Fraser Crichton, Mariachiara Ficarelli, Lachlan Kermode, Bhaveeka Madagammana, Davide Mangano, Karamia Müller: Violent Legalities

Violent Legalities is an interdisciplinary project that brings together contributors spanning the fields of anthropology, architecture, art and software design. The project was initiated by academic Karamia Müller, Lecturer at the School of Architecture and Planning, University of Auckland, and London/Boston based New Zealander Lachlan Kermode, software lead at human rights agency Forensic Architecture, based at Goldsmiths University, London. The multi-disciplinary collaborators include Pōneke-based photojournalist and programmer Fraser Crichton, Auckland architectural researcher Bhaveeka Madagammana, New York-based cultural anthropologist Mariachiara Ficarelli, and Milan-based animator Davide Mangano.

In the wake of the March 2019 Christchurch mosque shootings, the contributors of *Violent Legalities* collectively reflected on how such violence manifests. How does a research community respond to events such as the Christchurch shootings, and how can engaged researchers centre and prioritise other voices? Their initial investigation moved from an interrogation of this specific incident, to canvas and examine over 500 instances of violations against non-Pākehā. For the past seven months they have delved into a range of legal and historical documents that index the state's response to struggles for non-Pākehā communities' rights. Their initial findings are unsettling. As the contributors' state: 'Instead of seeing increasing recognition of these communities as part of Aotearoa/New Zealand, we found an unfolding history of conflicting worldviews. The legal jargon and length can hide the power of these documents. They are in fact 'violent legalities'.'

This investigation seeks to advocate for the rights of non-Pākehā, by scrutinising larger mechanisms at play that enable such systemic prejudices to manifest. Documents and sources, including excerpts from Waitangi Tribunal reports, are quoted throughout the timelines. Given the range and scope of these documents, and the complexities involved in developing the platform, this first public-facing display of the maps shows their research in a working state. The group will continue to develop and manage the pages remotely and public feedback is welcomed.

The project utilises TimeMap, an open-source cartographic platform designed by Forensic Architecture, to map and timeline incidents and to dynamically collate and visualise large volumes of material. New features have been integrated into this software to provide the latitude required in building complex narratives. This updated software allows for 'non-located' events, such as background legislative changes, to be correlated with the historical occurrences plotted in the cartographic fields. Seen this way the tangible outcomes of law-making practices are made apparent, often across much longer timeframes than we might initially expect. Through this investigation of

Te Urewera Raids in 2007, for instance, we can not only identify the legal changes that occurred within a relatively short period, which led to the unlawful raids, but we can also see other instances where Ngāi Tūhoe have been subjected to unwarranted interrogation over many decades. This engine has latent potential to be built upon and further populated as it approaches completion. An aim of the project is to initiate conversations with affected communities to update information captured in their system. This is a lengthy undertaking, as both a research project and in terms of website development, that will continue past the duration of this exhibition.

In the following statements the *Violent Legalities* team elaborate further on the specific focus of each map and their initial findings across the range of case studies. In the biographic information they have provided a link for those who wish to offer further feedback and connect the group to interested parties. Their hope is that the project will continue to build into an expansive platform which identifies both conscious and unconscious biases systemic to our legal system, within a cartographic platform specifically developed to address the particular challenges facing our bi-cultural and multi-faceted nation.

Stephen Cleland
Curator

Kirk Gallery

3

2

4

1
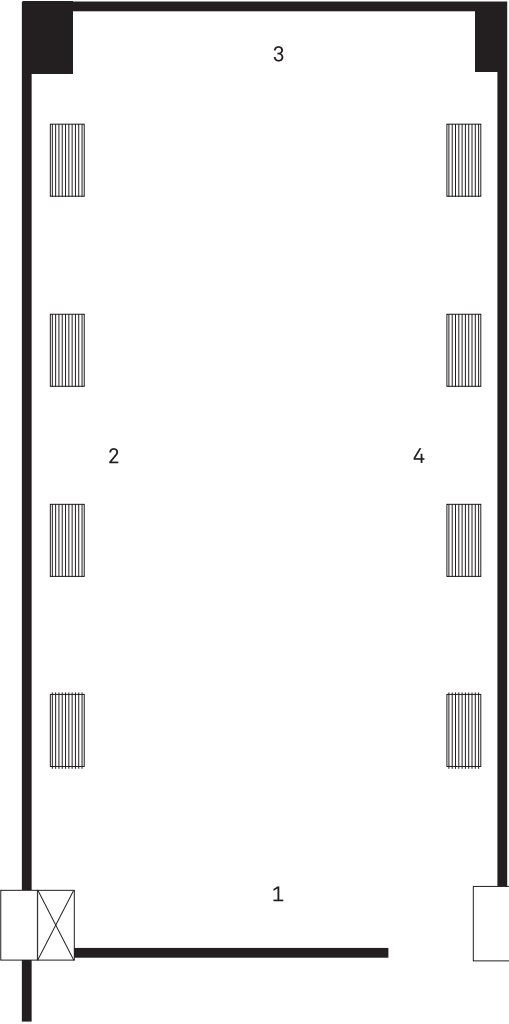
1   *Violent Legalities* 2020
    single channel video, 9 minutes, 12 seconds

    The film <u>Violent Legalities</u> *presents an overview of the research*
    methodologies employed in this exhibition. Scans of the legal
    documents used to build the TimeMap platform are displayed
    between each screening. – VL

2   *Terror Legalities* 2020
    TimeMap Cartographic Diagram, developed by Forensic
    Architecture 2014–. New features integrated into site 2019–2020
    by Lachlan Kermode. All research conducted by developed by the
    Violent Legalities team.

    <u>Terror Legalities</u> *spatialises the social relationships between legal*
    activity and racialised hyper-policing in Aotearoa New Zealand.
    It was developed in response to our initial research hypothesis in
    the wake of the 2019 Christchurch shootings, and is therefore the
    starting point for our research as a whole. In the five years prior
    to the shootings, Christchurch spokespeople from New Zealand's
    Muslim community made concerted and multiple attempts
    to bring state attention to white supremacist threats towards
    Muslims and rising Islamophobia. There was no notable response
    from the state, and a marked lack of intervention. In contrast, the
    New Zealand government introduced the Terrorism Suppression
    Act in 2002 in response to the 9/11 terror attacks. This continued
    and heightened state-sponsored surveillance and policing. <u>Terror</u>
    <u>Legalities</u> *details racist attacks that occurred in New Zealand*
    from 1996–2020 and contextualises them against counter-
    terrorism legislation passed in this time frame. What is revealed
    is a history of legal negligence, and in many cases active violence,
    with respect to racialised bodies. – VL

3   *Treaty Legalities* 2020
    TimeMap Cartographic Diagram, developed by Forensic
    Architecture 2014–. New features integrated into site 2019-2020
    by Lachlan Kermode. All research conducted by developed by the
    Violent Legalities team.

    <u>Treaty Legalities</u> *revisits the report produced by the Treaty of*
    Waitangi Tribunal in response to claims submitted by the iwi and
    hapū of Te Urewera district. As is shown in Terror Legalities,
    the Terrorism Suppression Act in 2002 is the legislation that
    enabled police to monitor Māori activist groups in Te Urewera
    district for 12 months from 2007-2008. Roadblocks were

*installed and homes raided in the Rūātoki township, as well as
across New Zealand in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North
and Wellington. Police justified their actions, claiming activists
were acting as terrorists, undertaking military training in the
Te Urewera Ranges to overthrow the government and carry
out violent protests. In 2013, the Independent Police Conduct
Authority found that police had acted unnecessarily, and that
this surveillance was unlawful. Treaty Legalities shows that the
Te Urewera raids are events that occur in a history of Māori
and thus racialised hyper-policing that stretches back to the
beginnings of settler-colonialism. – VL*

4   *The Moral Drift* 2020
    TimeMap Cartographic Diagram, developed by Forensic
    Architecture 2014–. New features integrated into site 2019–2020
    by Lachlan Kermode. All research conducted by developed by the
    Violent Legalities team.

    <u>*The Moral Drift*</u> *investigates the link between state care and
    the expanding prison population. Aotearoa New Zealand has
    one of the highest rates of incarceration in the developed world.
    Aotearoa's expanding prison system mirrors many countries
    with one difference: 50% of the prison population are indigenous
    Māori. Māori, however, are only 15% of the population. In
    Aotearoa, the 1950s saw a dramatic increase in children taken
    into care fueled by a moral panic over teenage delinquency and
    sexual mores. The recommendations of the 1954 Mazengarb
    Report (the source of the project title), empowered social
    services to uplift an estimated 100,000 children into state, foster
    and psychiatric care over a thirty-year period. These children
    experienced unprecedented levels of psychological, physical and
    sexual abuse whilst in care – 50% of those children were Māori.
    Intergenerational trauma combined with a contemporary moral
    panic over intervention in cases of child abuse now sees the uplift
    of Māori children at unprecedented levels. Correlation may
    not be causation, but as the prison population simultaneously
    expands the true moral drift is the State's deployment of
    strategies of blame in denying the inherent racism that lies behind
    the statistics of over-representation. – VL*

CONTRIBUTORS / TEAM

To provide feedback visit violentlegalities.space

Project Coordinator: Karamia Müller
Karamia Müller is a Pacific academic specialising in Pacific space concepts. Currently a Lecturer at the School of Architecture and Planning, Creative Arts and Industries, University of Auckland, her research specialises in the meaningful 'indigenisation' of design methodologies invested in building futures resistant to inequality.

Software Development: Lachlan Kermode
Lachlan Kermode develops full stack architectures and manages machine learning workflows across a range of Forensic Architecture's investigations. He has a degree in Computer Science from Princeton University, and a range of experience both in industry and as a full stack freelancer.

Research: Fraser Crichton
Fraser Crichton is a Pōneke/Wellington based visual artist who graduated from the Photojournalism and Documentary Photography Master's at University of Arts London in 2019. His research-based practice incorporates investigative journalism, data-visualisation, video, archival imagery, still photography, and community based participatory photography projects. Fraser's work examines the power of the state in the context of social reform and the criminal justice system.

Research: Bhaveeka Madagammana
Bhaveeka Madagammana is currently completing a Master's of Architecture (Professional) at the School of Architecture and Planning, Creative Arts and Industries, University of Auckland.

Video Editing and Design: Mariachiara Ficarelli
Mariachiara Ficarelli is a cultural anthropologist, and filmmaker. Her research interests include contemporary fascist movements and the arms trade, as well as the potential for open-source research in ethnographic methodology. Her research interests include contemporary fascist movements and the potential for open-source research in ethnographic methodology.

Animation: Davide Mangano
Davide Mangano is a computer graphics generalist with a Bachelor's degree in computer-generated animation from the Istituto Europeo di Design in Milan. He has specialized in 3D environments for both real-time and rendered projects.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND | **CREATIVE ARTS
AND INDUSTRIES**

Exhibition guide produced to accompany the exhibition
Fraser Crichton, Mariachiara Ficarelli, Lachlan Kermode, Bhaveeka Madagammana, Davide Mangano, Karamia Müller: Violent Legalities, Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, Victoria University of Wellington, 2 June – 16 August 2020

Te **Adam**
Pātaka **Art**
Toi **Gallery**

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA