

Introduction to an Index

Chitra Ganesh + Mariam Ghani

Chitra Ganesh + Mariam Ghani have collaborated since 2004 on the project Index of the Disappeared, which is both a physical archive of post-9/11 disappearances and a mobile platform for public dialogue.

As an archive, Index of the Disappeared foregrounds the difficult histories of immigrant, 'Other' and dissenting communities in the U.S. since 9/11. Through official documents, secondary literature, and personal narratives, the Index archive traces the ways in which censorship and data blackouts are part of a discursive shift to secrecy that allows for disappearances, deportations, renditions and detentions on an unprecedented scale. The Index builds up its collection by collaborating with others actively engaged in political and legal challenges to the policies we track, and draws on radical archival, legal and activist traditions to select, group, and arrange information.

As a platform, the Index presents discussions on ideas and issues related to the materials it archives, and draws upon materials in the archive to create text-based, site-specific works installed in a range of physical and virtual spaces, including galleries, museums, universities, community centers, libraries, conferences, publications, windows, the street, the web, and the mail. These visual forms of public dialogue are designed to confront audiences with the human costs of public policies, challenging them to re-consider the abstractions of political debate in specific, individual terms.

An index can be a trace, a signpost, an indicator or a measurement. Our Index begins in the gaps where language ends; that is, in the records of absence and absence of records where official language fails and new languages must be developed in its place. The Index in its most material form, the archive, preserves and presents the traces of redactions and erasures in the official record, alongside the words of the original actors and witnesses of the histories it explores. For the Index, the gaps in those records are not flaws in the archive, but rather the key to its organization. We configure the bits of information remaining in the public domain in order to make visible the missing links, the submerged body of secret information below the simple surface. Presenting the Index archive as an artwork-in-progress, constantly readapted to the specific sites in which it is installed, encourages visitors to approach it not as researchers seeking facts but rather with the critical awareness that the 'facts' they encounter are in flux, defined and redefined in relationship to time, to their context and to each other.

At the same time, the Index archive's steadily increasing mass is a visceral measure of the slow and steady creep of the troubling policies it chronicles, through every echelon of our society and every facet of our culture. In our own research with these materials, we have tried to probe the texts for productive breaks and slippages, moments where language escapes from official to unofficial registers, from public to private domains, from political to poetic testimony. These moments become the extracts and fragments of the Index, literal signs and visible trails that we circulate in the wider world.

For the Review, we have presented a chronology of the project through extracts from, re-framings of and comments on documents that represent both productive ruptures in and particular phases of our research – on special interest detention and special registration; on the laws and legal terms that enable and double disappearances in the detention system; on national security letters, libraries and domestic surveillance; on detainee abuse and deaths in custody; on the individual narratives pieced together from the stray details of tribunal transcripts, interrogation logs, testimony and trial exhibits; on legal (re)definitions of torture and military codes of conduct; and on the migration of “enhanced” interrogation techniques from the psychological experiments of the SERE program to GTMO to Iraq and finally to Afghanistan, where they continue to be practiced today.

Source notes:

Pages 1-2: This was the first document released, after several months of total information blackout, about the 766 men known as the “special interest detainees” – men who were picked up by the INS (now ICE) on immigration violations shortly after 9/11/01, then classified as being of “special interest” in relation to the events of 9/11, and remanded to the custody of the FBI and DOJ. Everything on the list is redacted except the arrest dates and the nationalities of those arrested.

Pages 3-4: A blank “form” National Security Letter (NSL) and a redacted list of all the NSLs served between 2001 and 2005. Both documents were released under FOIA as part of the ACLU’s lawsuit on behalf of four Connecticut librarians who refused to release patron records in response to NSL requests.

Page 5: The redacted page is from the CIA Inspector General report of 2004 (declassified though still very redacted in 2009) about the use of authorized and unauthorized “enhanced” interrogation techniques in CIA detention and interrogation operations. The prisoner classification chart is from Army Field Manual 19-4: Military Police Battlefield & POW Operations. The prison schematic is from a military Powerpoint presentation.

Page 6: Testimony and exhibits from a combatant status review tribunal (CSRT) held at GTMO for an Afghan prisoner named Muhebullah.

Page 7: The sample medical intake form is from US Army Special Text 4-02-46, Medical Support to Detainee Operations. Text extracted from the 83-page log detailing the interrogations of and “softening techniques” applied to Mohamed al-Qahtani at Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) between 11/23/02 and 11/01/03. The log was declassified in 2009 and its level of detail was cited by Physicians for Human Rights in their 2010 report as compelling evidence of human experimentation at GTMO.

Page 8: Watercolor portrait of Omar Khadr by Chitra Ganesh. Letter and translation of letter from the exhibits in Khadr’s CSRT transcript.

Page 9: Suicide note written by and documents related to the suicide of Hassiba Belbachir, who died in immigration detention. Among other things, her note asks, “What is the difference between prison and the tomb? In both places it is cold, dark and closed.”

Page 10: Watercolor portrait of Affia Siddiqui by Chitra Ganesh. Text from a psychiatric evaluation submitted as an exhibit for the prosecution in her 2010 trial.

Page 11: Text and illustration from Code of the US Fighting Force (Army Pamphlet 360-512).

Page 12: Illustration from Code of the US Fighting Force (Army Pamphlet 360-512). Document is an invoice from Jeppesen Dataplan (a Boeing subsidiary) for charges related to a rendition flight through Stockholm-Bromma airport, obtained via the unsuccessful ACLU lawsuit on behalf of rendition victims, Bashmilah et al. v. Jeppesen.

Pages 13-14: Extracts from the CIA Inspector General’s report cited above.

Pages 15-16: Photograph by Mariam Ghani (Kabul, 2010). Text superimposed on the barbed wire is taken from first-hand accounts of experiences in secret prisons in Afghanistan, in particular the “prison of darkness” thought to be located somewhere underneath the grounds of Bagram Air Base.

Texts not linked to a specific source were either composed by the artists, derived from proverbs, or abstracted from fragments of other portions of the same / similar / related documents in the Index archive.

INS Special
Joint Terrorism Task
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE---LA

(b)(7)(A)

(b)(7)(C)

A Number

Name

POB

*Arrest
Date*

*Arrest
Location*

Federal Bureau of Investigation / Other Agencies 29

Pakistan

9/22/2001

JTTF Comments:

Counsel Comments:

Jordan

9/28/2001

JTTF Comments:

Counsel Comments:

India

9/13/2001

JTTF Comments:

Counsel Comments:

Egypt

10/31/2001

JTTF Comments:

Counsel Comments:

YOUR NAMES ERASED, AND NOW BLANK SLATES

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE---LAW

Interest List

Force Working Group

W ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

Date	Charging Document Served	Immigration Charge	Date filed w/EOIR	Custody Location	SIOC FBI Interest	Legally Sufficient
9/22/2001		237(a)(3)(D)	9/25/2001	(b)(6)	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	Bond Info:	(b)(6)				
	DRO Comments:	(b)(6)				
9/30/2001		237(a)(1)(B)	10/1/2001	(b)(6)	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	Bond Info:	(b)(6)				
	DRO Comments:	(b)(6)				
		241(a)(5)		(b)(6)	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	Bond Info:	(b)(6)				
	DRO Comments:	(b)(6)				
12/6/2001		237(a)(1)(B)		(b)(6)	(b)(6)	
	Bond Info:					
	DRO Comments:	(b)(6)				
		WHERE ALL FEARS CAN BE WRITTEN				

~~SECRET~~



ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No

[Drafting] Field Division

[Street Address]

[City, State, Zip]

[Month Date, Year]

[Mr /Mrs.] [COMPANY POINT OF CONTACT]

[TITLE]

[COMPANY]

[STREET ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE No Zip Code]

Dear [Mr /Mrs] [LAST NAME]:

Under the authority of Executive Order 12333, dated December 4, 1981, and pursuant to Title 18, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 2709 (as amended, October 26, 2001), you are hereby directed to provide the Federal Bureau of Investigation

[REDACTED]

In accordance with Title 18, U.S.C., Section 2709(b), I certify that the information sought is relevant to an authorized investigation to protect against international terrorism or clandestine intelligence activities, and that such an investigation of a United States person is not conducted solely on the basis of activities protected by the first amendment of the Constitution of the United States

You are further advised that Title 18, U.S.C., Section 2709(c), prohibits any officer, employee or agent of yours from disclosing to any person that the FBI has sought or obtained access to information or records under these provisions.

CLASSIFIED DECISIONS FINALIZED BY
DEPARTMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)
DATE: 07-01-2004

CA# 03-2522

CLASSIFIED BY 65179 dnt/bce/aww 6/5/2004
REASON: 1 (C)
DECLASSIFY ON: X 6/5/2029

Patriot Act II-828

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED BY 65179 dnt/bce/aww

ON 8/3/2004

A LETTER SO SECRET IT COULD NEVER BE SPOKEN OF AGAIN. THE TRICK? RECOGNIZING THE ENVELOPE.

~~SECRET~~

Transactional Records NSLs Since 10/26/2001

Project Number NSL to Field Date

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b1

(S)

CLASSIFIED DECISIONS FINALIZED
BY DEPARTMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)
DATE: 1-24-03 *gmc/gac/33/4/24*
CA# 02-CV-2011

~~SECRET~~

THE INDEX OF DEMOCRACY IS THE INTERVAL BETWEEN

b1

INQUIRY AND INFORMATION.

(S)

~~SECRET~~

b1

(S)

~~SECRET~~

b1

(S)

Grand Total:

(S)

DRAFT

CIA psychologist/interrogators threatened KSM by saying that "if anything else happens in the United States, 'We're going to kill your children.'"

WHEN DAY WAS NIGHT, & NIGHT WAS DAY...

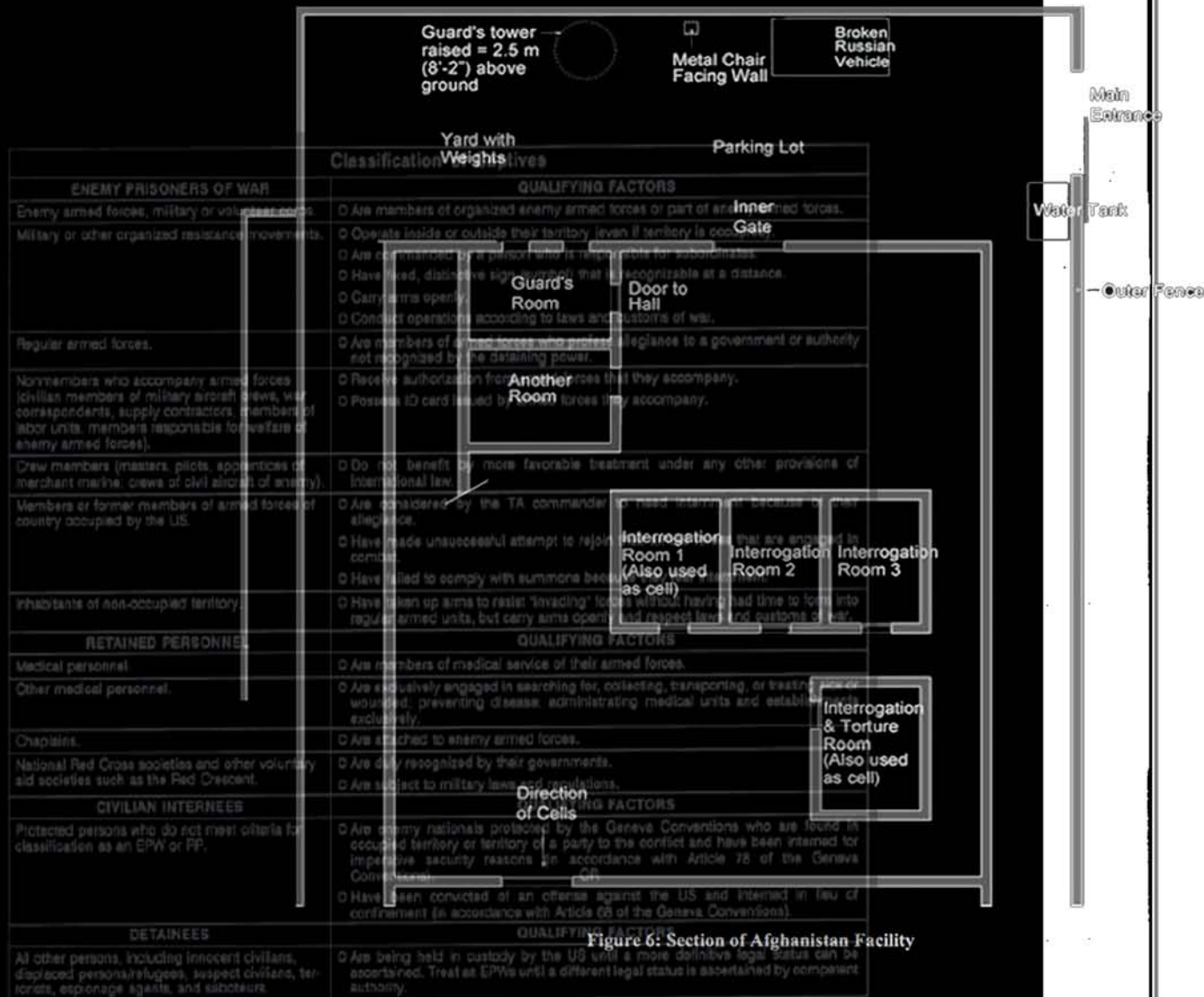


Figure 6: Section of Afghanistan Facility

(toxic blueprints)

نص الرسالة

أخبار شخصية أو عائلية فقط

ONLY MOVED BY
FORCE

BY THE BLADE OR BY THE HANDLE?

6.

Date 18/6/2004 التاريخ

Signature

Omar Ahmed Khadar

الامضاء

The addressee is my mother علاقة الصلة بيني وبين المرسل إليه

-----Original Message-----

From: Migliaccio, Gene A <Gene.Migliaccio@dhs.gov>

To:

CC:

Sent: Mon Mar 21 19:26:30

Subject: FW: SEN Report Notification-32105-1

(WHEN THE BORDERS CROSSED OUR BODIES)

Section 635. Visa Waiver Program.

Follow-up to SEN on death of detainee Hassiba Belbachir (A# 97-332-245)

j'ai un rendez-vous assez important avec un juge puissant arabe
ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION
With the given information provided, DHS recommends a medical review of this facility concentrating on Suicide Standards to determine if protocols exist and are being enforced. DHS is concerned that the detainee committed suicide, in medical pod, after being assessed as a suicide risk.
c'est ça

c'est le bon dieu à qui j'ai des questions à poser.

tu m'a pas peur du dieu.

Nan, car il s'est mes intentions et mon façon de être.

et comment tu va rencontrer le dieu? 08/2005

c'est simple, c'est de prendre le chemin le plus logique avec lequel

on a toute la vérité en face.

c'est quoi le chemin donc?

c'est bien la mort.

et tu n'as pas peur de la mort?

quelle est la différence entre la prison et la tombe?

je ne sais pas

aucune, dans les deux endroits c'est sombre, c'est froid et renfermé.
mais là j'ai moins la respiration

je respire de l'O₂ et avec le cœur engoncé ce n'est pas la peine

j'ai mal vécu - je vie mal mais on peut contrôler le futur pour être mieux

The whereabouts of the other children are unknown although Mohammed Khan claims that he has seen them in Karachi on at least a couple of occasions.

ON THESE SHORES OF BROKEN GLASS)



Dr. Siddiqui was arrested and was unaware of his whereabouts until he was the next day.

Dr. Siddiqui's history is not well known. There appears to have been no serious psychiatric difficulties prior to 2001 although in the interview her

a. If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

6. Code of Conduct V.

a. When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number, and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

b. When questioned, a prisoner of war is required by the Geneva Convention and this code to give name, rank, service number (Social Security number) and date of birth. The prisoner should make every effort to avoid giving the captor any additional information. The prisoner may communicate with captors on matters of health and welfare and additionally may write letters home and fill out a Geneva Convention capture card."

c. It is a violation of the Geneva Convention to place a prisoner under physical or mental duress, torture or any other form of coercion in an effort to secure information. If under such intense coercion, a POW discloses unauthorized information, makes an unauthorized statement or performs an unauthorized act, that prisoner's peace of mind and survival require a quick recovery of courage, dedication and motivation to resist anew each subsequent coercion.

d. Actions every POW should resist include making oral or written confessions and apologies, answering questionnaires, providing personal histories, creating propaganda recordings, broadcasting appeals to other prisoners of war, providing any other material readily usable for propaganda purposes, appealing for surrender or parole, furnishing self-criticisms and communicating on behalf of the enemy to the detriment of the United States, its allies, its armed forces or other POWs.

e. Every POW should also recognize that any confession signed or any statement made may be used by the enemy as a false evidence that the person is a "war criminal" rather than a POW. Several countries have made reservations to the Geneva Convention in which they assert that a "war criminal" conviction deprives the convicted individual of prisoner-of-war status, removes that person from protection under the Geneva Convention and revokes all rights to repatriation until a prison sentence is served.

f. Recent experiences of American prisoners of war have proved that, although enemy interrogation sessions may be harsh and cruel, one can resist brutal mistreatment when the will to resist remains intact.

g. The best way for a prisoner to keep faith with country, fellow prisoners and self is to provide the enemy with as little information as possible.

h. The Geneva Convention provides for the election of a "prisoner representative" in POW camps containing enlisted personnel but no commissioned officers. American POWs should understand that such a representative is only a POW chain of command for its own purposes and is not to be confused with the principles of Article IV.

Strong leadership and communication are essential to discipline. Discipline is the key to camp organization, resistance and even survival. Personal hygiene, camp sanitation and care of sick and wounded are imperative. Officers and non-commissioned officers of the United States must continue to carry out their responsibilities and exercise their authority in captivity. The senior, regardless of service, must accept command. This responsibility and accountability cannot be evaded.

If the senior is incapacitated or is otherwise unable to act, the next senior person will assume command. Commanders should make every effort to inform all POWs of the chain of command and try to represent them in dealing with enemy authorities. The responsibility of subordinates to obey the lawful orders of ranking American military personnel remains unchanged in captivity.

The Geneva Convention Relative to Treatment of Prisoners of War provides for election of a "prisoner representative" in POW camps containing enlisted personnel but no commissioned officers. American POWs should understand that such a representative is only a POW chain of command for its own purposes and is not to be confused with the principles of Article IV.

YOUR SILENCE WILL NOT PROTECT YOU,

As with other provisions of this code, common sense and the conditions of captivity will affect the way in which

INVOICE

Invoice no
19122416

Cost no
160786

Invoice date
2002-01-02

Page
1

Inquiries concerning this invoice should be made to

Tel +46 11-19 29 28

Fax +46 11-19 28 30

JEPPSEN DATAPLAN
121 ALBRIGHT WAY

LOS GATOS CA 95030
USA

The payment shall be at our disposal not later than

We don't accept any cheques.

2002-02-01

Late payment will result in additional charges in accordance with 18.5%

PERIOD UNTIL 2001-12-31

(ESSB)

STOCKHOLM-BROMMA

Noise-charge

700.00

Landing Charge

1868.00

Terminal Navigation Charge

659.00

Emission Charge

93.40

Passenger Charge

882.00

Security Pax

171.00

SPECIFICATION ENCL.

ROUNDED

-00.40

AND BLOOD DOES NOT WASH OUT BLOOD.

Org. number 05-202100-0795

VAT No. SE202100079501

Headquarters: Norrköping SWEDEN

Total SEK

Please refer to

LUFTFARTSVERKET

DIVISION STOCKHOLM

SSC

S-601 79 NORRKÖPING

SWEDEN

Pg 18 09 74-8

Bg 133-7716

4373.00

BANK S-E-Banken

Account No. 5323-10 233 00

SWIFT ADDRESS:ESSSESS

Please specify all
payments with
invoice- and
customer no.

Figure 5. Code of Conduct III

TOP SECRET

Waterboard

is below 18°C/64°F, detainees should be monitored for the

by far the most traumatic of the enhanced interrogation techniques.

the subject is immobilized on his back, and his forehead and eyes covered with a cloth. A stream of water is directed at the upper lip.

This process can continue for several minutes, and involve up to 15 canteen cups of water. **Ostensibly the primary desired effect derives from the sense of suffocation**

trainers consider it their most effective technique, and deem it virtually irresistible

White noise or loud music

YOUR NAME, YOUR FACE: ONCE HELD AGAINST YOU

LIKE A LOADED GUN,

Shackling

Shackling in non-stressful positions requires only monitoring for the development of pressure sores with appropriate treatment and adjustment of the shackles as required.

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] extended periods (up to 72 hours) in a standing position can be approved if the hands are no higher than head level and weight is borne fully by the lower extremities. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sleep deprivation

[REDACTED]
The standard approval for sleep deprivation, per se (without regard to shackling position) is 72 hours. Extension of sleep deprivation beyond 72 continuous hours is considered an enhanced measure, which requires D/CTC prior approval. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
A rigid guide to medically approved use of the waterboard in essentially healthy individuals is not possible, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FOR TORTURERS ARE NOT BORN, BUT MADE...

NOTE: Examinations performed during periods of sleep deprivation should include the current number of hours without sleep; and, if only a brief rest preceded this period, the specifics of the previous deprivation also should be recorded.

Cramped confinement (Confinement boxes)

Detainees can be placed in awkward boxes, specifically constructed for this purpose. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] confinement in the small box is allowable up to 2 hours. Confinement in the large box is limited to 8 consecutive hours, [REDACTED]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

each case the person to be suffocated
was strapped to a tilting bed

THEIR IDEA OF AN OPEN SECRET :

BLOOD, WATER, AND INVISIBLE INK ...

They came back
I did not but because
they had no life

and remained
naked throughout
the month
of July
which was removed once a
month after
my arrival
I used the bucket
the interrogator told
you your life is in
my hands



more days
cube

in path

about a month
the torture began
day

my clothes were cut
off the first two weeks
they did not give me food
only exercise and water

TRAPPED IN THE PATH OF A SPIDER'S WEB

AS CLOUDS PASS THROUGH THE SKY

after some time held in this
position, my shrimp
began to hurt so I
removed my
artificial leg to
relieve the pain
I was sh