

# Trauma & Global Flows

11'09''01 September 11



# Outline

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- Introduction: City, Global Flows, and Trauma & Risks
- 11'09"01 September 911
  - Responses at the "Center": Mexico, US
  - Responses from the "Margins": India
  - The Other 9/11's: Egypt, Israel



# 11'09''01 September 911: Content



# Review: City and Global Flows

How many kinds of flows have we dealt with?

- (Flows of **desires & emotions**)
- Flows of **commodities, simulacra & capitals** (**financescape**)
- Flows of **transportation, information & mediated messages** (**technoscape; mediascape**)
- Flows of **immigrants (& migrant workers; ethnoscape)**
- Flows of **conflicts, trauma and risk factors** (**ideoscape**)



global connectivity



# Global Trauma in the Modern Times: Collective Trauma

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- **Wars, Genocide & Terrorism:**
  - e.g. Holocaust (the systematic state-sponsored killing of six million Jewish men, women, and children and **millions of others** by **Nazi** Germany and its collaborators during World War II. --“The final solution to the Jewish question.”)
  - 9/11 & many others
- → **Migration** (e.g. partition in India; migration to Taiwan)

# Global Trauma Today:

## Trauma Globalized as **Risks**?

- **Natural Disasters** (earthquake, typhoon, hurricane; virus and transmittable diseases (AIDS, SARS, Ebola) technology breakdown & accidents (plane crash, blackout).
- **Economic crises** – interconnected
- **Anti-Globalization** (corporate-driven globalization; resistance to U.S. government, to the West, to 'McWorld') in the form of terrorism; **Trump's protectionism\***
- **Global Spreading of News** about traumas
- **Other Negative Sides of Global Connectivity**: crimes, drugs & terrorist actions

[Global Risks 2012 Report](#); [Global Risks 2016 Report](#)

# 911 as the Staging of Risk

'Staging', the deliberate production of the real possibility of the global terrorist threat, captures and circumscribes this deconstructive and reconstructive real and symbolic destructive unity [i.e. the attack]. **This destructive force was directed at the Twin Towers of a materially constructed and simultaneously profoundly symbolically imbued social authority in a literal sense, namely, the World Trade Centre.** The resulting fireball consumed everything around it, including thousands of human lives. **It exploded everywhere, in every living room in the world.** In the process, the deed destroyed **deeply rooted cultural assumptions**.

-- The television images of the twin **cathedrals of global capitalism** collapsing suddenly in a giant cloud of dust exerted such a fascination because of their traumatic obscenity.

-- The belief in the **invulnerability of the greatest military power** on earth was executed before a live audience.

-- The eruption transformed the site into a **dark crater that swallowed up life, dignity, compassion and military security** (Beck 9).



# The City Vanishes?

No, cities are **Receivers & Intensifiers** of Global Flows & Traumas, but they offer **Solutions, too**





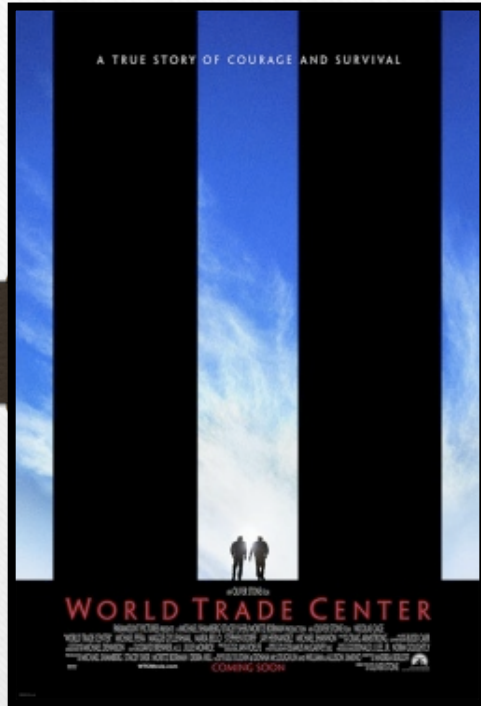
# City, Global Flows & Risks

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City of Dis/Connections means --

1. **Multiple perspective** (110901)
2. Chance encounters & Accidents; Face of **the Other** (God Man Dog)
3. Ethnic **Conflicts & Terrorism** despite love (The Attack)
4. Meanings of Global Connectivity & **the "Others"** (Lucy)

# 9/11 Films



- Fahrenheit 911 (2004)  
Michael Moore
- World Trade Center (2006)
- United 93\* (2006)
- 102 Minutes That Changed America (2008) - documentary





# 9/11: Problematized

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1. An **American-centered** concept;
2. This ubiquitous catastrophe “potentially conceal[s] the unpredictably traumatizing potentials of **everyday violence**” (Tancke 75)
3. A **media event, its image ubiquitous. → virtual reality**
4. Induces more support of violence (esp. re. “war on terror”; Carnagey)\*

# What does World Trade Center represent?

- Twin Towers (source)
- The World Trade Center, prior to the 2001 attacks, **was**
- ① a hub of economic prosperity, housing tenants including Morgan Stanley and the Lehman Bros., among many others. Due to the affluence of the tenants, the Twin Towers represented **the elite and powerful**, National Geographic reported just days after the attack. The World Trade Center was considered by many as the financial hub of the country.
- ② The towers may have also been seen to **symbolize America's imperialism and international influence by those who viewed them with disdain.**
- ③ Structurally, the sleek design of the crystalline and metal towers boasted **the prosperity and achievement in America.**
- In 2014, **One World Trade Center** opened on the site of the former Twin Towers. The new building, standing at 1,776 feet, is a symbol of renewal and hope in New York City.



# Why did 911 happen?

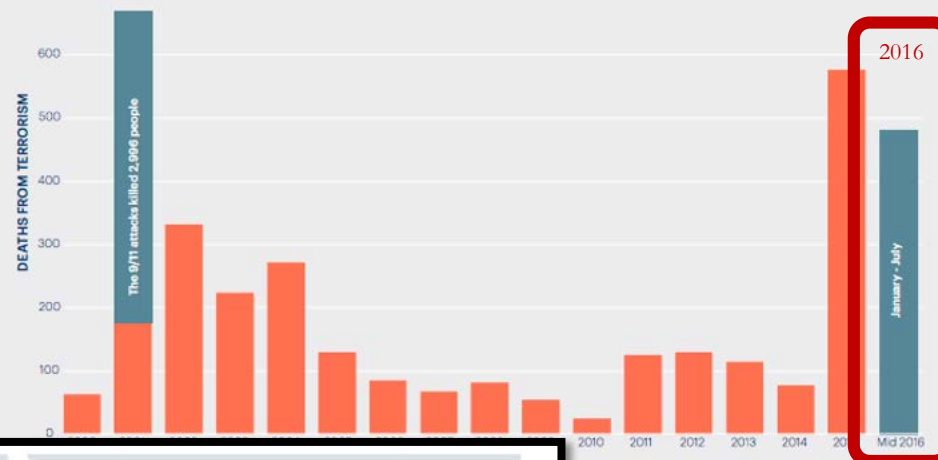
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- Terrorist attacks by the Islamic terrorist group **al-Qaeda**
- **Anatomy of the Collapse**
  - 14:55; 30:00 Bowing 707. 767
  - massive steel structure — “steel truss” 桁架  
38:58; 42:10
- Rebuilding: One World Trade Center (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71yWnRT-BE0>)

# Terrorist Attacks after 911

**FIGURE 2.6** DEATHS FROM TERRORISM IN OECD COUNTRIES, 2000 TO JULY 2016

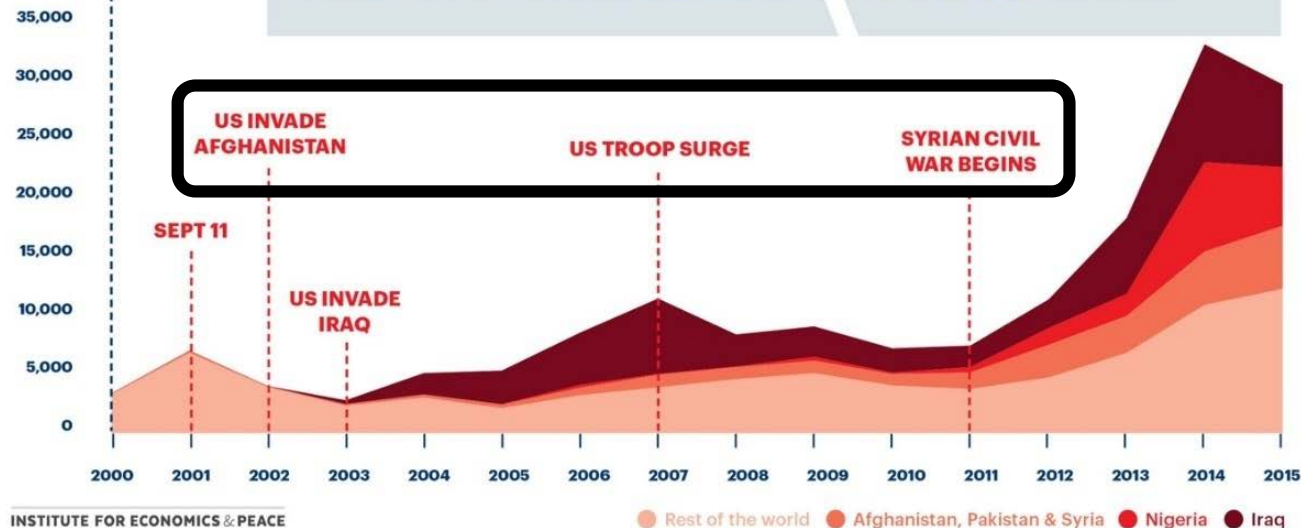
In 2015 deaths from terrorism increased by 650 per cent compared to 2014. This was the second worst year for terrorism in the OECD after 2001 with the September 11 attacks.



NUMBER OF DEATHS

Since 2000, there have been over **73,000 TERRORIST ATTACKS**, killing more than **170,000 PEOPLE**.

**29,376 PEOPLE** were killed in terrorist attacks last year. That's **10% FEWER** than 2014.





# After 15 years of war on terror, are we any safer?

- **2015:** The world's most developed countries have suffered a **650% increase** in deaths as a result of terrorism in the past year, rising to 577 deaths, from 77 in 2014. (source)
- **New War:** **This new guerrilla-style war** is ...waged ...by drones and counter-terrorism forces on the one side and a shifting constellation of organizations such as **ISIS, Al Qaeda, Boko Haram** (in Nigeria) **and Al Shabaab** (Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania) on the other.
- The latter's methods are highly **decentralized, networked and asymmetric**. Targets are not restricted to specific population groups or even symbolic sites as in the past. Rather, the goal of groups such as ISIS is to **lay siege to cities**\*, effectively shutting them down for as long as possible. (source [1](#), [2](#))
- Numbers of people dying of homicide still exceed those dying of terrorist acts.



# “Terrorism” & “New War”

- No universal definition; CIA, US: "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents."(Wikipedia)
- Hard to define; a term used to hurl against one's enemy.\*
- “Terrorism speaks.
- Terrorism is unspeakable.”
  - “How can a person, like that—how can a person just strap on a load of explosives and go blow herself up in the middle of a party?”(Amin from The Attack)
- Terrorism is not to be condoned, but it should be understood.



# 11'09''01 September 11

- Producer Alain Brigand invited 11 directors to reflect on the events' resonance throughout the world. He asked them to create films lasting **11 minutes, 9 seconds and 1 frame**

which engaged with the **film-makers' own 'cultures, their own memories, their own stories, their own language'**.



# 11'09''01 September 11

## I. Traumatic Experience on the Day

1. Center: Claude Lelouch (France) – a deaf-mute woman's experience
2. Center: Sean Penn (USA) – disappearance of the shadow
3. Center: Alejandro González Iñárritu (Mexico) –collage of sounds and jumpers

## Other 9/11's

- 1) Danis Tanovi (Bosnia), -- women protesting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of every month
- 2) Ken Loach (Britain) – September 11 of 1973, the coup against Allende in Chile supported by the CIA
- 3) Amos Gitai (Israel)
- 4) Shohei Imamura (Japan 今村昌平)--traumatized
- 5) Youssef Chahine (Egypt)

## II. Its Aftermath

1. Center: Mira Nair (India)
2. Responses from the Margins: Mediated Reality --Samira Makhmalbaf (Iran)
3. Idrissa Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso)

# Traumatic Experiences of 9/11

- **Impossibility of Representation**

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- 7. Alejandro González Iñárritu (segment "Mexico")

- **Immigrant/Foreigner Experience of 9/11**

- 9. Mira Nair (segment "India")
- 2. Claude Lelouch (segment "France")

- **Trauma – individual**

- 11 Sean Penn (segment "United States of America")





# Traumatic Centers?

- 1) Mexico: Alejandro González Iñárritu
- 2) France: Claude Lelouch
- 3) US: Sean Penn & Mira Nair

# 110901 (1): Discussion Questions

“Mexico”

- 1) what do you think are the effects of the **sound arrangement** in this film, esp. that of prayer at the beginning and the end?
- 2) Why are there so many dark screen images?

# Traumatic Center?

Alejandro González Iñárritu (Mexico)

- collage of sounds and jumpers
- Sounds in air waves—
  - Voices of indigenous Mexicans' **mantra-like prayers** (or muslim prayer?)
  - **Occasional thudding sounds**, suggesting bodies falling to the ground
  - **Telephone calls** (e.g. “we’re having a little problem on the plane. I just wanted to tell you that I love you more than anything...”)
  - **Noises** of towers exploding, people shouting, ambulance sirens, confused newscasters and reception interference
  - **Silence** → music + prayer



# Ending

هل نور الله يهدينا أم يعمينا؟

Does God's light guide us or blind us?



# 10. U.S.A. (next time)

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# The USA (next time)

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- The old man seems quite happy in the film? Where is evidence to prove that the old man is traumatized by his wife's death? What is his life like?
- How does 911 bring changes to his life? What do you think about the flowers' magical growth? Does the old man have a breakthrough? Or is it Sean Penn's perverse way of suggesting that every cloud has a silver lining? (What does World Trade Center represent in this film?)



## 10. U.S.A.-- *Sean Penn*

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- this old senile guy living next to the WTC and he doesn't know what's going on either.
- He still behaves as if his long-dead wife were alive and living with him, is shaken into a new sense of reality by the World Trade Center's collapse. When one of the towers falls, it allows a big burst of sunshine to illuminate Mr. Borgnine's tiny, dank apartment.

## 10. U.S.A.-- *Sean Penn*

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- **The old man: connects only with the past until the end**
  - ‘Remember Paul? He used to do work for us, remember? Nice man.’
  - clothes for her to wear – ‘something summery, something summery’ ‘Don’t you look pretty in that dress?’
- **Aware of his situation: the darkness of the apartment.** ‘
  - That’s why your flowers are not doing well.’
  - ‘They are like me, you know. They need light to wake up.’
- **Ending:** “You should have seen this.”



# Segments not Discussed

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**France**



## 2. France



# “France”

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- 1) What is the conflict between the man and the woman? How is the word “silence” used in their conflict (the man: silence is more deafening; the woman: there is only silence in our words)
- 2) How does 911 change their relationship? Visually what contrast does the film make between the woman writing and her surrounding?



## 2. France -- *Claude Lelouch*

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- about a deaf Frenchwoman, living in Lower Manhattan with a tour guide for the hearing impaired, who has all but decided to end their relationship when history forcefully intervenes. The deaf woman, living right next to the WTC, doesn't hear it, so doesn't know what's happening.
- **Contrasts between silence & words; images of disorder and “order” (including those photos?)**





**Responses from**

*The Margins*

*India, Iran, Burkina Faso*

# 9. India

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## 9. India -- *Mira Nair*

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- A Muslim young man (born in Pakistan but a USA citizen) was suspected of being a terrorist after he disappeared on that day; six months later, his body was found and he was seen as a hero.



# India

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- How does the mother try to prove that Salman is an American boy? Do they believe in her?
- How is politics associated with religion in this short film?
- What roles do the US government and TV news play respectively?
- Where do you see the author's signature?



# Segments not Discussed

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Iran, Burkina Faso

# 1. Iran

Setting: Refugee camp on the border of Iran and Afghanistan

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# 1. Iran -- *Samira Makhmalbaf*

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- Samira Makhmalbaf's film shows a teacher trying to explain to her students--**Afghan refugees in Iran**--what has happened in New York. The kids get into a discussion about God, and whether he would kill some people to make others; "**God isn't crazy**," one child finally decides. None of the children can imagine a tall building, so the teacher takes them to stand beneath a smokestack, and the smoke from the top makes an **eerie mirror of the catastrophe**.

# “Iran”: Discussion Questions

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1. What **kinds of news** do the kids find important? Why do they discuss if God kills them?
2. What role does **the teacher** play? How does the teacher try to help them understand what happened in NYC?
3. Do the kids understand it? Are they critiqued for not being able to understand?
4. How does this story compare with the high school students' cosplay in Nazi uniform in Taiwan? (Similar events: prince Harry; Russian ice skaters; A female band in Japan.)



# Connectivity and Connections Made

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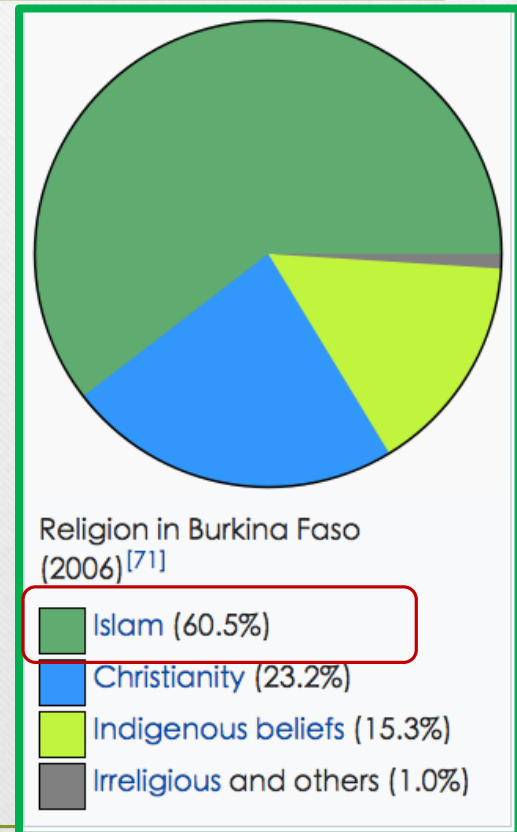
- **Connectivity:** (seg 1) tall chimney and Twin Towers
- **Connections:** (seg 4) Selma asserts. 'We have to demonstrate. For them and for us.'





# 5. Burkina Faso

Setting: Ouagadougou (Ouaga, capital city)



## 5. Burkna Faso -- *Idrissa Ouedrago*

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- These kids (protagonist, Adama) think they see Bin Laden and decide to try to capture him for the 25 million dollar reward. Failing to capture Bin Laden, they still think of some other solutions.

# “Burkina Faso”: Discussion Questions

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1. In this story of the kids’ trying to capture Bin Laden, where do we see its ironic connections to the 911 event?
2. How is the capital city (Ouagua) of Burkina Faso presented?
3. How do the kids solve Adama’s financial problem?



# Ironic Connection

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- “‘Bin Laden, come back please’, they shout disappointedly. ‘**We all need you here. Now he’s going to get caught somewhere else.**’ ‘No Osama bin Laden’, Adama sighs, ‘and my mother’s still sick’.



# Aftermath & Cross-Cultural Understanding

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## Children's understanding of 9/11 –

1. **Samira Makhmalbaf (segment "Iran")**
  5. Idrissa Ouedraogo (segment "Burkina Faso")
- **Cross-cultural communication**
    - 3. **Youssef Chahine (segment "Egypt")**

# Other 911' s

Israel, Egypt, Chile, Bosnia, Japan



# Trauma Contextualized: the other 9/11's

- **US-the Middle East in 1983**

- 1) Amos Gitai (Israel)

- 2) Youssef Chahine (Egypt)

- **Trauma –collective**

- Srebrenica genocide --4. Danis Tanović ("Bosnia-Herzegovina")

- Chile's own 9/11 (cout d'etat) -- Ken Loach ("United Kingdom")

- **holy war and its consequences**

- 11. Shōhei Imamura ("Japan")

“There is no such things as Holy War”

### 3. Egypt

[埃及]尤瑟夫·夏因（97戛纳特别奖，  
代表作：《亚历山大再次和永远》）





### 3. Egypt -- *Youssef Chahine,*

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- The Egyptian one centers on a film director who talks to the ghost of **a Marine killed in Lebanon in 1983**, and he claims that the terrorists "know the US is a democracy, therefore the people are responsible for their government's policies".



# 1983 Beirut barracks bombings – ([Wikipedia](#))

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- On October 23, 1983, two truck bombs struck buildings in Beirut, Lebanon, housing American and **French** service members of the Multinational Force in Lebanon (MNF), **a peacekeeping operation during the Lebanese Civil War**. The attack killed 307 people: 241 U.S. and 58 **French** peacekeepers, 6 civilian, and the 2 attackers.

# The Egyptian Director

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- Shows sympathy for the American soldier and a suicide bomber
- Understanding the American's life, while the suicide bomber is not willing to compromise.





## 8. Israel

● [以色列]阿莫斯·吉塔  
(著名纪录片导演, 代表作: 《耶路撒冷》)





## 8. Israel -- *Amos Gitai*

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- The Israeli one is another black humor take on it, as it centers on an attack in Jerusalem during 9/11 and a hyperactive reporter and police. The reporter tells us all the other things that happened on different years of 9/11 in the midst of a chaotic post-attack street scene.

# Discussion Questions

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- 1. How is the “terrorist” bombing presented in this segment?
- 2. And the policeman, ambulance doctor, the journalist & the witness? The noises?
- 3. The journalist’s frenzy report on the event, and on what happens on the other 911’s, finding that she’s not on air because something more important happens in NYC.



# Segments not Discussed

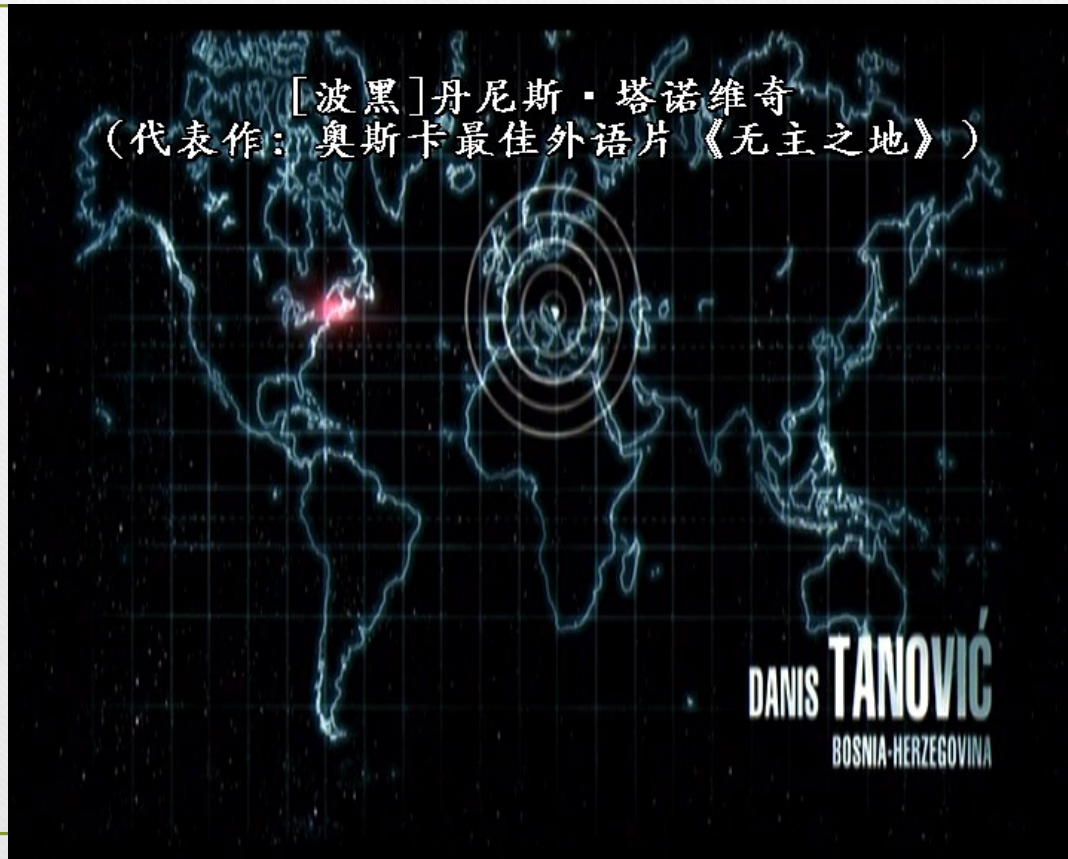
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**Bosnia, Chile, Japan**



## 4. Bosnia

● [波黑]丹尼斯·塔诺维奇  
(代表作: 奥斯卡最佳外语片《无主之地》)



## 4. Bosnia -- *Danis Tanovic*

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- long-running conflicts in Bosnia lead to Srebrenica massacre on **11–22 July 1995**, which killed 8000 residents.\*
- The surviving women were to have a demonstration of mourning the day of the 9/11 attacks, and we hear the radio broadcasts of news of the attacks, so they demonstrate for both their victims as well as the New York, DC, and PA ones.



# Discussion Questions

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- **Selma on the 11<sup>th</sup>**
  - Sleepless
  - Paper and lipstick for demonstration
- **At the association**
  - A long walk there with a man on wheel chair.
  - many pictures of men on the wall (including Selma's family photo)
  - Many women gathering there, listening to radio broadcast on 911.





# 11. Japan



## 11. Japan -- *Shohei Imamura*

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- Set on an isolated Japanese island near the end of World War II, Mr. Imamura's story tells of a Japanese soldier returning from his country's brutal campaign in China. **Ashamed to live as a human being, he glides through the woods and marshes as a snake.** Japan's illusions of extending its divinely ordered empire through Asia were, Mr. Imamura suggests, just as mad as Osama bin Laden's campaign to conquer the world for Islamic fundamentalism.
- **"There is no such thing as a holy war,"** Mr. Imamura's character concludes, providing a shattering humanist corrective to much of the abstract, ideological discourse that has preceded it.



# 11. Japan

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- 1. Why does Yukichi become a snake? How do his family (mother, husband, wife and wife's lover) deal with him? Why can't the villagers kill him?
- 2. What does the film try to say? Where are the ironies?





## 6. U.K.



## 6. U.K. , *Ken Loach*

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- The UK one focuses on a Chilean who narrated the September 11 coup in Chile that Nixon and Kissinger instigated in 1973.
- the C.I.A.-directed coup d'etat on Sept. 11, 1973, against the democratically elected Socialist government of President Salvador Allende in Chile (as movingly recounted in Mr. Loach's sequence by a Chilean refugee living in London)





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