Siting Futurity
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#Hallstatt: Welcome to Jurassic World

“Globalization takes place only in capital and data; everything else is damage control.”

— Spivak (2010, 36)

“Insofar as the fake points to unresolved problems in the world today, it should be analyzed, not dismissed.”

— Abbas (2008, 252)

In 1993, Jurassic Park (dir. Steven Spielberg) unleashed a frenzy of cloned, CGI-generated dinosaurs from a tropical island theme park onto multiplex screens.¹ With the “inevitable” failure of Jurassic Park’s security (Scott 2014), and the equally inevitable success of this “contemporary descendent” of Frankenstein (Mitchell 2005, 172), rampaging dinosaur clones have become a regular

¹ This chapter builds on Ingram and Reisenleitner (2014), a theoretical and photographic meditation on Norbert Artner’s Hallstatt Revisited I that draws on Ackbar Abbas’s juxtaposition in “Faking Globalization” of Deleuze’s “any-space-whatever” and Mario Gandelsonas’s “X-urbanism.” In our reading Artner’s series represents a kind of “twenty-first-century urbanism with Chinese characteristics” and makes clear the need to distinguish among different forms of copying.
feature in a franchise of novels, films, animations, comic books, video games, and Universal Studios water rides. That the world has become a rather different, more intense place than it was when Michael Crichton’s novel was published in 1990 is evident in the franchise’s fifth film and second in the Jurassic World series, *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018, dir. J.A. Bayona). Just as Arnold Schwarzenegger’s T-800 in the *Terminator* series goes from being the threat in the original to the only force strong enough to save the good humans from the more evil machines that are developed in later sequels, so too is it a staple of the *Jurassic* franchise to have the dinosaur that was originally seen as the greatest threat turn around and save the good humans from a more dangerous clone.

*Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* makes two innovations to this pattern that justify its title. First, it is the first time that the cloned dinosaurs do not just break out of the theme park in which they are enclosed on a fictional Central American island — they and their DNA make it to the mainland and, not irrelevantly, northern California, i.e., the home of Silicon Valley. Second, it is the first time that not only dinosaurs are cloned but also humans, in the subplot twist in which the granddaughter of one of the original dinosaur cloners turns out to have been cloned after her mother died, something about which her grandfather and father disagreed and which could be what has driven the father over to the dark side. It is not a coincidence that at the beginning of the film the dinosaurs on the island are confronted with an extinction event in the form of a volcanic eruption, from which a select few are rescued in an ark-like transport. The lesson of the *Jurassic World* series seems to be that it is no longer just the case that, as W.T.J. Mitchell noted back in 1998, “The author (like many of his fellow human beings and all *NAWMAs* [North American White Male Adults]) may even feel, at times, like a dinosaur himself” (Mitchell 1998, 7). Rather, in the *Jurassic World* series humans officially become dinosaurs both in facing the threat of extinction in being surpassed by clones, but also in being subject to the same process of cloning as the dinosaurs.
In 2012, Austrians were made aware that cloning was no longer merely the stuff of blockbuster films, nor restricted to sheep and CGI-generated dinosaurs. Rather, they learned that when it comes to places, it has become something of a Chinese speciality. Much to the shock of its citizens, who numbered 778 as of January 1, 2018, but were slightly more numerous in 2012, Hallstatt, a tiny, über-picturesque village in Austria’s Salzkammergut, a tourist region “famous for its pristine alpine scenery, lakes, mountains, and church steeples towering over villages and small towns” (Reisenleitner 2017, 201–2), was turned into what Bianca Bosker, in Original Copies: Architectural Mimicry in Contemporary China, calls a “simulacrascape” (4): a themed environment built to look like a famous site in “the West.” Called “Hallstatt See — Huizhuo” [五矿·哈施塔特], the “made in China” gated-community version of Hallstatt came about rather by chance. The wife of the CEO of Minmetals Land Inc., the real estate branch of China’s largest metals trader, was often in Austria as she was a huge fan of classical music, and upon visiting Hallstatt, she was so taken by its beauty that she convinced her husband to replicate it (Fischer-Schreiber 2014). Hallstatt See was built at an estimated cost of US$ 940 million (Zeveloff and Johnson 2012) and located in Boluo, a city of 820,000 that has been described as “a run down sort of place with a factory town feel” (Shepard 2012b). Boluo is in turn in the larger, 4.6 million municipality of Huizhou, a two-hour drive north of Hong Kong in the booming industrial heartland of China’s southern Guangdong province on the South China Sea.

Paradoxically, the original Austrian Hallstatt has managed to maintain its uniqueness by being copied. It serves as the culmination of this study because the way it has responded to being turned into a simulacrascape is instructive in its postmodern pragmatism and lack of clonophobia, the fear of cloning that W.T.J. Mitchell addresses in Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present. Generic, “usual suspect” Chinese “copy towns” exist in multiples, such as Chengdu’s British Town, which was completed in 2005 and modelled on Dorchester (Paterson 2011); Thames Town just outside Shanghai — a prototypi-
cal English town with mock-Tudors, pubs, a statue of Winston Churchill, and a copy of Christ Church in Bristol that is a very popular spot for Chinese wedding photos (Medina 2013); and Oriental Windsor County in Taizhou with a bar called Treasure Island and “[b]right, red, London style phone booths […] scattered around the complex—apparently so the army of security guards that patrolled the place 24/7 could have a place to take shelter in the cold and rain” (Shepard 2012a). In contrast, it was not merely elements of Hallstatt that were reproduced in China. Rather, its entire core was replicated, making it not a “copy” but a “clone” town.² While there have been claims that it is the only such place to have received such treatment, that “Never before in known human history has one country built a full-scale copy of a place in another country. Hallstatt, China is the mother of all knock-offs” (Shepard 2012b), one can also point to “Shanghai’s Holland Village […] which replicated, whole cloth, the urban plan for Kattenbroek, a section in the city of Amersfoort in the Dutch province of Utrecht” and even used the same architect, Ashok Bhalotra, of the firm KuiperCompagnons (KCAP) (Bosker 2013, 43).

Nevertheless, Hallstatt is special. As Markus Reisenleitner has pointed out, “Chinese property developers did not just stumble over a random little village in Upper Austria, and Hallstatt is not just another interchangeable tourist spot available to be transplanted as an image of ‘Olde Europe’” (Reisenleitner 2017, 205).³ Rather, Hallstatt is the core of the Kulturlandschaft Hallstatt–Dachstein/Salzkammergut [Hallstatt–Dachstein/Salz-

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³ He further notes that “The spectacularization of Hallstatt as a New Urbanist theme park all but obliterates the dark sides of a historical trajectory in which capitalism was built, among other things, on environmental damage (still somewhat visible in the mines) and on the social control of an absolutist Baroque theocracy and its fear-mongering mobilization of religious orthodoxy (still manifest in the ossuaries and frescoes of Hallstatt’s churches), a violent trajectory that escalated during the past century in a fascist state whose memories are now buried in a deep lake and are only occasionally resurrected in popular culture” (Reisenleitner 2017, 215–16).
kammergut Cultural Landscape], which has enjoyed UNESCO World Heritage site status since 1997 on account of the village’s Celtic pre-history and the area’s fabulous natural beauty. In what follows, I show how Hallstatt’s qualities have given rise to a reflective mis-en-abîme structure, the dynamics of which are captured in two intricate visual works: Ella Raidel’s *Double Happiness* and Norbert Artner’s *Hallstatt Revisited I*. After probing Artner’s and Raidel’s works to see how Hallstatt’s spectacular singularity has managed to produce an intrinsically fractured imaginary that continues to invite, and, indeed, thrive on mediatization, I look into the political potentiality of the way it continues to deal with the consequences of its “having-been-copied” status.

Happiness Doubled

“‘Jeder in China kennt Hallstatt,’ sagt sie. ‘Jeder.’” [“Everyone in China knows Hallstatt,’ she says. ‘Everyone.’”]

— Kazim (2018)

Ella Raidel’s *Double Happiness*, which won the 2015 best film prize at Lisbon’s Architecture Film Festival, opens with long takes that focus on the elemental beauty of Hallstatt’s location, “nestled into the steep inclines of the Alps” at the edge of a deep lake (Reisenleitner 2017, 206). The salt in the mountains behind it may have provided Hallstatt with its wealth and history of settlement, something we are briefly introduced to in a sharp cut to Yan Zhongming, an urban planner who works for Yansplan in Shenzhen; however, it is not salt but its majestic setting that is the key to Hallstatt’s current prosperity. Until the late nineteenth century the tiny village could only be reached by boat or treacherous trails, and when a train station was built in 1877, it was

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Thanks to Jing Xu for pointing out the level of exaggeration in this comment. It is an important part of the phenomenon addressed in this chapter that the places in question are used for the purposes of distinction in Bourdieu’s understanding of it as a way of accruing social capital.
on the other side of the lake and connected by a ferry service, whose approach to the village Raidel takes us on.⁵

These opening long takes and cuts prime viewers to be attentive to the specificity of both Hallstatts. In Deleuze’s typology of movement images, the long shot is associated with the perception image, while the close-up and medium shot are associated with the affection image and the action image. Had Raidel opened with a series of close-ups, she would have been encouraging viewers to focus on the expression of emotions and to read these places as “any space whatever.” As Ackbar Abbas has helpfully outlined,

[t]his concept helps not only to underline the important relation between affectivity and space but also to differentiate between space and place, affectivity and emotion, along the following lines: as “space” refers us to places we do not yet understand, or no longer understand, so affect refers us to emotions we do not yet have, or no longer have a name for. In both cases, some kind of shift has occurred. As Deleuze explains it, any-space-whatever is the polar opposite of an actualized “state of things,” which is always framed in terms of spatiotemporal-psychic coordinates that we tacitly understand. By contrast, any-space-whatever involves a series of deframings. (Abbas 2008, 244–45; italics in original)

By constantly emphasizing framing, Raidel’s documentary works to compensate for the way the construction of Hallstatt, China, has implicitly deframed Hallstatt, Austria. It feels weird to walk around a place one knows has been copied, and this feeling is intensified by the strong presence of Asian tourists, which has risen from fewer than 50 in 2005 to the point that, a decade

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⁵ When a road to Hallstatt was finally built in 1890, it needed to tunnel through the surrounding mountains, and citizens have vociferously resisted the construction of a highway through the village ever since (“Exklusiv-Talk Mit Bürgermeister Alexander Scheutz (Hallstatt) — Newletter” 2014). In anticipation of the coming discussion of duplication, I note the tunnel’s atypical construction in having two separate entries and not just one.
later, four members of the thirteen-member town council belong to an association, the BfH — Bürger für Hallstatt [Citizens for Hallstatt], that campaigned with the slogan “Tourismus mit Maß und Ziel” [“Moderate and Targeted Tourism”] (“Wahlzeitung” 2015). I will return to the sentiment that “Vienna must not become Hallstatt” (Bruckner 2018) in the conclusion.

Calling Hallstatt’s story “a true romance of globalization,” Raidel, who comes from Gmunden on the nearby Traunsee and had at that point lived in Taiwan for more than ten years, set out to make a documentary that would help audiences understand that “romance,” and especially the Chinese side of it (Raidel 2018). To that end, the majority of the film focuses on Hallstatt See in China, including clips from a Chinese promotional video for the gated community, a discussion of it and the Chinese propensity for theming on a Hong Kong television talk show; interviews with star architect Ma Yansong and not one but two urban planners who work in Shenzhen, as well as foot-
age of painters in the village of Dafen, near Shenzhen, which is famed for producing copies of oil paintings, and of a couple on a motorcycle driving around Boluo so that viewers can form an impression of the extent of the construction in the surrounding area. As Eli Horwatt commented after the showing at the 2015 Hot Docs in Toronto, the film “offers an unusual mirror to the West through the lens of contemporary China” (Raidel n.d.).

That mirror is deliberately disorienting. In the opening section in Austria, which is shot through with cuts to China, Raidel encourages the development of viewers’ perceptive abilities by repeatedly challenging them to evaluate what it is they think they are seeing. Chinese women are shown wearing Austrian folkloric dress — are they in Austria or in China? In an interview, the owner of the Grüner Baum hotel, Monika Wenger, boasts that after she learned of her hotel’s duplication, she had her establishment renovated and that all of the interior furnishings were made in China and shipped to Austria in four containers. When we are then shown the hotel’s reception, we see that the reception sign is in German and Chinese — are we still in Austria, or has the documentary once again cut to China? We have already seen a young Chinese boy playing in the fountain in Hallstatt’s main market square that has turned out to be in China, as there are bright-orange fish in the fountain. We also see Chinese lanterns in a waterside restaurant full of Chinese patrons that those who know the original would recognize is in Austria. There is then another abrupt cut to the back of a man looking out to a huge working harbour. That we are now decidedly no longer in Austria is confirmed with a street market scene of people wearing straw hats cleaning fish.

Because Hallstatt is such a small place with very recognizable sites, viewers find themselves noting differences among the

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9 Raidel’s inclusion of Dafen and not a karaoke bar, which would have served equally well to draw attention to the skill that copying requires but is not specific to southern China, is in keeping with her overall agenda of explaining to Euro-American “Westerners” how Hallstatt came to be copied and where and how it fits into the Chinese scene.
various types of reproductions of places that recur, such as in paintings, models, and television reports. As Raidel explained to an interviewer at the Rotterdam Architecture Film Festival, she is

interested in how images are created, distributed and perceived, and what kind of reality is created with these images. I would say that *Double Happiness* is a lot about what’s going on with images, first of all, what’s copied […] from *The Sound of Music* to the village, which is actually now a backdrop for wedding pictures. They’re also shooting soap operas there. So what’s going to happen with all these images and how will they transfer and become something else? (Raidel 2018)

Adding to the conglomeration of images is not her priority as much as drawing viewers’ attention to it. As Ackbar Abbas noted in the context of Hong Kong, a historical *site*, even one that is preserved, such as the Hong Kong Cultural Center, can be created to be a consumption *sight*, which has the effect of the preservation of history being used “to bring about the disappearance of history” (Abbas 1997, 66). Part of our introduction to the original Hallstatt in Raidel’s film includes a pair of swans (two, of course, not just one), which is intercut with a beautiful Chinese woman in an Austrian folkloric costume, who hums and stretches her neck out in a manner similar to the swans. Viewers may wonder whether they are being encouraged to consider whether there are swans in the Chinese Hallstatt as well and, if so, whether the Chinese have gone so far as importing “real” Austrian swans. However, when swans recur in the documentary, as they inevitably do, they are neither Austrian nor Chinese but in an oil painting. It also turns out that not all the swans in Austria are “real” in the sense of living birds, as pedalboats in the shape of swans are a popular pastime.

Hallstatt See, Raidel’s documentary suggests, has come to life through images. Monika Wenger shows us the initial plans and photographs she discovered of her village, and a brochure for the Chinese facsimile that she claims tourists could not distin-
guish from the original. While the resemblance of Hallstatt See to the original may be “down to the smallest detail,” one visitor has described the Chinese clone in terms that reveal the elements that prevent it from being a perfect clone of the original:

There were flowers everywhere, the sound of birds tweeting were [sic] playing throughout the streets from hidden speakers, the streets themselves were paved with bricks laid in semi-circular patterns, the fountain in the town center was an identical match, and the Sound of Music soundtrack playing on an endless loop could be heard everywhere. The Chinese not only cloned the buildings, but they carved out the physical landscape as well. (Shepard 2012b; italics added)

It is in the realm of the mechanical reproduction of nature that one recognizes the copying most forcefully. One can indeed hear birds chirping and the strains of “Doe, a deer, a female deer” in the clip of the Hallstatt See marketplace in Raidel’s documentary. The latter is particularly jarring for anyone with Austrian local knowledge. That Austrians do not associate the 1965 Hollywood film starring Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer with Hallstatt and that they have great difficulty relating to the enormous success of the Sound of Music tours in Salzburg are points Raidel stresses in the Rotterdam interview (Raidel 2018). It is interesting that she does not show us the “British-style fake phone booth in Hallstatt See” that Wittek mentions in her thesis (Wittek 2015, 24). Rather, Raidel makes do with a “Traffpunkt” (instead of Treffpunkt) typo on a sign to gesture towards the way the Austrian media who initially visited the Chinese knockoff amused themselves by pointing to typos, inaccurate dimensions, and inappropriate foliage, not to mention the fact that many of the buildings were unoccupied and some mere facades filled with rubbish. While Mayor Alexander Scheutz declared with pride after his visit that “One recognizes immediately that it’s Hallstatt,” one sees in Double Happiness that it is precisely not Hallstatt, Austria but Hallstatt See, China. It is a typical simulacrascape in that it is “a deliberate customization.” As Bianca
Bosker explains, “the Chinese are less concerned with an exact copy and more interested in replicating the aspects of the European or American ‘other’ they find most iconic, attractive, and desirable” (Bosker 2013, 49), something Western architects are sometimes unable to deliver:

Lisa Bate’s experience as an architect in China confirms Xie’s conclusion [that foreign designers won’t design the type of foreign architecture the Chinese want]. The Canadian, a principal with B+H Architects, was hired to design a Canadian-style residential development in Shanghai, Canadian Maple Town, and recalls a major controversy with her client on how the ‘Canadian’ theme would be made manifest: ‘The client was insistent on a Canadian character, but we got into huge issues on whether that meant Canadian design or theming. They wanted something more thematic, more Disney-ish. We tried to tell them that’s not what ‘Canadian’ is.’ (ibid., 49)

The Sound of Music and British telephone booths in Hallstatt See may not be “Austrian” for Austrians, but after watching Raidel’s documentary, one can appreciate the desire encapsulated in the reference in the English-language title to “the happiness that’s increased twofold when a couple decides to spend the rest of their lives together” (Ungerböck n.d.). One hopes that, for the prosperous Chinese who choose to make themselves at home in Hallstatt See and not in the endless rows of soulless apartment towers in its hinterland and beyond, if any in fact do, which is a real question and the one with which I conclude the chapter, Hallstatt See’s theming delivers on the locale’s promise of providing a breath of sorely needed fresh air.10

10 China’s legendary pollution problems can be seen in the fact that “Sogar abgefüllte Hallstatter Luft gebe es neuerdings in Dosen zu kaufen” [“Even cans filled with Hallstatt air are now available for purchase”] (Kazim 2018). As noted in the section of chapter five on health resorts, Austrian alpine air was already being sold in the nineteenth century, when “one enterprising businessman found a way to sell mountains to those who wished to see their restorative powers outlast their visit to the Alpine town of Mariazzell
Revisiting Hallstatt and Its Doubling

Norbert Artner shares Ella Raidel’s interest in images, but he is more interested in their doubling than in what they can communicate about a distant culture and its propensity for duplication. *Hallstatt Revisited I* consists of ten large-scale photographs Artner took in Hallstatt See that were displayed at various outdoor sites in the original Hallstatt from July 21 to October 31, 2014. Each photo was accompanied by a relatively small white poster with a map of the locations of all ten photos and the following bilingual explanatory text by Thomas Macho, the co-supervisor of Artner’s PhD on *Nach den Bildern. Konstruktion und Wirklichkeit* [After Images: Construction and Reality] at Linz’s Art University:

[Since 2012, Hallstatt is no longer only to be found in the region of the Salzkammergut in Austria, but also in China. What is the relationship between model and copy, original and quotation? In his photographs Norbert Artner has pursued questions of imagination and globalization, function and surface, inclusion and exclusion, ideal and cliché in both]
places. The pictures were taken over the course of a year in “Hallstatt Lake” in the Chinese region of Guangdong. Now in the Salzkammergut the photographs are intended to invite and inspire an engagement with the mirroring and duplication of the original location of Hallstatt.

That the text appeared on all ten posters twice, in German and in English (and not in Chinese), is in the spirit of that engagement, as is the fact that the exhibition itself was duplicated. Under the title of Hallstatt Revisited, a second exhibition took place the following fall, from September 3-7, 2015, during the Ars Electronica festival in Artner’s hometown of Linz, the capital of Hallstatt’s province, Upper Austria. The promotional materials for Hallstatt Revisited differ somewhat from the Hallstatt Revisited I poster, and they reveal that the process took somewhat longer than a year: “Artist Norbert Artner’s high-quality photographs taken between 2010 and 2014 recorded this process of reflection involving the two Hallstatts.” However, no matter the period over which they were taken, the photos clearly reflect an interest “in what possibilities of innovation are introduced by this form of imitation.”

Like Raidel’s documentary, Artner’s photographic project, with its English-language title similarly gesturing towards the artist’s cosmopolitan, post-national orientation, was also structured around doubling. Just as there were not one but two images in the grounds of the Hallstatt museum, there were also two in the center of town, two mounted on barnlike structures in outlying housing areas, and two in car parks, which were the hardest to find. While the two remaining photographs were not obvious doubles, the one on the boatshed along the lake could be seen to match the one on the central grocery store, as both are sites of sustenance. In terms of content, the photographs from China were also mounted to reflect (on) an aspect of their

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11 The Ars Electronica website was hacked while this book was going to press, and their archive (https://ars.electronica.art/festival/de/archive/), in which this quote was originally found, now only results in a loop.
surroundings, such as one of water mounted on the boat shed and one featuring the church tower in China mounted in a parking lot looking out over the original church. At the most popular spot in town for taking portrait photographs as it provides a stunning mountain backdrop, one found a photograph of a Chinese wedding party, with a photographer photographing a wedding couple with his helper holding up a large reflector to ensure proper lighting for the wedding photographs. While it used to be rare to find wedding couples among the Asians taking pictures of each other at this spot (I can provide much documentary evidence for this claim), the opening of Kazim’s report from October 2018 indicates that that is changing:

Eine junge Chinesin schreit auf. Ihr ins Haar gesteckter Schleier wurde von einer Windböe erfasst und ins Wasser des grün schimmernden Sees geweht. Dahin das Hochzeitsbild! Der Bräutigam schimpft, auf Mandarin, man kann nur ahnen, was er sagt. Derweil versucht eine Freundin, die Braut zu trösten. Es ist ja nur ein Fake-Foto — die echte Hochzeit wird noch in China gefeiert, wo dann die Bilder aus Hallstatt den Gästen gezeigt werden.

[A young Chinese woman shrieks. The veil that was attached to her hair has been taken by a gust of wind and blown into the shimmering green lake. The wedding picture is ruined! The bridegroom curses, in Mandarin, one can only imagine what he’s saying. In the meantime a girlfriend comforts the bride. It’s only a fake photo, after all — the real wedding will

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12 There is much evidence that wedding photography features prominently in both Hallstatts. In Raidel’s documentary, there is a wedding photography scene, in which the reflector for lighting ends up occupying the entire screen. Fischer-Schreiber also comments on the popularity of weddings in Hallstatt See in the “Hochzeitstrubel” [“Wedding Whirlwind”] part of the report of her visit, in which she deems Hallstatt See “eigentlich eine ziemlich gelungene Kulisse” [“actually a quite successful stage set”] (Fischer-Schreiber 2014).
be celebrated in China, where the guests will be shown the pictures from Hallstatt.] (Kazim 2018)

Fittingly, even the weddings in Hallstatt turn out to be doubled.13

Once one is looking for it, it is hard not to notice doubling in Hallstatt, most strikingly in the altar of the town’s main church, Maria am Berg, which consists of a late Gothic and nineteenth-century historicist model next to each other, labelled so that tourists appreciate which is how much older. One also cannot fail to catch sight of reflections that make one sometimes wonder which the copy is, or if both are. Indeed, for each of the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century images of Hallstatt in the Austrian National Library’s collection, it is not difficult to provide a twenty-first-century update.

What this doubling points to is fracturing, which one sees in the remnants of Celtic culture on display in Hallstatt’s museum as well as in a number of public artworks around town. That Hallstatt is a fractured space and that the artists who engage with it cannot seem to avoid replicating its fractured quality can be traced back to its history as the oldest known salt mine in the world as well as to the large cave structures in the neighboring Dachstein. The history of Hallstatt’s mountains being cleaved apart by both human and natural forces could also have been part of its appeal to the Chinese. As Reisenleitner notes, there are some remarkable parallels between the original Hallstatt’s history and its replica’s context and aspirations.

It is with the question of aspirations that I wrap up my reading of the Austrian visual imagery of the Hallstatts. What has happened to Hallstatt See since its ceremonial opening in 2012, which the Austrian mayor attended? Rather than the residential area it was planned to be, Hallstatt See would now seem to number among the many underpopulated places Wade Shepard writes about in Ghost Cities of China. Similarly in his feature

13 The immersive yet temporary quality of wedding photography parallels that of the very popular “rent a dirndl” service in Hallstatt and could well point to an interest in cosplay and certain video games.
on “Hallstatt — An Austrian Town in China Where No One Is Home,” Lukas Messmer notes:

The area around Chinese Hallstatt is the result of a real estate boom gone wild. China’s GDP growth relies heavily on property development. Also, many people use real estate as a means to hedge against inflation and gain wealth. It has created vast urban developments nobody lives in. Hallstatt is one of them. […] Beijing is aware of the situation. Ghost towns, or in communist lingo, “sleeping towns,” were a hot topic at annual meetings in the last years. Following Premier Li Keqiang’s work report in 2014, the government issued a policy paper urging local governments to stop “extensive development” and heal “city sickness.” (Messmer 2015)

Given how widespread the copy town phenomenon is and how difficult it can be to get access to unfiltered news out of China, it is difficult to determine the extent of “city sickness.” Thames Town, for example, seems to be making a comeback. Writing in 2015 Lachmann described it as


[a proper gated community with fence and guards. However, except for a few people, the city is uninhabited. Even when many houses and properties were sold, except for a few exceptions no use seems to be made of them. In the central area there are some shops, but the rest seems deserted. Only}
By 2018, however, Bianca Bosker reported that: “The 27-year-old owner of a boutique selling clothes by up-and-coming Chinese designers told me Thames Town had grown busier since 2014, thanks in part to the expansion of the subway system, and in part to the swelling population of Shanghai proper. (Between 2000 and 2016, the city had grown by the population of New York City, pushing the city limits closer to Thames Town)” (Bosker 2018). At the same time, she was quick to admit that “Not every former ghost town has come to life. In Shanghai’s Holland Village (no relation to Liaoning’s), most storefronts along the main street stood empty or deserted, their dusty concrete floors littered with desiccated bouquets or curled posters. [...] Several buildings, including replicas of Amsterdam’s Maritime Museum and De Bijenkorf department store, were under construction—just as they had been during a previous visit in 2008” (ibid.). “Tianducheng (Sky City),” the replica of Paris on the outskirts of Hangzhou, may have recovered: “In recent years, as more people moved into Tianducheng, the city has been transformed from a ghost town to a normal place where people live. Nowadays, most of the parking spots are occupied, couples stroll its streets in the evenings, and beneath the faux Eiffel tower, tourists and wedding parties can be seen posing for photos throughout the day, every day” (Zhao 2018), as has the northern port city of Tianjin’s replica of Manhattan (“China’s Copy of Manhattan Is No Longer a Ghost Town” 2017). But many have not.

What is striking about Hallstatt See is that, like Sky City and also, to an increasing extent, the original Hallstatt, it has become “a tourist town and a mecca for wedding photographers” (Messer 2015). That is, it is not merely the case that Hallstatt See was brought into existence via images — the photographs the Chinese took in, and the plans they made of, the original that Ella Raidel has Moniker Wenger present us with in Double Hap-
It is also being sustained thanks to the image-making of tourists and the meaning of weddings among the growing Chinese middle class. What Ackbar Abbas wrote about Asian cities in “Faking Globalization” — that they are where “the urban experiments of the 21st century will take place” because Asian cities “make it clear that the city exists as not just a physical, political and economic entity that can be documented, but also a cluster of images, a series of discourses, an experience of space and place, and a set of practices that need to be interpreted” (Abbas 2008, 244; italics added) — is true not only of Hallstatt See but of both Hallstatts. That is what the Austrian “BfH — Bürger für Hallstatt” [Citizens for Hallstatt] mobilized against in their 2015 local election. Of the opinion that bus tourism was hurting both the quality of life of many Hallstätter as well as the holiday experience of those guests staying on for longer than a few hours, they formed an association to push for action, such as raising the parking fees for buses.¹⁴ What the Hallstätter were noticing is that mass tourism was hollowing out their village, robbing it of its heart and turning into a soulless place subject to the “tourist gaze” (Urry and Larsen 2011). In other words, their village was becoming increasingly not just like its Chinese clone but also like “the standard narrative of the clone” as Mitchell outlines it: a “headless, mindless, soulless creature, the exemplification of the human organism reduced to ‘bare life’ […] , the reduction of the human organism to a purely instrumental and commodified condition” (Mitchell 2011, 37). Cities, we are reminded, are living organisms that can sleep and be in need of resuscitation. The Chinese cloning of them encourages us to see them as living images and to probe their, which is to say our, futurity in the final section, by revisiting the Jurassic universe.

¹⁴ Statistics bear them out. The mayor reported at the beginning of 2019: “2014 hatten wir 7917 Reisebusse; 2018 waren es 19,344” [“In 2014 we had 7914 coaches; in 2018 it was 19,344”] (“Hallstatt will Touristenmassen besser lenken” 2019).
The Future: We’re Not in Kansas, Anymore

“[T]he image (as always) goes before the word, foreshadowing the future if only we knew how to read it. It is the older sign, the archaic sign, the ‘first’ sign, as C.S. Peirce would put it. That is why images not only ‘have’ a future related to technology and social change, but are the future seen through a glass darkly.”

— Mitchell (2009, 140)

“[F]rom farther away we look mechanically reproduced / […] I am not your object of study / and I am not here for you.”


Critics have had no trouble identifying the ideological coordinates of the Jurassic universe. Like most action blockbusters, it is a form of left melodrama, which, as discussed in the introduction and as we also saw in the culture-clash comedies, makes us, on the one hand, conscious of “the fundamental antagonisms that structure our society” while at the same time encouraging us to live out the possibility of revolution and even reconciliation “as mere entertainment” (Tompkins 2018, 90). That is why Jurassic World can present itself as “anticapitalist, antimanagerialism, and anti-gm” while also remaining, as Richard Dyer draws our attention to, “anti-feminist, racist, species-ist, and decidedly not queer” (Dyer 2015, 19). Nothing fundamental has changed in terms of the Jurassic universe’s ideological coordinates since Crichton’s original, in which, as Briggs and Kelber-Kaye point out: “[w]hat is interesting—and anti-feminist—[…] is the story of reproduction he links it to, one in which ‘good’ reproduction takes place in white nuclear families where gender roles are properly adhered to, and ‘bad’ reproduction takes place in Third World families” (Briggs and Kelber-Kaye 2000, 97).

As a corollary to the Frankenstein parallel, it is noteworthy that in Fallen World, both human and dinosaur relations revolve around motherhood: Blue, the good velocirapter that ends up saving them, is brought from the island to serve as a mother so that the deadly new weapon clones can imprint on her, while it is the young granddaughter, who turns out to be
contrast to more recently developed franchises in spe such as *Pacific Rim* (2013), which feel they can no longer afford not to take Asian markets into account, the *Jurassic* universe has remained resolutely transatlantic Euro-American, which is to say, hegemonically ethnically white. Stephanie Turner underscores the prejudice against Asians in Crichton’s novels: “The Japanese investors funding this mess, whom the reader never sees, serve as the novels’ behind-the-scenes scapegoat, Crichton’s reference to Reagan-era hostility toward Japan’s considerable share of the American automobile and electronics markets. Indeed, the reengineered Toyota Land Cruisers, their faulty transmission apparent from the start, are the bad copies signifying this social disorder” (Turner 2002, 904). This prejudice shifts in the films from the Japanese to the Chinese, reflecting the changing geopolitical status of those two nations. The evil geneticist role in *Jurassic World* is reprised from *Jurassic Park* by B.D. Wong, who came to prominence playing the Chinese opera singer lover of a French diplomat in *M. Butterfly* on Broadway and who remains the only “far-east” Asian in the *Jurassic* cast.

The layering that Wong’s character represents affords us insight into the fears that, like a magnet, he is anticipated to attract: racism, homophobia, but also, importantly, clonophobia. What Mitchell pursues in *Cloning Terror* is “a deep cultural logic” that he reads as symptomatic of “a comprehensive cultural formation summarized by Michel Foucault as ‘the birth of biopolitics,’ and of a period that extends back into the Cold War era that [Mitchell] has called ‘the age of biocybernetics reproduction,’” whose figurehead is the clone (Mitchell 2011, 19–20). Mitchell’s focus is resolutely US-centric. What was urgent for him when he was writing was to engage the link between cloning and the terrorism “that began to manifest itself visibly after 9/11” (ibid., 19). He therefore ignores the question of the Chinese, a key strand of the *Jurassic* universe’s DNA that remains to be teased out.

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a clone, and not a grandson. Moreover, the granddaughter provides the lynchpin for the white nuclear family that Claire and Owen form at the end, replacing her bad guy, single father.
Consideration of Mitchell’s imagology encourages us to ask what places want, while consideration of the Chinese directs us to the contradiction of places as living entities and as property, and to the thus far unsatisfying results of their having been cloned. A reviewer of *Ghost Cities of China* plaintively asks why, given that the Chinese government has the power to make and remake cities, the results are “so sad”:

Copycat “western” towns, endless Central Business Districts, huge malls; this is urbanisation purely for quantity and profit. Other writers have argued that certain municipalities, such as Chongqing, have managed a more egalitarian state-driven urbanisation than others, like Guangzhou, but Shepard doesn’t explore the question. Neither does he address the future: once the ghost cities are populated, what next? (Hatherley 2015)

Such questions also occupy Bianca Bosko in *Original Copies*:

How will living in a replica of Germany or Beverly Hills affect Chinese citizens and their lifestyles? Will this trend continue into the future, or is it a passing fad? How will history treat the simulacra townships? Will the popularity of these foreign building types choke the growth of a national, distinctly Chinese, architectural style—or will it inspire it? (Bosker 2013, 18–19)

Her argument is that “it is, in part, within these communities that the Chinese are beginning to stage sites of ‘otherness’ where a rising middle class lays claim to economic and cultural power and even incubates an embryonic political identity” (ibid., 4), and she underscores that these middle classes “are only the latest in an ancient and venerable line of borrowers from the archive of historical architectural styles,” which includes immigrants to the United States who, in the late nineteenth century proved “exceptionally adept at transplanting European townscapes to the new continent” (ibid., 6). The question she does not ask about
this embryonic political potential is whether, in light of the development of new technologies and the ensuing bastardization of democratic principles, the Chinese middle classes, or for that matter the middle classes in the US and elsewhere, remain in a position to act like citizens and to reflect on, and act on, the prioritizing of any kind of greater good.

What Hallstatt and its cloning encourage us to reflect on is how much has changed since America was a rising nation keen on establishing the hegemony of its dream, and how best to deal with the rise of China. In an interview with NPR, Chinese novelist Yan Lianke, who has been both celebrated but also had some of his works banned in China, elucidates the challenges in terms of simulacra:

[B]asically in China’s reality today, the real is unreal. All of us who are living in China today basically exist in a kind of fantasy already — in a kind of elusive reality. Our everyday life is already filled with both a kind of fantasy of the future, a kind of denial of the present. We really don’t have a full grasp on what might be happening or what might not be happening to us in everyday life. So when I write my seemingly fantastical novels like Explosion Chronicles or The Day the Sun Died, I’m really trying to write a kind of reality that people are not facing and people are not seeing, but in fact exists. (Lianke 2019)

When asked about the state of anxiety he feels, he replied:

Yes, I certainly feel a great deal [of] anxiety and unease and maybe perhaps even the sense of danger. I feel it day after day. But I wouldn’t say it’s based on any specific incident or set of reasons, and in that I’m not alone. I think people in China all feel this way. Intellectuals feel this way. But everyday life is a sense of constant anxiety, constant unease — you don’t know where the danger is coming from. The danger could be the curbing of free speech, but the danger could also be in poisoned or contaminated vegetables. It could be in a
financial crisis. But all in all, we spend every single day in a state of anxiety and I’m not exempt from it. (ibid.)

Is this to be our future? What can one do in the face of fear-generating hyperobjects like China and climate change? How to prevent fear from making things worse? What can one understand that will make a difference?

A key difference between the two Hallstatts is that the Chinese one is surrounded by a massive property development. Piecing the case studies in this book together encourages us to see the way the Chinese state has used property as a form of alternative currency. As Wade Shepard’s work draws attention to, “The first thing to understand is that nobody in China actually owns property. Land is still nationalised, and leases are sold for up to as many as 70 years” (Hatherley 2015; italics added). Chinese have been encouraged to invest in property, and not GICs or gold, not as places to live but in order to provide for their own individual prosperity. What else it is important to understand is the scope and the significance of these developments:

In 2009, fully 45 percent of China’s population, or about 570 million people, were estimated to be living in urban areas. […] By the end of 2005, 80 percent of urban Chinese owned their homes. […] Even amid the turmoil that struck the international financial markets in 2008, government statistics indicate China’s residential property sales jumped around 80 percent to approximately 3.8 trillion RMB in 2009, as individual home mortgage lending rose nearly 50 percent over the previous year. (Bosker 2013, 4–5)\(^\text{16}\)

\(^\text{16}\) In its scope, this phenomenon resembles the new financial regime in the US that Saskia Sassen has described as “a kind of Frankenstein of a special kind: it can never lose” (Sassen 2019). Where it differs from the Chinese is that while the Chinese system concentrates on circulation, the US system is purely extractive, as one sees in the example Sassen gives of their “succeeding in passing a law in Congress that establishes this [student debt] is a debt than can never be excused. So there is a capability at work here that the traditional bank never had. I am not saying debt is a new phenom-
Most of the empty apartments in the forests of towers around Hallstatt See and beyond were purchased with what, in the spirit of *Planet Ottakring*, we might call “Kommunisten,” in that they have worked the same way they do in the film to build up the economy, but on a much more massive scale.¹⁷

What this study also helps us see is the profoundly hybrid state of what is generally held to be, and interacted with as, reality. As each of the book’s case studies makes clear in its own way, it is not only the new copy-towns in China that should be understood as simulacrascapes. Our engagement with all places is overlain on at least three levels: by the images and forms of cultural production that exist of them, by the histories of past events that have taken place in them, and by the unconscious fears and desires we project onto them. The problem, as Adrian Ivakhiv so cogently explains in *Shadowing the Anthropocene*, is that we have been trained to see only the physical world and not its shadows:

Commodity capitalism has been profoundly successful at encouraging us to think that objects are real, and at projecting value into those objects so that they serve the needs of individuals, even if they never manage to do that (which is, of course, the point). The effects of our actions, on the other hand, are systemic and relational, and we won’t understand them unless we come to a better appreciation of how systems and relational ecologies work and of how we are thoroughly enmeshed within them. (Ivakhiv 2018, 23)

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¹⁷ One can thus better appreciate the implications of the announcement across the news services on January 18, 2019, that Beijing was finally going to open its banking, insurance, and securities markets, something it had promised repeatedly to do since joining the World Trade Organization in 2001.
As my case studies underscore, it is not only the case that we are thoroughly enmeshed in the various invisible cultural, historical, and psychic layers of our surroundings. As Mitchell reminds us in *What Do Pictures Want?*, mediation has always been an integral part of those surroundings: “If images are life-forms, and objects are the bodies they animate, then media are the habitats or ecosystems in which pictures come alive” (Mitchell 2005, 198). However, Mitchell’s conclusions are not mine, primarily because of the considerable distance in our respective ‘we’s and in the material we are dealing with. Mitchell’s could not be more us-centric:

The Hooded Man of Abu Graib, accused terrorist, torture victim, anonymous clone, faceless Sone of Man, will remain the icon of our time for the foreseeable future. And behind the veil of this spectral enemy, the faces of Jesus, Muhammad, and Moses will continue to haunt us. (Mitchell 2011, 167; italics added)

My examples demonstrate a different kind of hauntology, namely, a posthuman one whose ‘we’ understands that category as Rosi Braidotti does, which is to say as negotiated: “‘We’ categorize ourselves as a ‘we’ of humans and humanity, where actually ‘we’ are a group of subjects who all have very different agendas, experiences, and knowledge” (Wilde 2020, 1039). What follows is “an understanding of ‘we subjects,’ as a type of recognition of similarity yet difference” (ibid). From the reviving of the Proletenpassion in the Arena to the politically pedagogical demonstration of alternative forms of currencies and community in *Planet Ottakring*, from the necropolitical performances of Lazarus in the Volkstheater to the hijacking of Christoph Schlingensief’s neo-colonizing container performance in the square in front of Vienna’s Staatsoper, and from the dedicated keeping operational of at least one sleeping-giant Kurhotel in Semmering and Hans Weingartner’s repeated figurations of natural settings as potential spaces for the practice of new forms of collectivity to Hallstatt’s parrying of tourist masses attracted by its sleeping
giant clone in China, the case studies here all offer an alternative kind of “how-to” guide to recognizing workable collectives capable of negotiating and navigating their surroundings, using historical coordinates, ghosts if you will, to avoid succumbing to the overwhelming complexity wrought by digital technologies on those surroundings.

Ivakhiv has shown how quickly the scary monsters that are hyperobjects can be, and indeed have been, produced:

The AnthropoCapitalist Thing (henceforth, A/C Thing) includes humans, ruminants, cereal grasses, fossil fuels, combustion engines, cities, techno-economic networks, and a proliferating array of things made for the Thing and things made to make other things for the Thing. Even things made by the A/C Thing seem to be getting livelier and more complex: digital life, nanotechnology, online worlds. We are building a complex meganetwork atop a complex meganetwork, but with relations between the two—Terra 1.0 and Terra 2.0—growing ever more tenuous and fragile. (Ivakhiv 2018, 29–30; italics in original)

A phrase both Bosker and Mitchell employ now strikes me as quite prophetic: “Boots on the ground are a must,” Bosker declared in her acknowledgements (Bosker 2013, xi), while Mitchell describes a clone army as consisting of “all foot soldiers, ‘boots on the ground’ as the standard synecdoche for infantry puts it” (Mitchell 2011, 41; italics in original). In order to reclaim “the digital future as humanity’s home” (Zuboff 2014), we need to pay proper attention to where our boots are and to recognize and tap into the life-giving strands of our surroundings. Adopting a Buddhist-like zen attitude towards possessions and imagining the Anthropocene and humankind as a geological layer of history, as Ivakhiv proposes as a way of addressing “the crisis of agency” that is very much a part of our historical moment (Ivakhiv 2018, 18), may work well in the context of those haunted by the faces of Jesus, Mohammad, and Moses and thus
attuned to see spectral enemies because they have been trained to see enemies spectrally. As my examples demonstrate, that effort can be usefully supplemented by historically sensitive cultural practitioners, audiences, and academics, who are called on to redouble their efforts and engage in activating the ghosts of radical pasts in such ways that they reach and maintain a citizenry worthy of that name. That citizenry, like the Hallstätter and the Donnerstagdemo demonstrators, and the Arena occupiers before them, needs to be capable of thinking and acting collectively to ensure that a good life is within reach of every “one,” which is to say every “thing” in a given environment. In other words, they need to be able to identify with the cloned granddaughter in *The Fallen World* rather than position her as Pandora 2.0 (or 4.0 or wherever we are now) as the film does. How we bring the drinking bros in the finance world into such a position (and they are, of course, merely the tip of an iceberg of toxic masculinity that needs to be melted with a very different kind of climate change), is the stuff of another study. The contribution of this one is to point out what all there is to be learned from a strand of Viennese culture not often associated with the city. Its feel-good focus on specific sites and places and their histories at least provides us with a starting point and workable scope for future efforts.

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18 My thanks to Justyna Poray-Wybranowska for reminding me that Buddhism has also played a central role in my colleague Marcus Boon’s work.