Book Review

Review of Hasian, Jr., Marouf. 2016. *Forensic Rhetorics and Satellite Surveillance: The Visualization of War Crimes and Human Rights Violations*. Lanham, MD: Lexington.

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Marouf Hasian Jr.'s book examines the multifarious "forensic rhetorics" at work in the use of satellite imaging in relation to humanitarian crises. The book has seven chapters in total, including an introduction and conclusion. As the introduction to the text, Chapter One outlines the main theoretical and methodological approaches. Hasian uses Foucault's notion of the *dispositif* to foreground the assemblage of discourses, technologies, institutions, and other agents in the suasory use and power, or the "truth effects," of satellite imagery. To do so he borrows primarily from rhetorical studies and security studies referring to his own method as a "critical legal rhetoric" approach. The book is organized according to five case studies, each of which analyzes the discourses of those promoting and contesting the use of satellite imagery as a form of forensic evidence.

Chapter Two is the first case study and examines the 1995 killings in Srebrenica. Hasian uses this as an early example of the use of satellite imagery in making rhetorical claims to truth and evidence. He traces the public discourse around the acceptance and rejection of this type of imagery, ultimately arguing that these 1990s debates foreshadowed the promotion of satellite imagery as a viable form of primary evidence (over human intelligence and signal intelligence). Chapter Three follows a similar model, examining the use of satellite imagery in the Israeli Occupation of the Gaza. Here and throughout the book, Hasian is careful not to take sides in the debate, instead outlining the contesting rhetorical strategies as "truth effects that battled for recognition" (pg. 77). The chapter uses Israel's 2014 Operation Protective Edge (OPE) as a central axis—examining the rhetorical positioning of satellite imagery before and during OPE.

Chapter Four is the most unique in the book in that it explores celebrity-backed campaigns to use satellite imagery in addressing large-scale humanitarian crises. Specifically, the chapter focuses on George Clooney's Satellite Sentinel Project in Sudan. Hasian effectively critiques the notion, promoted by Clooney and other celebrities, that satellite imagery is an inherently effective and objective tool in combatting humanitarian crises. It is here that he expands on a central argument of the book: that the continued promotion of satellite imagery as an objective and primary form of "witnessing" will dissuade civilians, politicians and scholars from attending to the tremendous complexity and nuance of cases like that in Sudan. As a consequence, appropriate diplomatic solutions may be replaced by more damaging militaristic efforts or other forms of intervention.

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The second main argument of the book is developed fully in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Five addresses the use of drones in “manhunts” for Taliban and Al Qaeda members in Pakistan between 2003 and 2015. The chapter offers an analysis of the debates surrounding drone warfare and, as such, is less specifically about satellite surveillance than previous chapters. Chapter Five is also distinct in that Hasian takes a clear stance in the case study, aligning himself with those who critique drone warfare, particularly claims that it is more precise, controlled, and humane than other forms of combat. The main argument advanced in the chapter is that the use of satellite imagery serves as a “constitutive factor” in the very crises and programs it is promoted as helping to solve. This argument is further developed in Chapter Six on the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) and the surveillance of the Mediterranean “migrant crisis.” As in the previous chapter, Hasian takes a clear, critical stance on the use of forensic rhetorics in the discourse of 21st century “migrant crises,” arguing that “all of this talk of a temporary migrant crisis is serving as a rhetorical excuse for postcolonial Europeanization and the redrawing of borders and mythic nationalistic lines that could be recognized as a unique form of 21st century *recolonization*” (pg. 173). One particularly telling example is the author’s discussion of the rhetorical shift to focus on human traffickers rather than refugees. Hasian effectively shows that this shift has a double-role: it obfuscates the complex realities behind migration and attempts to flee areas of conflict, while simultaneously justifying the continued use of satellite surveillance (to purportedly target the traffickers).

Chapter Seven concludes the text, summarizing the main findings of the case studies and calling for increased critical attention on the use of satellite surveillance in constructing forensic rhetorics. Here Hasian raises several key points common to Surveillance Studies on the subjectivity and power relations that are inherent in surveillance practices. However, as a book based in rhetorical analysis and security studies, *Forensic Rhetorics* is not really conversant with the Surveillance Studies literature that will be familiar to the readers of this journal. Nonetheless, the book will be of use to Surveillance Studies scholars with an interest in better understanding the use of satellite imagery in humanitarian crises. The individual case studies will be of interest to researchers whose subject areas parallel those under investigation by Hasian.

The book contains an inordinate number of formal mistakes including spelling errors, dropped words, misplaced words, and problems with sources, that should have been caught in a thorough copy-edit. This is worth mentioning because at times the errors are so numerous they detract from the flow and weight of the arguments being made. This is an unfortunate weakness in an otherwise insightful and thorough investigation of “forensic rhetorics.”