist, feminist territorial lens bring to scenarios work?

There is a geographical metaphor at the heart of the Oxford scenario process, with a sea of perceived uncertainty surrounding an island of relationships which we believe we can influence. As the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan notes, "[h]ow time and place are related is an intricate problem that invites different approaches" (1977, p.179). Time may be spatialized when we think of it as an arrow, or imagine the future as a place where we will one day reside; spaces, too, have their temporal aspect as geographical and geological processes see them form, transform, and disappear over time.

Selkirk et al. (2018, p.2) note that the future "is too often constructed as linear continuation of past and present, a trajectory that clearly leads from now to then, thus partially stripping it of its complex and unexpected nature."

"Time, however," they note, "and our ability to know the future, is much more complex than any trajectorial framing or linear model can account for [...] Humans interact with time in multiple ways - in future horizons or geometries that reference different patterns of temporal movement" (p.3).

One of the things that the notion of the territorial body, and discussions like today's in Warwick, have to offer the world of scenario planning is a closer attention to the ways in which scenarios discipline time, and in which that discipline is shaped by scenarios' own origins and entanglement with the military and with extractive industries. If time is a resource, then it is wise to be mindful of Kathryn Yusoff's discussion (in Williamson, 2022) of the ways in which resources can be commodified and stripped of context: "I think of something like the gold standard, for example. It can go into a Swiss bank and [...] be cleaned of its associative geographies and qualities and places."

Scenario planning, in the tradition to which the OSPA belongs, similarly arose in the context of Cold War military strategy (Beck 2018) and the extractive industries (Bradfield et al 2005); it can be considered one of those aspects of today's information society which Lankes (2021) describes as being "forged in war". These associations, too, should not be "scrubbed", erased, or neglected -- though where Curry (2022, p.100) dismisses the possibility, given its history, for "conventional scenarios practice [...] to evolve beyond its current range, or to address issues of power or meaning", I argue that the capacity for scenarios to meaningfully engage with work like that of Gago highlights precisely the opportunities for viable and useful evolution. In the words of the poet Friedrich Hölderlin (trans. Horton, 2007), "Where there is danger/The rescue grows as well": precisely the fact that working with scenarios forces us to confront and surface these issues, "staying with the trouble" in a methodological sense, brings about the required critical self-reflection. Engagement with the body-territory is one example.

In turn, the foresightful aspect of scenario work can help us to think about the diagnosis of the territorial body in time.

In making this connection, I draw on the cinematic metaphor which recurs throughout the history of scenario planning. Screenwriter Leo Rosten made use of Hollywood terminology when he originally proposed the term "scenario" for the kind of future stories Herman Kahn sought to tell when "thinking the unthinkable" at the RAND Corporation:

> "In the movies, [Rosten said], a scenario is a detailed outline of a future movie." Actually Rosten knew that the word *scenario* was outdated in Hollywood; it hearkened back to the silent era. But to the RAND scientists, it sounded more dignified than *screenplay*. Herman Kahn particularly loved the word, including its literary connotations. Scenarios, as Herman Kahn saw them, were supposed to be fictional and playful, not some sort of rigorous forecast. (Kleiner, 2008, p.129)

Ramírez and Wilkinson continue the cinematic metaphor in the Oxford Scenario Planning Approach, drawing on *Burden of Dreams*, the documentary of the making of Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo*, to consider the "movie about the movie", a meta-reflection on the scenario building process which helps to clarify the use and purpose of scenarios (2016, p.122).

For Pandian (2015), the fraught and collaborative nature of moviemaking as an enterprise, and the way in which cinema captures time through a succession of still frames, both challenge simplistic understandings of being and emergence. Pandian draws on the work of Gilbert Simondon to question a tendency "to think of process in terms of its endpoints, beginning with an existing object and interring some point of origin that must have led ineluctably to this very destination" (p.274); he illustrates movies' "peculiar amalgam of movement and stillness" (p.282) with the example of Étienne-Jules Marey's "chronophotographs".

In Marey's "Chronophotograph of a standing jump" (Figure 6, c.1882), we see a body's motion, captured in increments, and, viewing it, can begin to ask ourselves, as practitioners of foresight: what does it mean to perceive Gago's *body-territory* over time, including from the perspective of a plausible manufactured future, as its encounters with transactional actors and contextual factors redraw boundaries, dynamics, and identities?

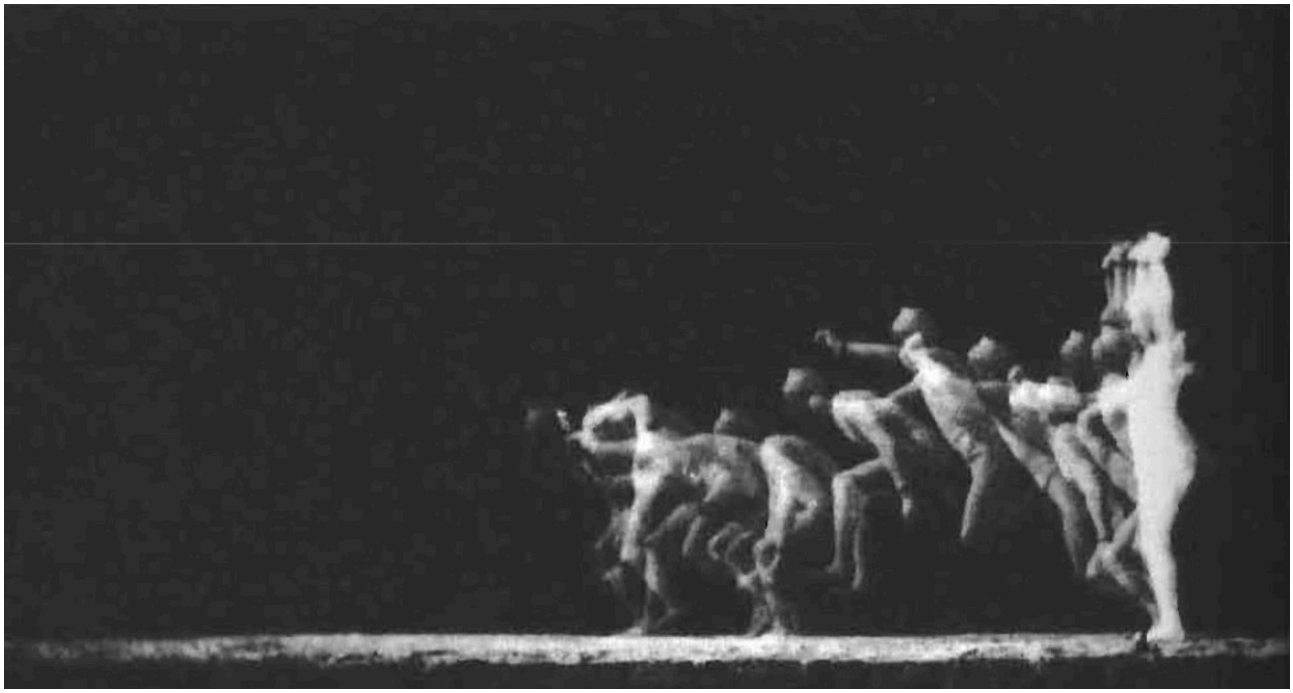


Figure 6. Chronophotograph of a standing jump (Marey, c.1882)

"Taking the constituted individual as a given, we are then led to try to recreate the conditions that have made its existence possible," Simondon writes (1992, p.297), offering an understanding of individuation which he then critiques as overly simplistic: "it is equally possible to maintain that becoming exists as one of the dimensions of the being, that it corresponds to a capacity beings possess of falling out of step with themselves." (p.300).

Taking a scenario planner's perspective on Gago's *body-territory* challenges us to recognise that the territorial body is always in a state of becoming, and that it has the capacity to "fall out of step with itself". The territorial body is to be understood not solely in terms of the conditions which have made its existence possible, but the ways in which it continues to become, and its capacity to fall out of step with its current form. This approach helps us to construct analyses and actions to address questions of justice as they apply to the territorial body, oriented not solely to the current state of affairs or the historical constitution, but the potential future contexts in which the dynamics of the *body-territory* might play out

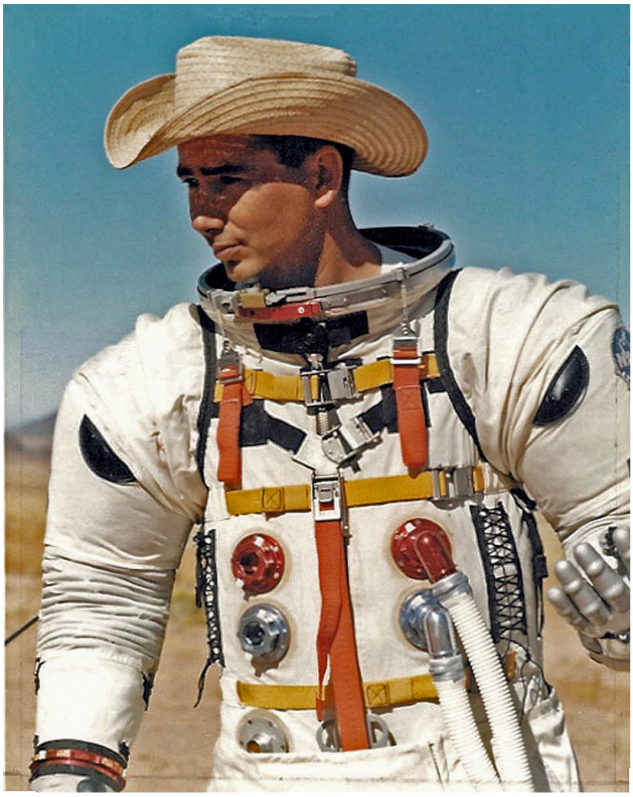


Figure 7. Geologist Joe O'Connor wearing an early version of the Apollo spacesuit in the Territory of the Navajo Nation, Arizona, 1965. USGS Open File Report 2005-1190, Fig 31a

An example of the speculative body-territory is offered by the simulated Mars expeditions and training conducted on Earth which are recounted in Lisa Messeri's *Placing Outer Spac*e (2016). At locations like the Mars Desert Research Station (MDRS) in Utah, volunteers, some closely affiliated with NASA, explore what it might be like to experience

life on a future Martian colony. Such environments are similar to other unusual examples of the body-territory such as the offshore oil rig workers studied by Mahzabeen (2022).

Messeri explores how the imagined future of Martian colonisation echoes and resonates with the colonisation of North America and the iconography of the Western frontier (figure 7); the "American frontier, though long settled, frames the training [of the] astronauts as they prepare to journey to the extraterrestrial frontier" (2016, p.43).

She also considers how, like Marey's chronophotographs, a territorial "double exposure" (30-32) of sorts comes into being, with the landscapes of Mars and Utah overlaid upon one another (figure 8).

Messeri cites a visitor to the Utah station: "Stepping out of my dark cabin, I immediately found myself face-to-face with the main porthole of the upper deck, and a red-tinted brown landscape of rock and sand stretching out onto the horizon. That's when it really sank in: for all intents and purposes, we were on Mars" (Ruff 2012, cited in Messeri 2016, p. 30).

As volunteers conduct real geological research alongside a kind of science-fictional play-acting, they understand the Martian present through the lens of Earthly landscapes, while Earth's present is in turn interpreted with reference to the landscape of Mars. The privations as well as the wonder of speculative "Martian" living form part of this experience:


Figure 8. The Mars Desert Research Station. Courtesy of The Mars Society / MDRS.

Each crew decides to what extent they want to enhance the feeling of MDRS being a no place. Cell phone reception was spotty, so most of us volunteered to leave our

> phones off for the mission to simulate a remove between MDRS and elsewhere. Though we had Internet access, the bandwidth was limited and forced us to adopt different usage habits. Crews are told that water is scarce and to shower conservatively at the hab [habitation unit]. Our crew adopted an every third day shower routine, but I found out toward the end that one crew member had been showering everyday. Danny on the other hand sought a more "authentic" experience and opted to shower only once. We were simulating isolation, but was this Mars output really a utopia? (Messeri, 2016, p. 67).

Messeri draws on the work of Eric Hirsch (1995), in terms resonant with my reading of Simondon and Pandian, to note how "the pursuit of dynamism distinguishes the anthropological approach to landscape analysis", viewing landscapes like Martian Utah as processes: in Hirsch's words, a populated landscape, and therefore a body-territory, "in the flow of becoming" (p.31) -- the territorial body in time.

The dynamic interplay of the "astrogeological narrative", by which astronauts are trained in Earth geology to prepare themselves for space exploration, and the "areological narrative", in which planetary scientists focus on the unique geology of Mars itself, offers a unique vantage point on our earthly conditions:

> Regardless of the time or the reigning cosmology, then, speculating on the plurality of worlds provokes thinking not only about the universe but about Earth itself [...] Ideas of what it means to be on Earth shape studies of other planets, and studying the habitability of other worlds refines how we define life on Earth. (2016, p.196).

This forms part of a wider discourse of what Messeri, following Spivak (2003), terms "planetarity":

> Planetarity, perhaps because it appeals to a word associated with "nature" (planet) rather than "culture" (globe), serves to remind us that we are guests of Earth [...] Whereas "globalization" suggests an expansive flattening, "the planetary" resurrects a sense of finitude accompanied by the reality of unequally distributed wealth and resources. (2016, p.10).

In the final part of this paper, I explore how this fresh perspective and sense of interconnection can lead us to action on the pressing issues of our own immediate time and space.

# 5. Re-weaving the transactional island: moving from foresight to collective action

> *My love for the world is like always*
> *For the world is a part of me*
>
> - Percy Mayfield (1961), "The Danger Zone"

Ramírez's elaboration of the Oxford Scenario Planning Approach with Mannervik in *Strategy for a Networked World* (2016) seeks to better understand the dynamics of value co-creation on the "island" of the OSPA's "transactional environment". This understanding enables actors to find ways to orchestrate transactional relationships that

co-create new value - including "reclaiming territory from the sea" by developing new connections which bring contextual uncertainties under control (see figure 9).

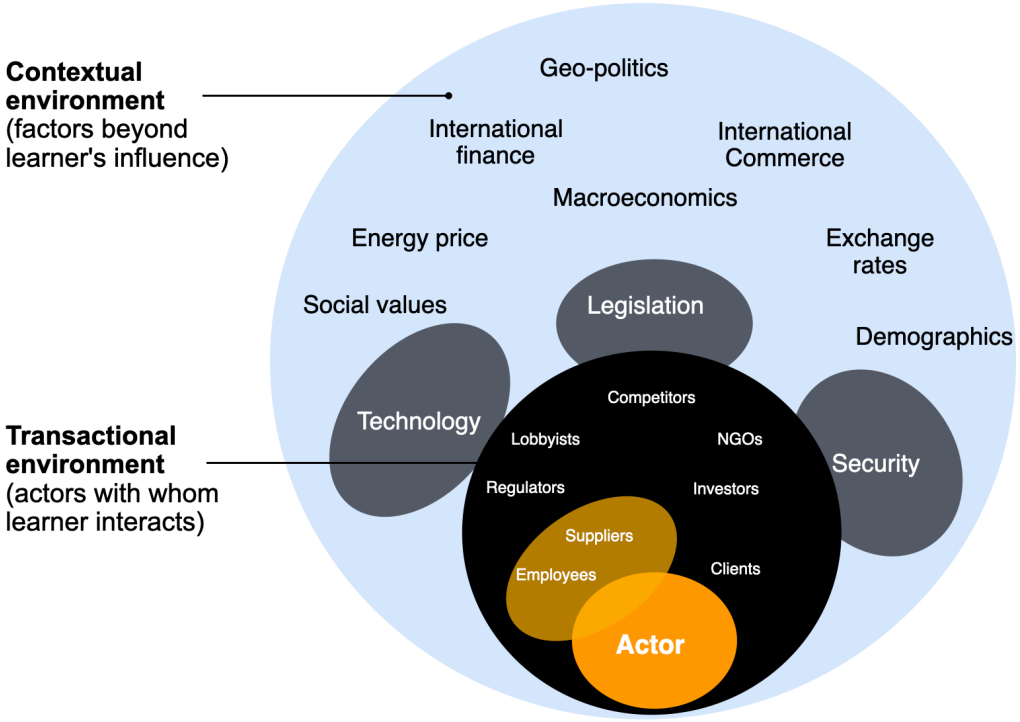



Figure 9 - Expanding the transactional environment - adapted from Ramírez and Mannervik 2016, p.174. The scenario learner, by forming a new alliance, creates a new collective actor (in orange) which can exert a transactional influence (in black) over uncertainties which were previously contextual for the lone actor.

Drawing on actor-network theory, this approach is resonant with Latour's (1996, p.370) insight that "Strength does not come from concentration, purity and unity, but from dissemination, heterogeneity and the careful plaiting of weak ties" and "that resistance, obduracy and sturdiness is more easily achieved through netting, lacing, weaving, twisting, of ties that are weak by themselves."

These "value-creating systems" can be orchestrated for a wide range of ends, including Gago's intersectional and activist "logic of connection that globally maps, against the grain, capital's landings based on the imbrication of different forms of oppression" (2020, p.198).

Ray Charles, singing the Percy Mayfield song which opens this final section of the present paper, articulates the sense that "the world is in an uproar / the danger zone is everywhere": the TUNA conditions of turbulence, uncertainty, novelty, and ambiguity do not happen only in faraway places but at any point on the planet, and digital technology has expanded and developed the global spaces in which immediate conversations about these conditions can take place.

But Charles also sings that "my love for the world is like always / for the world is a part of me". We began our journey through the overlapping spaces of the *body-territory* and spatial justice by considering Longhurst (2000)'s identification of the body as "the geography closest in", the most intimate realm we inhabit, alongside Causey (2017)'s suggestion that "the mind interprets our surroundings *in terms of* our bodies" (p.27).

The remedy to TUNA conditions is to attend ever more closely, not just to what lies within, but to our interconnectedness. We may do this through the lens of Ramírez and Mannervik's value-creating systems; through Latour's "careful plaiting" of ties; through Gago's *body-territory* which re-entangles body, collective, and place*;* or Haraway's call for "learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings." (2016, p.1).

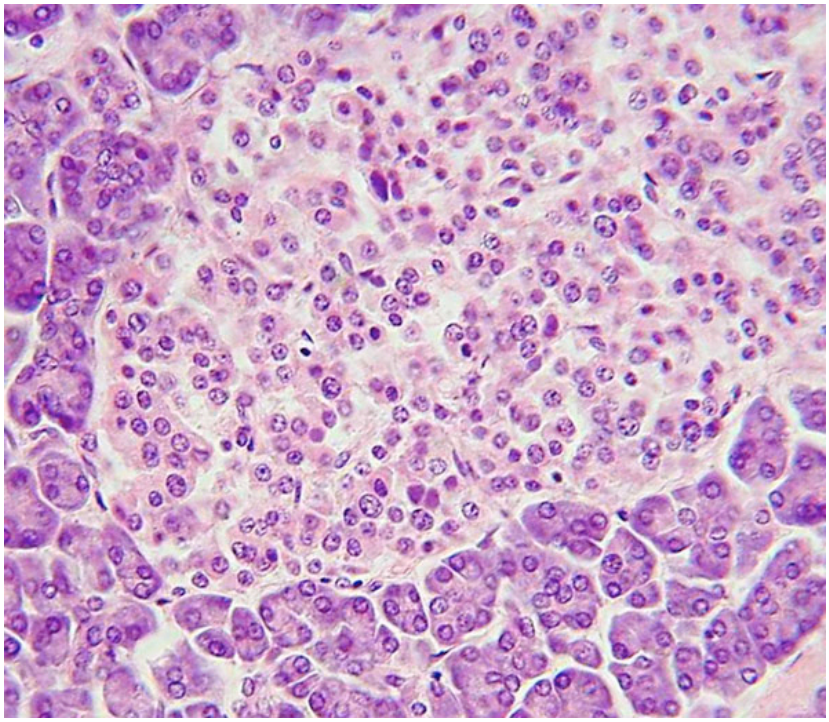


Figure 10. Islet of Langerhans by Wikimedia user Polarlys.

I began this paper by acknowledging my own links to the towns of Warwick in both Australia and England, whose histories are entangled by colonial naming practices. At the school I went to in the English Warwick, just down the road from this conference, one teacher would ask general knowledge questions unrelated to the subject he was teaching.

One of his favourites was to ask "where are the Islets of Langerhans?", which sound like a place on a map of the Earth but are in fact parts of the pancreas (figure 10). It is a reminder that there is a geography within us, which shapes and is shaped by the wider context. It speaks to Donna Haraway's argument - resonant with Latour's sense that "nonhumans are also planetary subjects, rendered on an equal footing with humans" (Messeri, 2016, p.11) - that along with dispensing with the notion of the Anthropocene, we should also throw away *anthropos*, the notion of the human, and

instead find common ground with the critters of all scales, down to the microscopic, who make up life on earth in shared systems of value co-creation.

Perhaps this, too, could be a benefit of the turn towards "planetarity" which Messeri encounters when she explores the relationship between the territories of Earth and those of other worlds: "today's dominant astronomical cosmology is presented as a mode of connection [...] such that it becomes a possible task to know our *own* place in the universe." (2016, p.192).

Perceiving ecosystemically and acting relationally, including by speculative means, become key to surviving and thriving in our turbulent times; for bodies and territories of the past, present, and future, however they may be defined and at whatever scale, "staying with the trouble" and dealing with uncertainty means attending with care, in breadth and depth, in microcosm and macrocosm, to the relational nature of our existence.