

Archives of the Arctic. Ice, Entropy and Memory
Sept. 18-20, 2013
Berlin, Germany

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Mapping from the ground

Landscape Journeys is an ongoing research project mapping contemporary and future landscapes by experimental mapping methods. We map from the internal perspective of moving through and being immersed in landscapes. We look for new emerging orders based on local, unforeseen and unintended processes and effects, and insist on the social relevance of documenting emergent material landscapes. Thus, departing from the predominant tradition of architectural and territorial mapping, we argue for a mapping that documents the material qualities of the landscape from a ground level perspective. Focusing on the North we thus seek to oppose the extensive use of 'mapping from above', demonstrated with the remote sensing surveillance of Arctic and Sub-Arctic territories.

Our recent journey to the Kola Peninsula in Russia was preceded by a travel to Iceland, and it traverses a line of past, present and future industrial landscapes. It generates descriptions and narrations attentive to the perceptual quality of travel through landscape and the material that informs the traveler's conceptualization of the landscapes. Looking at the small settlement of Teriberka on the north coast of the Kola, and on a selection of Nickel and Palladium mining sites further south, particularly Monchegorsk, we seek to situate the contemporary experience of exposed landscape in relation the geopolitical projections in the same landscapes.

Architecture traditionally performs a more structural mapping, isolating physical or iconographic traits. We attempt to expand on and supplement this procedure with an approach that insists on the agency of matter. Our contemporary mapping is based on documentation as the prime response to emerging landscape typologies. Inspired by the work performed by the Center for Land Use Interpretation we employ documentation as an important tool to include new typologies in the operating notion of what is a landscape.

Taking inspiration both from ground mapping, architectural mapping projects like Learning from Las Vegas, and recent thoughts on the agency of matter, we expand on current mapping practices by producing even more discursive maps. Ours is an explorative form that includes social development, landscape practices and land use strategies. This mapping procedure is more

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explicitly subjective and more explicitly speculative than the territorial mapping. It locates the mapper in space and in social and political time, and negotiates with stakeholders that all try to monopolize their perspectives, for example the Shtokman developers in Teriberka, the planned hub for the Shtokman development and Norilsk Nickel who runs the many open pit mining sites on the Kola peninsula. The travel becomes important as a contemporary, but historically inspired way of locating the observer in space, documenting a range of impressions and phenomena, with the intention of producing *maps of agency*.

An important approach implied in traveling is that of serendipity - "Finding something good while not specifically searching for it," perhaps represented by the accidental encounters of the travel. This represents a radically opposite of the 'mapping from above' mentioned above, and the monopolization of perspectives is explicit, rather than obscured by remoteness.