

**THE SENSE OF BELONGING: PERCEPTION, PLURALISM AND THE
POSTWAR CITIZEN-SUBJECT**

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DEDICATION

For Amory.

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ABSTRACT

Critiquing the Rawlsian use of Kant's philosophy of experience, this dissertation draws on Benjamin's and Deleuze's intervention into the *Critique of Judgment* in order to affirm a "higher experience" beyond that through which postwar American citizen-subjectivity is assembled. Specifically, it engages the habits of perception and recollection as they emerged in the period with respect to sight, sound and smell, within the domains of indigeneity, raciality and ethnicity. Instead of a merely *pluralist* mode of political belonging, it articulates one that is *pluralizing*, thinking through what it might mean to belong to becoming rather than being.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Proust and the Police: Perception, Recollection and the Postwar Citizen-Subject

*"Every little gesture, quite domestic and yet quite sublime,
reveals a more profound comprehension of existence
than all your textbooks of philosophy"*

- Marcel Proust¹

A piece of writing is never simply the expression of an essential, undivided self, anymore than the subject it claims to elucidate is reducible to the summaries found on dust jackets or back covers. This work for instance, as often recounted to my dissertation committee, potential employers, family and friends, is most directly a meditation on the politics and aesthetics of the postwar citizen-subject vis-à-vis the government of sight, sound and smell, filtered through the critical theories of Immanuel Kant, Walter Benjamin and Gilles Deleuze. And yet, without the indirect influence of the author of *In Search of Lost Time* (henceforth, *ISLT*) whose fictional, personal and political works consumed what little free time there was while writing it, it certainly would not be what it has become. In the wake of reflection, it is no wonder: for Proust, the details of the purgatory to which he had been consigned involved hand-wringing over the successful completion of the work within an always insufficient allotment of time, worry over the poetics of grammar and diction, and anxiety over whether the chosen aesthetic effectively tapped the non-representational layers of perception, recollection and subjectivity at issue. More consequential for the dissertation

perhaps, was the paradoxical sense one gets while reading it that what was being critiqued in *ISLT* was as intimately derived from his own cultural habitus as it was from his repulsion towards its most commonly-inculcated dispositions. In other words, just as Proust satirized the prewar French aristocratic lifeworld that he narrowly charmed his way into by cataloguing its peculiar habits of perception and recollection, so too it seemed, the dissertation might critique its postwar American equivalent with respect to what, especially after the onset of the economic crisis in August 2008, seemed an equally precarious belonging. Certainly neither adhered to the majoritarian assumptions of the respective societies, cultures or classes, partially because whether consciously or not, the respective aesthetics didn't wholly fit them in the first place. But also to the extent that they did, they weren't beholden to their broader requirements: particularly not the jettisoning of immanent, pre-subjective complexity in favor of adherence to categories of representation. As Deleuze asks in relation to *ISLT*, "what is the narrator, ultimately, in himself? To accept the necessity of distinguishing the narrator and the hero as two subjects...would be to refer the Search to a system of subjectivity...that is alien to it. There is less a narrator than a machine of the Search and less a hero than the arrangements by which the machine function under one or another configuration, according to one or another articulation, for one or another purpose, for one or another production. It is only in this sense that we can ask what the narrator-hero is, who does not function as a subject".²

Thus, it was largely while avoiding the direct task of dissertation-writing in order to read the seemingly only tangentially-relevant works of Proust, that it became evident that his work was also written in the wake of events of world historical proportion. Events that he knew would become conditions of possibility not only for the curtailment of imagination in the short-term, but also in a time yet-to-come, for the illumination of the contingent foundation upon which these dispositions relied. And while he would not deny the very real, material effects of congealed habits of perception and recollection specific to his experience, nor had he accepted the prevailing wisdom about why "someone is 'received' in a certain

world, why someone ceases to be so, [which] signs...the world obeys, which signs are legislators, and which high priests".³ Indeed, whatever the similarities might have been in terms of critical observation and social position, the more important distinction was that while *ISLT* was typically restricted to the field of "literature", the dissertation was to that of "political theory". Even so, given the common assumption between them that politics and aesthetics could scarcely be separated, they may yet be seen to converge on the point that, while the French and American Revolutions redeployed a largely reconfigured citizen-subject through which the modern nation-state would legally extend the conditions of belonging beyond those previously enshrined by divine right, what could never be legislated was the *sense* of belonging it presupposed. Purely formal guarantees of equality and liberty would not prevent the French and American aristocracies from maintaining their power and authority after the bourgeois revolutions of 1789 and 1776, because it was not only through the state or the economy, but also through culture that it became consolidated. While few canonical figures writing from within "literary" or "political theory" genres had attended to either dimension with any real criticality, what Proust intuited was that those who attained a provisional belonging from without often perceived the contingent foundation of its authority with great lucidity. Indeed, as he put it in Volume VI, *Time Regained*, "I had been among society folk long enough to know that they, not the electrical workers, are the real illiterates".⁴

Certainly the culturo-political conditions of belonging, whether on the formal level of citizenship or the more informal one of aesthetic or academic canons, opened up somewhat in both countries since the *belle époque* referred to throughout *ISLT*, just as it did in the postwar period that was the subject of the dissertation. However, particularly after the defeat of the Axis Powers at the end of the Second World War and the ambiguous successes of the new social movements in the ensuing years, the widely-propagated notion that the United States had suddenly arrived at an unrivalled democratic pluralism became its own received wisdom, layering conscious perception and voluntary recollection with

its own molecular traces that became molar realities. Indeed, as Deleuze argued in this respect, in the postwar society of control, even a greater openness could become enlisted into the ongoing reconsolidation of power and authority, because it could enable control to extend that much further. Although it certainly constituted an achievement therefore, the presidential election of Barack Obama was an ambiguous one that, far from overcoming raciality as such, instead reconfigured its hierarchy in the manner that Proust provocatively referred to as that of the kaleidoscope, subject not only to deterritorialization but also reterritorialization, at any given moment. Similarly, while the introduction of the floating exchange rate in the Seventies may have broken down boundaries between national economies as well as societies, it nevertheless proceeded such that it integrated them into the ever-more imperial form of "universal modulation".⁵ So too then, might we critique the political theory canon that emerged in this period, insofar as it temporalized the formal-legal integration of cultural minorities as an already-accomplished pluralism, a universal modulation that had been similarly predicated not only upon an uneven distribution of power, but particularly after consignment to this eternal present, also upon the radical, processual ethos of political becoming that William Connolly described as *pluralization*.⁶ Just as a piece of writing could not be summed up by a reductive blurb, nor could a reformulated citizen-subjectivity adequately represent the micropolitical becomings that its constituents actually underwent, for although they might have been described in that way, they never simply functioned as subjects.

Perhaps it was not for nothing then, that John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* has so often been cited as the founding work of the genre's contemporary wing: cynical in its politicization of the social and predictable in its apology for continuing inequality, it along with numerous other developments, would effectively appropriate the postwar American politics of difference within the frame of the very liberal majoritarian presuppositions that continued to prevent the future emergence of a democratic polity. Indeed, as had become the case with most

contemporary political theory, Rawls merely reproduced the central presuppositions underpinning the disembodied, disaffected "individual" that had dominated Western political thought from Plato through Kant and beyond, circumventing in the process what this dissertation refers to, in a perhaps not entirely conscious reference to Proust, the "sensory-memory habitus". Put briefly, the informal, subterranean aesthetics of citizen-subjectivity that always already constitute the formal legal framework within which a person became individuated as a subject of governance in the first place. Although in the postwar period the libertarianism of Michael Nozick and the communitarianism of Alastair MacIntyre would offer meager "alternatives" to this, given their common philosophical origins, they too circumvented the *sense* of belonging accompanying the formal-legal *conditions* of belonging through which the postwar citizen-subject had been consolidated, with the result that Proust's critical observations continued to resonate. It is in this manner perhaps, that we should recall the narrator's assertion in Volume II, *Within a Budding Grove*, that far from venturing into the non-representational layers of perception and recollection, amongst most who uncritically accepted the perceptions and recollections of the modern period, "the idea that one has long held of a person is liable to stop at one's eyes and ears".⁷ Given his attentiveness to the workings of sensory-memory forces therefore, perhaps Benjamin, who I artificially separated from my encounters with the French novelist initially, had not overstated the case when in considering the force of his writings, he asserted, "Proust's pointing finger is unequalled".⁸

Surely there were many thinkers who problematized this received wisdom by articulating the sense of belonging as it was inculcated within various subjugated individuations, as did Michel Foucault in his interrogation of panopticism as a "government of the soul",⁹ through which prisoners for instance, had been made to willfully accept their possession of a criminal essence. But as with those creators within Proust's milieu who in contrast to himself, paternalistically sought "to make art accessible to the people by sacrificing refinements of form",¹⁰ most

of these also circumvented any discussion of the sensory-memory habitus that consolidated not only the subjugated but also the dominant individuation that had held the others within its thrall, even while the socius became increasingly interpenetrated and transversal below the formal level of representation. Moreover, by continuing to invoke the isolated, enclosed and molded individual that underpinned the One and the Many of prewar disciplinary society, rather than acknowledging the tension this individuation had shared with that of the coconstituted, free-floating and modulated dividual emerging in the postwar society of control, most attempts to assert cultural difference naturalized a particular subset of the category as representative of the One and the Many. In this way they reified an ontology as outmoded as that by the liberal capitalists they sought to oppose. In other words, whereas one's identity may have been the primary concern prior to and in the midst of the new social movements, in their wake subjectivity had no longer referred *exclusively* to a particularity that expressed it, but was instead redeployed as a zone of indistinction between the One and the Many, a haecceity that as Deleuze had put it, "substitutes for the individual or numerical body the code of a 'dividual' material to be controlled...[one that] opposes individuals against one another...dividing each within".¹¹

What I sought to articulate in the dissertation then, was neither the formal-legal nor the culturo-political consolidation of the postwar citizen-subject as an individual, but rather the *sense* of belonging through which postwar American pluralism policed this individuation. By mobilizing it in tension with the emergent pre-individual for whom categories of perception and recollection were assemblages of habit and artifice, a relation that had been described in Deleuze's commentary on Proust as the "strange plasticity of the narrator".¹² Expanding upon the multiple senses given to the concept of sense throughout his work, (including *The Logic of Sense*, as with Peter Strawson's *The Bounds of Sense*) the term referred neither to sensory experience per se nor to logic as such in any discrete, partitioned sense, but instead to the reliance of truth upon a complex

interweaving of multiple apparati of representation with conscious sensations, discursive presuppositions, affective becomings and voluntary memories. All of these served to police multiple layers of pre-individual reverberations deriving largely from involuntary memory and unconscious perception.¹³ Put differently, what was called truth was mobilized upon an edifice of majoritarian habits of perception and recollection which were always already in the process of becoming congealed and which constantly redeployed the tension between one's numerical, disciplinary, identitarian status and one's coded, modulated, control status, thereby allowing for the state redeployment of the informal sense of belonging, according to contingent coordinates of specific political situations. None of this however, implies a simple acceptance of the phenomenological subject who, in possession of an intentional, reflexive consciousness, would somehow rationally perceive the world simply as a result of "lived experience", without always already being complicit with and therefore implicated in the policing of perception and recollection. Rather, as Deleuze put it in his Hyppolitean critique of Hegel, in a manner that suggested the inseparability of an always-already contingent logic and an always-already layered experience, "philosophy must be ontology, but there is no ontology of essence, there is only an ontology of sense".¹⁴ Rather than a phenomenology of lived experience as self-evident truth in other words, what the Proustian critique offered was an incorporeal corporeality, in which the past "is not content to rise up again as it was once present (simple association of ideas), but rises up absolutely, in a form that was never experienced".¹⁵

Thus, while the object as an easily-critiqued, liberal locus of enunciation continued to plague the Rawlsian claims of an original position, the subject as seamless, autonomous individual vastly limited the responses to it, instead reproducing the centralized, hierarchical sense of belonging upon which it was based in another form. The sense of belonging in the latter approaches in other words, simply reinforced the dominant logic of belonging, only with the difference that it appeared as a minor subjectivity, composed within the thrall of

with the attendant sensory-memory habitus. What this dissertation adds then, is a concept of belonging of sufficient complexity to demonstrate that citizen-subjectivity and every other subjectivity it holds within its orbit, is always already composed in tension with that domain beyond subject and object. It is from here that the channeling of pre-individual materiality into "body-brain-culture relays",¹⁶ syntheses of experience that thenceforward operate in a layered manner upon the now-individuated subject, take place. In this manner then, although the work was intended to build primarily upon the critical theorizations of Kant, Benjamin and Deleuze, it quickly dovetailed also with Proust's great intuition about the plasticity of the sensory-memory habitus that neuroscientists now suggest he discerned in literary form long before they did in the sciences.¹⁷ While the commonplace assumption had been that truth was somehow self-evident and that the apriori presence of reason was sufficient to guarantee that the evidence of the senses, *ISLT* was the first to introduce the notion that memory and other such qualia filtered experience and that consciousness produced a representational account of reality largely in order to consolidate the self such that perception was always already channeled into habit.¹⁸

Aside from the likes of Rawls and his peers charmed by the liberal consensus then, while it was widely accepted in the postwar period that all of the senses were interarticulated through memory in the continuous reproduction of the individual as the primary project of consciousness, another insight Proust discerned early on was that not all of the senses retained similar functioned in the process. In the case of postwar America, the more direct connection of smell with unconscious perception and involuntary recollection, meant that as with the French *belle époque* considered in *ISLT*, the potential disassembly of the subject and reemergence of the pre-individual singular had to be occluded. Whereas sight and sound were first filtered through the language-oriented thalamus within which consciousness was assembled in the form of a self, smell proceeded directly to the hippocampus, "the center of the brain's long-term memory".¹⁹ Indeed, as noted with respect to his multisensory experience of the madeleine in Volume I,

Swann's Way, the repeated sight of the dipping cake provoked no memory for him since his sensory-memory relays had eventually congealed into habits of perception and recollection, whereas the smell of the same material object, which was only rarely encountered brought back his Combray days in their unconscious, pre-individual absolute form. Given the multiplicity of contingencies involved then, the project of the dissertation became one not so much concerned with interrogating all of the different sensory categories through which such qualia had been channeled into the sensory-memory habitus, much less the infinite political fault lines through which they had become articulated with the individuations thereby enabled, but rather with three specific intersections of experience through which citizen-subjectivity had become congealed in the postwar United States. These produced a spatiotemporally specific tension between the Rawlsian individual of conscious perception and voluntary recollection and the pre-individual singularity of unconscious perception and involuntary recollection. However, these assertions are not intended to claim a monopoly on the myriad possible interpretations of the politics or aesthetics of the period, nor even on the very specific domains upon which they focus, for as Deleuze once stated in relation to the author of my distraction, “it is strange that it was Proust, an author thought to be a pure intellectual, who said it so clearly: treat my book as a pair of glasses directed to the outside; if they don't suit you, find another pair”.²⁰

The following then, constitute the central concerns of the dissertation's three central chapters:

- 1) Sight and indigeneity: in which I consider how an ontopolitics folded into postwar ocular experience coalesced with institutionality and discursivity to produce a selectively-visibilizing habitus I call postcolonial synecdochalism. Specifically, I assert that even while it acknowledged the national historical responsibility for the decimation of many of the nation's indigenous peoples, it also consigned their existence to a now-

past temporality. In other words, rather than seeing Native American alterity as inseparable from a transversal presence like others, the postwar pluralist disposition instead set it apart. As such it could only see that which resonated with its inculcated romanticist synecdoches through the ontopolitical policing of the image of a vanishing race, which thereby consigned the recognition of immanent, constitutive multiplicity of postcolonial indigeneities to a yesterday that is no longer and never will again be.

- 2) Sound and raciality: in which I engage how an ontopolitics folded into postwar auditory experience coalesced with institutionality and discursivity to produce a selectively-audibilizing habitus that I describe as macroraciality. Specifically, one that after the aesthetic of the pre-Civil Rights period entered into a host of microracial becomings was then reterritorialized by way of an eternally postbellum present. In other words, although black musical aesthetics could now be included within the audible, it would be reductively constituted through genre boundaries considered authentically black. Rather than considering African-American alterity as always already inseparable from a transversal potentiality of expression, the postwar habitus recognized only that which resonated with expectation, that of a today that never was and never will be.
- 3) Smell and ethnicity: in which I interrogate how an ontopolitics folded into postwar olfactory experience coalesced with anti-immigrant institutionality and discursivity to produce a deodorized habitus I call aethnicism. Specifically, one predicated upon citizen-subjectivity's naturalization of the process through which that which was involuntarily identified from without became voluntarily identified from within, enabling the immigrant of then to become the citizen of now. Rather than experiencing Asian, Latin American and other migrants as part of a transversal becoming like their own, the postwar disposition identified

only that which resonated with an assimilationist telos, while all else was consigned a tomorrow that is not yet and never will be.

In each of these, it was the tension between the depluralizing of experience through conscious perception and voluntary recollection and those of unconscious perception and involuntary recollection out of which the preindividual singular enables its repluralizing, that was the primary interest. For just as the latest neuroscience suggests that memory emerges when two neurons change form in the wake of experience so as to become interarticulated in the newly lubricated synaptic gap between them, so too was it suggested that political experience created neural pathways within which perception and recollection became congealed collectively and individually, most typically in the modern form of the One and the Many, rather than of multiplicity as such. Thus, just as the long-unencountered smell of the madeleine involuntarily transported Proust's narrator beyond his individuated representational perception and recollection to the pre-individual singular experience of the ethnically-inflected lifeways of his Jewish Aunt in the Combray of his youth, so too might a long-unencountered pop song force a non-representational perception and recollection of the racially-inflected lifeways one's youth in the postwar United States. Or perhaps more provocatively, just as the sight of the madeleine had provoked no cognitive response in the narrator since he repeatedly experienced their visual form and thereby habituated them, so too might the daily visual experience of an urban neighborhood begin to screen out hundreds of homeless people, in order to similarly produce a useful image of pluralist tolerance. What all of this suggested, amongst other things, was the power of Gerald Edelman and Giulio Tononi's summary of Proust's literary observations in *A Universe of Consciousness: How Matter Becomes Imagination*: "neurons that fire together wire together".²¹ The reason this phrase mattered was that if they could fire together to produce a representational, individuated sensory-memory habitus, those same neural pathways could be redirected to produce other dispositions, since neither perception nor recollection are static things but are instead processes that are

always already in a state of becoming, no matter how they might have been temporalized within a particular, contingent political frame.

Therefore, the insight followed in this dissertation was that the sense of belonging of which the postwar citizen-subject had been aesthetically composed was fundamentally a product of unacknowledged neural plasticity, one that had policed an emergent Rawlsian liberal, autonomous individual in tension with a pre-individual singularity that its consolidation occluded. In the form of a tripartite immanent critique then, it became clear that the task of the project at hand was to articulate the contingency of the depluralized sensory-memory habitus that was dominant in the postwar United States, as well as its potential repluralizing in the midst of global technological, cultural and political transformations that were not merely subject to the will, but were very much always already in motion regardless. Before we move into the three central chapters however, the remainder of the introduction will set the stage for what follows by situating the thesis of the work within the frame of contemporary political thought. In the first section, the post-Kantian and as I discovered, also post-Proustian commentaries of Benjamin and Deleuze on the depluralizing of experience are considered in the wake of the rationalization of the synthesis and the spectacularization of the cinema. In the second section, I apply these observations to the capacity of film to affirm the repluralizing of experience that Benjamin and Deleuze make possible by reading Proust both with and against particular versions of Kant, as the basis for a more dynamic sense of belonging with which to uncoil that which continues to reproduce the modern citizen-subject. But in line with Deleuze's commentary on Proust, the point was not simply to return to originary, preconscious, arepresentational experience, as many have interpreted to be the central point of *ISLT*. Rather, as becomes evident over the course of the final volume, the point is to become a creator, to produce a work of art or a fragment of life that will not simply recall the past, but will actually create the future. But we will come to all of this, in good time.

1.1. Depluralizing Experience: Hope, Fear and the Sensory-Memory Habitus

Although his own canonization might well have helped to train postwar perception in the contrary manner, the French aristocracy of Proust's critique weren't the only ones to have devised informal means through which the sense of belonging was captured in the wake of major political changes. In the American half-century of nearly unchallenged planetary hegemony from roughly 1949 through the first decade of the 21st century, cinema as well as television, photography and YouTube; radio as well as records, CDs and MP3s; architecture, as well as sanitation, urban design and urban planning; and political science as well as communications, philosophy and literature, amongst a multitude of other assembled forces, themselves contributed to a neoliberal resonance machine bent on depluralizing experience at the very moment in which citizen-subjectivity became more formally inclusive than ever before. It is telling therefore that, according to Rawls, the appropriate response to the new social movements is neither to engage difference, nor to problematize what he affirms as an already-accomplished "reasonable pluralism",²² but to instead defend the already-existing conditions of belonging on the purely formal-legal level. Like the unitary, individuated narrator of classical literature which Proust sought to displace throughout *ISLT*, the ethos he affirmed was one that imposed a "veil of ignorance" that occluded every predicate of identity, not to mention corporeality, discursivity or pre-individual singularity that he imagined might prevent the redress of inequality in what he judged the least-biased manner possible. The presumption of course, was that in drawing down this reasonable shroud, one arrived at the "original position", that individuated citizen-subjectivity, albeit carved out of the more originary pre-individual material, by way of the apriority of reason alone. The acclaimed source of Rawls' argument, which interestingly enough, was similarly employed by the French aristocracy,²³ was specifically cited in Chapter IV of *A Theory of Justice*: "Kant supposes that...moral legislation is to be agreed to under conditions that characterize men as free and equal rational beings. The description of the original position is an attempt to

interpret this conception...[in the form of] a rational human individual".²⁴ Free and equal citizens in other words, were not to engage in dissensus and ethically-informed, situationally-specific modes of conflict, but rather to "narrow the range of disagreement",²⁵ from behind the disembodied, disaffected veil of ignorance the new social movements had sought to lift, insofar as it consolidated the hierarchical inclusion and received morality they opposed.

Essentially therefore, what the original position constituted was an apology for the *a priori* presupposition of reason that had served the dominant readings of Kant (which we will refer to as neo-Kantian, while post-Kantian will be used for heterodox readings), as the condition of possibility for experience as such. It was this which was thereby held to preexist every specific instance of experience with universal applicability, regardless not only of sensory or memory inculcation, but more generally, of "the real conditions of actual experience".²⁶ In other words, like his counterparts in the non-academic world, Rawls assured his followers that the franchise would indeed be extended to "minorities", but only on the condition that doing so would mean very little, since it would occur on the state's terms alone. Put differently, the franchise henceforward would be analogous to that afforded the reader by the unitary, individuated narrator: that of "reasonable pluralism". In order to grasp the force of such a move in the face of situated difference, one might recall a key scene from Scott Hicks' *Snow Falling on Cedars* (1999): at the height of anti-Japanese sentiment during WWII, Kazuo, a prominent member of the Japanese community in Port Townsend, Washington had been falsely accused of killing a white man while on a joint fishing trip. When the judge asked why he did not immediately notify the authorities when the white man had fallen in the water, Kazuo's wife begins to tremble, her eyes tearing up as she testifies that given the heavily racialized atmosphere, "it would look bad". Just as Proust noted with respect to the political kaleidoscope expressed in the suddenly more exclusionary French salons after the Dreyfus Affair,²⁷ this wartime American court which had been founded on the representational level upon the disembodied, disaffected original position the

Rawlsian subject individuates, while on the pre-individual level upon the prevailing sensory-memory habitus of the time, could not have taken into account the alterity she invoked any more than it could have acknowledged the apprehension she felt in the situation. Similarly then, in *A Theory of Justice* the *a priori* presupposition that subjects have always already been individuated as specifically liberal individuals, that these individuals have been ruled by reason and that this rationality has been expressed in a self-interested disposition, was never subjected to a pluralizing critique, but was instead assumed *tout court*, in line with the specifically neo-Kantian version of the transcendental deduction and the panoply of presuppositions that had composed its aesthetic.²⁸

Aside from the numerous interventions that emerged towards the end of America's half-century, this naturalization of the neo-Kantian reading of Kant's presuppositional edifice was most famously critiqued by Karl Marx in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. There, he argued that far from reflecting the received qualia of some eternal, already-existing individual subject, the sensory-memory habitus was in fact produced by way of a contingent deployment of the originary pre-individual material in line with the mode of production specific to it. As he put it then, "the forming of the five senses is a work of the entire history of the world down to the present",²⁹ a statement that in the more heterodox post-Kantian approach of Deleuze & Guattari is rendered "all history is really the history of perception, and what we make history with is the matter of a becoming, not the subject matter of a story".³⁰ Indeed, as Kojin Karatani has emphasized, the most productive reading of Kant is that which allows the dominant account to be deformed by the interventions of Marx, while the most radical reading of Marx is that which proceeds through Kant's critical philosophy.³¹ In dominant readings of the *Critique of Pure Reason* by contrast, the subject was not consolidated as individual through the politico-economically enframed repetition of sensation and inculcation of habit, but had instead been conceived as a metaphysical entity containing *a priori*, transcendently-derived forms that served as conditions of possibility for experience universally. Just as

neo-Kantians happily assert that Kant's moral philosophy in the *Critique of Practical Reason* was constructed upon these forms, so too had Rawls' original position bracketed experience as it occurred within variegated sensory-memory habiti, regardless of the manner in which the prevailing mode of production (or other cultural arrangements), redistributed them. It was by way of these dogmatic conceptual blinders then, that the postwar citizen-subject arrived at the *a priori* position enabling the ignorant moral legislation that he assumed to assist the unbiased redress of inequality.³² However, when the stated goal of one's political philosophy has not been that of the immanent pluralization of the already-existing democratic ethos, but instead that "finding a basis of public agreement...using a fundamental organizing idea within which all ideas and principles can be systematically connected and related",³³ what else could have been expected? Following the neo-Kantian account of experience, it was a universalizing and totalizing politics of overlapping consensus, one that was acclaimedly "political and not metaphysical", that would result from the slow, steady establishment of these shared norms within public culture.

But as Connolly has shown in a manner that recalled Marx's early and of course Deleuze & Guattari's later interventions, the claim to have entirely evacuated the ontological domain should have itself been cause for skepticism, for as we saw in *Snow Falling on Cedars* as much as in *ISLT*, more often than not, abandoning metaphysics has portended an unacknowledged embrace of it, in a manner that moreover naturalized the dominant culturo-political individuation as though it were the only possible one. Indeed, much to the contrary of Marx's historicization of the senses or Proust's politicizing of aesthetics, Rawls' neo-Kantian response to those who suspected that a "metaphysical doctrine of the person is [thereby] presupposed"³⁴ was to reaffirm the universality of postwar American citizen-subjectivity not by rearticulating secularism as might be imagined but to the contrary by returning to the Bible. In a long footnote, he invoked the famous conversion story in which the scales fell from Saul's eyes as he was transformed into Paul on the road to Damascus, such that existence as such appeared

differently than it had before. In contrast to the view held by many born-again Christians in the last half-century however, Rawls assumed, in predictably ever-reasonable form, that "such a conversion implies no change in our public or institutional identity, nor in our personal identity".³⁵ As such, theological affiliation, like cultural particularity or pre-individual singularity, was rendered bracketable so that the disembodied, disaffected logic of the original position could be simultaneously deployed as non-metaphysical, and the specific individuation appropriate to the modern citizen-subject became naturalized as the universal one. But as Marx would have undoubtedly asked wasn't this privatization of nearly every form of experience precisely also the *depoliticization* of all that was most profoundly political in postwar American society, which is to say the society of consumption? As Connolly put it in *The Ethos of Pluralization*, any politics is always already an ontopolitics "because every political interpretation invokes a set of fundamentals about necessities and possibilities of human being, about, for instance, the forms into which humans may be composed and possible relations humans can establish with nature...to say that something is fundamental or that nothing is fundamental, then, is to engage in ontopolitical interpretation".³⁶

In the prewar years it was Benjamin who had most notably taken up such intuitions about the philosophical, aesthetic and political contingency of the dominant sensory-memory habitus, already arguing in the what has become the heterodox, post-Kantian manner, that the German philosopher's depluralizing of experience in the more dogmatic readings was not simply evidence of a philosophical shift, but was instead an epiphenomenal outcome of material events and processes that occurred within his epoch. For him however, unlike Marx, the physiological basis from which he began had included not only the change in the mode of production from feudalism to capitalism but more broadly the Enlightenment and with it the rise of secularism and statism.³⁷ Furthermore, he argued that the expanding resonance this depluralizing mode of experience enjoyed throughout much of the 19th and 20th centuries derived from the

proliferation of such events as the two World Wars and the concomitant emergence of new transportation and communication technologies within the frame of what was becoming a planetary urbanization. In the terms of Deleuze, who had similarly critiqued the neo-Kantian depluralizing of experience, such sea-changes were important because "when a new dose of pre-individual reality is mobilized in a new problematic...the psyche opens up to a [different] 'trans-individual collective'".³⁸ Indeed, as Proust's image of the kaleidoscope suggested as much as his pair of glasses, this relational frame constantly redeployed the individual/pre-individual tension in a different manner, but always such that it maintained the culturo-political hierarchy in a politically advantageous manner. Thus, although Benjamin's early critique and improvement upon Kant's philosophy of experience was somewhat opaque when read in isolation, the later applied essays such as the 1934 piece "Experience and Poverty" clarified significantly the basis for his analysis of the constitution of what others had called the trans-individual collective.

As he stated:

Experience has fallen in value; amid a generation which from 1914 to 1918 had to experience some of the most monstrous events in the history of the world. Perhaps this is less remarkable than it appears. Wasn't it noticed at the time how many people returned from the front in silence? Not richer but poorer in communicable experience? And what poured out from the flood of war books ten years later was anything but the experience that passes from mouth to ear. No, there was nothing remarkable about that. For never has experience been contradicted more thoroughly: strategic experience has been contravened by positional warfare; economic experience, by the inflation; physical experience, by hunger; moral experience, by the ruling powers. A generation that had gone to school in horse-drawn streetcars now stood in the open air, amid a landscape in which nothing was the same except the clouds and, at its

center, in a force field of destructive torrents and explosions, the tiny, fragile human body. ... We have become impoverished. We have given up one portion of the human heritage after another, and have often left it at the pawnbroker's for a hundredth of its true value, in exchange for the small change of 'the contemporary'. The economic crisis is at the door, and behind it is the shadow of the approaching war. Holding on to things has become the monopoly of a few powerful people, who, God knows, are no more human than the many; for the most part they are more barbaric, but not in the good way.³⁹

Thus, whereas prior to the two World Wars the individual/pre-individual tension that had enabled an experience that still engaged a relative multiplicity of sensory-memory and other cultural registers, afterwards a depluralizing of experience emerged even while the reconstituted power and authority that consolidated it simultaneously took on a more inclusive form, as we have already seen with Rawls. This was particularly clear in the postwar American deployment of experience with respect to the reterritorialization of minor particularities and pre-individual singularities alike, which allowed for their enfranchisement, but only to the extent that they folded the common sense of the unitary citizen-subject, into their respective sensory-memory habiti. In the terms of Michael Omi and Howard Winant, whereas the United States prior to the World Wars amounted to a "racial dictatorship", in their wake it transformed into a "racial hegemony", in which the dominant order reconstituted itself such that it no longer made the issue of passing a problem, but instead rendered experience such that covering those differences that could be minimized became the primary issue.⁴⁰ Indeed, in line with Rawls' championing of a reasonable pluralism that had proceeded not to expand and complicate it further, but to instead narrow the range of disagreement, difference as such was trained to the thrall of citizen-subjectivity as a set of politically unthreatening subjectivities that would never call the prevailing center of gravity into question. This of course, was very similar to that which Proust observed to have occurred with respect to the French aristocracy's integration of a previously-

disavowed Republicanism. Benjamin's argument was that advanced capitalism combined with unprecedented militarism had decimated traditional modes of experience, exchanging the diversity of human experience for "the small change of 'the contemporary'". Translated into cultural terms, integration served not only the positive role of ending certain forms of inequality, but also at the very same time, that of legitimating the continuing hegemony of already-dominant populations.

The difference prior to the World Wars, according to Omi and Winant, was that "racial dictatorship consolidated racial consciousness and organization originally framed by marronage and slave revolts, by indigenous resistance, and by nationalisms of various sorts. Just as the conquest created the 'native' where once there had been the Pequot, Iroquois, or Tutelo, so too it created the 'black' where once there had been Asante or Ovimbundu, Yoruba or Bakongo".⁴¹ The result of this was that it then became "possible to locate the origins of hegemony right within the heart of racial dictatorship, for the effort to possess the oppressor's tools - religion and philosophy in this case - was crucial to emancipation".⁴² While Omi and Winant's analysis is insightful, the reduction of indigeneity, raciality and ethnicity to the confines of a more unidimensional racial formation ignores much of what a more subtle, pluralist approach might complicate further. For this reason, rather than assuming it, this dissertation continues to interrogate the presupposition of a neo-Kantian rational *a priori*, considering its contribution to a highly-variegated and ever-changing culturo-political kaleidoscope in postwar America that nevertheless rested on an ontopolitics of transcendence. Indeed, it was because of this that it attributed amongst other things, a temporality of a yesterday that never was coupled with a selective visibility to indigeneity; a temporality of a today that was never otherwise coupled with selective audibility to raciality; and a temporality of a tomorrow that never will be coupled with selective odority to ethnicity, while reserving the full range of each of these for the for citizen-subjectivity alone. Indeed, as the critical race theorist Derrick Bell had noted, this paradoxically more inclusive yet also more depluralizing

assemblage of habits of perception and recollection also became the condition of possibility for the nation's sudden dominance within the global political economy. In other words, the earlier multiplicity of experience that Benjamin held to have still existed under the prewar cultural dictatorship of in the United States became ever-increasingly whittled down to an even more narrow strand, under the new aesthetic of exclusive inclusion. The condition of possibility by which it was enabled derived primarily from the new relation to internal difference bequeathed by the postwar world in which legal decisions such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, not to mention all of the associated cultural genres, from jazz through rock-and-roll, "provided immediate credibility to America's struggle with Communist countries to win back the hearts and minds of emerging third world peoples".⁴³

Following Benjamin's heterodox historicization of Kant then, the sense of belonging that had underwritten the postwar sensory-memory habitus in fact corresponded to a depluralizing experience that emerged at precisely the moment that a reasonable pluralism was understood to have been achieved for the first time. In Vol. II *Within a Budding Grove*, Proust explained this type of disjuncture between staticizing political representation and the aesthetic becoming upon which it always already relied by way of technological metaphor, when he suggested that "whenever society is momentarily stationary, the people who live in it imagine that no further change will occur, just as, in spite of having witnessed the birth of the telephone, they decline to believe in the aeroplane".⁴⁴ Thus, just as Proust's lifeworld in the *belle époque* had eventually congealed into the peculiar sensory-memory habitus recorded in his writings, so too did the phantasmagoria of America's half-century turn the culturo-political kaleidoscope it bequeathed from the prewar world until it too produced a distinctive assemblage of dispositional tendencies. In so doing one might say, the depluralizing experience inaugurated centuries earlier within the emergent capitalism and statism of Kant's lifeworld was rematerialized within significantly altered conditions, albeit without deposing its most fundamental sensory-memory

schema. Just as the world's national economies could be integrated vis-à-vis the floating exchange rate, so too could minor cultural particularities and pre-individual singularities be integrated into an uneven distribution of cultural power within a spectacularized media environment, as the election of Obama only indicated further. The logic of universal modulation in other words, had ensured that while disciplinary enclosures would progressively disappear, all that was once exterior to them could now be interiorized precisely because there was no interior left, or at least, in Deleuze's terms, none not always already "in more or less terminal decline".⁴⁵

It is in relation to this last phrase that we should recall that Benjamin argued that the real danger of this depluralizing of experience was that it traded in the long, traditional experience of *Erfahrung*, that in which accumulated wisdom was transmitted transgenerationally, for the isolated, modern experience of *Erlebnis*, the realm in which mere information came to prevail. Whereas in the neo-Kantian frame, manifold objects of experience were to be subjected to synthetic *a priori* judgments already established before the encounter, Benjamin's post-Kantian approach privileged the immanence of the encounter itself, reserving the greatest reverence for the knowledge thereby afforded, without accepting the received notions about its irrelevance. This is why his seemingly divergent writings on such subjects as hashish, childhood, fantasy and mystical experience amount not to a random catalogue of early modern nostalgia, but rather an immanently critical exegesis on the human heritage that had been lost with modernity's destruction of experience. In essence, his argument was that in the conventional reading, Kant's synthetic *a priori* merely reproduced the Newtonian notion that only science could uncover truth, such that pre-individual and radically singular modalities of experience became suspect, particularly those that went beyond the merely personal in the form of *Erfahrung*. Instead, modernity supplied its own assemblage of presuppositions, which although they overturned the authority of the object, nevertheless consolidated the subject in the place thereby evacuated. Ironically however, this did not result in the affirmation of subjective experience,

per se: much to the contrary, the relation of the sensibility and the understanding became one in which, while they had initially been interarticulated, the latter became subjected to *a priori* reason, which converted impressions into concepts only in accordance with already-existing categories.

Benjamin's post-Kantian argument to the contrary had been that while this might have seemed to have balanced the sensibility and the understanding, it ultimately denied any metaphysic that was irreducible to the postulates of subjective, rational-empirical consciousness. Rather than allowing the domain of the transcendental to be negated entirely, what he sought was the reemergence of a "speculative metaphysics",⁴⁶ one that within the coordinates of a still-Kantian (but more post-Kantian than neo-Kantian) enframing, would overcome the subject-object distinction as such. With this in mind, Benjamin argued that one could begin to rearticulate the Kantian philosophy of experience "by virtue of its brilliant exposition of the certainty and justification of knowledge, [which thereby] derived and developed a depth that [could still] prove adequate for a new and higher kind of experience yet to come".⁴⁷ While neo-Kantian orthodoxy presupposed the rationalist coordinates specific to the Enlightenment, Benjamin saw no reason that the same philosophical edifice couldn't be redeployed so as circumvent this reductionism in favor of experience in the more complicated sense of "the absolute - the infinite and unconditioned condition of all experience".⁴⁸ Thus, while the neo-Kantian reading deppluralized the synthesizing and configuring process of the categories, Benjamin reversed it on the new philosophical ground thereby cleared so that the experiential manifold as such might be affirmed. Of course it already had been in the concepts of the sublime, the beautiful and the splendid, but now potentially, this could be extended to the entirety of experience as such. Not in order to suggest that for instance, religion, insanity, psychoanalysis, sexuality, clairvoyance or soothsaying couldn't themselves become as potentially destructive and hegemonic as the liberalism of late modernity had been, but rather to critically affirm the decentered multiplicity of experience as itself containing a trace of the transcendental. By "dissolving the

boundaries between Kant's three faculties in a speculative metaphysics of experience"⁴⁹ and opening up the possibility of an immanent encounter with the absolute, not in the sense of the transcendent but of the transcendental (that which lies beyond representation), Benjamin asserted the radical notion that "the absolute is manifest in every experience of the finite".⁵⁰

Thus, the modern account of experience as preconditioned by reason alone is not redressed by jettisoning reason as such, but instead by allowing it to detach from its majoritarian status so as to become one minor modality amongst others. As he asserts in reference to the manner in which Kant's philosophy of experience reifies these pragmatic presuppositions even while they had previously been used against the very scientific reformers he sought to affirm, "madness is a form of perception alien to the community".⁵¹ Returning to the Rawlsian veil of ignorance, one might have said that for Benjamin, as with Kant's jettisoning of any form of extra-rational experience, cultural identities are divergent forms of experience that are always already bracketed, such that they too become a form of perception alien to the community. As Benjamin put it, "Kant produced a metaphysics of nature and in it described that part of the natural sciences which is pure - that is, which proceeds not from experience but simply from reason *a priori*".⁵² Experience was then, depluralized by artificially distancing sensation from the categories, whereas for Benjamin, they had always already formed a composite; his rearticulation of knowledge and experience was therefore simultaneously a repluralization of community and subjectivity. Although he himself never said so, this would of course have been particularly the case when the concepts of the sublime, the beautiful and the splendid were subtracted from the circumscribed domain to which they'd been sequestered, such that it could potentially occur within every experience of the finite.

Similarly, Deleuze contributes to the post-Kantian tradition the insight that while "all our knowledge begins with experience...it by no mean follows that all arises out of experience".⁵³ His response to neo-Kantian transcendental idealism had

been to replace the discrete transcendental *a priori* and empirical *a posteriori* with the transcendental empirical, a composite of the virtual and the actual. It was in this manner that his approach overturned the neo-Kantian naturalization of difference as derived from an ontology of identity, asserting that the turn away from the manifold ignores that it is actually identity that derives from difference and not the reverse. Superficially of course, ontological difference is sometimes understood as the virtual as it exists outside of space and time, deploying identity as the manner in which difference is actualized as identity within specific coordinates of existence. However, since Deleuze complicated the neo-Kantian presupposition that space is only ever extensive and time only ever successive, what he arrived at instead was the assumption that the virtual and the actual were always already co-present to one another. Thus, in speaking of the virtual we would have been referring neither to the models of Plato's forms nor the neo-Kantian approach to pure reason which would result in copies situated within space and time, but instead to pure simulacra, which Proust described in terms of the dominant sensory-memory habitus of his own experience as "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract".⁵⁴

While the Rawlsian deployment of transcendental idealism consolidated the postwar citizen-subject in the form of rationalized experience devoid of involuntary memory and unconscious perception, Deleuze's rejoinder affirmed Benjamin's emphasis on a higher experience, beyond all of the assumptions such an assertion involved. As he put it, rather than allowing the neo-Kantian approach to naturalize the subject/object binary, "we will [instead] speak of a transcendental empiricism in contrast to everything that makes up the world of the subject and the object".⁵⁵ This approach then, like that of Benjamin's, allowed for a far richer account of both *a priori* and *a posteriori* moments of experience, insofar as it eschewed the usual presupposition of specific categories, concepts or axioms. Indeed, it was this logic that, "in contrast to transcendentalism...[sought] after the conditions of actual rather than all possible experience":⁵⁶ however, as a form of empiricism, it was still transcendental insofar as it equally eschewed the

assumption that the apriority of experience could ever be directly known, a position better understood as one embracing wonder as opposed to knowledge, sensitivity as opposed to intelligence. While the object as the basis for the subject's experience had of course, already been rejected by phenomenology, Deleuze took the critique further and rejected the presupposition of the subject itself as the basis for the experience of the object, suggesting that the conditions of possibility for experience would necessarily remain forever beyond the reach of the I. Indeed, it was precisely this interpenetration between the transcendental and the empirical that had accounted for that between the individual and the individual, in the postwar society of control. In order grasp the manner in which the sense of belonging served as the informal foundation for the formal conditions of belonging then, one must grasp that as Deleuze had put it, "the logic of sense is inspired in its entirety by empiricism. Only empiricism knows how to transcend the experiential dimensions of the visible without falling into Ideas, and how to track down, invoke, and perhaps produce a phantom at the limit of a lengthened and unfolded experience".⁵⁷

Between these revisions of Benjamin and Deleuze then, the following chapters seek to articulate an immanent theory of the depoluralization of experience through which to interrogate the consolidation of the postwar citizen-subject vis-a-vis the rearticulation of the sensory-memory habitus in integrated, modulated form. While Rawls reproduced the rationalist apriority of the neo-Kantian account of experience, Benjamin and Deleuze instead affirmed the post-Kantian approach of a repluralizing higher experience, one that didn't simply discount *Erlebnis* so as to return to *Erfahrung*, but instead facilitated the immanence of the latter to the former. And while contemporary political theory routinely deployed universal, transcendental platitudes about experience, Benjamin and Deleuze instead situated it within the material frames of such processes as industrialization, urbanization and mediatization so that, rather than having sought "the abstract conditions of any possible experience" as had prevailed in neo-Kantian Rawlsian approaches they could instead interrogate "the real conditions of actual

experience".⁵⁸ Therefore, following the notion that the task of the coming philosophy was "to recognize and sort out which elements of the Kantian philosophy should be adopted and cultivated, which should be reworked, and which should be rejected",⁵⁹ in the next section I consider the argument that it was in the *Critique of Judgment* that the presuppositions of the first two *Critiques* were most radically deformed and citizen-subjectivity most thoroughly decentered, while seeking the real conditions in which actual experience were always already becoming repluralized through the phenomena Benjamin conceptualized as profane illumination and positive barbarism.

From a post-Kantian perspective then, if the analytics of the beautiful and the sublime, not to mention the still underdeveloped notion of the splendid, offer a way of undoing the postwar deployment of sensation as represented within the narrowed, rationalized experience of citizen-subjectivity, then the task of critical analysis will be to articulate the real conditions in which they are encountered today, not only in rare, prequalified, privileged moments of experience, but within the most everyday aspects as well. The neo-Kantian policing of what counts as sublime or beautiful, splendid or rational as much as what does not count as any of them, is in other words, what depluralizing experience amounts to. Indeed it was within this liberal sensory-memory habitus that Bush's policing of fear over most of the 00s entered into a zone of indistinction with Obama's policing of hope in the decade's latter years. Whereas the former mobilized fear so as to minimize hope down only to the focused assertion of the renewal of imperial sovereignty, the latter mobilized liberal hope in order to minimize fear down only to the focused opposition to dissensus itself. Depluralizing experience in other words, had become that which reduces negation or affirmation down to a one-dimensional, easily-consumable image, one perfect for amongst other things, election campaigns. And yet, as Deleuze has summarized his view of how Nietzsche was often reduced to a synecdoche of his full dynamism, "the yes which does not know how to say no (the yes of the ass) is a caricature of affirmation. This is precisely because it says yes to everything which is no,

because it puts up with nihilism it continues to serve the power of denying - which is like a demon whose every burden it carries. The Dionysian yes on the contrary, knows how to say no: it is pure affirmation, it has conquered nihilism and divested negation of all autonomous power. But it has done this because it has placed the negative at the service of the powers of affirming. To affirm is to create, not to bear, put up with or accept". Nietzsche himself of course, already argued this as well, when he made the assertion that already placed into question the depluralizing force of modern state liberalism on experience in *Beyond Good and Evil* "I contradict as has never been contradicted and yet I am the opposite of a negative spirit: only after me is it possible to hope". In the final section of this chapter then, we will consider not simply the depluralizing of experience, but the potential repluralizing that might issue out of such a posture.

1.2.Repluralizing Experience: In Search of New Weapons

In order to properly interrogate the question of repluralizing experience, it will be necessary to first recall the reverberations of the Nietzsche/Deleuze interface as it appeared in the latter's assertion from his essay on the society of control that contra the dispositions mobilized by the sensory-memory culminations of the American half-century electorally, "there is no need to hope or fear but only to look for new weapons". The belief in the potential repluralizing of experience in other words, required no presupposition that things would be made wholly better once and for all, as though there had been a single, unitary telos at which it would ultimately arrive. In this sense it was neither hope for a completely alternate world that would have transcended downward from an entirely divergent realm so as to completely deliver us from every conflict and complication of life, *nor* was it hope for this world as presently existent such that if we would have simply forgotten difference, the political could have become whole, frictionless and livable within it. Rather, politico-cultural immanence began from this world and for that very reason was more thoroughly equipped to begin to transform it into something much different and potentially much better than those that proceeded

in transcendent fashion. Rather than hope in the ready-to-hand sense that citizen-subjectivity habituated in the period running up to and after Obama's election, what it constituted was a materialist politics that dispensed with the illusory circumvention of dissensus and disagreement, preferring instead to embrace friction and conflict while taking things as far as possible given the spatiotemporal coordinates of the existing culture and polity. The immanentism it sought to affirm did not dismiss all that currently exists as tainted and complicit although it certainly was, but instead searched for the unnoticed multiplicities and unrealized potentialities within what had already been co-present. Philosophically speaking, that meant focusing attention on the work of Kant, which as was often noted, was absolutely central to all of the directions Western philosophy took in the postwar period.

Indeed there is no doubt: pragmatist, Marxist, analytic and continental thought all clamored to cite the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Critique of Judgment*, even while having taken the works in significantly divergent directions. As a book-length study of the philosopher's influence by Tom Rockmore noted, "the unsuspected breadth and depth of Kant's impact on the four main currents in twentieth-century philosophy...apparently defends identifiably different, obviously incompatible views of knowledge".⁶⁰ Hence for instance, the equivocality Deleuze showed on the subject, when he described his own text on Kant as "a book on an enemy",⁶¹ while in that very work he had arrived at a more affirmational conclusion closer to Rockmore's summation, in which it had been held that after Kant, there were no ultimate "friends" or "enemies".⁶² As he stated with approval at the end of the book's preface, "a discordant accord is the great discovery of the *Critique of Judgment*, the final Kantian reversal...an unregulated exercise of all the faculties, which was to define future philosophy, just as for Rimbaud the disorder of all of the senses was to define the poetry of the future".⁶³ Similarly, while Benjamin denounced the neo-Kantian legacy's complicity with the destruction of experience in the modern period, he nevertheless affirmed that "it is possible to retain the highest

determinants of knowledge established by Kant, while still contradicting his view of the structure of our knowledge of nature or experience".⁶⁴ Finally, while Rawls pledged his allegiance to the version of Kant typically read into the first two critiques by neo-Kantians, he avoided the post-Kantians' emphasis on the rupture of subjective and objective unity alike in the third by way of the sublime, the beautiful and the splendid. Indeed, as Davide Panagia asserted in his study of the thinker's disjuncture with Jacques Ranciere, "the democratic moment reveals a sublime tort that constitutes the 'crises of judgment' Rawls fears most".⁶⁵ Between all of them, what was affirmed was a necessarily though not always perceptibly selective reading of the Kantian legacy, one that suggested that far from presenting a unitary, seamless body of writing, he can be read to have argued for either representational or aesthetic approaches, each of which contained profoundly divergent implications for politics and culture. It was in the latter however, that the primary *sense* of belonging underlying the *conditions* of belonging become evident as the most politically consequential, precisely that domain which Rawls could not assimilate into his rendering of Kant without contradicting his most basic ontopolitical presuppositions. Within the macropolitics of national elections as in other culturo-political milieu then, the kaleidoscope may have seemed to have turned in favorable or unfavorable directions, but it was always within the finely-grained micropolitics of experience itself that subject and the object were alike deterritorialized and reterritorialized.

Given their much greater attentiveness to this dimension of reality as it actually existed for contingently-situated beings, it is not particularly surprising that it would be a literary writer rather than a philosopher who most lucidly suggested how the sublime, the beautiful and the splendid's rupture of subjectivity could have become increasingly commonplace within conditions of industrialization, urbanization and mediatization. Indeed, as implied above, the Proustian aesthetic itself already implicitly invoked the Kantian version of each of these, in the form of what Benjamin referred to as *chok* (shock), chance encounters with objects that forced the subject's direct experience of the aesthetic always already beyond both,

simmering below the register of voluntarily recollected, consciously perceived reality. Throughout the volumes of *ISLT* and in particular Vol. I, *Swann's Way*, the experience of involuntary memory, that data of the unconscious which could not be recalled by merely rational effort, but which nevertheless could be provoked given the appropriate conditions of encounter, always already retained the most absolutely deterritorializing potentiality. In such an event, according to Benjamin, the representational, unitary, individuated self was undone such that pre-individual singularity rose up absolutely, enabling a repluralizing experience beyond that arranged for in the modern period. Following this reading, as will be seen in the three central chapters, the dissertation was primed for the introduction of the concepts of the "everyday sublime", the "commonly beautiful" and the "splendor of the insignificant", each of which affirmed the potentiality of the repluralization of experience not only within philosophy, or even within lived experiences of great magnitude, but equally so within a potentially infinite number of commonly-encountered as well as deliberately-abjected domains. As it was put in "The Image of Proust", "Proust's most accurate, most convincing insights fasten on their objects as insects fasten on leaves, blossoms, branches, betraying nothing of their existence until a leap, a beating of wings, a vault, show the startled observer that some incalculable individual life has imperceptibly crept into an alien world. The true reader of Proust is constantly jarred by small shocks".⁶⁶

Indeed, *ISLT* was composed with precisely this effect in mind: what Benjamin intriguingly described as the project of "making the pointless story interesting"⁶⁷ was never an apolitical one, at least not in the most interesting reading. Rather, it proceeded by drawing the reader into the minutiae of everyday life, in a manner that was so focused that scenes from their own life were involuntarily recalled, *vis-à-vis* the narrator from whom they became indistinguishable, as noted above was something like the experience of writing this dissertation while reading Proust. Thus, as with the experience of the madeleine mentioned above, it is within the everyday rather than that represented as the exceptional moment that

representational experience is most commonly undone, whereas for the neo-Kantian consensus, the *chok* of sublimity referred almost exclusively to the absolutely great or the immensity of nature. This is for instance, exemplified in the third Critique as such: "bold, overhanging, and as it were threatening, rocks; clouds piled up in the sky, moving with lightning flashes and thunder peals; volcanoes in all their violence of destruction; hurricanes with their track of devastations; the boundless ocean in a state of tumult; the lofty waterfall of a mighty river, and such like; these exhibit our faculty of resistance as insignificantly small in comparison with their might. But the sight of them is the more attractive, the more fearful it is, provided only that we are in security; and we willingly call these objects sublime".⁶⁸ The true reader of Kant then, to return to Benjamin heterodox, decidedly post-Kantian bent, is left only with the catastrophic and the enormous as bases for attaining sensation beyond representation, whereas *ISLT* rendered a repluralizing experience by way of acts as commonplace as bending down to put on one's boots, witnessing a once familiar row of church steeples, or admiring the tactile qualities of a folded napkin, each of which could provide examples through the small shocks of the everyday sublime, the commonly beautiful or the splendor of the insignificant, of the critical mode of perception Benjamin referred to as "profane illumination".

Of course, given that as Habermas argued,⁶⁹ the novel was the cultural form *par excellence* upon which the modern citizen-subject was constructed, Proust's deployment of small shocks as a literary device ought to serve as a model for multiply mediated approaches to the repluralizing of experience within the world as it exists today. Indeed, while industrialization, urbanization and mediatization greatly narrowed the range of experience in the Benjaminian sense, they also opened up an unprecedented number of potentialities for its transformation by increasing the likelihood of encounters with small shocks of this sort, which precisely because of their foundation in fleetingness of *Erlebnis*, retained the capacity to de-essentialize the neo-Kantian subjectivities the postwar American cultural habitus consolidated. In the first appendix to *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze

referred to this project as the "reversal of Platonism", that which refused the so-called "realm of pure forms" (or, the categories), and instead "make the simulacra rise and...affirm their rights among icons and copies. The problem no longer has to do with the distinction Essence-Appearance or Model-Copy. This distinction operates completely within the world of representation. Rather it has to do with undertaking the subversion of this world - the 'twilight of the idols'. The simulacrum is not a degraded copy. It harbors a positive power which denies the original and the copy, the model and the reproduction".⁷⁰ This too, was the great insight of Proust, in his embrace of art as the most important weapon in the search for truth, precisely because it was only in the realm of artifice that truth resided. As the character Don Draper puts it in the AMC series *Mad Men*, while on a date with a woman chasing after what she judges an authentic relationship, "what you call 'love' was invented by guys like me, to sell nylons".⁷¹ While the statement might have seem initially to reinforce the destruction of *Erfahrung* by way of a *chokerlebnis*, from a Deleuzo-Proustian perspective it might also be read as an instance of the everyday sublime, the commonly beautiful or the splendor of the insignificant, insofar as it provokes a shock of recognition (or as Benjamin puts it, *chokerfahrung*), within a cultural frame that would otherwise be dismissed as the mere spectacle of television. Hence the reference to the pre-representational domain of gesture as "quite domestic and yet quite sublime",⁷² that serves as the epigraph for this chapter: referring to the micropolitical as a more profound approach to the world than even philosophy, the fragment suggests the sublimity, beauty and splendor always already immanent to everyday life.

And yet, while television was often denounced in terms of distraction prior to the turn of the 21st century and the subsequent widespread introduction of digitalized new media, afterwards we were already living in a post-televisual period, just as many commentators have recently argued that popular culture is becoming post-cinematic. In a similar light, TV series such as *Mad Men* are described as "cinematic television",⁷³ while others are dubbed "broadcast literature".⁷⁴ ontologically, the rise of the Internet and the shift to digital platforms produced a

cultural transformation so pervasive that it effectively redeployed the entirety of the popular culture upon which the last half-century had been predicated. Certainly it was still as spectacle, but this time it took the form of what some described, in a nod to the rise of an ubiquitous screen culture as “microspectacle”.⁷⁵ All mass media previously released were now retrospectively perceived and thus subject to unprecedented consumer intervention: indeed, much as in Proust’s *ISLT*, the cultural memory of even the recent past was now critically re-rendered. It is in this light then, that the dissertation affirms the concept of the post-cinematic as a general concept through which to interrogate new media forms as such, seeking in particular their potential usefulness as new weapons in the critical reshaping of the postwar cultural habitus.

Because while cinema was increasingly drawing upon music videos, television, advertising, video games and other non-filmic audiovisual forms, all of these had themselves already entered into a becoming-cinematic also. Above all, this was noticeable in the formal sense: TV shows for instance, are increasingly streamed online by the likes of Netflix, The Pirate Bay, Hulu, Boxee, EZTV and other services, alongside the unparalleled access to digital streams, torrents and other redeployments of the innumerable films they began to provide access to. And while one could still subscribe to cable television in order to watch them as they were made available within the original broadcast TV temporality, those same stations were often available cost-free on the Internet, alongside all the other downloadable media files with which they had become ontologically fused. The new post-cinematic universe in other words, had become one in which all that once retained traces of the aura, including that of the film as it still existed for cinephiles who proclaimed the “death of cinema” (from Susan Sontag to C.S. Leigh),⁷⁶ had become another non-auratic miscellany amongst others, which might or might not be received as an object of politico-cultural interest. What this post-cinematic universe enabled however, was not simply the fading of the aura of the original films, but as Benjamin argued long before the development came to pass, a wholly new relation to experience as such. For perhaps the first time,

the temporality of yesterday that had been ascribed to Native Americans for instance, was provincialized in popular culture as indigenous filmmakers like Sherman Alexie proceeded to create post-cinematic digital productions that reflexively challenged not only the dominant production of temporality, but also the previously commonplace ascription of sublimity, reason and the other categories to indigeneity. In such works as *The Business of Fancydancing* (2002), the capacity of the post-cinematic universe to enable a Benjaminian profane illumination on a scale never before possible, was made perceptible. And as we will see in chapters three and four, similar new media-related developments can be found with respect to raciality and ethnicity, for instance in Barry Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy* (2008) or Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland's *Quinceañera* (2006).

However, as several critical thinkers realized long before cinema had begun to enter into its post-cinematic phase, film had always been one of the most potentially radicalizing arts insofar as it juxtaposed the popular and the avant-garde, questioning the distinction between them: this too, was a feature that was deepened even further.⁷⁷ Indeed, rather than simply having offered the auratic sort of sacred, transcendental illumination that might have been acquired by a lifetime of exposure to high culture, an Ivy League education, or perhaps the chance encounter with the sublime, the beautiful or the splendid (in the rarified, neo-Kantian form), the cinema has always been held by critical theorists to mobilize precisely the kinds of small shocks necessary for profane illumination. And yet it was only in the early-21st century that the post-cinematic media environment enabled this on a scale accessible to a large swath of the populace. Through the phenomena of remediation, the convergence of all previous media into the most recent digitally-networked forms, post-cinematic media provided a more powerful frame than ever before for what Deleuze in reference to Proust called "the Search".⁷⁸ Similar to the narrator's quest for lost time within the recesses of his own involuntary memory, but realizing the incapacity of voluntary memory and conscious perception to successfully do so unaided, internet video portals of all

kinds now serve as means through which films, music videos, daily news, television shows, raw consumer video and other media fragments could be instantly recalled, blurring thereby the distinction between voluntary and involuntary memory as well as that of conscious and unconscious perception. Rather than simply returning to the phenomenological emphasis on the primacy of sensory-memory perception however, post-cinematic media becomes a means through which the absolute beyond subject and object can be critically encountered, in order to facilitate a specifically active perception and ultimately creative action, whether as an artist or an otherwise-engaged figure. Hence the assertion of Deleuze, in *Proust and Signs*: “what constitutes the unity of *In Search of Lost Time*? We know, at least, what does not. It is not recollection, memory, even involuntary memory...what is involved is... [an] apprenticeship of a man of letters”.⁷⁹

Consider for instance, William Connolly’s observation that just as contemporary neuroscientists had created technologies such as the mirror box, which assists wounded patients in rewiring their unconscious brains, so too does moving-image culture tap the non-representational layers of perception and recollection necessary for doing so. It enables a similar self-reconstitution because “films...communicate affective energies to us, some of which pass below intellectual attention while still influencing emotions, judgments and actions”.⁸⁰ But it is only in the post-cinematic period that this profane illumination was made possible on such a grand scale, as opposed to the relatively small section of it that resided for instance, in avant-garde film culture up until that point. Indeed, the new media environment only further added to Deleuze’s suggestion in *Cinema 2* that the time-image that emerged with postwar cinema was important insofar as “instead of going from the acentered state of things to centered perception...[it goes] back up toward the acentered state of things”.⁸¹ As for the political implication that this portends, Michael J. Shapiro has noted that the politically important result of doing so is that one’s own sensory-memory habitus is problematized, as it is confronted with that which it identifies at a distance from

the center it creates. As he put it, “what perception tends to do is to lose information in order to produce an interest-based perspective on things. Cinema basically has de-framed zones (to use Deleuze’s expression), that defy the narrowing perspective of perception. So cinema basically holds the very forms that produce critique”.⁸²

Nevertheless, given all of this, how might we move from Deleuze’s philosophy of transcendental empiricism through Benjamin’s aesthetic of profane illumination towards a politics worthy of that which had been described as “positive barbarism”? The first step of course, if by that term we mean the immanent intensification of the most potentially transformative elements of the world as it is today, is the need for a grasp of its emerging form within the latter postwar American period, as well as an engagement with the centripetal nature of the cultural habitus through which it was engaged until now. Rather than a refusal of this world, it would mean proceeding as Brecht suggested in a phrase intended to question the politically romanticist tendencies within the radical formations of his own time, “don’t start from the good old things, but the bad new ones”.⁸³ In this light, the repluralizing of experience aided by internet video portals through which not only millions of clips and even full-length films are now available, but also much of everyday life is available otherwise, contributes a new development in which the unconscious is redeployed in a manner that allows for their instantaneous encounter with the sensoria of a potentially limitless collectivity. Just as the Kantian sublime, beautiful and splendid opened philosophy to the notion of the free play of the faculties, so too does digital new media create unprecedented conditions of possibility for all of them to occur in any-instant-whatever: precisely the sort of profane illumination affirmed in Proust’s image of the madeleine, the music phrase, the cobblestones, the folded napkin and otherwise. What it meant was opening up the linear temporalities of progress edited into the dominant habits of perception and recollection so as to open them up to a potentially infinite number of alternate narrations. Indeed, it this post-cinematic environment that enables a return to Benjamin’s concept of shock

effect, which he argued allowed for the critical evaluation of that which was previously allowed to slip below the level of consciousness, to an extent unheard of previously. Just as the slip of the tongue gave way to the Freudian slip after the early 20th century discovery of the unconscious, so to has the post-cinematic redeployment of existence as such given way to an image that “allows for a recovery of what perception evacuates”.⁸⁴

While this argument is extended by Deleuze in numerous places, a similar point was made by Benjamin with respect to the illumination of what conscious perception and voluntary recollection renders imperceptible: “the camera introduces to us unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses...while making possible a perception of space informed by the unconscious”.⁸⁵ Indeed, as multiple events have made clear since then, post-cinematic culture greatly expands the capacities of the Search, producing a vast, instantly recallable cultural unconscious, in which millions upon millions of video clips archive a great swath of the most commonly-shared perceptions and recollections. But in order to grasp how new media culture contributes to a politics of positive barbarism, serving as a portal into what we will soon theorize as the everyday sublime, commonly beautiful and splendor of the insignificant, one must refer not only to the actual but also the virtual, the manner in which its very existence restructures experience itself. It is here that Victor Burgin's recent observations on “the remembered film” comes into play: whereas narrative film served to consolidate a temporary consciousness, a fictional sense of self through which the filmgoer identified with the narrative in the classical, Aristotelian manner, the acentered nature of post-cinematic culture suggests a profound rupture within this process and consequently, the potential rising of a collective unconscious, that could continuously reshape individual consciousness itself. Referring to the subversive potential of sequence-images that pervade Internet video portals in particular, Burgin argues that by “breaking into and breaking up the film, [the images] upset the set patterns that plot the established moral and political orders of the entertainment form of the *doxa*”.⁸⁶ At the same time that

they transmit the *Erlebnis* of mere information that Benjamin feared would ensure the destruction of experience, they also enable the transmission of accumulated wisdom in a new form of the moving image as proverb, a profane illumination of *Ehrfarung* that can be accessed in an ubiquitously available form.

It is this that is suggested by Deleuze's notion of the "becoming-cinematic of the world",⁸⁷ referring not only to fiction, aesthetics or culture but also to the entirety of reality that is typically held to be outside of its realm. As everything becomes internalized into the increasingly ubiquitous screen culture, it is also revealed as artifice, such that it takes on a fictional quality not only in retrospect, but in the very moment of perception. It is this that enables a politics of positive barbarism, which works through the post-cinematic environment to give rise to a new mode of community in which "singularities stand together in the absence of a state". Of course, while the post-cinematic universe is not politically subversive in and of itself, the increased capacity for capital accumulation in its acentered environment of clips, trailers, posters, clothing, television ads, reviews, theoretical exegeses and listserv discussions, ensures that new potentialities are always arising within it. Indeed, the fact that the memory of the cultural object is now always already divided between a multiplicity of individual and collective media venues ensures that no complete, unchallenged account of it will emerge. In this sense, the network-centric, perpetually remediating quality of the new media environment is itself the surest indication imaginable that a new kind of polity, that is from its most incipient state beyond the neo-Kantian liberalism of subjectivity and objectivity, is already emerging. The ideological groupings of the modern period, from socialism to anarchism and from liberalism to fascism and beyond, had all been based upon varying interpretations of the transcendental idealism that overturned the divine right upon which monarchical power relied. The post-cinematic environment in contrast, refuses not only that but even the cinematic, preferring instead the free play of the faculties itself, which might draw on any number of different cultural objects, theoretical affiliations or dispositions previously held inviolate. Politically speaking, it produced a zone of indistinction

between the spectacle and the habits of perception and recollection that had composed everyday life, reconstituting both in a manner that enabled a new potentiality in the face of the depluralizing experience that had previously prevailed.

Far from ensuring a situation in which only a completely passive mode of reception was possible, the transformation of the spectacle by way of new media may have turned out to be the basis for Deleuze's rise of the simulacra, one that could contribute not only to abolishing the divine right of kings, but also the transcendent right of neoliberal state capitalism, as well. While an array of concerns have been raised about the potential effects of the turn away from whole, unbroken cultural objects towards new network-centric modes of perception, the new channels through which the Search is conducted also "enhance the brain's capacity to be stimulated",⁸⁸ intensifying its ability to "adjust [the] perception of the world in response to changing information".⁸⁹ Whereas the liberal individual presupposed by Rawls' theory of the citizen-subject presupposes a disembodied, disaffected disposition, that of the emergent dividual increasingly required in the society of control features more prominently that which Spinoza described as the *conatus*, "the capacity to be affected". The distracted, split-focus attention proper to the contemporary media environment might well prevent the consolidation of a unitary self, thereby infinitely opening the subject up not only to new forms of control as has so often been asserted, but at the same time to new modes of resistance. Depending on whether "new weapons" appropriate to this world are in fact found, the profane illumination and positive barbarism it enables may prove far more radicalizing than much of its often-totalizing forebears, because contrary to the familiar argument that within this process "all that was once directly lived has become mere representation",⁹⁰ what they enable is a multidimensional form of existence that is always already critico-redemptive and in which such dichotomies as experience/representation implode. It is through this lens moreover, that we should recall Benjamin's provocative suggestion about Proust's *ISLT*, a novel also often presumed to have been simply in the service of the

existing arrangements of power, by way of a supposedly uncritical chronicle of the upper ten thousand: "much of the greatness of this work will remain inaccessible or undiscovered until this class has revealed its most pronounced features in the final struggle".⁹¹

Which brings us back to the start: we began this introduction by noting that a work such as a dissertation is never merely attributable to the efforts of a single self-same author, anymore than that which it considers is reducible to the synopsis, or even its actual contents. One of the primary reasons Deleuze focused on Proust was his emphasis on the Search, the apprenticeship of signs which is never simply the purview of academia, let alone the disciplines or canons that props it up, but which derive even there from an open, dynamic milieu that is only territorialized afterward. This dissertation then, would not have been possible had it simply focused on the subject at hand: a genealogy of the postwar American citizen-subject considered through the government of sight, sound and smell via Kant, Benjamin and Deleuze. Only by way of the virtual, which in this case was the voluminous pages of *ISLT*, was it able to engage the topic at hand. Thus as a segue into the three central chapter, let us recall a statement from *Proust and Signs*: "we never know how somebody learns; but whatever way, it is always by the intermediary of signs, by wasting time and not by the assimilation of some objective content...we never learn by doing like someone, but by doing with someone, who bears no resemblance to what we are learning".⁹²

Chapter Two

Sight



"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes"

- Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*

As suggested in the Introduction, in what follows we will engage the often-unnoticed processes we refer to as microcolonial, in order to consider how they invest everyday experience with traces that continue to produce citizen-subjectivity long after the initial encounters between Native American and European peoples occurred. However, whereas in the early American period the fledgling nation concentrated on the macrocolonial execution of the founding violences typical of settler states, the postwar period was such that the continuity of the outcome thereby achieved required a rather different political ontology.

Along with it came a host of changes to the cultural habitus, particularly in the realms of perception and recollection, the primary channels through which consciousness is consolidated. In this chapter, we direct our attention specifically to how the transformed experience of vision in the postwar United States coalesced with that a reconstituted collective memory to produce the microcolonial disposition. Whereas European settlers from the late 15th through perhaps the next several centuries were indeed settlers, today's descendants of their legacy, in both the ancestral and beneficiary sense, are more productively understood as citizen-subjects. There is of course, no question that large-scale violence is still enacted upon Native America: but the manner in which it occurs today, even if the suffering unleashed is comparable in magnitude, is not that of macrocolonialism. In contrast to the founding violences of the past, the microcolonial relies first and foremost upon preserving violence, which requires periodic aesthetic shifts within the cultural habitus in order to legitimate new forms of power and authority. In this light, it is perhaps not surprising that there were few domains of experience within which the Rawlsian veil of ignorance more thoroughly depluralized the sensory-memory circuitry of the citizen-subject than that of vision. Indeed, in contrast with other domains, it was precisely because the new imagery was more variegated that they it was also more totalizing. With respect to the microcolonial disposition in particular, the neural pathways associated with sight were repeatedly imprinted with synecdochal images of indigeneity, thereby producing a relief effect between the screen and the eye itself.⁹⁴ Whether subject to the centrifugal force upon the cultural habitus as existed prior to the World Wars or the centripetal force that reshaped it in their wake, citizen-subjectivity was consistently reterritorialized until it began to spontaneously envision Native Americans vis-à-vis the sensory-memory habits of microcolonialism, which posited indigenous peoples not only as a vanishing but rather as a vanished race.⁹⁵

Of course, this was by no means a simple process: as Proust noted within the Parisian *milieu* of his own experience, the introduction of a collective solipsism

into the cultural habitus never filters sensation within a single, static form. Rather the relief effect is always already in a state of becoming, constantly morphing to accommodate a kaleidoscope of imagery circulated through films, legal documents, paintings, political theory books, novels and coinage, amongst other media. The urbanization of many of the United States' indigenous peoples after the Second World War for instance, might have been expected to disrupt the remaining macrocolonial habits of perception and recollection. In practice however, while it may have in specific instances, more broadly it did so in a manner that reterritorialized vision such that Native American Indians were only perceived microcolonially, as a "present absence".⁹⁶ Certainly, it could not be denied that the formal, legal integration of indigenous peoples into the US citizenship regime from the 1831 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek through Concurrent Resolution 108 in 1953 and beyond proceeded relatively steadily. But as the oft-noted inability of many in the postwar period to even perceive "Indians in unexpected places" (Philip J. Deloria) suggested this integration had itself been predicated not only on the macrocolonial logic of physical extermination but when that failed the microcolonial logic of aesthetic termination.⁹⁷ Indeed, even while comparing it to the Emancipation Proclamation, Utah Senator Arthur V. Watkins referred to CR 108 as the "Termination Act", an appellation that stuck ever since he introduced it just after WWII. But much more than in legal decisions such as this, it was the visual culture of the postwar period, and particularly within popular film, that contributed to the selective perception of Native Americans as belonging to an already vanished race.

Thus, despite the appearance of an unmediated visual culture in the wake of films such as Kevin Costner's *Dances With Wolves* (1990), Michael Mann's *Last of the Mohicans* (1993) or Disney's *Pocahontas* (1995) the centripetal image of Indianness that the postwar period bequeathed was not nearly as tolerant as was widely believed. Specifically, it did not deterritorialize the previous macrocolonial habitus absolutely, but instead reconstituted and adapted it to an even more dynamic representation that reterritorialized the preserving violences

through which American power and authority was reproduced. Long after the nation's initial founding violence produced the distinction of "indigenous", "settler" and "immigrant" bodies, this force redeployed the elements it had always relied upon in ever-more variegated and ever-more totalizing forms. It was for this reason for instance, that while postwar citizen-subjectivity was marked by an increasingly tolerant structure of feeling, the assemblage of psychic clichés upon which it was by then based also rendered the would-be recipients of that affect in an even more depluralizing manner than prevailed within the previous one. To return to the language of visual culture, what Guy Debord had initially referred to as the diffuse spectacle of American consumer capitalism then, was not overcome in the postwar period, but was merely replaced with what he later retheorized as the "integrated spectacle".⁹⁸ Within this new distribution of the visible, a microcolonial relief effect emerged that called forth a figure that Michelle Raheja calls the "sa(l)vage",⁹⁹ in which indigenous peoples are no longer represented as the Other per se, but are instead reconstituted as no longer indigenous at all, vis-à-vis the presupposition that either the centrifugal force of prewar Manifest Destiny eliminated them on the one hand or the centripetal force of postwar urbanization assimilated them on the other.

The political ontology of present absence upon which this disposition relied however, was essentially a result of a dispositional montage that had been folded into consciousness: some images were spliced in while others were edited out, so that it was in the zone of indistinction between the included and the excluded that the relief effect appeared. One of the prime examples of this is the common association today of sublimity and indigeneity, which produced a host of totalizing clichés that continued not only in the prewar but also postwar period, particularly that of Native Americans as a vanished race, through the image of the sa(l)vage. Whereas early American novels such as Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntley: Or the Memoirs of a Sleepwalker* (1799) proceeded in macrocolonial fashion "to evoke the sublime by portraying the overwhelming emotion associated with capture by the Indians",¹⁰⁰ those formed by way of the

microcolonial disposition of present absence worked through evocations of noble savagery. Certainly, the sensationalism of the early captivity narratives and the traces they left within the cultural habitus afterward can be said to have paved the way for the films of recent popular culture. But what is particularly interesting is that the common thread between them is that of sublimity: “whether Indians were portrayed as bad or good, they were in romantic eyes a poetical people whose activities took place in a sublime landscape”.¹⁰¹ *Dances With Wolves*, *Last of the Mohicans* and *Pocahontas* all shared this emphasis, in which a new affect of pity rather contempt took over, although it could only emerge once indigeneity as a status indicating an alternate, co-present lifeworld was considered to have been terminated. It is this that throws into question the uncritical embrace of the sublime as a received idea, so as to instead reconceptualize it as a new means through which to challenge the cultural habitus as presently constituted. Rather than having simply consolidated the dominant neo-Kantian variety therefore, in this chapter we take a decidedly post-Kantian approach, drawing on Benjamin and Deleuze to theorize the more micropolitical concept of the everyday sublime. It is this that we will seek in the films of the early 21st century which have some times reproduced the sa(l)vage, but which also called the prevailing order into question by following the Brechtian imperative: “begin not from the good old things, but the bad new ones”.

Of course, none of this occurred in a vacuum: indeed it was because of the tremendous success of the microcolonial relief effect that Los Angeles KFI AM 640 shock jocks "John and Ken" were emboldened to call upon it in November 2008. Their widely-broadcast response to Raheja's intervention into the Thanksgiving reenactment ritual at Condit Elementary School where her daughter had been attending kindergarten is exemplary of contemporary imagery of a vanished race. While on the formal discursive level, it was not entirely obvious, the bellicose inflections of the vocal delivery could be said to have mobilized the integrated spectacle it presupposed: "now we have *some professor* who is of

Indian descent, who is saying she is *offended*"? The first thing that might have been taken from this ready-to-hand reaction, as well as the protest of the dozens of listeners thrown into action by it, was that the new identity politics is no longer that of minorities per se. Rather, the cultural habitus had reterritorialized that discourse such that it is in fact the so-called "majority" that is popularly represented as imperiled, as it negotiates culturo-political conflicts over its accumulated image-repertoire by what has become an increasingly urbanized, deconcentrated and diversified population. The microcolonial relief effect of the sa(l)vage, consolidated after decades of public policy rhetoric, reenactment rituals, Hollywood film clips and navel-gazing *Gerede* ("idle talk"),¹⁰² enabled the viscera of tens of thousands to resonate when the shock jocks called upon these inculcated layers of perception and recollection.¹⁰³ Indeed, it was this that enabled LA-area media reports on the conflict to suggest the inauthenticity of the claim, arguing that only Raheja's mother, and not Raheja herself was a tribally-enrolled Seneca, whilst assimilating her ethnogenesis to that of for-all-practical-purposes Euro-American supporters of the Thanksgiving reenactments, who justified their protest by citing their own acclaimed ancestral status as "part-Native American".¹⁰⁴ What this amounts to then, is a late modern culture war over the distribution of the visible as it has congealed so as to reterritorialize the postwar sensory-memory disposition according to centripetal rather than centrifugal force. As a result, Native Americans who dissent could be conveniently dismissed while Euro-Americans had been enabled to speak in their present absence. Rather than having constructed an Other in relation to which the self was then constituted, alterity was itself reterritorialized in an alternate form of CB Macpherson's "possessive individualism".¹⁰⁵ In the process, the sa(l)vage filtered the manner in which the responsibility of settlers towards indigenous peoples was popularly perceived, producing a relief effect that because it presupposed their absence, also confirmed their own nonaccountability.

More than anything else, it was the force of repetition that inculcated this disposition: just as Proust's non-representational layers of sensory-memory

experience failed to be triggered by the visual experience of the madeleine after multiple viewings, so too did the integrated spectacle reterritorialize the dominant cultural habitus through repeated exposure, producing thereby a depluralized visual relief of Indianness.¹⁰⁶ And furthermore, because cultural identity was always already relational, this sensory-memory habitus necessarily altered self-representation as well. As one Euro-American parent lamented in the wake of Condit's Thanksgiving controversy, "one lady [i.e., Raheja] is dictating what basically 160 other parents are allowed to do - and this is something we've been doing for forty years!"¹⁰⁷ In the face of such statements, it might well have been asked if, rather than having reproduced the representational order of models and copies that justified the circumvention of responsibility, we were to instead affirm Deleuze's call in the first appendix to *The Logic of Sense*, "'to reverse Platonism'... to make the simulacra rise and...affirm their rights among icons and copies"?'¹⁰⁸ In that case, repetition would produce not only the same but also the different, it might have lifted the veil of ignorance so as to reveal a new materiality predicated not on a dichotomy of the real versus the ideal, but on an ontology of becoming itself as real. Rather than having just reproduced simplistic understandings of the social construction of identity, such an approach would have affirmed not only that indigeneous peoples really do exist, but that their claims upon the late modern state are also real and will be so for the foreseeable future.¹⁰⁹ The subjection of Indianness to the Platonist dichotomy of essence and appearance then, did not provide a foundation upon which an anticolonial politics could really have been deployed as claimed by Peter Hallward,¹¹⁰ but was instead redeployed by postwar microcolonialism, so as to reterritorialize Native Americans as no longer existing at all.

Indeed, one might question whether it was not this that explained the ascription of the sublime to New World indigeneity: there was of course, little that was more tremendous or massive in the early United States, than the decimation of millions of people. But at the same time, it was the retrospective perception and recollection of them that brought that into the thrall of citizen-subjectivity, as

explicated so well in Deleuze and Guattari's theory of European racism which they argue in *A Thousand Plateaus* "never detects the particles of the other...[but instead] propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out...or allow themselves to be identified at a given degree of divergence".¹¹¹ Perhaps therefore, since it had primarily been the latter form that took hold in the wake of the Termination Act, we might invoke the distinction Benjamin made vis-à-vis Proust between the snapshot and the image itself, so as to affirm the difference submerged within repetition.¹¹² In Vol. VII of *In Search of Lost Time*, the narrator told of his inability to recall the finely-grained texture of his childhood vacations in Venice, which so long as he remained within the rational effort of the voluntary, were renderable only in the form of *Erlebnis*, of the snapshot: "I tried...to draw from my memory...'snapshots'...which I had taken in Venice, but the mere word 'snapshot' made Venice seem to me as boring as an exhibition of photographs, and I felt I had no more talent for describing now what I had seen in the past, than I had had yesterday for describing what at that very moment was, with a meticulous and melancholic eye, actually observing".¹¹³ Benjamin's "snapshot" referred to forms of perception and recollection in the thrall of citizen-subjectivity, that in the context of this chapter, we have referred to as microcolonial. The unconscious optics thereby denied however, could be rendered in film as image, thereby producing a "deepening of apperception...[that would] burst this prison-world asunder by the dynamite of the tenth of a second...[substituting] an unconsciously penetrated space...for a space consciously explored".¹¹⁴ Although the integrated spectacle mobilized cinema to circumvent the pre-representational, dynamic image of *Erfahrung*, it could also have enabled more confounding impressions to be asserted on the cultural habitus, as the narrator said happened for him upon tripping over uneven paving stones:

Almost at once I recognized the vision: it was Venice, of which my efforts to describe it and the supposed snapshots taken by my memory had never told me anything, but which the sensation which I had once experienced as I stood upon two uneven stones in the baptistery of St. Marks had,

recurring a moment ago, restored to me complete with all the other sensations linked on that day to that particular sensation, all of which had been waiting in their place - from which with imperious suddenness a chance happening had caused them to emerge - in the series of forgotten days.¹¹⁵

No longer a matter of mere happenstance however, as it was in *ISLT*, Benjamin argued that the non-representational layers of sensory-memory experience could be triggered through mechanically reproduced art which would enable the emergence of a more critical relief effect. Translated into the postwar microcolonial situation, this form of vision would no longer be deterritorialized in the relative sense, as with what became the reterritorialized image of the sa(l)vage, but would take a more radical line of flight in the direction that Deleuze and Guattari describe as "absolute deterritorialization".¹¹⁶ In other words, a viscosity that would not have been merely optical in the phenomenological sense of embodied experience, but haptical in the sense that it would have dissolved the hierarchies that deploy peoples, sensory organs, experiential forms, collective memories and temporal frames within the order of representation.¹¹⁷ This critical relief effect would be one that would enable simulacra to rise and affirm their rights among icons and copies by overcoming the real/ideal distinction, such that the visual process would be not only ontologically but otherwise "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract".¹¹⁸ The triumph of the image of *Erfahrung* over the snapshot of *Erlebnis* then, does not mean the end of materiality but instead, as Félix Ravaisson argued prior even to Proust or Bergson, the potentiality of a new variety of it that is not contradicted but aided by ideality. As he put it, "the obscure intelligence that through habit comes to replace reflection, this immediate intelligence where subject and object are confounded, is a real intuition, in which the real and ideal, being and thought are fused together".¹¹⁹ Repluralizing experience in this manner interrupts the centripetal force upon perception and recollection that keeps microcolonial power and authority intact, loosening the boundaries of each until the becoming beneath

becomes perceptible and alternate potentialities become actionable.

It is in this manner then, that we consider a range of thinkers in this chapter, all of whom affirm the emancipatory potential of reenvisioning indigeneity not as quiddity or synecdoche but as irony or haecceity, such that the thrall of citizen-subjectivity upon which the microcolonial relies could be deposed. The internal migration of many indigenous peoples from country to city in particular would seem to question the image of the sa(l)vage, at least that is, if the cultural habitus did not prevent it. One of the more outstanding amongst those who have contributed more dynamic images of indigeneity is the late Jorge Fernandes. He has articulated a concept of the "native as nomad", which suggests that indigenous subjects always already contain unactualized potentialities that deterritorialize the present, despite being positioned within a representational order that suggests otherwise:

insofar as the native's haecceity presences a resistance to an enfolding of the self/same, the European imperial project sought to contain the native's affirmative difference through narratives of social evolution, which construe differences between Europeans and natives not as qualitative, but as quantitative: it is not a difference of species but of genus. In these taxonomies, nations are enclosures that preserve striated fields of difference: they are the loci of foundational difference. Late-modern migrancy disrupts these formations. ...[thus I interrogate] what happens to the nation and the narratives of difference it enables when they encounter the native as nomad whose presence denatures the link between nations and identities.¹²⁰

While it is true that Fernandes referred to natives of countries forced to migrate as international diaspora, only therein becoming reterritorialized as migrant subjects in the new country, the concept applies equally well to indigenous migrants forced to migrate intranationally, such as for instance, the post-Termination Act

urban Navajos that are the subject of Kent Mackenzie's LA-based film *The Exiles* (1961). In other words, more than anything, it is the capture of haecceity and its redeployment within the thrall of citizen-subjectivity that prevents the solidarity of those "identified at a given degree of divergence". Indeed, this was precisely what Duns Scotus' original definition of the term suggested, in its assertion of thisness (*haecceitas*) over whatness (*quidditas*):¹²¹ whereas the former emphasized the absolute becoming underlying every particularity, the latter denied it so as to represent a reterritorialized identity in the name of being. As it is put by Deleuze and Guattari: "there is a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing or substance...they are haecceities in the sense that they consist entirely of relations of movement".¹²²

In this chapter then, we consider the microcolonial as it appears in the thought of the Chippewa author-theorist Gerald Vizenor and the Spokane author-filmmaker Sherman Alexie, as a means through which to break down the investigation into two primary sections that, as a glance through the remainder of the work suggests, forms the structure not only of this chapter but of the dissertation as a whole. In the first section, we investigate the depluralizing of experience in the Old World snapshots of Thomas Hobbes, Jacques Rousseau and John Bramhall registered in much of the reception of James Cameron's blockbuster film *Avatar* (2009). At the same time, we attend to the alternate potential trajectories suggested not only in a more critical reading of Hobbes and Rousseau, but in Donna Haraway's critical yet largely affirmative response to *Avatar*. The section concludes with a consideration of the Makah whaling controversy in the Seattle of the late Nineties in order to demonstrate the continuity of this process, as urban cosmopolitans themselves deployed the native as a present absence, upon which the legitimacy of their own presence was predicated. In the second part, the thoughts of Vizenor are engaged in the Sherman Alexie film "The Business of Fancysdancing" (2002), in order to think through the subversive potentialities immanent to postwar cultural habitus that as Benjamin argued, might have actually enabled the mechanically-reproduced work of art to repluralize experience by producing a

more critical visibility than that which the integrated spectacle had. By considering the native as haecceity, the Rawlsian project of citizen-subject-formation is revealed as predicated upon a disembodied, disaffected rendering, one that is, contrary to the predictable phenomenological response, not "too abstract but, on the contrary...not abstract enough".¹²³ This chapter suggests then, that in order for native as nomad to become perceptible the citizen-subject must itself be affirmed as haecceity by locating those moments in which it enters into a becoming-imperceptible.¹²⁴ Which is to say by encountering that which remains beyond the immediately sensible, such that the sa(l)vage which renders the indigenous subject a vanished race is deterritorialized by the citizen-subject's own rendering as an absent presence. Referencing a series of sequences found throughout a number of recent films, we will suggest that the cinema, particularly within a post-cinematic media environment, restores both what is below and above the threshold of visual perception, thereby suggesting that the optics typical of the postwar period was itself a process that might yet enable a haptics that is yet-to-come.

2.1 Depluralizing Vision: James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009)



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We begin our investigation of the microcolonial then, with the snapshot image of indigeneity that began to congeal in the postwar period, in the movement between what had been a primarily centrifugal, exclusive force in disciplinary society to a centripetal, inclusive force in control society. While both reduced Native American lifeworlds to a series of synecdoches upon which citizen-subjectivity

was reterritorialized, in the latter mode indigeneity would be understood not merely as Other but as internal to the new mode. As such, because it was in that moment ascribed to a yesterday that never was, actually-existing Native Americans were rendered imperceptible from the inculcated vantage point produced by the state. This outcome was largely assisted by the fact that postwar visual culture typically reproduced the Aristotelian mode of identification in which the audience assimilates their own experience to that of the protagonist so as to arrive at morally appropriate lessons. Indeed, the new aesthetic became dominant at the very moment in which collective tolerance supposedly reached its high water mark: in popular film especially, this was expressed through the image of the white hero who typically served as an avatar through which the audience could project their habituated assumptions about the aftermath of the nation's founding violence, such that indigeneity was longer understood as external but as internal to the dominant mode of experience. Whereas the captivity narratives of early American novels suggested a violent, Hobbesian Other, a constitutive outside to the macrocolonial collectivity, postwar culture no longer engaged the indigenous subject in this manner. Instead, as many popular films and canonized photographs attest, it proceeded in the microcolonial manner of harkening back to a mythologized, unthreatening past, in which despite the best efforts of white heroes, a noble, Rousseauian proto-American culture became extinct. Any potential alternative to these trajectories, was rendered unthinkable, until post-cinematic filmmakers like Sherman Alexie and as I will argue, James Cameron, began to introduce alternate images of the native as nomad.¹²⁶

We will of course, primarily save for the second section the question of whether repluralizing the visual habitus today might require a more complex political aesthetic in which identification would occur heteropathically, with a subject of equal dynamism to that assumed by the viewer. What we will ask here instead, is how this new Aristotelianism worked not only in the popular film of most of the late 20th century, but more importantly how it is both reconstituted and questioned in the post-cinematic equivalent afterwards. Just as Benjamin's mass culture

theory had done in a general sense, Bertolt Brecht's thoughts with respect to the alienation effect helped to overthrow the ritual function that restrained visual culture within a hierarchical mode previously. In the process, it opened up the possibility of a critical function that might be argued to have emerged most significantly in the early 21st century, in terms of indigenous film and photography. By countering the ancient reproduction of received ideas as inviolable, the approach that appeared at this time demonstrated that instead of passively acquiescing to immediate identification with dominant assumptions, visual culture could alternatively pursue an alienation-effect to open up a critical distance between actor and character and thus between pre-individual singularity and microcolonial, state-centered individuation. By maintaining this zone of indistinction, Brecht had thought that the roles played in the reproduction of everyday life might come to be seen as arbitrary and contingent and thus changeable rather than inviolable as they had been. In this sense, what post-cinematic indigenous film began to disrupt were the truth-claims enacted in the phase of mass culture that had just passed, pointing out in a Proustian mode the habituated, subjective nature of their supposedly natural, objective assertions. Here then, we will be concerned with how a new Aristotelianism is once again being enfolded into the dominant sensory-memory habitus, but also with how it is being challenged not only by new aesthetic approaches but also by alternate forms of reception.

In order to understand how the depluralizing of experience is mobilized visually, it is useful to begin with some of the findings of neuroscience with respect to the habitualization of perception. Frank Werblin and Botond Roska for instance, have demonstrated that the eye is not simply a receptive instrument that transmits raw visual data to the deeper regions of the brain for processing, but is itself productive of meaning insofar as it is composed of brain matter that translates the incoming photons into a rhythmized, rudimentary visual language. Deep within the retina they argue, bipolar and amacrine neurons distribute the sensory flux into twelve separate "movie tracks", one for outline, another for motion, and still

others for shadows, highlights and other features. These are then interarticulated before being transmitted to the inferior temporal cortex (ITC), where the visual process is consolidated according to culturally-inculcated patterns of recognition. Much as with consciousness more broadly, Werblin and Roska held, the phenomena of seeing consolidates the self by constantly filtering out ambiguous visual stimuli, such that our everyday sensory world appears as a seamless whole. Indeed, as the famous Necker Cube example confirms, visual perception is very much like a censorious state that constantly edits out that which contradicts its most basic assumptions. There are what Plato referred to in *The Republic* as summoners, "those that strike the relevant sense at the same time as their opposites I call summoners, those that don't do this do not awaken understanding".¹²⁷

But in contrast with the pure forms that Plato imagined as the ontological identity underlying existential difference, what everyday perception actually conceals is just the reverse. That is to say, the ontological difference obscured by identity through the rhythming of sensation until it is naturalized in the form of conscious perception and voluntary recollection. From this vantage point, the new consensus that emerged in the voluminous reception of James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009) remains perhaps the best example yet of how popular film culture reproduces the means by which the microcolonial is appears in the form of the sa(l)vage. At the same time, as Donna Haraway's alternate reading of the film suggests, it also retains the potential opening of the cultural habitus to a deterritorialization of that perception, precisely insofar as it does not function on the level of the macrocolonial. While this did not go unnoticed, the manner in which it was invoked was questionable since even if the reproduction of the narrative of the white hero was a key element in the resurrection of a new aesthetic of identification, the ready-to-hand responses to it often failed to disagree sufficiently. Indeed, they typically either contributed to the further rigidification of citizen-subjectivity by reducing it too to a synecdoche, thereby ignoring the potentially deterritorializing, critical dimensions of the work, or conflated the

cinematic and post-cinematic as if they were of a piece. But the task of this section is not simply to identify particular cultural objects as exemplars of the depluralizing of vision, but rather to interrogate how they illuminate the process at work, so that we can move on to the next section, which concerns the more primary topic of its repluralizing.

With that in mind, perhaps the first thing to note about the film is that whereas a comparatively lauded film such as *The Matrix* presented the simple choice between the red pill and the blue pill, between the real world and its representation, *Avatar* suggests a world in which there is neither model nor copy, but only simulacra as such.¹²⁸ As the character played by Sigourney Weaver states with respect to the manner in which the indigenous Na'vi communicate with and through Pandora, "we're not talking about pagan voodoo but something that is real biologically: a global network of neurons".¹²⁹ It is then, a collapse of the nature/culture or world/heaven dualism in favor of a radical, almost Spinozan monism: Pandora is just as real as Earth and its planetary communication apparatus is just as real as the Internet. The Na'vi do not separate the sacred and the material, just as they do not animal and non-animal, which is something that the Earthlings gradually come to understand as they are confronted with their own dualism. That in and of itself marks a tremendous difference from any previous film that it could be compared to, but even the narrative is not easily assimilable to its precedents. Briefly, it concerns a disabled man named Jake who is sent on a mission with the military to help mine a rare metal unobtainium from a planet that is called Pandora. He gives up the privileges accorded to him in order to become part of the indigenous populations, which is also what all non-Na'vi do if they expect to remain for any length of time: those who do not are forced to leave by the time the film has come to an end. When a seemingly impossible-to-win battle breaks out between the invading military forces and the Na'vi, the ultimate result ultimately is the success of the indigenous peoples due to a mutinous rebellion from within.

As argued by Haraway, what is important about this is that rather than ending on a note that the order of things is unchangeable, it retains the hope that another world is indeed possible other than that of today. Still, insofar as it does resemble them in certain respects, it is important because of how it both invokes the earlier narratives and opens up the possibility for alternate ones in the future. Indeed, this is what separates *Avatar* from its predecessors, is the manner in which while it initially places the audience in the position of the white hero, this is then experienced in a manner that is not only non-white and indigenous but also one that is consciously constructed. What makes this potentially critical is that in doing so, the film relied upon a complex assemblage of visibility, in which the audience is constantly shifting between the non-indigenous and indigenous corporeality, to the point that neither seems more or less real than the other, but as in the Brechtian alienation effect, both appear as the simulacra that they are. This is assisted throughout the film, through repetition of the phrase “I see you”, which first appears halfway through the film, when Jake says it to Neytiri. At this early stage however, he does not really see her anymore than she sees him: it is only when the two encounter one another in their singular states towards the end that they mutually intone “I see you”. As such, the device can alternately be read either as depluralizing vision by introducing a series of clichés about indigeneity or as repluralizing them by concentrating on the moments in which the alienation effect is produced in relation to precisely those clichés.

Perhaps the truly radical moment in *Avatar* then, was not the anticolonial uprising but the moment in which the visual habitus of the audience is called into question: during the battle, the Na’vi could well have remained expressions of the microcolonial disposition. But in the final scene, Jake and Neytiri alike arrive at a point in which they understand that they are avatars for each other and even for themselves, just as the audience has by identifying with what began as an exemplar of the dominant particularity only to proceed to the final mutuality of singularity. In any case, neither the emancipatory capacities of heteropathic identification nor the processual, changeable nature of visual experience made

much of an impression on the vast swath of commentators. For instance, consider one of the most widely read reactions to Cameron's film, Analee Newitz' "When Will White People Stop Making Movies Like 'Avatar'?" Beginning with the assertion that the film presupposed the perspective of Euro-Americans seeking to assuage white guilt, she suggests that it *Avatar* "revisits the crime scene of white America's foundational act of genocide, in which entire native tribes and civilizations were wiped out by European immigrants to the American continent". Pandora's forest, she claimed, approximated those of California, while the blue-skinned, catlike Na'vi were analogues for Native Americans who "wear feathers in their hair, worship nature gods, paint their faces for war, use bows and arrows, and live in tribes". In a broader sense, Newitz' claim was that the Na'vi served as metaphors for the stereotypical indigenous peoples seen in Hollywood films throughout the postwar period. While that may be partially true, to reduce the entire film to that alone is to overlook the difference between Cameron's post-cinematic offering and that of the earlier cinematic cultural objects to which she likened it. Not to mention that rather than the Hobbesian or Rousseauian images of the past, what was being deployed here was much more that of the sa(l)vage, which because it is microcolonial in deployment, is also open alternate readings.

Indeed, in contrast with such films to which it was compared as *Dances With Wolves*, *Last of the Mohicans* or *Pocahontas*, the specificity of *Avatar* was that it was perceived by much of its audience by way of specifically 21st century new media, such as digital 3D, torrents, YouTube, Mpeg or Facebook. As a result, the totalizing image of film often associated with the classical era of cinema was not necessarily in play, although that did not mean that totalizing forces could not remain in play on another level. Similarly, the images were largely made with CGI and other computer-based technologies rather than wood and mortar sets or other such constructions, while the *mise-en-scene* implicitly cited a video-game and music video aesthetic that contrasted markedly with the more classically cinematic lifeworld of earlier films. In short, what Newitz missed was that *Avatar* was a specifically new media production rather than simply a cinematic cultural

object like those that prevailed throughout most of the postwar period. Which meant that it was never simply a film but had both become and was constituted by a pastiche of images out of which emerged the sa(l)vage, understood not as a constitutive outside but as one component of an increasingly variegated inside.¹³⁰

What it provided then, was not only a stage on which to replay the macrocolonial nature scene, but also a lens through which to perceive indigeneity no longer as nature in opposition to the culture of citizen-subjectivity, but as a nature-culture that is always already immanent, within. In other words, it enabled the viewer to grasp that in contrast to Newitz' assertion, Pandora was not the Earth as it was before the fall into language and culture, since amongst other features, the indigenous populations had their own planetary Internet which was technological, biological and spiritual at once. Rather, Pandora is better understood as an image of the 21st century microcolonial habitus, that renders visible the extension of the aesthetics of indigeneity as quiddity rather than haecceity that is currently underway. There is no doubt of course, that those associated with the production, distribution and consumption of *Avatar* were not consciously applying biocultural theory to the blockbuster film market. But the intent of the director, the producers or anyone else involved is less important than the critical moment of reception, which has transformed significantly with the rise of new media. Following this line of thought, perhaps it was not only the worst but also the best example of the arbitrariness with which the mobilization of quiddity has been made to obscure haecceity of Native Americans so that it might continue into the post-cinematic landscape. In a manner not entirely different from that of the protagonist Jake's initial approach then, Newitz conflates the cinematic to what is actually post-cinematic, affirming not the vantage point of the singular but of the citizen-subject.

In contrast to Newitz, the real danger inaugurated by *Avatar* was not the assuaging of a lingering national guilt or the reproduction of an image in which indigeneity was reducible to nature alone, but rather its demonstration that even in

a denaturalized and increasingly participatory media culture, the aura of the microcolonial could still be resurrected and thrown into motion. More interesting in this sense was Mark Fisher's "They Killed Their Mother: *Avatar* as Ideological Symptom", which engaged the film through the dark ecology of Timothy Morton, in which rather than environmental politics being predicated upon a one-dimensional image of the natural, the questioning of the representation of nature was its primary concern. And yet he too proceeded to denounce the film as such, not only by accusing it of stereotypically conflating nature and indigeneity as had Newitz, but also by drawing attention to the special effects of CGI, which he judged so realistic that in his words, "it is very difficult to be immersed in the film as fiction". Instead, Fisher asserted in a manner that called into question what type of aura he sought to defend, "it is much more akin to a themepark ride, a late-capitalist 'experience', than a film". Here too then, we must ask: does this not assume the cinematic as always already more natural and authentic than the post-cinematic, a fiction that is only authentic if it amounts to a Wagnerian total artwork? While the latter draws on a video-game and/or music video aesthetic in addition to redeploying a vision of the host of clichés harvested from the last half-century of filmmaking, it was for this reason that the image of the sa(l)vage could recall and mobilize all of them, evoking them into consciousness wherever convenient. To adapt a concept from Proust in other words, it might be said that *Avatar* was a film in which the spectator became aware that as far as visual perception is concerned, what is seen is always already condition by what has been seen. But for Fisher, what is essential in this particular instance, is that the denaturalized CGI is mobilized in the service of a naturalized image of indigeneity. Thus, "what is foreclosed in the opposition between a predatory technologised capitalism and a primitive organicism, evidently, is the possibility of a modern, technologised anti-capitalism".

What is missing in this argument however, is that while microcolonial perceptions and recollections certainly were at work in much of the reception of *Avatar*, it deploys nothing that can be simply foreclosed as "primitive organicism". Rather,

in addition to all that it seems to do in that manner, it also uses the powers of the post-cinematic media environment to potentialize a profane illumination of the history that gave rise to present absence. The real problem with *Avatar* was not so much that it mobilized multimillion dollar, post-cinematic production values, but that it did so in a manner that for many once again redeployed the association of the sublime with indigeneity, as had occurred from the early American captivity narratives to the romanticism of postwar Westerns. As such, at least in terms of reception, it occluded other forms of potential significance from the lives of Native Americans, not to mention the many other cultures it drew upon, all through the filter of the already dominant cultural habitus. This however, is also the sense in which critiques that argued that while it was aesthetically pleasing, *Avatar* remained conventional in terms of narrative missed a great deal. For the formal dimension is always already inseparable from the content with which it resonates to produce the overall aesthetic experience, which is itself a central part of the story. In this case, that which conjoins sublimity and indigeneity is not simply in the realm of cliché: the experience of inhabiting an avatar that is of another culture does not simply confirm but confounds the Jake's citizen-subjectivity. *Avatar* is not primarily about the noble savage, but about the savage noble's self-reconstitution after the emergence of the sa(l)vage as a cultural filter shaping the collective perception his own sense of self relies upon. Indeed, the film reproduced the avatar of that self by inhabiting the simulacra in a manner that estranged the audience from both, such that at least potentially, something new could be assembled that would respect and affirm rather than exclude or internalize difference.

One should recall then, if we are not going to create a simple dualism of form and content, that what was especially important for the film in terms of the former was the use of new techniques such as performance capture, in which 120 video cameras were employed to record the actor in a variety of positions, until the actor was not even needed to produce scenes. Once this was combined not only with digital 3D, but also the latest CG approaches that are now capable of capturing

small-scale affectual shifts on the surface of the face, *Avatar* achieved a new plateau in filmmaking that caused many to refer to the experience in terms of the sublime. Typically, such references noted the manner in which the technology contributed to an experience of awe in the face of a degree of sensory dynamism that had not been achieved before. For instance, Andrew Leonard of *Salon* asked, "are the Chinese attracted to the anti-imperialist message of '*Avatar*' or simply swooning, like everyone else, at the sublime CGI?"¹³¹ Similarly, a blog devoted exclusively to the film gloated, "*Avatar* is a profoundly sublime combination of emotions, new concepts, creativity and visual effects".¹³² And another source asserted that "James Cameron's new sci-fi epic, *Avatar*, brings back to the cinema a sense of the sublime. All you have to do is put on those funky 3D glasses, and then you are Alice with all the wonder of a child again".¹³³ The problem however, as the overuse of the term suggests, was that the new Aristotelianism at work for many of the viewers of *Avatar* on the narrative level was contradicted by the new media technology which deterritorialized the audience's cultural habitus, while they were in this absorbed state.

So sublime was the experience for many of them in fact, that according to over 1,000 posts on the online site *Avatar Forums*, many fans fell into depression after comparing their own world to Pandora, which was described as a "beautiful, glowing utopia".¹³⁴ Indeed, one even considered committing suicide after his everyday existence began to seem "gray...like my whole life, everything I've done and worked for, lost its meaning".¹³⁵ Similarly, an article by film critic Manohla Dargis in the *New York Times* celebrates how the sheer audiovisual stimulation brought back what in the wake of new media culture had become a waning economy of attention to the cinema, as audiences briefly overcame their various digital distractions so as to be absorbed into the experience. "When I watched '*The Dark Knight*' in Imax, I felt that I was at the very edge of the screen", Dargis noted. "*Avatar*", in 3-D, by contrast, blurs that edge, closing the space between you and the screen even more. Like a video game designer, Mr. Cameron seems to want to invite you into the digital world he has created even if,

like a film director, he wants to determine your route”. And for many, that route was a specifically colonial one, in line with the indigenous sublime that marked the early captivity narratives and the late noble savage images alike. As the indigenous literary theorist Jodi Byrd retorted for instance, noting the loci of enunciation that such statements likely assumed, “fans of *Avatar* suffer depression after the film’s immersive experience because they can’t go native, er, Na’vi. Compare [that] to indigenous audiences who are just depressed that this shit hasn’t changed in a century of Hollywood film making”. But what if in fact, the narrative was changed, precisely insofar as the technology that made the cinematic experience immersive produced an ontological shift in the meaning even of clichéd imagery?

To return to the Brechtian imperative to begin not from the good old things but the bad new things, we should recall that particularly in its post-cinematic form, the spectacle is not simply a signal broadcast from a single, all-powerful source, but is as participatory as it is integrated. One is never simply absorbed in the immersive or distracted experience to such an extent that thought is entirely impossible: much to the contrary, as Benjamin argued, it is precisely in the distracted state that critical thought becomes possible not only for single individuals but for mass populations, insofar as a greater multiplicity of stimuli can provoke more diverse modes of thought. Haraway’s critique that the theme raised by *Avatar* might also be read as that of the collapse of dualisms in order to encounter nature not as originary essence of being but as a transformation that is always already a “becoming-with”.¹³⁶ In her view, the desire of audiences to be immersed in the film and to go native derives not only from the classical, questionable sources implied by Byrd, but also from the arbitrariness of the nature/culture split that assigns the former to indigenous and the latter to citizen subjectivities. *Avatar* in a certain sense therefore, actually complements the approach taken by Alexie, in which indigeneity is deployed as ontologically part of an undividable nature-culture composite. In this case however, rather than affirming the culture of subalterns who had been historically consigned to the

natural, it is the dominant sections who had been correspondingly ascribed to the cultural, who affirm the natural.¹³⁷ In this light, even if both Byrd and Haraway make supportable points, it is because of how powerful new media could be potentially, that it should be taken seriously and not only redeployed but also consumed in a critical rather than merely dismissive manner.

Haraway also argues in contrast to other critics that on Pandora “there really was a divide between not so much nature and culture, but nature-culture on the one hand and technology on the other”.¹³⁸ The theory of the cyborg that she produced suggested that one needn’t be composed of metal in order to be technical and that the Na’vi refuse such typically Earthling dualisms as that of nature and culture. While even that division between nature-culture and technology was troubling for her as it was for others, perhaps there is an alternate reading of *Avatar* that is still unconsidered, since the assumption of most critiques was that the primary division was that of nature and culture. Noenoe Silva for instance, commented that indigeneity was deployed in the film was such that they were shown to “hiss like cats”,¹³⁹ while in contrast, the technological Earthlings get into “big robot suits”.¹⁴⁰ Still, this begs the question of focus, as Haraway argues: is it equally disturbing for such critiques not only that indigeneity is equated with nature or with nature-culture, but also that the invading military force is equated with technology? Because if these two require one another, it is perhaps this that is at the heart of a great deal of microcolonial processes that continue to shape the cultural habitus today, when for instance, indigeneous people are produced as more natural and therefore more capable of speaking authentically. It is not simply a question of representation for Haraway, but of how people actually embody these positions in reality that remains after the turn away from the Hobbesian captivity-narratives and toward the Rousseauian noble savage imagery. Thus, rather than immediately assuming that the desire to go native is such a terrible thing, she asserts that anyone, indigeneous or non-indigeneous should be able to engage the natural, cultural or technological as they so desire, however it may be coded at present. Only in this way can the opposition to not

only the macrocolonial but also the microcolonial be engaged seriously: if the indigeneous subject and the citizen-subject are to be mutually circumvented, the first step towards such a future lies in refusing the dualisms that produce them. Certainly Pandora and the Na'vi is a fantasy world that has very real consequences, but so too is Earth and all that is assumed as the audience perceiving it.

It is then, only in the recognition that what we see is a result of congealed habits of perception and recollection then, that we might begin to understand the political utility for such mass experiences of Fernandes' native as nomad. Indeed, the figure of the sa(l)vage mobilized in *Avatar* is very much analogous to the movie tracks assembled by the experience of vision, precisely insofar as it draws on more clichéd images of indigeneity than perhaps any other film. As noted in the neuroscientific observations of Werblin and Roska, once they have been assimilated into the sensory language afforded by the ocular neurons, all of perception is then directed in that manner. Just as the raw excitations of the bipolar cells had been inhibited by the amacrine cells in other words, so too was the haecceity of indigeneity assimilated to a quiddity that was then retrofitted into the process through which the relief effect was produced. But in the alienating visual approach utilized in Cameron's film, all of this becomes visible and critiqueable such that other modes of creation might ensue. This can perhaps be better understood by way of a brief consideration of the photography of indigeneity, for what it demonstrated was that there was no mode of experience that was not always already a product of a particular dispositional training that informed it. As the Standing Rock Sioux thinker Philip J. Deloria has observed, emphasizing what he called "the histories of expectation" that produced the reception of such photographs as *Red Cloud Woman in Beauty Shop* (1941), he argued that the relief effect produced by previously experienced imagery always already filters the encounter with new images such that perception is never simply about lived experience. Rather, it is one's contingent spatiotemporal enframing that provokes the affect of surprise, deriving from a microcolonial

presuppositional assemblage that asserts, much as was argued to have been the problem with the reception of *Avatar*, that "Indians are primitive, unaccustomed to the modern technology of the 1940s hairdryer. Indians live in the hinterlands, strangers to the urbanity of the manicure. They practice barter or gift economies and are, thus, unprepared for the cash exchange of the beauty parlor. They are solemn and stoic, hardly expected to share a smile with their manicurists".¹⁴¹

An image of this sort then, could be more productively interpreted in terms of the Platonic sense of the summoners, at least if the *telos* implicit in the notion was circumvented. Just as the co-presence of different-sized fingers on a single hand had provoked Greek philosophy to question the relation between essence and appearance, Deloria's image also exemplified phenomena in which "sense perception doesn't declare one thing more than its opposite".¹⁴² In this case however, the political ontology that dichotomized thought between nature and culture became displaced so as to render perceptible the difference that had always already composed identity. Werblin and Roska's observations in other words, explain why *Red Cloud Woman in Beauty Shop* delivered us from the natural attitude of mere seeing, since it made apparent how even the initial moments of visual perception are informed by the inculcations of the sensory-memory habits to which one becomes assimilated. As in Akiyoshi Kitaoka's optical illusions such as *Collapse of a Prison* (2007), in which motion is apparent even in still imagery due to the ambiguity-editing processes of consciousness, Deloria showed how unexpected visual stimuli of the sort that we are considering here summon thought about the relation between perception and recollection insofar as they awaken the understanding not towards a *telos* of identity but into a becoming-with.¹⁴³

In order to grasp the force of *Avatar*'s reterritorializing sublimity then, consider how profoundly it departs from Mackenzie's much more complex even if much more stripped-down film, *The Exiles*, which also invoked the photography of indigeneity. As a cultural object that intentionally interrupts postwar,

microcolonial expectation, its very existence at all was seemingly more important, insofar as it confounded habits of perception and recollection that were still very much in the process of being manufactured at that time. Beginning with a still tableau from Edward S. Curtis' photographic collection *The North American Indian*, one of the most important archives to have contributed to the image-repertoire upon which the sa(l)vage was later based, the film soon entered into a montage that moved from a posed photograph of an indigenous woman to the protagonist of the story, who was not only depicted in full motion but was also shown sporting short bangs and a quintessentially Fifties mode of dress, demeanor and lexicon, all within the urban environment of L.A.'s Bunker Hill neighborhood. Of course, the film had been largely unknown until recently, while the photographs in contrast, had continuously informed habits of perception and recollection in the postwar period, which meant that the former's impact was much less than it could have been. Much like *Avatar*, the most common defense of Curtis' images was that the photographer had made it his life's work to preserve the countenances of the indigenous peoples of North America as they were prior to colonization rather than letting the traces of their existence go unacknowledged. The problem with this argument though, as with much of that surrounding Cameron, was that the snapshot of indigeneity that took hold in his wake was not predicated upon the prior non-existence of Native American Indians, nor did it deny the reality of their descendants, as the white Angelenos dismissively put it with respect to Raheja. Rather, what it relied upon was the convergence of all prior clichés into a single although mobile, dynamic visual composite that then corresponded to that imagined as a single copy folded into the microcolonial disposition in order to extinguish the continuous collective responsibility of settlers towards indigenous peoples as a whole. The sa(l)vage was represented in other words, as an overcoming of the distinction even while enabling the mobilization of whatever version of the imagery might have been instrumentalized according the contingent requirements of a particular situation. Thus, in the Thanksgiving controversy, Raheja's existence was not denied per se, but was deployed such that her intervention signified nothing more than that of a

descendant of the Senecas who no longer existed in their original authenticity. Much like the obverse of a Kitaoka illusion therefore, the sa(l)vage mobilized vision not in order to reveal the process through which ambiguity was assimilated in the process, but rather to invisibilize it.

In this sense, we might say that despite the latter's usefulness to both postwar and early American assumptions, it was the centripetalizing logic of John Bramhall more than the centrifugalizing approach of Rousseau's "noble savage" or Hobbes' "savage" that most clearly approximates the early 21st century United States. Particularly that is, since it not only affirms depluralizing representations of Indianness, but mobilizes all prior representations as elements of a more complicated but also more totalizing image.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, as Bramhall retorted against both the positive and negative images of each while in exile, given that either might incite rebellion within England, "there never was any such degenerate rabble of men in the world that were without all religion, all government, all laws, natural and civil, not [even] among the most barbarous Americans".¹⁴⁵ In doing so, rather than affirming the becoming of indigeneity, he assimilated Native American multiplicity to the history of expectation not only of his own period, but at least retrospectively, also that which the postwar United States required, such that what really was singular and distinct from it could not be perceived. The failure to recognize alterity and to instead require an Aristotelian celebration of identification meant that those bodies which retained the dominant position were naturalized as having an exclusively cultural composition, outside of nature per se. Much as some read into Cameron's image of the sa(l)vage in *Avatar*, the photographic portraiture pursued by Curtis amounted to far more than a benevolent archive of cultural preservation. Indeed, it was precisely because it was so often defended as such that it served as one of the most prescient harbingers of the end of the old models of the macrocolonial and the emergence of the microcolonial. In its wake, Native Americans and other indigenous peoples would be subjected to the perceptual phenomena of present absence since unlike those in *The Exiles*, they were perceived not as survivors

subject to becoming like everyone else, but to the contrary as inauthentic vestiges of people who were no longer.

As Vizenor puts it, Curtis' *The North American Indian*

created simulations of surveillance, the pictorialist pose of ethnographic images...[removing] parasols, suspenders, wagons, the actual traces of modernism and material culture in his pictures of natives. Curtis was a pictorialist, but his removal practices were ideological, a disanalogy. He created altered images of the vanishing race at the same time that thousands of native scholars graduated from federal and mission schools. Luther Standing Bear had returned to the reservation as a teacher. Charles Eastman returned as the first native medical doctor on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Curtis may have noticed native survivance, but he was dedicated to pursuing pictures of a vanishing race.¹⁴⁶

Drawing on Vizenor's observations, we might say that rather than haecceities whose movements were irreducible to the grid of identities, what the sa(l)vage deployed was the assemblage of quiddities required to produce indigeneity exclusively through a microcolonial temporality, so that it would permanently enter into a present absence. Rather than the Necker Cube, in which visual perception was revealed as a process of the self-interested assimilation of alterity, what *The North American Indian* actually preserved was a series of edited representations that were visible only insofar that they were present when necessary, so as to remain governable by the colonial state, and invisible only insofar as they were absent when useful, in order to render the preserving violence upon which it was based imperceptible. It was this that informed the disjuncture between the two versions of Curtis' *In a Piegan Lodge* (1910), which thereby enabled them to express the peculiar sensory-memory habits of the postwar period better than any other work, at least until *Avatar*. While the photographs were taken in years prior to the Second World War, it was in their wake that they were

retrospectively revisited *en masse*, to confirm the ideal of an already-accomplished pluralism that disacknowledged the resistance and survival of Native American Indians, rather than affirming a still-unfolding process of pluralization in which the collective responsibility to indigenous peoples would have been ongoing.

Postwar vision therefore, was constructed in a manner that can be discerned from Bramhall to Curtis through Cameron, and with infinite other components in between, in the manner that it filtered unconscious perception and involuntary recollection, rendering sensation as representation. In the original version of *In a Piegan Lodge* for instance, a father identified as Little Plume and the son as Yellow Kidney had been shown positioned at opposite corners of a tipi with an alarm clock positioned between them, each bearing the stoic countenance that Vizenor has described as the cliché-ridden face of the "kitschyman". Perhaps the inclusion of the technology had been an oversight on Curtis' part or maybe Little Plume and Yellow Kidney had intentionally placed it there in order to circumvent the image of the vanishing race they thought he was seeking to promote. In either case, there was little doubt that the original form of *In a Piegan Lodge* was altered by Curtis because it had been inassimilable to the specifically microcolonial habitus that was then in the making, in which that which was previously excluded would instead be made to coincide with the *polis* that rendered its presence absent. As Christopher Lyman notes in *The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions*, where the alteration was first revealed, "the removal of unwanted detail was certainly not the only end to which Curtis employed retouching".¹⁴⁷ Hence the altered version that was still sold and displayed throughout the postwar period, in which the photogravure had been cleansed of Little Plume and Yellow Kidney's alarm clock so that they could be more seamlessly located within the grid of identities as organized according to the logic of citizen-subjectivity. Louis Owens' *Mixedblood Messages* articulates present absence in this manner as the removal from chronological time and the consignment to a yesterday that he has become the very mode of life for millions of "living descendants of the original

Americans, [who therefore,] unless they impersonate that original 'other', have no place in the world".¹⁴⁸

Consider then, the caption composed for Curtis' second version of the photo:

The picture is full of suggestion of the various Indian activities. In a prominent place lie the ever-present pipe and its accessories on the tobacco cutting-board. From the lodge-poles hang the buffalo-skin shield, the long medicine-bundle, an eagle-wing fan, and deerskin articles for accoutering the horse. The upper end of the rope is attached to the intersection of the lodge-poles, and in stormy weather the lower end is made fast to a stake near the centre of the floor space.¹⁴⁹

"The various Indian activities" apparently, did not include those markers of becoming to which settlers were assumed to be appended but only those that congealed the assemblage of speeds that was the sa(l)vage. The photographic images comprising *The North American Indian* therefore, helped to introduce what Raheja describes as "anachronistic and irrelevant, if quaint, figure[s of indigeneity] in the early twentieth century".¹⁵⁰ It was no surprise then, that the postwar urbanization of Native Americans did not in and of itself correct the snapshot image, but instead resulted in an even more profound invisibilization, since citizen-subjects exposed to the visual dressage inaugurated by photographers such as Curtis were rendered unaware of any reason why they should expect the co-presence of indigenous peoples in their midst. As one member of the Oakland Indian House put it, "an urban Indian community countered all existing mainstream stereotypes: 'Indians in cities, no way!' (Whispered and hardly ever said directly to one's face.) 'But I thought all Indian people lived on reservations in rural areas or...were dead'".¹⁵¹ Indeed, as Owens had argued, this was not merely conceptual, but was also experienced in the new distribution of the visible in everyday life. For instance, "an Indian person can walk into any place in the Western world wearing what his or her great-great-

great-great grandparent might have worn - especially if that person is from a Plains tribe - and be immediately recognized as a 'real' Indian. Conversely, if that same Indian were to enter the same room with short hair, wearing a coat and tie or evening dress, the chances are very good that no one would recognize him or her as 'real' - especially if that Indian person happened to be relatively fair skinned".¹⁵²

This shaping of the cultural habitus in this manner afforded substantive results in the service of the national claim not only to collective non-responsibility for the founding violences of the macrocolonial period but also to the right to define the image of indigenous authenticity through which its own subjectivity was consolidated. In addition to the psychic clichés of which *The North American Indian* was composed, by way of transition to the second section, we will engage that of the Makah whaling controversy as an example of the repluralizing of vision. In the Seattle of the late Nineties, amidst an environmental protest culture that included signs and bumper-stickers reading "Save the Whales, Harpoon a Makah!", such figures as Paul Watson of the Sea Sheppard Conservation Society reproduced Curtis' and Cameron's exclusion of Native Americans from the becoming that he and his cohorts assumed for themselves by drawing attention to their employment of a variety of technologies in the process of the hunt. Because they used contemporary accoutrements in addition to the dugout canoe, the project was dismissed as "a pathetic attempt to mimic [the tribe's] forebears".¹⁵³ In a more recent hunt, Watson's statement was echoed on the *King 5 News* website by one commentator who suggested that "the Makah right to whaling on a 'cultural' basis is no longer true or applicable [because] in the hunt of 1999 the tribe availed itself of speed boats; cell phones; Coast Guard cutters; 'spotters' from helicopters; high powered rifles and machine guns to bring down their prey. The traditional long boats and spears used by their ancestors played a minor and incidental role in the kill...[thus] from a 'traditional' standpoint, the methods employed were solidly 21st century...and a complete travesty of Makah ancient whaling practices".¹⁵⁴

The tribe defended their position however, not by asserting the originary authenticity of that which is represented as traditional, but rather by taking the immanentist approach of affirming simulacra against the microcolonial order of models and copies. In this sense, their struggle was one of survivance, for as they asserted in response, "our opponents would have us abandon this [whaling] part of our culture and restrict it to a museum. To us this means a dead culture. We are trying to maintain a living culture...if we wanted to abandon all cultural traditions, we would simply use a deck-mounted cannon firing a harpoon into the whale. No, our canoe has been carved by traditional carvers and will be paddled by eight whalers who have sanctified themselves by rituals that are ancient and holy to us. The hunt is being conducted in a manner that is both traditional and modern".¹⁵⁵ Perhaps then, as I have suggested through the reception of *Avatar*, it was precisely the emergence of the sa(l)vage that was the condition of possibility for the self-overcoming of this aspect of depluralized experience, just as it was the basis from which the haecceity of the citizen-subject might be revealed as well. Indeed, following Haraway's reading of *Avatar*, perhaps it is its enabling of thought beyond the early American captivity narratives as well as the postwar films that is its greatest contribution.

2.2 Repluralizing Vision: Sherman Alexie's *The Business of Fancydancing* (2000)



In the last two sections, we considered not only the depluralizing of the postwar cultural habitus as a general phenomenon in microcolonial habits of perception and recollection, but specifically the ambiguity in the production and reception of postwar film and photography concerned with indigeneity. But if we are to proceed by way of immanence, we must follow this up with another question: aside from the dissensus that emerged in relation to Cameron's blockbuster film, how might the same sensorium that reproduced the sa(l)vage become the condition of possibility for the overcoming of the political ontology of present absence? First of all, recall the invocation of sublimity that served as a basic element of indigeneity in early American captivity narratives as well as in postwar cinema. In both cases, it served to produce an image of indigeneity as alterity, which insofar as it invoked a Hobbesian savagery or a Rousseauian nobility, was the source of its effect. By interrogating the filmic and photographic archive as we have done, we have begun to grasp the role that synecdochal imagery of this sort has played in the constitution not only of the relief effect that shaped the visibility of the past but also the more recent one of the sa(l)vage. In this section however, we will be concerned with Benjamin's and Proust's emphases on the small shocks that we will call the "everyday sublime", which as we have already seen in Haraway's reading of *Avatar* as well as Vizenor's of *The North American Indian*, can counter the synecdochal image of indigeneity with a deterritorializing visibility that exceeds any ascribed subjectivity. This is the case in indigenous cinema in particular, in which any image of Indianness referenced is often self-consciously proposed as one that has been captured and partitioned from a much more dynamic cultural multiplicity. What might be considered as a post-Kantian sublime then, as opposed to the neo-Kantian version that tends to emphasize magnitude, would be more likely discovered within the domain that we are considering as microcolonial rather than macrocolonial.

One of the best examples of this in relation to the transformed aesthetics of the early post-cinematic period was Sherman Alexie's *The Business of Fancydancing* (2002), in which the tension between reservation and urban aspects of

contemporary Native American life in the United States is foregrounded along with the nature/culture distinction that is its implicit subtext. But rather than jumping to a quick conclusion of asserting the greater or lesser authenticity of either one or the other, once again it is the zone of indistinction between them that the film affirms. As a result of this embrace of the urban and the cultural in addition to the rural and the natural as the proper realm of indigenous experience, the microcolonial consignment of Native American Indians to a yesterday that never was is thereby called into question at the same time as the spatiality of the reservation which had been its only holdout in contemporary consciousness. In order to begin to consider the difference that this makes in the everyday visual relief characteristic of the postwar United States, consider the synecdochal structure it assumed with respect to the indigenous peoples of the continent. As demonstrated in *The Exiles*, either the urbanization of the majority of Native Americans nor the multiplication of the stock imagery upon which they had been perceived interrupted the native as quiddity, but instead reinforced it by confirming the already assumed inauthenticity of survivors. Given that within that frame, non-assimilation would have meant either confinement to the parochial or extinction as such, this is perhaps not entirely surprising, nor is it that even those who intend to engage in acts of solidarity would unknowingly reproduce it.

For instance, despite what were no doubt empathetic intentions on his part, the literary theorist Arnold Krupat reproduced this synecdoche when he suggested that the indigenous approach to autobiography was always already at odds with Western metonymy. The reason for this is that in his ontology, the collectivity of the former is as unambiguous as was the individuality of the latter, not unlike those who in the past ascribed one to nature and the other to culture. Aside from the contingent power relations that determine which populations are allowed to count as haecceities or individuals in order to make such judgments and which have to be reduced to the quiddities or collectivities they supposedly negate, the more fundamental question this move suggests is that of Simondon's ontogenesis

of the individual. Which is to say, in such approaches as Krupat's what becomes of the pre-individual domain within which an ontology of relationality serves as the condition of possibility for singularity? If the reproduction of collective / individual oppositions are themselves epiphenomena of representation, why are they be imagined to contribute to an emancipatory politics?¹⁵⁶ In other words, the emphasis on synecdoche which had been thought to be a radical refusal of colonial subjectivity in fact further consolidated the exclusion of Native Americans even while attempting to articulate a post-imperial pluralism. Vizenor's reply to this move, was to affirm the centrifugality implied by the native as haecceity, asserting instead that "Krupat...assume[s] that the 'synecdochic models' revealed in the text are representations of tribal cultures outside of the text, and that the constituents of the synecdoche are not determined by interpretation, translation and the philosophies of grammar".¹⁵⁷ Rather than simply representing the submerged collective, which would have enabled not only benevolent but also instrumental representations of indigenous peoples, Vizenor affirmed the perspective of Los Angeles and Seattle-area urban Native Americans considered above, in addition to as we will soon see, the aesthetic force of *The Business of Fancydancing*: "the autobiographical narrative must be ironic; otherwise some narratives would be more natural and essential than others".¹⁵⁸

In this section then, we follow this insight in order to consider how Alexie's post-cinematic aesthetic reframed the perception of urban indigeneity by reconstituting the microcolonial understanding of that which gave rise to such phenomena as the L.A. Thanksgiving and Seattle whaling conflicts. In order to consider how this might have produced a rupture with the sa(l)vage and savage noble alike however, we must first return to Benjamin's argument about the critical potential of the cinema as derived from his engagement with László Moholo-Nagy's essay from a decade prior, "Production-Reproduction" (1922). Therein it had been argued that emergent visual culture could accommodate the concerns of modern critical painting not only within traditional domains but also the new mediums of film and photography as well. In order to demonstrate this, Moholo-Nagy suggested

two possibilities for technologically-reproducible visual media. The first of these was the transcendental "reproduction" of already-existing forms in accord with the order of representation, while the second was the immanent "production" of those still yet-to-come. It is of course the second of Moholo-Nagy's visual forms that retained the most creative potentiality and it was this Benjamin referenced when he spoke of the long historical development not just of the mode of production, but as Marx put it, the "mode of perception".¹⁵⁹ Because every new media platform redistributes the sensible as a matter of course, art works produced within their purview that took the medium to new levels necessarily retained the most consequential role in the determination of the direction it took. In this manner, Moholo-Nagy affirmed the capacity of film as well as photography to recast not only the sensory-memory habitus, but with it the values and habits that became dispositional over time. As he put it, "art attempts to create new relationships between familiar and as yet unfamiliar data, optical, acoustic or whatever, and forces us to take it in through our sensory equipment...[Therefore,] creative endeavors are only valid if they produce new, as yet unfamiliar relationships. By this I mean that, from the creative point of view, the most we can say of reproduction (the reiteration of relationships that already exist) is that it is a question of virtuosity. Since it is above all production (productive creativity) which has a role to play in human development, we must turn to media which have up to now been used only for reproductive purposes, and try to open them up to productive ends".¹⁶⁰

Implicit in the statement of course, is the splitting of new media, which in the early 21st century is primarily that of digital film and photography, into a multiplicity of interstices between productive and reproductive ends. As an example of one who accomplished the former, Moholo-Nagy cited such innovators as Viking Eggeling, one of the first to consciously experiment with the cinematic medium in short films such as *Diagonal Symphony* (1924). Rather than reifying "the reproduction of dramatic action", which he held to merely confirm the conventional progression of linear, frozen snapshots as was at that time

already widely available, he concentrated on the challenge of pushing the medium into a new relation with the evolving visuality by "work[ing] with motion as such...[defined as] movement in space without recourse to the development of formal elements in their own right".¹⁶¹ Just as Eggeling had avoided merely narrative action so as to foreground movement, so too might we say that in his deployment of the post-cinematic form as more important than narrative, Alexie dehabituated the congealed perceptions and recollections with respect to indigeneity that had become folded into citizen-subjectivity, so as to redeem the becoming thereby occluded. Perhaps the best example of this was his formal critique of previous filmic representations of indigeneity as parochial and reservation-bound in *The Business of Fancydancing*, a film inspired by the Dogma '95 movement of Lars Von Trier, that was shot entirely on a Sony DSR-500WS and a Sony DCR-TRV900 for under \$100K, as opposed to the typical cost of a film in that style which was often several times that. Throughout the film, Alexie foregrounds down-market versions of the new digital media diagetically within the lifeworld of the characters as well as non-diagetically as the means of recording. In doing so he ensures that, to invoke Moholo-Nagy once again, the reproductive ends of the image of the sa(l)vage would always already be confronted with the productive ends of what Vizenor calls the "postindian",¹⁶² that which remains indigenous without being reducible to the long history of representations of it. Rather than reifying indigeneity as a received idea within a microcolonial frame, what his film produces is an intervention into that process, so as to render perceptible the multiplicity of that which would have remained imperceptible. The opening scene for instance, depicts the main character Seymour and his friend Aristotle at their high school graduation: while this would have been a familiar enough theme if they had not been Native Americans, Alexie's approach eschews the notion of them being portrayed directly instead preferring their appearance through the lens of a low-end digital "dirty camera".¹⁶³

To return to the narrative register, after the first two boast of plans of moving to Seattle in order to attend college, the off-screen friend holding the camera through which the audience perceives them jokes, "I got my GED. I'm going to work in the uranium mines". As in the use of doubles in *Avatar*, it is through this juxtaposition of the diagetic and the non-diagetic image that Alexie affirms the post-cinematic over the cinematic while also instantiating an ethos of perception that Edouard Glissant describes as "the right to opacity".¹⁶⁴ In short, rather than further enabling the synecdochal assumption that difference is essentially transparent and thus susceptible to immediate, unproblematic representation, Alexie's post-cinematic aesthetic presents indigeneity not simply as nature or culture but as a nature-culture, presented through a series of technological screens, including digital video cameras, mirrors and windshields, but also dispositional screens, such as those harbored by "reservation Indians" towards "urban Indians", or by urban liberals towards indigenous peoples as such. As a result, the film never assumes culture as a totality, but always already as an assemblage. For instance, the credits end by disassembling the notion of the director as a single, unitary subject with the line: "The Business of Fancydancing: a Film By At Least 62 People, Indigenous and Otherwise". Indeed, Alexie makes the film from start to finish in an actively horizontal manner, at first hiring only women in order to prevent the typical gender balance in that media, then allowing production members to trust their own judgment rather than deferring to him. As he notes with respect to the process as it played out with one particularly important person he hired, "the production assistant completely ignored hierarchy, which is what I wanted". Finally, rather than working from an entirely complete, unchangable narrative, Alexie proceeded in the manner of a jazz musician, putting together a basic screenplay, then hiring actors who were similar to the characters and then encouraging them to interpret its general sense so as to speak spontaneously, while the cameras recorded.

The post-cinematic quality of the work therefore, resides in the virtual frontier between the pre-individual and the already-individuated, which is how it

circumvents the representational hubris that typically imprints such encounters with a microcolonial mark. In many ways, *The Business of Fancydancing* demonstrated Glissant's ethos of the refusal of transparency: "opacities can coexist and converge, weaving fabrics. [But] to understand these truly, one must focus on the texture of the weave and not on the nature of the components".¹⁶⁵ It did this for instance, insofar as it foregrounded the question of the visual habitus while also emphasizing the micropolitical continuity of the colonial in the cultural habitus of a region that had regarded by many of its inhabitants as already postcolonial.¹⁶⁶ One example of how this was decentered was the former reservation denizen Seymour Polatkin's poetry reading at a Seattle bookstore, in which he was framed in the window from the outside, producing what Alexie describes in the director's commentary as a "zoo-like quality", one that given the largely non-indigenous, Euro-American context, accorded well with the poster beside him which read "National Indian Month". Similarly, in the same track he called attention to the statue of Chief Seattle in Pioneer Square, which importantly doubled as a water fountain. Rather than interpreting it in its ostensible, ready-to-hand role as a public memorial, Alexie asserts that within the film it challenges the microcolonial notion of "Indians as a natural resource".¹⁶⁷

And when a scene appeared featuring numerous indigenous children playing, each of them displaying a wide variety of phenotypes, he reacts by noting that "one of the reasons we had all these kids, and it was great that this diverse looking group of kids came out, was so we can see the various skin tones and the way Indian kids look. You know, that little blonde boy is an Indian, so the idea that Indian identity is one thing or even two things is completely wrong".¹⁶⁸ Once again therefore, Alexie's aesthetic affirms indigeneity as haecceity rather than quiddity, such that in each of these example, what the viewer is exposed to is the encounter between a deterritorializing aesthetics of opacity and the already-existing one of transparency. This accords with the post-cinematic media environment in that it suggests that meaning can never be captured at any single node, but instead becomes distributed throughout a potentially infinite number of them. From

YouTube mashups to illegal torrents and beyond, this constant recontextualization multiplies possible meanings far more than they had been in the past, such that references to the universal meaning of a work become immediately suspect. Similarly, *The Business of Fancydancing* especially calls into question the ascription of sublimity to indigeneity by the novelists and filmmakers of the American past, suggesting instead an aesthetics of the everyday sublime. For instance, as Seymour sarcastically reads from one of his poems devoted to the parody of such clichés, “Indians always have secrets which are carefully and slowly revealed to everybody and Indians must see visions. White people can have the same visions, if they are in love with Indians [because] if a white person loves an Indian, then the white person is an Indian by proximity”.¹⁶⁹ Rather than the already-individuated in other words, the post-cinematic aesthetic he affirms is that in which the grid of identities are called into question, such that microcolonial habits of perception and recollection can be deposed.

From this vantage point, just as figures such as Watson and his Sea Sheppard followers rendered Native Americans a present absence by circumventing the ethos of opacity, so too was citizen-subjectivity reconstituted in the postwar period by it. *The Business of Fancydancing* had few precedents with respect to its foregrounding of that fact, but it would be remiss to overlook one key scene that had done so previously, in Jim Jarmusch’s *Dead Man* (1995). After the Euro-American protagonist Blake encounters Nobody, the Makah man who becomes his only ally in what had by that point become a path toward death, he is shown flailing in the woods, complaining, “I seem to have misplaced my eyeglasses”. This is followed to a cut to Nobody who is pictured wearing them with a big grin on his face, returning the enigmatic reply, “perhaps you will see more clearly without them”. In contrast to the visual habitus assumed by Watson, *Dead Man* affirms the opacity of the Makah on multiple levels, including their statement that their whaling practices, far from being expressions of a culture trapped in a now-gone era, is in fact one of “a living culture...both traditional and modern”. Jarmusch’s deployment, like Alexie’s in *The Business of Fancydancing*, is one in

which the sa(l)vage and savage noble are brought face to face in a manner that does not assume transparency, but instead deploys each as opacities to one another and to themselves. Throughout the second half of the film, Blake's being-toward-death takes this even further, reversing the myth of the vanishing race such that it is the Westward-bound citizen-subject who is destined to vanish rather than the opposite. In this sense, the film could be understood much like Alexie's as a profound reversal of the ontology of present absence to which Native American peoples such as the Makahs have been rendered. Instead, in this case it was the citizen-subject that became is rendered in that manner, not in the Emersonian sense of the "transparent eye" that could see all but could not itself be seen, but rather that of the subject who in order to affirm the haecceity of others, becomes the haecceity that it always already is as well. In the terms of Maholo-Nagy then, *Dead Man* is a productive rather than reproductive work: in the final scene, Blake floats into the ocean in such a manner as to aesthetically render the end of the last vestiges of "the Indian" and "the Settler" alike, opening in the process the possibility of a non-identitarian cultural habitus yet-to-come.

The Business of Fancydancing takes this farther though, in its demonstration that just as the figure of the sa(l)vage mobilized numerous images of indigeneity according to situationally-defined but nevertheless ontocolonial requirements, so too could indigenous cinema do so to radically divergent ends. Thus, while Krupat is correct that many indigenous autobiographies appear to have been formally synecdochal, Alexie's recent offerings are so only in the ironic sense affirmed by Vizenor, which is how they circumvented transparency formally and substantively at once. For instance, in his young adult novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, the first thing to strike the reader is the epigraph itself: W.B. Yeats' famous line "there is another world, but it is in this one".¹⁷⁰ In beginning with this, Alexie refuses the transcendental assumption that the only viable means through which to resist the microcolonial is somehow through the refusal of immanence, since this would only reproduce the predicament. Rather than accepting a depluralizing image of indigeneity as a pure form in which the

only escape from a colonized subjectivity is a Platonic model that then emulated by copies of lesser import, the Yeats quote suggests that cultural emancipation must from this world and this world alone, engaging thereby the pre-individual domain out of which individuation is always already composed. Krupat's synecdoche on the other hand, leaves the sa(l)vage intact by attempting to overcome it transcendently, such that the native as haecceity remains obscured. Alexie's novel in other words, which is itself largely visual through its use of comic illustrations, throws the mobilization of images into reverse, as the primary activity of the narrator is never simply individual or collective per se, but is instead concerned with the negotiation of a fragmented existence. Which is to say that which is stretched between the Euro-American town of Reardan where he had moved to receive an education and the reservation town of Wellpinit, that rather than "teaching you lessons about perseverance" as he implies a representational account might assert, "[really only] teaches you how to be poor".¹⁷¹ While he drew the ire of many of his friends for leaving, by the end of Alexie's narrative they came to respect his choice, particularly insofar as it proved that the clichés propagated by settler society were precisely that and nothing more. Indeed, as his best friend Rowdy eventually admitted, employing the ironic register championed by Vizenor rather than the synecdochal one of Krupat, the narrator's choice is actually far closer to the traditional than that which even many of his community had come to assume under that nomenclature:

I was reading this book about old-time Indians, about how we used to be nomadic...So I looked up nomadic in the dictionary, and it means people who move around, who keep moving in search of food and water and grazing land...Well the thing is, I don't think Indians are nomadic anymore. Most Indians, anyway....I'm not nomadic. Hardly anyone on this rez is nomadic. Except for you. You're the nomadic one...you're an old-time nomad. You're going to keep moving all over the world in search of food and water and grazing land. That's pretty cool...Just make sure you send me postcards, you asshole.¹⁷²

However, as foregrounded in *The Business of Fancydancing*, such conceptual transformations did not occur in a vacuum, as identities were always already co-constituted within more primary conditions of becoming, as implied in the image of the native as nomad. The character Seymour, in his own movement Westward, therefore had to represent everything that was, as he says at one point, “the opposite of rez”: he was for instance, urban, intellectual, educated, non-heterosexual, all of which had triggered the resentment of his reservation cohorts. And yet the inverse was the case in the city, where the challenge was to demonstrate that as a Native American, he was not “the opposite of urban”: as he recounted at a reading there from one of his poems concerned with microcolonial narratives, “if the hero is an Indian woman, she must be beautiful, she must be slender and in love with a white man...when the Indian woman steps out of her dress, the white man gasps at the endless beauty of her brown skin... she should be compared to nature, brown hills, mountains, river valleys, clear water...” Of course, this also suggests that Alexie's affirmation of the multiplicity of Indianness in opposition to that deployed in the sa(l)vage deterritorializes the cultural habitus does not do so simply by way of an originary indigenous subjectivity, prior to all representation. Rather, by drawing on the ruins of precisely that which it congealed in order to bring together the assemblage of forces that enabled postwar citizen-subjectivity, he deactivates their meaning within that habitus, so as to push them toward alternate ends.

The fact that microcolonial presuppositions produced habits of perception and recollection that sought to naturalize even that which was very recently acquired therefore, did not mean that was the only potentiality available from a perspective of immanence. Indeed, as Ravaillon suggested nearly two centuries before, “habit subsists beyond the change which brought it about. Moreover, if it is related, insofar as it is habit and by its very essence, only to the change that engendered it, then habit remains for a change which either is no longer or is not yet; it remains for a possible change. This is its defining characteristic”.¹⁷³ The postwar cultural

habitus that caused urbanites to invisibilize actually-existing Native Americans in their midst then, was deterritorialized when the possible change of the native as haecceity began to dislodge the quiddities that enabled it. But in doing so, the former never entirely overcame the latter, nor did the ironic mode of autobiography preferred by Vizenor produce a new transcendental: rather, as suggested by the stoic Indian kitschman in *Smoke Signals*, which Alexie wrote, what they instantiated was a survivance that entailed a critical grappling with the visual as theretofore assembled. This then, is why although, “as the subjugated ‘other’ of an invader discourse synonymous with global media saturation, the Native American subject finds himself spectacularized on a global scale...Alexie [made] his stand in the struggle for a subjective agency not in some autochthonous interiority but on the flat, open ground of the invader's own image-repertoire [...] thick with its history of use and abuse, the banality and trauma which are fused in its ‘heavy lightness’ and which prime it for redeployment in the long siege of postmodern decolonization”.¹⁷⁴

Neil Campbell's affirmation of Alexie's emphasis on the importance of maintaining an immanentist approach to resisting the microcolonial is compelling in *The Rhizomatic West* for much the same reason, particularly insofar as it eschews any claim based upon a dualism of the real/ideal. To invoke Deleuze once again, affirming the rights of simulacra against the models and copies affords an alternate authenticity that is both more radical and more nuanced than that usually called by the name. Because it emphasizes the potential of culturo-political transformation beginning from immanent rather than transcendental loci of enunciation, it also makes change possible in the present. Indeed, as Ravaissou had suggested nearly two centuries before, if the emergence of a particular cultural habitus historically required the immediate self-overcoming of the one that had been previously congealed, no further evidence is necessary that the shell of the lifeworld in which we currently exist engenders the potentiality of other realities as well. In addition to Alexie's post-cinematic efforts to break down the nature-culture divide by which citizen-subjectivity interiorized the indigenous

subject, Campbell's observations about the microcolonial image-repertoire as deployed in Bad Segeberg, Germany for instance, suggest how a critical encounter with postwar optics could have been confronted with a deterritorializing haptics:

already established, clichéd roles that presume an authenticity and accuracy of detail as a way of honoring Native cultures can have an alternative, unsuspected, and critical effect by emphasizing the ethnic grid that contains and delimits identity rather than sustaining or empowering it. As Philip Deloria puts it, one will undoubtedly engage with the Indian as a reassuring marker of 'something undeniably real' connected with notions of a 'real Self', a 'powerful indicator of the timeless and the unchanging', but will also see that 'Indianness' could be 'an equally compelling sign of transformation, rebellion and creation'. Such a shift between one perception and another has the capacity to fracture the grid, coming close to Vizenor's own radical intention to make Native people see how they have been constructed as 'indians' (inventions, simulations, absence) by others and by themselves, within a wider U.S. and international context... [Thus, the existing image-repertoire] can function as an important reminder to question notions of the 'real' and the 'authentic' and remain alert to the claims of any single or essentialized point of view... any criticism, whether from outside or inside (of the United States or Native cultures) [therefore] has to recognize the significance of these dual and related positions - hegemony/subversion, inside/outside, authentic/inauthentic - and chart a dialogic course through all sides so that the many dimensions can be examined and utilized in the deconstruction of such a restrictive 'ethnic grid'.¹⁷⁵

Drawing on the work of Owens as well as Vizenor, what Campbell argues is that it is not only the two primary identities produced by the colonial encounter that are rendered susceptible to reterritorialization, but even more importantly, the

virtual frontier between them. In order to engage it ironically rather than synecdochally he suggests, one must remain attentive to what he called "the zone of the trickster", which Owens, in another work, describes as "a shimmering, always changing zone of multifaceted contact within which every utterance is challenged and interrogated, all referents put into question".¹⁷⁶ In Deleuzean terms, the virtual frontier is a domain in which the actual grid of identities can be rerendered by constantly juxtaposing their presupposed quiddities to the haecceities of which they are ultimately composed, thereby destabilizing the prevailing habits of perception and recollection that congealed them. For instance, in *The Business of Fancydancing*, there are multiple matching shots that analogize the Seattle city skyline and the architectural environment of the reservation, which blend into images in which an urban dance club is at one moment a cross-cultural nonidentitarian space and in the next a specifically indigenous, yet still asubjective domain in which fancydancing rather than disco-dancing is the primary activity. Similarly, when Seymour returns to the reservation for a funeral, several shots position him as a child playing with friends in the apple trees, thereby invoking the dominant perception of indigeneity as nature and the nation-state as culture, before immediately positioning him as an adult sitting in his car in a manner that suggests an ontology of nature-cultures, in which the two are always already inseparable.

And the persistent refraction of Seymour's body as well as that of other Native Americans, through digital video cameras, home windows, store windows, car windows and mirrors allows Alexie to rework post-cinematic visual language. In doing so, he is enabled to destabilize prior representations of Indianness that relied on Platonic distinctions of model and copy so as to arrive at the more dynamic materiality of the simulacrum itself. Rather than simply seeing "the Indian" as an unproblematic, self-evidential figure as in Curtis' *The North American Indian* or even the more variegated sa(l)vage articulated in Cameron's *Avatar*, the question becomes therefore, how to make the microcolonial image-repertoire stutter, such that the virtual potentiality within could begin to emerge.

Alexie's assertion in other words, seems to be that the challenge today is not that of arguing that Native Americans constitute a noble, heroic people, radically distinct from those typically associated with citizen-subjectivity. Rather, as Elias Sanbar matter-of-factly suggests of the Palestinians with respect to Israel in his interview with Deleuze, what an immanentist political aesthetic would affirm is that, much to the contrary, "they are a people like any other". The implication, given Alexie's concern with Indianness as simulacrum, does not seem to be that it's only *suyapi*, the primarily Euro-American descendants and beneficiaries of the original settlers, who are complicit with the reproduction of microcolonial modes of subjectivity. Rather it is also Native Americans themselves, who often continue to play into practices they were subjected to historically by naturalizing invented traditions that are instantiated by way of the reproduction of the nature-culture split. What is introduced by Alexie is the collapse of that dualism, such that those things that are typically taken for granted as nature can be denaturalized and thereby placed into dialogue with culture. For instance, in one scene in *The Business of Fancydancing*, Seymour asked a woman he briefly dated before coming out, "how did we ever make frybread sacred? This stuff is so bad for us. Indians are too fat, you know?" Of course, the subtext was that the original frybread recipe emerged during the imprisonment of 8,000 Navajos by US forces in the late 19th century, an improvisation upon the meager food supplies provided them, including "lard, flour, salt, sugar, baking powder or yeast, and powdered milk".

But as Alexie emphasizes, the extent to which it is accepted as tradition is already contentious: as an article by Suzan Shown Harjo put it in *Indian Country Today*, "if frybread were a movie, it would be hardcore porn. No redeeming qualities, zero nutrition". As a counterpart to this relatively recent naturalization of what is often regarded as tradition, another scene from the film suggests that the naturalization of heteronormativity is equally temporally-enframed, as shown in the juxtaposed images of Seymour's reservation-based cultural habitus of today

compared to the much more pluralist recollection he retained of his grandmother. As he recounted from a conversation with her when he first came out, she had told him a story of a male chicken who wiggled its tail in front of another rooster, waiting for it to mount. And yet, she went on to say, she happily ate it: “that was my grandmother’s way of saying a gay chicken is still just a chicken. And it didn’t matter to her if it was gay or not”. As in the posthumanist becoming-with affirmed by Haraway, Native Americans, homosexuals, chickens and citizen-subjects are all ontologically equal in this film, despite being differently positioned. Thus just as Sanbar claimed in his interview that “Zionism has imprisoned the Jews”, we might well recall Glissant’s similar assertion that Columbus, by which he meant also his beneficiaries, has colonized himself. In order for this mutual captivity to be deposed therefore, not only must “the colonized” decolonize themselves, but “the colonizer” must too, that is, if both are to attain a politics in which they can be simply, a people like others.

Nevertheless, the microcolonial control of perception cannot be undone simply by ignoring it: emancipation does not lie in the transcendental destruction of the spectacle, for neither the diffuse nor the integrated form hold sway as they once did. Indeed, as Ranciere has insisted, spectatorship today is itself always already an actively-engaged process, one that constantly threatens the intended meanings of the author. And since truth is primarily a question of alternate lenses through which it is only ever approximated, neither the exertion of centrifugal nor centripetal force upon perception can ever adequately reach it. Indeed, as stated in *The Emancipated Spectator*, which is amongst other things, Ranciere’s critique of Debord, “the main source for the critique of the spectacle is, of course, Feuerbach’s critique of religion. It is what sustains that critique - namely, the Romantic idea of truth as unseparateness. But that idea itself remains in line with the Platonic disparagement of the mimetic image”.¹⁷⁷ Thus for Ranciere, an emancipated spectator does not disparage but affirms the reality of the mimetic image in a self-overcoming of subject and object alike, becoming opened up in the process to the repluralization of vision. In short, what radical spectatorship

entails is that which we've already suggested in relation to *Avatar*: deterritorializing the previous visual assemblage in accordance with the notion that "habit draws something new from repetition - namely, difference".¹⁷⁸

Following this line of thought, since cultural particularity is also a product of repetition, we can infer that it too can become deessentialized and opened up to affirmative, singular redeployments, especially since the processual nature by which it is perceived and thereby materialized is rendered perceptible by it. Cezanne's insistence on this point is telling: in a manner that moreover, precedes contemporary neuroscience much as Proust did, he famously asserted that "the eye is not enough, one needs to think as well".¹⁷⁹ And of course, contemporary neuroscience certainly confirms this, insofar as it shows that the spectacle is not overcome by returning from the acentered state of things back to centered perception. Rather, it only ever is by thinking as well, not by simplifying but by complicating further, "go[ing] back up toward the acentered state of things, and [thereby] get[ting] closer to it".¹⁸⁰ Taking this into account, perhaps we might conclude by reconsidering *Avatar* by way of the two versions of Curtis' photograph, then reading each of them by way of Alexie's film. What it demonstrates most immediately of course, is that so long as a critical mode of reception is brought to bear upon it, even an image of the sa(l)vage can be redeployed in opposition to the grid of identities and in favor instead of a rhizomatic indigeneity. While the finished work was generally taken as the final materialization of *In A Piegan Lodge*, there is no reason that early versions, later revisions, inevitable weathering and other such alterations should not be considered as of at least equal interest as the finished piece.¹⁸¹ Applied to *Avatar*, this would suggest at a minimum, the instability of the cultural object, not only in terms of production but also reception, since it is precisely this indeterminacy between worlds rather than their autonomy that matters most. Because politics is never about one world but rather "the contradiction of two worlds in a single world: the world where they are and the world where they are not, the world

where there is something 'between' them and those who do not acknowledge them as speaking beings who count".¹⁸²

Despite his formidable critique of Curtis therefore, we might recall that Vizenor himself argued not only that the original "with the clock has a curious elegance and inspires a visual analogy [while] the retouched photogravure without the clock is fakery and disanalogy",¹⁸³ but also his assertion that many Native Americans actually celebrate the imagery for reasons that are not reducible to the internalization of microcolonial perception.¹⁸⁴ The task then, is neither analogy or disanalogy alone, but an affirmation of ontological difference that itself derives from the collapse of every remnant of the dualism of substance: this of course, is the "univocity of being".¹⁸⁵ In the work of Barbara Maria Stafford, analogical imagery is defined as "an active, aesthetic, creative connection in the visual arts",¹⁸⁶ which, as applied by Vizenor "in the sense of natives...[is] a desire to achieve a human union in visual images, rather than a cultural separation in language. Analogy absolves the distance and discrepancies of pictorialist and ethnographic pictures of natives by restoring a sense of visual reason".¹⁸⁷ Implicitly then, disanalogical imagery would be that which reimposes the veil of ignorance, imposing a center of political gravity that reifies the apriority of reason over sensation, culture over nature and citizenship over indigeneity, each of which in their own way mobilize the sa(l)vage. Vizenor redeems *In a Piegan Lodge* therefore, in a manner that is not unlike Cezanne's statement, insofar as he draws attention to the fact that rather than simply passively receiving photons alone, in order for vision to become possible, "one needs to think as well".¹⁸⁸

While the dualism of identity/difference that is at the heart of the postwar cultural habitus might suggest the contrary, contemporary neuroscientific research confirms that as Stafford herself puts it, "it is impossible to have a sophisticated theory of difference without an equally nuanced conception of similarity".¹⁸⁹ However, far from emphasizing analogy alone, it is also suggested therein that the similar is not the same thing as the identical: as Heidegger emphasized, "we can

only say 'the same' if we think difference".¹⁹⁰ It is this that the a rhizomatic politics suggests, as seen in Vizenor's reading of the original Curtis photograph, as an overcoming of the subject/object distinction consolidated in the second version.¹⁹¹ But just as not every form of analogizing is equally emancipatory, neither does every form of particularity further the microcolonial project as such. Especially in light of the centripetalization of the cultural habitus, in which no identity is wholly autonomous, the virtual project of differentiating is never the same as the actual project of differentiating.¹⁹² Whereas the former concerns the manner in which identity is problematized, the latter concerns the actualization of what emerged in the process, as for instance in the manner in which Vizenor problematized the indigenous subject in order to affirm the postindian.

It is in this virtual frontier then, that we might begin to produce instead an alternate mode of "empathic vision"¹⁹³ defined not merely as a positive extension of the liberal, individuated self, but rather as "a form of encounter predicated on an openness to a mode of existence or experience beyond what is known by the self".¹⁹⁴ In such a movement from differentiation to differentiation, the closure that microcolonial habits of perception and recollection ensure is opened up, even if the stock imagery suggest that only analogy can disrupt the cultural habitus. Thus, not only must identification be heteropathic,¹⁹⁵ but so must the relation between art and thought begin with sensitivity and affect as opposed to intelligence and reason. Drawing on *Proust and Signs*, Jill Bennet makes this argument by noting that the image of the sign as felt rather than recognized can become the basis for a more empathic encounter between subject-positions than that that enabled currently. In this manner she engages both analogy and heteropathy, but within the more primary sphere of the affect out of which reason is ultimately composed. As she notes:

Deleuze's argument is not simply...that sensation is an end in itself, but that feeling is a catalyst for critical inquiry or deep thought; we assume, he says, that the best philosophy is motivated by a love of wisdom, but this is

not, in fact, the case, since there is nothing that compels rational inquiry. For Deleuze, affect or emotion is a more effective trigger for profound thought because of the way it grasps us, forcing us to engage involuntarily¹⁹⁶

From this perspective, the immersive experience of *Avatar* is not so easily dismissed either, particularly since there is no telling what modes of thought the experience might produce, either in the immediate moment or afterward in retrospect. As might be argued by Proust, an alternate sensory-memory disposition must be cultivated beginning with the lifting of the veil of ignorance in which one is simply an autonomous individual, so as to engage relationality as such. Furthermore, heteropathic identification is not exclusively reserved for the most dominant groups, but can just as easily enable cross-cultural encounters on multiple fronts that might have been impossible before. Despite what some viewers of *Avatar* might assume, becoming-minoritarian does not literally mean becoming-Indian, which would only be to fail to move from differentiation to differentiation, but much to the contrary becoming a haecceity that overflows the boundaries of citizen-subjectivity. Indeed, it would proceed just as the postindian does to overflow the limits of indigenous subjectivity, since "affect is not merely encoded into a subject body but dispersed throughout the landscape in a manner that creates the possibility of its communalization".¹⁹⁷ It is within this domain, which we might call that of the everyday sublime, and not that clichéd sublime produced by Hobbesian or Rousseauan assumptions, that there remains a glimmer of hope. Which is to say that which recognizes that as it was put by Glissant, "creolization creates a new land before us, and in this process of creation, it helps us to liberate Columbus from himself".¹⁹⁸ What the aesthetic of *The Business of Fancydancing* demonstrates when juxtaposed to *Avatar* in this respect is that it is ultimately creativity in the face of new technology, rather than the reification of the technology in and of itself that counts. For while Cameron spent hundreds of millions of dollars making the most widely-experienced image of the sa(l)vage, Alexie's meager fraction of that cost contributed to repluralizing of experience as

such, even if only in preparation for further changes in the future. What this should remind us of is Benjamin's assertion in "Experience and Poverty", when asked what a depluralizing experience can still offer, if anything, to one who has been forced into its aesthetic barbarism: "it forces him to start from scratch; to make a new start; to make a little go a long way".¹⁹⁹

Chapter Three

Sound



"The charm of music dwells not in the tones but in the echoes of our hearts"

- Marcel Proust

It is a well-known piece of postwar musical trivia that the Memphis-based Sun Records producer Sam Phillips once said that if he could find a white man with the “Negro sound”²⁰⁰ he could make a million dollars. That statement in fact, might well turn out to be the most telling utterance with respect to race, perception and power, in the period from the end of the Second World War to the presidency of Barack Obama. Whereas in the past, Euro-American figures like Elvis Presley had to stand in for those who could be heard but not seen, his emergence produced more large-format photo books, video documentaries, image-based magazine specials and additional visual culture than any president prior to him.²⁰¹ But aside from that fact, why this sudden, unprecedented tolerance for the so-called “Negro sound”, even while the sight of blackness remained taboo in popular culture until at least the early Eighties,²⁰² if not well into the first decade of the 21st century? As in the previous chapter, at least part of the answer lies in the depluralizing of the cultural habitus in the postwar period, which was enabled by way of a political ontology that produced a relief effect between the sensory organ itself and that which it perceived. This was one that was based no

longer upon adherence to a norm that excluded others entirely, but that now interiorized alterity according to the degree of divergence it registered.²⁰³ In the case of vision, once the training of perception produced the desired result, the phenotypical difference of Native Americans was obscured. And as we have shown, the transformed image it was then assimilated to rendered it indistinct from other identities that were then presumed still-present rather than presently absent. At the same time, the sublimity ascribed to Native Americans in the early Hobbesian and later Rousseauian narratives was reconsolidated as a new organizing force that would assure for many audiences ensure the continuing thrall of citizen-subjectivity. Most important however, was that although the synecdochal imagery through which the Native American subject was perceived became more variegated, its haecceity became all the more imperceptible, as in the microcolonial conflicts of Los Angeles and Seattle, not to mention the reception of *Avatar*. But what can be said analogously about the popular acculturation to a so-called “Negro sound” in the postwar period with respect to these same themes of perceptibility and imperceptibility or exclusion and inclusion, in relation to race?

Just as the prewar and postwar period could be divided according to macrocolonial and microcolonial habits of perception and recollection in relation to indigeneity, so too can we speak in relation to race of a prewar macroracial and postwar microracial habitus. Through the consolidation of a new auditory habitus, the perception of the African-American subject became more variegated but also more totalizing. In particular, this occurred by occluding that which W.E.B Du Bois has described as remaining “within the veil”.²⁰⁴ Rather than ascribing a clichéd concept of sublimity to blackness, it proceeded through a reassessment of the beautiful that interiorized previously eschewed music, but from a vantage point that still retained citizen-subjectivity at the center. As a result, the deplurality of experience with respect to the perception of African-Americans in sound became at least as elusive to immediate sensibility as it had been with respect to Native Americans. Since it was widely believed to be the one domain in

which macroracial stratification had been replaced with postracial reconciliation, the new microracial modes of continuing inequality remained largely unperceived. Much like Proust's character Swann who habitualized the tones of Vinteuil's little phrase as always already associated with Odette, the new auditory presence of African-American cultural objects became associated with integration, but in a manner that was still hierarchical. Indeed, as with Phillips' conjoining of white vision and black sound in the figure of Elvis, this enabled music to serve as an auditory substitute for what was otherwise excluded, so long as it was identified from citizen-subjectivity's unmarked center.

Rather than the terminology utilized by the Memphis producer however, this phenomena is perhaps more tellingly conceptualized in Trudier Harris' notion of "invisible blackness",²⁰⁵ through which she critically engages the racial aspects of the sense ratio that constituted the postwar period. Aside from depluralizing experience by partitioning the senses, it also ensured that while equality remained partial in other milieu, those who sought its extension could at least be consoled that "America's music is more democratic than America's people".²⁰⁶ Whereas in the macroracial habitus of the prewar period, the blues and jazz genres developed in conditions of relative autonomy, in the microracial equivalent afterward, both were made to conform to a regime of expectation that, as in Phillips' famous statement, now embraced a particular mode of blackness, that which remained invisible so as to maintain exchange-value. Thus it is no surprise that racial reconciliation after the World Wars amplified sounds that expressed these imperatives while muting those that did not. For the auditory habitus had been reterritorialized as a kind of shock absorber, responding to the deterritorializations that rhythm-and-blues and rock-and-roll initially enabled by neutralizing their effect. The cultural reassessment of the beautiful in this period then, while it constituted many important shifts initially, later prevented the kind of violence in thought that occurred for instance, when in *ISLT*, Swann heard Vinteuil's little orchestral phrase as "the sudden pain [that] gave him back the days themselves".²⁰⁷ Postwar music culture was based not on the dynamism of

sensation as such, but on a logic that Leroi Jones in *Blues People*, describes as that concerned with transforming “verbs to nouns”.²⁰⁸

It was in this manner that the cultural habitus was microracially reconstituted so as to affirm not beauty as such, in the sense that anything could potentially be judged to be, but rather only that which congealed within the thrall of its hierarchical center of gravity. Assembling the desired tension between the perceptible and the imperceptible, which is to say, between that which conformed to the dominant aesthetic imperative and that which did not, was a central component of this process. As such, the embrace only of a liberal pluralism, demonstrable within the general populace at large through the introjection of invisible blackness in the form of records, tapes, CDs or MP3s, became not only compatible with but crucial to white supremacy. For, rather than an objective overcoming of inequality as such, what the post-Civil Rights era produced was a new sense ratio predicated upon an uneven relation between subjectivities just as it did in the relation between the senses. Despite celebrations after the 2008 presidential election, the extent to which this continued nevertheless becomes especially clear when one considers the functioning of the youth culture industry, in relation to race. Whereas previously, it often contested racial hierarchy through a musical metaxis of the virtual and the actual,²⁰⁹ of differentiation and differentiation, these were largely abandoned by the time of the rise of network culture²¹⁰. While Stuart Hall famously noted in his 1968 book *The Hippies: an American ‘Moment’*, that “hippie society remained...strikingly a part of white America”,²¹¹ at least in that case it was acknowledged that race was indeed, an issue. What has characterized the most recent instantiations of youth culture has been the assumption that it no longer is, or that if it is, it is only as a laughable throwback to previous time.

Perhaps this is not surprising, since unlike the microcolonial habitus which had been upheld through the projection of the sa(l)vage onto an environment that rendered them presently absent, that which proceeded microracially was instead

produced through the introjection of invisible blackness. This was then verified by reference to a demonstrably tolerant music archive, which as Hall argued, could then be used to avoid rather than encounter the issue of race. Particularly when popular appreciation for black aesthetic value no longer interrupted citizen-subjectivity as it had in the period of late jump blues and early rock-and-roll, it could then be consumed such that its reception would be, to *Blues People* again, that of the noun rather than the verb. While a modified version of Hall's nomenclature for the early 21st century would probably require reference to the hipster rather than the hippie, recent technological and economic changes have only further exemplified up his claims. Thus the process that Pierre Bourdieu theorized in his *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* as "pleasure as a duty"²¹² has come full circle, such that rather than black music being disruptive, today it is largely palliative.²¹³ Taking that into account however, it should not be forgotten that the shift from industrial to consumer capitalism and from folk to mass culture over the course of the postwar period was what gave birth to the youth culture industry. Since this was "the process by which modern industrial society detach[ed] children from their families and socialize[d] them into the wider social system",²¹⁴ a reconsideration of how that process has taken place in relation to microracial processes would be useful.

The transformations involved were of course, fraught: since the medium for negotiating the differentiation and differentiation of racial engagement was that of aesthetics, it became a node not only for the manufacture of consent but also dissent, within the interstices between the judgment of the beautiful as well as between use-value and exchange-value.²¹⁵ Despite his reputation otherwise, even Theodor Adorno admitted that youth who changed their listening habits from the consumerist aesthetic of Tin Pan Alley (e.g., "How Much Is That Doggy In the Window?") to the more ambiguous reverberations of rock-and-roll, understood themselves however briefly, as rejecting the cloistered, oppressive culture of the adult world. And as Dick Hebdidge has chronicled, a veritable parade of subcultures have since marched through this gap, many of whom extended the

initial microracial modes of control into more transversal milieu. But while youth culture has always been produced in this manner, the situation in today's network culture is especially problematic, for at the same time that it is dissolving as a demarcable demographic, what has taken its place has accelerated so intensively that the moment a divergent cultural node emerges, its use-value begins to be overcome by its exchange-value. As such, any potential radicality it might have contained is transformed more rapidly than ever from verb to noun,²¹⁶ leaving the historically critical processes unactualized. As we will see in this chapter's consideration of Spike Lee's *Bamboozled* (2000) and Barry Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy* (2009), in many ways it was precisely the rise of a post-cinematic, media environment that enabled it. But at the same time, the critique of the microracial aestheticization of the political is always also the politicization of that aesthetic, which means that new forms of differentiation are enabled.

Of course, youth culture is about nothing if it is not about judgment and given the predictable legacy that it has ensured in the contemporary moment, perhaps there is yet some value to Horkheimer and Adorno's observation that "in the culture industry respect is vanishing along with criticism [such that] the latter gives way to mechanical expertise".²¹⁷ Indeed, this argument is not easily avoided, because once again, sound has emerged such that it not only reinforces the already-dominant circuits of perception and recollection, but continues to privilege the evidence of distinction over the more involved process Nietzsche called "digestion".²¹⁸ Just as the microracial reverberations of early postwar popular culture produced a youth that feigned encyclopedic knowledge of African-American music while synecdochalizing it in the process, so too has that which emerged more recently proceeded as Benjamin puts it, by "allow[ing] *Erlebnis* to parade in the borrowed robe of *Erfahrung*".²¹⁹ But if we are to seriously engage the intersection of race, perception and power in the postwar period, we must also recognize those moments in which sound became emancipatory, hinting toward the absolute deterritorialization that was its condition of possibility. But one need not reference only Deleuze in order to circumvent Horkheimer and Adorno's

claims of the total subordination of use-value to exchange-value in the culture industry. Indeed, as one can easily discover in *Das Kapital*, Marx's own assertion was much to the contrary, that the commodity was never unidimensional but was always-already of a "dual character".²²⁰ It is for this reason that mass culture is always potentially popular and subculture is always potentially radical, even if in examples such as those we have considered thus far, the actualizations they portend are often only virtually in tension. Indeed, as we will see in our encounters *Bamboozled* and *Medicine for Melancholy*, it is precisely because of network culture's unprecedented capacity to interiorize what had previously been autonomous that we should heed Benjamin's warning that a reactive response to new forms of youth culture can itself be a conservative impulse. As he put it in an essay written when he was active in the German Youth Movement, "in our struggle for responsibility, we fight against someone who is masked. The mask of the adult is called 'experience'. But let us attempt to raise the mask. What has this adult experienced?"²²¹

Benjamin's argument here is that the disillusioned claims of lived experience often serve as a form of philistinism that ignore that the source of this prejudice is often precisely the depluralizing of experience, which is then taken for granted as though it were all that had ever existed. The source of this assumption was simply that as Benjamin put it, "he knows experience and nothing else. Because he himself is desolate and without spirit. And because he has no inner relationship to anything other than the always-already out-of-date".²²² Speaking again from the perspective of the German Youth Movement, he retorted, "we, however, know something different, which is that experience can neither give to us nor take away: that truth exists, even if all previous thought has been an error".²²³ Tellingly, the section is grounded halfway through by Friedrich Schiller's famous line from *Don Carlos* in which Rodrigo says of his boyhood friend who is attempting to re-enlist in the struggle against Spain's Phillip II, "tell him that when he becomes a man he should revere the dreams of his youth"²²⁴ In contrast with the adult who dismisses the repluralizing of experience, Benjamin's assertion is that "the youth

will experience spirit, and the less effortlessly he attains greatness, the more he will encounter spirit everywhere in his wanderings and in every person. When he becomes a man, the youth will be compassionate. The philistine is intolerant".²²⁵ Certainly, the mechanical expertise often enlisted in youth culture can be a form of philistinism, but hope does not lie in the return to some originary authenticity that has now been lost. Rather, as Spike Lee's and Barry Jenkin's post-cinematic interventions demonstrate, what is needed today is a positive barbarism, one that functions on the same plateau as the postracial but to different ends.

Of course, it goes without saying that observations about the ambiguity of youth and its potentially effects on the unity of political community are not themselves recent. Indeed, they reach back throughout the history of Western political thought, at least to Book II of Plato's *Republic*. There it had been argued that the proper training of the guardians begins with the music encountered in childhood, which he held to be the foundation from which character is formed. And as commentators on the youth culture industry of today have noted as well, he too anticipated the potentially fraught process of cultivating auditory distinction in children that would properly detach them from their families and socialize them into the wider social system. Plato's assertion was that only Dorian and Phrygian harmonies and rhythms would be rendered perceptible, while complex, aesthetically-challenging songs would be banned, lest they produce other kinds of dispositions than those desired by the Republic. Here, one can hear echoes of Benjamin's philistine, the adult who perceives his own experience to have been universally-applicable apart from time and space, even when it is a very particular form of it. But one also hears echoes of Virilio's figure of the subcultural youth who reproduces the aesthetics of disappearance that are the condition of possibility for depluralizing experience. In response to both, it is Plato's summary of his teachings in Book IV that is most telling, which he makes by citing a Dorian warning: "when modes of music change, the most fundamental laws of the State always change with them".²²⁶ For Plato as for his inheritors, the cultural distinction derived from the process of musical introjection became the most

potent form of dressage "because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten, imparting grace, and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful, or him who is ill-educated ungraceful".²²⁷ The common presupposition about what specifically constitutes either one is what unites the philistine and the hipster. Only one who retains a critical relation to the relief effect through which sensation is trained really confronts the arbitrariness of citizen-subjectivity, because it is only in doing so that one becomes capable of either producing new sounds, or of listening to those that exist in a different manner.

As in the *Republic*, the postwar United States also cultivated a cultural habitus that would accord with its rise to hegemony. It proceeded by changing not only the law itself, but by interrupting the visceral layers of the sensory-memory habitus that were becoming deterritorialized, enabling them to mobilize exchange and "lay the foundations of their fortress in music".²²⁸ Biopolitically speaking, what this produced was not only the display of the symbolic capital suddenly accorded to the consumer of previously abject African-American music, but also one's belonging to the economic class for whom such status displays mattered. Indeed, as David Hesmondhalgh has observed, whereas in the past powerful groups projected their superiority through acts of direct violence, today "displays of efforts to experiment with new lifestyles and tastes become increasingly important [since] being a sensitive emotional individual is a key marker of superiority".²²⁹ Thus, if one is to successfully avoid the entrapments of the philistine as well as the hipster, one must also keep in mind that "music can be part of status battles to show one's openness to a variety of lifestyle pleasures and superior emotional range".²³⁰ Given this shift in the manner in which invisible blackness was experienced one can also grasp the instrumentality with which Louis Armstrong, Dizzie Gillespie, Duke Ellington and the other "Jazz Ambassadors" were deployed worldwide to Eastern Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. Much like those in the postwar period who displayed erudition devoid of digestion, so too were these musicians instrumentalized as synecdochal

evidence of the country's superior collective tolerance, particularly in the face of images to the contrary deployed by the Soviet Union. As a "Secret Sonic Weapon",²³¹ the rhythms and melodies of previously disparaged folk culture were transformed from verb to noun, as a means through which, to cite an article in the *New York Times*, "to counter Soviet propaganda portraying the United States as culturally barbaric...[since] many jazz bands were...racially mixed [they were] a potent symbol in the mid to late '50s, when segregation in the South was tarnishing the American image".²³²

Nevertheless, as Marx insisted with respect to the commodity's dual character, reterritorialization of use by exchange always already enables the further deterritorialization of exchange by use. As such, no cultural object is ever simply static, but is always in a state of becoming. For instance, while the task of displaying an already-accomplished pluralism was important to the State Department's global designs, it was also precisely because of this that Louis Armstrong was able to refuse participation in a 1957 trip to the Soviet Union in protest of the government's failure to send National Guard troops to Little Rock in order to integrate the high school. It was only after they did so that the musician referred by them to as "Ambassador Satchmo" rejoined the project, making plans for a subsequent tour through South America, effectively withdrawing his initial protest, "it's getting so bad, a colored man hasn't got a country".²³³ What this demonstrates of course, is that the only way to prevent musical innovation as well as the culturo-political shifts associated with it was to immediately interiorize it, as though it were always already expressive of a totality that would otherwise have been fragmented. In other words, in order to avoid the tendency by which, as it is put in the *Republic*, "mankind most regard 'the newest song which the singers have'"²³⁴, they had to recode not only the auditory materiality of the song itself, but also the manner in which it resonated with listeners in the tension between use and exchange. But is also in this respect that we should recall the first question posed by Aristotle in the section of *Problems* concerned with the aporia of music (Book XIX): "why do those who are grieving and those who are enjoying

themselves alike have the flute played to them?"²³⁵ Here, the argument that specific tones naturally correspond to specific affects is placed in question: rather the argument is much closer to that engaged by Marx, that by redirecting attention towards use, the dual character of the commodity reveals that they are always already open to recoding beyond the judgment inculcated by dominant modes of perception and recollection.²³⁶

Proust makes much the same case with respect to music when he invokes Vinteuil's little phrase in *ISLT*: initially it is associated by Swann with Odette, which is why it is alternately painful and pleasurable for him to encounter. Compared to that which his voluntary memory recalls, that enlivened by the involuntary provides a greater intensity and returns him to his best moments with her from the past. For the narrator however, the phrase's true power lies not only in the perception or recollection itself but in its capacity for totally free association, which is to say its ability to become the raw material for an artistic creation that can then make all other signs resonate. The postwar reterritorialization of African-American musics through the introjection of symbolic capital is a bridging of this gap in that while the production of a structure of feeling is still the task, the relationship upon which it is based no longer requires specific melodies or rhythms. As in Proust's preference not just for involuntary recollection or unconscious perception but for the pure affirmation of creation, it is not a question of models vs. copies, or of authentic vs. inauthentic blackness, but rather of pure simulacra in which all instantiations are real and ideal, or as Proust puts it, all are "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract".²³⁷ Which means of course, that with respect to the question of judgment, the truly political moment is that identified by the Kant in the third *Critique*, which is much closer to our meaning of what we are calling the "commonly beautiful". In short, that although the potential generalizability of one's judgment is a necessary condition for an object to be regarded as beautiful, "it is not a theoretical objective necessity; in which case it would be cognized *a priori* that everyone *will feel* this delight in the object that is called beautiful by

me...[rather] he who describes anything as beautiful claims that everyone *ought* to give his approval to the object in question and also describe it as beautiful".²³⁸

Because the cultural object is not subject to totalizing representations but is experienced as though it should be in other words, the process unlocks the free play of the faculties which enables critical reflection on the means by which sensation is transformed into representation and pure simulacra is transformed into models and copies. Although it is often mobilized in the service of illegitimate power and authority therefore, the beautiful's most radical vocation lies not in the perceptible, but in the capacity it enables for a becoming-imperceptible, for an encounter with repluralizing experience. Indeed, it should not be forgotten that the latter process is that which we have heretofore been theorizing as the depluralizing of experience: the beautiful enables its interruption so that the processes called for by Benjamin and Deleuze can commence. This realization indeed, enables alternate modes of judgment that are often at odds with those that are currently ascendant. The third *Critique* politicizes aesthetics insofar as it deposes the common sense deriving from the forms while enabling the simulacra founded upon subjective rather than objective necessity. Much closer to Marx's emphasis on use-value as the virtual always already haunting exchange, aesthetic judgment at its highest moment turns the object into a means without end, a "purposiveness without purpose".²³⁹ That which is identified by Horkheimer and Adorno as mechanical expertise however, is mobilized for the accumulation of symbolic capital and is predicated not on the mobilization but the prevention of the free play of the faculties, such that the understanding is placed at the service of the imagination, but the reverse. Repluralizing experience however, does not mean giving up aesthetic judgment, but recognizing the contingency of taste as it appears within particular coordinates of time and space. In other words, engaging the free play of the faculties rather than naturalizing their hierarchical distribution. It is in this manner that we should read Kant's statement that "even the song of birds, which we can bring under no musical rule,

seems to have more freedom, and therefore more taste, than a song of a human being which is produced in accordance with all the rules of music".²⁴⁰

This chapter then, engages the microracial habitus of the postwar period by foregrounding the tension between the commonly beautiful, which is articulated as open to determination, and its ready-to-hand equivalent that is presupposed as inviolable. In the first section we do so by considering the use of sound in Spike Lee's *Bamboozled* (2000) as a means by which to critique the musical introjection of invisible blackness as a new foundation for citizen-subjectivity. Through this lens we engage the arguments of Adorno about the process through which African-American music was integrated into mass culture, such that doing so failed to interrupt the existing relations of power and authority. In order to take seriously the depluralizing implications this entailed, we then proceed to consider those of Benjamin on the subject of technological reproducibility, which became an object of concern for both of them. In this way, we will see that microracial habitus as it emerged within postwar popular culture can be characterized as one of conformity and rupture alike, that which Eric Lott described as "Love and Theft".²⁴¹ In order to consider the former, we dedicate the second section to the question of repluralizing experience by interrogating youth culture as it is interrogated in the post-cinematic works of African-American filmmakers. To this end, we engage Barry Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy* (2008), which also renders the microracial habitus in a manner allowing for the emergence of a profoundly dissensual redeployment of sound. As in the previous chapter, the task will not be to affirm a particular mode of subjectivity, but to grasp the movement of deterritorialization and reterritorialization through which they are constantly being reconstituted. As we will argue, this does not entail putting aside the project of musical erudition, but rather approaching it from the perspective of profane illumination. In this way, rather than reproducing the existing presuppositions through which competitive individualism produces citizen-subjectivity in the process of judgment, we encounter instead the free play of the faculties through

which the new can emerge not only in prescribed domains, but also in those that are proscribed.

3.1 Depluralizing Sound: Spike Lee's *Bamboozled* (2000)

As noted above, one of the more typical assumptions about race in the postwar United States is that the Civil Rights movement overturned inequality as such and that this was made possible by the emergence of a newly pluralist disposition amongst the citizenry. But as the critical race theorist Derrick Bell has argued, neither such landmark cases as *Brown v. Board of Education* nor the affective shifts that enabled it are alone the crucial component. For it could not have succeeded to the extent that it did without the interest convergence it sought to propagate intranationally with more planetary designs that were already in place internationally.²⁴² Indeed, as suggested in our consideration of the Jazz Ambassadors, the rise of the United States as the central world power after the World Wars required the reterritorialization of the cultural habitus upon which it was based, since the dominant habits of perception and recollection had become ruptured. The interiorization and neutralization of African-American movements in particular, through interventions as the State Department's realignment of musical associations with the Jazz Ambassadors, enabled a form of control far more difficult to oppose than that of the prewar disciplinary society. By redeploying African-American music as having transcended the virtual differentiation it had attained in popular culture, state power and authority were restabilized through indirect symbolic rather than direct physical violence. This was convenient of course, since it allowed for the redeployment as blackness as a synecdoche of an increasingly tolerant structure of feeling throughout mass culture. Just as Bourdieu pointed out in his own context, a tolerant musical taste served a similar function in the United States, contributing to the appearance of a more refined cultural sensitivity at the very moment that affect became an important attribute of national subjectivity not only intranationally but also internationally. Just as symbolic capital stood in for economic capital in the

reconstitution of class hierarchy after the French Revolution, so too did it serve as a justification for microracial reconstitution in the wake of Civil Rights.

The political ontology of invisible blackness then, was predicated on the folding of a depluralizing aesthetic into the auditory habitus that was inseparable from a mechanical expertise. This is belied not only by the aesthetic segregation of black music apart from that considered popular, but also by way of the generalized imperceptibility thereby imposed. In this section though, we will argue that Bourdieu's theory of distinction does not necessarily conflict with this process as might be assumed, since the control of minor particularities is not undone by simply revaluing cultural objects as tastes of necessity. Indeed, doing so more often than not leads to mechanical expertise: and as Bell implies in the broader legal sense, this is one of the most reterritorializing forms of subjectivization not only for African-American communities from which the music derives, but also for those whose consumption produces a merely liberal pluralism. Indeed, this is essentially what is stated in Ranciere's argument that the most radical moment of Kant's analysis of the beautiful is not when the free play of the faculties is frozen within the already-existing milieu as reterritorializing "tastes of luxury", but when that sphere is itself opened up to that from which it was previously excluded. The point then, is neither to oppose nor to reproduce the appreciation of the beautiful as now valued, since doing so would imply an ontological inequality of capacity, but rather repluralizing what was culturo-politically depluralized in the nation's rise to global hegemony. Indeed, as Kennan Ferguson observed well over a decade ago, judgment itself is not the problem, for while "judgments are the bases of political identities...no thing has only one possible meaning, reading or analysis. Judgments are thus never predetermined; multiple judgments are always possible".²⁴³

Spike Lee's *Bamboozled*, one of the earliest films to critically deploy a post-cinematic aesthetic, was also one of the first to pose the question of judgment's impact on the cultural habitus and its complicity with assumptions of the

postracial. Above all, within the frame of the film, what occurs is that the hip, white figure of Dunwitty is juxtaposed to square, black figure of Delacroix, in order to call into question the depluralizing of experience through the production of cultural objects contingently marked by discourses of authenticity and inauthenticity alike. In addition to the narrative and other linguistic elements however, it is the post-cinematic quality of the film registered in its mixed-media look and multivalent sound that enable it to mobilize an intervention that counters the effects of ready-to-hand judgment. For instance, with respect to the visual axis, Lee worked with cinematographer Ella Kuras to shoot the project primarily on a camera that had previously been used for prosumer digital video and Internet-based applications, rather than film or TV. Indeed, the Sony VX-1000 was the first mini-DV camera to enable downloading of audiovisual material to consumer-grade Macintosh or PC computers. Although it would still be years before YouTube and other Internet video portals became common, it was this factor more than any other that set the process into motion. Rather than simply reproducing the already-existing film or TV look, they instead sought to invoke elements of TV and cinema by tweaking the appearance of the digital video itself, remediating it in order to create a new, critical aesthetic language that would be irreducible to any of them alone. Indeed, particularly in terms of the film's chromatic dimension, the finished product was visually quite distinct from most existing imagery, which as was Lee and Kuras relate, was what allowed it to render an otherwise invisible blackness visible. As it was put by the latter, "although generated on video, the final color-corrected visuals wouldn't really be considered 'video' nor would they try exclusively to emulate film".²⁴⁴

This post-cinematic approach as we saw with Cameron's and Alexie's films in the previous chapter, was the product of the primacy of the simulacra itself, rather than simply the original on the one hand or its reproduction on the other. Irreducible to either the presumed authenticity of sharp-focus, full-spectrum film or the presumed inauthenticity of pixellated, high-contrast TV, the intentionally mixed-media image combined with the film's narrative to break with the

dominant political ontology. Indeed, as noted specifically with respect to invisible blackness, Lee and Kuras intentionally scrambled the existing codes not only as they had been accorded to African-Americans, but also of theretofore possible moving-image mediums. Paradoxically shooting on warm Super 16 film for the implicitly diagetic TV segments and cold mini-DV for non-diagetic everyday life, they did so in order to render perceptible the produced nature of the latter in a broad sense and the very real effects of the former otherwise. It was against this backdrop that Kuras asserted that rather than simply reproducing the existing presuppositions accorded to either one, “this [choice] introduced a different sense of reality into the idea of this television show and brought it into a much more visceral sensibility”.²⁴⁵ Similarly, the team confounded the existing regime of expectation by employing film-style lighting for the mini-DV shots rather than acquiescing to the expectation that digital video does not require illumination. It was this and not only the unconventional narrative that enabled *Bamboozled*’s unprecedentedly dynamic critique of invisible blackness, because whereas it was typically only audible in the most clichéd of forms, here it was rendered not only visible in a general sense, but in a multiplicity of iterations, while the sound was also problematized. Indeed, in what the cinematographer described as the “classic Spike shot”, the character Delacroix opens the film with the room panoramically spinning around behind him as Damon Wayans sit on the dolly. Doing so anchored the filmic locus of enunciation in neither a presumptive whiteness nor a received blackness, but instead in the pure simulacra of the post-cinematic itself, one coupled with Stevie Wonder’s haunting song about the relation of race and representation.

This plural assemblage of mediums of course also enabled a plural potential of aesthetic judgments, the existence of which more broadly is the reason the image of the hipster remains an important element of the sensory-memory habitus upon which postwar citizen-subjectivity rests. Not because the term, insofar as it refers to the aesthetic identity *par excellence* could be so easily dismissed, but rather because it couldn’t be, since it referenced not an identity per se but a disposition.

Much like the mixed-media problematization of authenticity and inauthenticity in Lee and Kuras' aesthetic, it could be critiqued as Hall did in relation to the hippie, but never in a manner that did not itself reproduce elements of what it pointed out. Of course, as is well known, the term hip is an adaptation of *hepicaat*, derived from the West African Wolof language of modern-day Senegal, which originally refers not to a subjectivity derived from the judgment of the audible, but rather one that troped the visible, "one who has his eyes open". It was only after the United States' rise to planetary hegemony that its meaning became inverted such that it was the relation to sound rather than sight that was at issue. It is no surprise therefore, that the term has almost always referenced a denizen of youth culture whose aesthetic judgments have become sufficiently loosened so as tolerate previously-eschewed music but insufficiently so as to produce humility in relation to it. Of course, as with the State Department's deployment of the Jazz Ambassadors internationally, the reconstitution of the populace intranationally involved not only a revaluing of the beautiful but also of capitalism's claim to a superior plurality compared to socialism, which it represented as homogenizing and opposed to freedom. Indeed, the display of a liberal tolerant aesthetic sensibility more often than not confined African-American cultural expression to aesthetic segregation. Meanwhile, the equivalent legal judgment served not only to win non-Western peoples over to global capitalism but also to reterritorialize minor populations within, so they would not become swept up in the cultural and political transformations that emerged at the time.

More than any of Lee's work, it is *Bamboozled* that addresses this question, or at least its aftermath as it exists today: to begin, the most fundamental thing that it does is that it reverses the hierarchy of sound over sight through which microracial habits of perception and recollection were assimilated into the cultural habitus. But it also remediates the representations that characterized the period, while mobilizing a mixed-media televisual and cinematic image to contest liberal presuppositions of a clean break between past and present. Indeed, as Lee's director's commentary on the DVD suggests, a major theme for him was the

notion that minstrelsy continues to play a part in the production of citizen-subjectivity, even in the more inclusive version of it, which in the guise of a sensitivity to tastes of necessity, often reproduces the very aesthetic segregation upon which the more generalized stratification of African-Americans continued:

People think that because blackface was a relic of the past that therefore they can't get caught up in this, that the issues in this film are not relevant. That is not true at all - we're in the 21st century, and America's gotten a lot more sophisticated. So you don't need to apply burnt cork, you don't need to apply blackface to be doing a minstrel show in today's times.

Given the film's prediction that liberal pluralism could easily give way to more blatant forms of racism that appeared in mass culture alike in the years afterwards, perhaps we should recall Benjamin's observations with respect to the unactualized capacities unleashed by way of technological reproducibility. For it was there that he first argued for the power of film to restore what the neo-Kantian fetishization of immediate experience evacuates. In this case that could mean contradicting centripetal sound with the more unsettling transversal sensoria of *Bamboozeld*. In other words, what was powerful about Lee's approach was that rather than reproducing the existing distribution of the visible and audible, its approach was productive in the Maholo-Nagoyan sense that it functioned at the same level as did aesthetic segregation, such that the cultural habitus was not taken for granted, but was problematized. In order to get a sense for this, consider once more, the manner in which the mixed-media look of the film challenged invisible blackness insofar as it challenged the way in which it had been rendered previously. In other words, not only on the content level of the narrative but on the formal level of sight and sound as well, the film provincialized the sensory-memory habiti of its central characters and the audience as well. Undoubtedly, the television producer Dunwitty was the most jarring figure in this respect, for although he retained a nominally broader knowledge of African-American culture than many Euro-

Americans, his clichéd, mechanical expertise about it served more than anything else to reaffirm the centrality of his own citizen-subjectivity.

Through a variety of cues, the audience experiences the contingency of his visual habitus, which is made paradoxically apparent by deploying his uncritical experience of it as non-contingent. For instance, Dunwitty assumes a wide range of postures and gestures derivative of an African-American vernacular, but he does so not in the interest of cross-cultural dialogue or self-decentering, but rather in the service of monologue and centripetalization. In the sense utilized by Saldanha, his relation to blackness is actually a purification of whiteness, insofar as it could enlist alterity as such into the thrall of the center of gravity it imposed. Put differently, this microracial approach was not simply exclusive, but inclusively-exclusive, since “whiteness gathers its strength from being versatile, not from mere ruthless oppression”.²⁴⁶ Indeed, while Dunwitty’s cultural habitus is not derived from a centrifugal disposition it is certainly the product of a centripetal one. The interior design of his office for instance, serves as an extension of himself, festooned as it is in clichéd images of blackness, such as images of iconic African-American basketball players and afroed female disco-dancers, amongst others. In contrast, the inverse deployment is seen in the visual habitus of African-American employee Delacroix, who assumes postures and gestures typically associated with whiteness while decorating his office with the more centrifugal figurines and trinkets through which the prewar epoch represented blackness. Of these, the most provocative contraption deployed is the “Jolly Nigger Bank”, a painted, metal object that rather than being directly mobilized, at one point starts to move autonomously. As it jumps back and forth, the exaggerated mouth chattering up and down without direct manipulation, the optical deployment of the microracial basis for the postracial ontological assumptions of Dunwitty’s interior design are rendered apparent at the same time.

It is through a similar lens that we might consider the use of color, which serves as an implicit critique of dominant sensory-memory habits: for instance,

whenever the radical hip hop group the Mau Maus appear, the image is drained of almost all color, thereby producing a warm black, white and yellowish look that contrasts markedly with the cool, faded shades of the TV network's office enclosures. The implication is not that the two are simply radically distinct, but that they are in many ways conjoined in a binary synecdochal image of African-American identity: hence the ironically simplistic lyrics to the song they feature in the same scenes, "Blak iz Blak". Similarly, after the murder of Mantan, the shots that framed the reaction to the events were equally monochromatic and deployed in a manner that skewed what was otherwise experienced as an unaltered TV image below the register of conscious perception. Rather than form and content being separate in other words they are united in a conjoined critique of invisible blackness. As the cinematographer asserted in this respect, "during the color correction process...content definitely influenced the look and vice-versa".²⁴⁷ The most noticeably post-cinematic element of the film however, apart from the affirmation of an aesthetic beyond that of filmic authenticity and TV inauthenticity alike, was the manner in which the final coda critically remediated macroracial and microracial imagery ranging across the history of media. In this respect, the film was not simply post-cinematic in the sense of coming afterward, but also in that of being retrospectively critical of its often racist legacy, in order to affirm a less depluralizing approach. For as Michael Koresky put it, "with *Bamboozled*, Spike Lee entered the new millennium and announced, without the slightest hesitation, that filmmaking was still a primitive medium. Technologically and educationally unformed - made suspect and misshapen by those who wielded it, and barely ready to be vindicated".²⁴⁸ Indeed, the post-cinematic aesthetic he engaged was not only irreducible to a specific filmic look or musical sound in the classical categorical senses of either term, but it also bore no narrative resemblance to Susan Sontag's uncritical lamentation for the "death of cinema". The remediated coda was the only sequence in fact, that was not color corrected: rather, it was the Terrence Blanchard theme music that accompanied it that mobilized critique. Lee had decided to leave the images as they were when initially experienced by much of the audience, such that rather than grating

against their congealed perceptions and recollections, they would confirm them immediately after having been critically confronted with the critical look that comprised the greater part of the film, while disconfirming them in sound.

Bamboozled's post-cinematic aesthetic therefore, served not necessarily to contradict but to complicate the official narrative in which, in response to the network's refusal to allow TV shows featuring dynamic black characters, Delacroix proposed the production of "Mantan: The New Millenium Minstrel Show".²⁴⁹ Rather than directly opposing the sensibility upon which mainstream TV had been based, Delacroix proceeded with the plans for a show that proceeded on the same level it assumed, utilizing "black actors with blacker faces". The diegetic TV production complicates the narrative therefore, in that rather than representing reality in the unreflective terms employed by Dunwitty, it represents representation itself and in doing so, reveals the absurdity of the Platonist order upon which post-Civil Rights hierarchy rested. But as the image of the chattering bank suggested, Delacroix could control the reception of the imagery he introduced no more than the microracial habitus could that which it gave rise to. Which is why it is so interesting that his producer allows the show to go forward: like much of the projected audience, Delacroix takes the minstrel show simply for what it appears to be, a synecdochal representation of blackness. This is unproblematic in the larger schema precisely because of its blatancy, since it could then be ironically embraced, thereby proving not so far from how the producers perceived reality in the first place. But just as Benjamin always suggested critical cinema should, Lee counters this ready-to-hand sensory-memory circuitry with the multiplicity of experience submerged beneath the taste of necessity.

He does so by enabling encounters not only with the relief effect provided by unconscious optics but also that produced by the synergy of "acoustics and electroacoustics",²⁵⁰ through which the microracial habitus was congealed. In addition to overturning invisible blackness through the mixed-media look of the

film, *Bamboozed* also revealed everyday auditory experience as a domain that although it is experienced as unmediated, is actually a composite of multiple inputs. Much like Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence as a more palatable replacement for economic violence, the auditory relief effect it intervened in was one that suggested it was the representation of liberal pluralism that was most depluralizing in the contemporary moment. This was seen for instance in the interest convergence between Dunwitty and the African-American actors he hired, and the means through which the film's sound was rendered so as to call into question the depluralizing of experience through the manufacture of authenticity and inauthenticity alike. For instance, the sound constantly critiques dominant claims to musical distinction while deessentializing what such a thing might be expected to mean in relation African-Americans, for instance in Blanchard's score in the final coda, which defies genre expectations that partition black music from popular music, which was itself the product of aesthetic segregation. Just as the mixed-media look critically remediated film and TV aesthetics of the recent past, provincializing both through the technical capacities afforded by prosumer mini-DV cameras, so too did Lee's soundscape critique the Platonist order of models and copies, refusing the naturalization of invisible blackness.

Specifically, it clarified how Dunwitty's need to maintain a centripetal representation according to the imperatives of a postwar broadcast television market coincided with Manray and Womack's need to survive, which meant that they would not directly challenge the aesthetic segregation upon which it was based. This is why they were hired to play *Mantan and Sleep 'n' Eat*, rather than a star like Denzel Washington, who the station acknowledged, would see such a role as invisibilizing. Which explains why when the pair are first encountered during their tap-dancing routine, although it was otherwise nearly constant, the non-diegetic soundscape abruptly goes silent, so that attention is focused on the auditory effects of the wood-soled shoes on the wooden surface they've laid out to dance upon. The auditory diagenesis is also foregrounded through background silence when Delacroix introduces Manray and Womack to Dunwitty and Manray

is invited to demonstrate his tapdancing capacities on the producer's desk, which was what ultimately seals the deal for the relationship. Finally, in a later scene when Delacroix gives Manray a pair of tapdancing shoes previously been owned by Bill Bojangles Robinson, his immediate response is to tap the soles together, remarking "that's a nice sound, wood on wood". As tellingly as was the reversal of expectations in the film's look, this occurs just after a scene in which Delacroix is interviewed on one of the few African-American radio shows in the NYC broadcast market: after being welcomed to the show, Delacroix replies, "it's good to experience the experience".²⁵¹

It is through such subtle gestures that Lee affirms that the problem isn't simply one of models and copies, of greater and lesser degrees of authenticity, but of sensibility itself as pure simulacra. Just as Delacroix produces "Mantan: The New Millenium Minstrel Show" in order to represent representation, *Bamboozled* responds immanently by using all of the characters non-diagetically, without acquiescing to the assumption that outcome is simply a matter of author's intent. Thus, much as he has Manray affirm the sound of wood on wood, Lee himself affirms the experience of the experience, as a means through which to provide the small shocks that might assist the viewer not only in no longer taking the given distribution of the sensible for granted but also in not assuming that any one intervention into would necessarily be the proper one. Which is why W.J.T. Mitchell's statement about the origin of his use of the Du Boisian concept of double-consciousness in his studies of the image is compelling, since it is meant to critique any pretense about it as something that could ever exist prior to the necessarily-layered experience of experience. In his articulation, the power of film and other mediums to deploy images is that they enable not merely perception but specifically, the perception of perception. Thus, it is especially interesting that when asked from where his notion of the doubleness of the image was derived, he replies by invoking *Bamboozled*:

...it came to me out of the conjunction of critical race theory and the role of images in the practice of racial stereotyping. Double consciousness, for Du Bois, arises out of a consciousness of being perceived as an image, through a screen or "veil" of racist misrecognition, and the "second sight" that the subject of the racist gaze receives as a result. Homi Bhabha's classic essay on "The Other Question," which generalizes the peculiar duplicity and dialectics of the stereotype was another key moment. But I don't think the whole thing came into focus until I saw Spike Lee's marvelous and disturbing film, *Bamboozled*, with its relentless exploration of the re-appropriation (and thus re-animation) of blackface minstrelsy across the full range of modern media, from the original minstrel show, through vaudeville, cinema, radio, television, and the internet. Spike Lee's film struck me as not only the most profound cinematic reflection on racial stereotyping that we have, but also as a precise anatomy of the way "double consciousness" is constituted, not just by racial difference, but by images as such.²⁵²

Of course, sound is one of the most important moments in which that phenomenon occurs, since it can make palpable the likely outcome of being perceived such that the only sense of self possible is that which first passes through the eyes and ears of others. Thus, one of the primary issues involved in double-consciousness is the relief effect through which aesthetic segregation is enforced, which operates partially by reference to elements considered characteristic or uncharacteristic of blackness.²⁵³ Heeding the Proustian insight that the charm of music is not in the notes themselves but in the associations made with them, this argument can be read as suggesting that it is the associations through which they are identified that is the primary question. And this is born out throughout *Bamboozled*'s deployment of sound: for instance, the ostensibly political hip hop group the Mau Maus who are introduced in order to demonstrate how in the 21st century version the last remnants of the minstrel show are retained in music. The synecdochality of their aesthetic is particularly clear in the final

scene in which they execute Manray live via the Internet, at the very moment he overcomes the double-consciousness they ostensibly sought to liberate African-Americans from. In the film then, musical genre serves as another form of aesthetic segregation, one of the primary means through which microracial power and authority is reproduced. Indeed, as the lyrics to "Blak is Blak" suggestively recount just after Manray's desktop tapdance wins over Dunwitty, "I hear the world in all-black surround sound. Barricaded so you can't move around now". Furthermore, one might recall the scene in which the minstrel band that features a fiddle is depicted as playing on a stereotypical plantation and the lyrics to the song suggest that such instruments are not the sonic domain of African-Americans.

In league with Mitchell and Du Bois then, perhaps the most radical aspect of *Bamboozled* is not to found in the mixed-media look but when the tapdancer-turned-minstrel performer casts off the associations that would otherwise have been naturalized. Indeed, insofar as it breaks with the musical genres' representations of black authenticity, Manray's simple act of appearing on stage without the makeup or the stylized vocal inflections also affirms the positive Du Boisian concept Mitchell doesn't mention: "self-consciousness". After Dunwitty and the audience indulge in that which was proscribed by themselves donning blackface and attempting to rap in an ostensibly African-American style, the temporality of an eternally accomplished pluralism could no longer hold. The convergence of sounds and images Lee provides at this moment, between the actor's refusal to perform the synecdoches through which the audience perceived them and Dunwitty's incredulous response is one of the most interesting in his entire *oeuvre*. For, it is here that neither the visible nor the audible axes of the film alone trigger thought, but rather the manner in which they function together that does, for both the diagetic and the non-diagetic audience alike. This, particularly insofar as it foregrounds the reconstitution of aesthetic segregation that continues to sequester African-American music as always already subordinate to a racially unmarked, but still implicitly white popular culture as such. While the film

features hip hop, jazz, blues, funk, R&B and other genres typically associated with blackness in the majority of shots, it also foregrounds non-diegetic silence as well as classical orchestral arrangements in several key scenes. And this is not to even mention Blanchard's title score, which blends aspects of most of the major African-American musical genres together with classical, in a manner that renders them indistinguishable while importantly, claiming even that which had typically been excluded from it as black music.

In this sense in other words, *Bamboozled* mobilizes a post-cinematic aesthetic to present the immanent contradictions of the postwar cultural habitus, while enabling the first steps by which double-consciousness could be transformed into self-consciousness. By presenting sound as always already simulacra and never as subject to the Platonist distinction of models and copies, the film critically remediates genre not as a seamless whole, but as a radically open assemblage. Indeed, much like Schiller's suggestion in *The Aesthetic Education of Man*, "it is through Beauty that we arrive at Freedom",²⁵⁴ in contrast to Bourdieu's depluralizing tastes of necessity, the score affirms the radical capacity over and against the essentialist ontology of incapacity. Rather than being aesthetically "barricaded so you can't move around now", as the lyrics to the Mau Maus song suggests, the title score affirms the potentiality that could emerge with the affirmation of repluralizing sensibilities. Indeed, the qualities it deploys are best understood as examples of what Ranciere describes as the "aesthetic regime of the arts...[which] in accordance with Schiller's model, is rooted in the aesthetic anticipation of the future...on the side of the invention of sensible forms and material structures for a life to come".²⁵⁵ Thus in the first half of the film, while the visible landscape is still relatively straightforward, R&B musicians like Stevie Wonder and hip-hop musicians like Goodie Mob provide brief, thought-provoking auditory transitions between scenes, pieces that are often jarring in their alteration of the other axes of the film. Then as the narrative intensity increases, Blanchard's theme recurs with increasing frequency, intervening when conventional affective responses would have been provoked, either through the

introduction of racial banter or humor. For instance, the first time it emerges is when Big Blak Afrika, the frontman of the Mau Maus played by Mos Def, matches Dunwitty's synecdochal simplicity not only by accusing his sister who works for him of merely "working hard for the man on the plantation", but also by contradicting himself in then asking if she might be able to get them a gig with him. There is also a brief R&B interlude that intervenes afterward, which then reappears while Delacroix is pitching the show for the first time to Dunwitty. Then it emerges again when Delacroix is shown going through the prewar imagery for the first time in order to prepare for the minstrel show, as he remarks that that while Martin Luther King didn't like seeing African-Americans being beaten on the evening news, "white America needed to see that in order for this country to change; they need to see this now for the exact same reason".

Additionally, Delacroix's diction is articulated in a manner that indicates the danger of transcendently rejecting particularity, as his father Junebug pontificates repeatedly. For instance, when Delacroix visits him in the comedy club where he routinely performs, the question immediately presented to him is "where the fuck did you get that accent?" Junebug then takes it much further, rupturing the received expectation that he would then substitute that choice for an originary authenticity. He does this by referencing the supposedly opposite diction employed by Dunwitty: "everybody white want to be black... they all act black, sound black. I hope they start hanging niggers again. I'm going to find out who's black". All of these auditory features then, reference a cultural habitus that has materialized bodies microracially, not only in the way that discourse acted upon them but also as Saldanha put it, "the way those bodies themselves interact with each other and their physical environment".²⁵⁶ His point is not to suggest that perception is separate from discourse anymore than it is to present one sensory domain as separate from others: rather it is to affirm the overcoming of such dualisms. The relation between the visible and audible registers then, serves to remind us that the judgment of the beautiful in relation to African-American music is never nonracial, especially not when it remains mired in assumptions

about the tastes of necessity. What it reveals is that the microracial relief effect was always already a relational phenomena produced such that even while a greater degree of complexity was granted in sound than in sight, this dynamism was itself recast so as to reinforce the neoliberal racial hierarchy upon which the image of pluralism relied.

How then, to learn from *Bamboozled* so as to begin to break with the assumptions of the cultural habitus it reconstructs, particularly in a moment that has been reconsolidated as postracial? Recall that when Dunwitty invokes invisible blackness, he does so by reference to the taste of necessity: rather than seeking that which is evacuated in everyday experience, the relief effect he assumes is that of postwar citizen-subjectivity. Lee's post-cinematic aesthetic on the other hand, illuminates the microracial dimensions of the present such that the active enlistment of perception and recollection into the constitution of the self become perceptible. By foregrounding the manner in which auditory reception enables identification only with that represented within the terms of the existing sensibility, rather than grasping alterity as alterity, *Bamboozled* causes those who have interiorized it like Dunwitty, to question their dispositions. Of course, as has been suggested repeatedly, to recognize this is not to suggest that no advances were made during this period. Indeed, initially African-American music wasn't even available for this level of recognition: rather it was sequestered within an entirely different domain of exchange that for most of the country's history was regarded as the lowest form of musical culture, save perhaps for that of Native Americans.²⁵⁷ Thus when rock-and-roll first appeared in the broadcast radio market, after having been set apart under the racially-coded nomenclature of rhythm-and-blues for nearly a decade, numerous organizations campaigned to have it banned, lest youth culture begin to appreciate it or worse yet, empathize with those their forebears had enslaved in the past. The populations born into the conditions of the postwar period produced innumerable new forms of anxiety, especially within families accustomed to controlling the aesthetic allegiances of their offspring. After the emergence of radio and the changes brought by the Great

Migration brought in particular, this new demographic gave rise to numerous subcultures as the sound-image became public. But as we have seen, it wasn't long before this repluralizing potentiality as well as that of many others was interiorized and the remnant itself redeployed as a new docility that served the reproduction of microracial power and authority. In the next section, we consider how it might be repluralized once again, by attending to post-cinematic cinema in which once again, sound and sight are mutually problematized, not simply in order to disrupt habit or render the contingency of the present one perceptible, but in order to make new forms of intervention actionable.

3.2 Repluralizing Sound: Barry Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy* (2008)

In contrast with arguments about the judgment of the beautiful that partition distinction such that is rendered the divergent domain of distinct racial groups within aesthetically segregated genres, in this section we affirm a post-Kantian concept of the beautiful elaborated most productively in the works of Benjamin, Deleuze and Ranciere. All three derive specifically political implications from Kant of course, drawing on and expanding 18th century readings of the *Critique of Judgment*, which held that "it is through Beauty that we arrive at Freedom".²⁵⁸ In contrast, Adorno and Bourdieu reproduce a theory of judgment that attends to movement and becoming only as it occurs within the existing partition of cultural formations and as a result, at the expense of those that break with it. It was under the influence of a similar set of assumptions that the postwar cultural habitus was composed in sound, such that invisible blackness was experienced not only as natural, but even as progressive. What the post-Kantian perspective added to the discussion was a concern with the beautiful as that the common, which is to say as the potential domain of everyone, regardless of social position. Which brings us to the primary question posed by the audiovisual aesthetic of *Bamboozled*: what would it mean to open up judgment such that the microracial partition imposed by the essentialization of genre is deposed? This we will assert, would be that of what we call the commonly beautiful, insofar as it would enable the capacity of

everyone to be expressed, without regard for aesthetic segregation. Recall for a moment George Mosse's suggestion that German Jews' attachment to figures such as Schiller and Goethe served them not only as a "bulwark against nationalism and anti-Semitism",²⁵⁹ but also as a means through which the dominant culture could itself be rendered open to alternate modes of judgment that could become reconstitutive. This of course, is one of the primary reasons Blanchard's title theme for *Bamboozled* is so distinctive, since rather than simply accepting the Mau Maus' deppluralizing, received notion that "Blak iz Blak", it provincializes the European musical tradition itself, transforming it into the spiritual equivalent, which renders it eligible for African-American redeployment.

That doesn't mean of course, that this in and of itself is sufficient to overturn the microracial habitus that gave rise to invisible blackness: indeed, as Dipesh Chakrabarty notes with respect to the subaltern redeployment of Western thought in a more general sense, "it is both indispensable and inadequate".²⁶⁰ But the repluralizing of the sense ratio such a trajectory affords is necessary insofar as it circumvents the sensory-memory circuitry that congealed under the order of representation with the ruptural force of active self-creation. As it was put by Deleuze in *Cinema 2*, a minor aesthetic of this sort always has as its project "not that of addressing a people, which is presupposed already there, but of contributing to the invention of a people".²⁶¹ Rather than merely accepting the given associations made with particular kinds of sounds then, as Swann does through Vinteuil's little phrase, music becomes what it is for Proust's narrator: a means through which materiality as such could be reconstituted through the production of the work of art. In opposition to Adorno and Bourdieu, as well as the snobberies they variously enabled, this repluralizing of what is even countable as black music directly recalls a key moment from Proust's final volume of *ISLT*, *Time Regained*, in which the segregated aesthetics of Sainte-Beuve are radically overturned. Referring to the increasing influence of the sensibility promoted by diplomats and financiers in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair, the narrator retorts:

The idea of a popular art, like that of a patriotic art, if not actually dangerous, to me seemed ridiculous. If the intention was to make art accessible to the people by sacrificing refinements of form, on the ground that they are 'all right for the idle rich', but not for anybody else, I had seen enough of fashionable society to know that it is there that one finds real illiteracy and not, let us say, among electricians. In fact, an art that was 'popular' so far as form was concerned would have been better suited to the members of the Jockey Club than to those of the General Confederation of Labor - and as for subject, the working classes are as bored by novels of popular life as children are by the books which are written specially for them.²⁶²

In this section then, we will attend to another film that in the first decade of the 21st century also meditated on the potential import of a post-cinematic aesthetic in a post-Kantian manner: Barry Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy* (2008). As with the African-American cinematic and musical projects noted thus far, here too the audio-visual relation that produced the microracial phenomenon of invisible blackness is called into question through the auditory landscape and the place of music within it. What is different in this case however, is that rather than the Euro-American connoisseur of black culture playing the role of conceptual personae as in *Bamboozled*, here it is an African-American character who has taken on the precise inverse position. Indeed, Micah is a fixed-gear bicycle-riding, indie-rock listening, organic food-eating, hipster living in the rapidly gentrifying, increasingly white San Francisco of the mid-00s. The difference that makes is significant and speaks profoundly to the question of repluralizing experience under conditions of postracialism, particularly insofar as it affirms the political importance of satisfying "the desire to challenge the [established] hold on distinction".²⁶³ While there are numerous scenes that capture this point well, one of the most arresting is when the central character Micah and his would-be African-American, hipster girlfriend Joanne visit a museum exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). When she initially suggests the plan, he

flippantly introduces the synecdoches by which he experienced the Bay Area as an African-American, invoking for instance, the perception that while black people “go to church” and “eat fried chicken”, they don’t “go to the museum”. His skepticism of course, was not entirely unfounded: indeed, as critical histories of the institution attest, the museum was founded upon “the dissonance between, on the one hand, the democratic rhetoric governing the conception of public museums as vehicles for popular education and, on the other, their actual functioning as instruments for the reform of public manners”.²⁶⁴ In other words, museums were instruments for precisely the kind of microracial aesthetic segregation that relies not only on formal, legal grounds in order to function effectively, but also on the determination of belonging through the cultivation of disposition.

Thus when he finally succumbs to her invitations, Micah still attempts to retain his imaginary by discussing the Silvia Striplin funk song “You Can’t Turn Me Away”, to which Joanne simply replies, “I don’t listen to music like that”. Then, upon their arrival at MOMA, behind the glassy façade an image of an African-American child’s face looms large, which is then matched by an art photography book that she looks at that features black kids playing soccer. Below the image is a quote from Goethe that affirms: “Whatever you dream you can do, begin it! Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!” Considering not only Mosse’s remarks about the relation of German Jews to figures like Goethe, but also the color theory of the latter, the statement can be read as a critique of the potential microracial implications of Sir Isaac Newton’s claims, which held that color is reducible to distinct measurements along the “optical spectrum”. Presumably of course, these points could be extrapolated micropolitically, so as to determine a person’s relation to the virtual, whereas to the contrary, Deleuze described “Goethe’s splendid formula” in the much more dynamic terms as one “infinite degrees”.²⁶⁵ This is especially the case in the film, given the complex audiovisual aesthetic that unfolds in immediately subsequent scenes: more than anything else, these serve to problematize the invisible blackness through which

the postwar sensory-memory circuitry was consolidated after the Sixties. Indeed, whereas vision was foregrounded at the expense of sound throughout the remainder of *Medicine for Melancholy*, in this sequence the audible prevails over the visible, but in a reconstituted manner. For instance, when the couple first encounter the exhibit, Micah abruptly switches buttons on and off that start and stop brief audio clips of jazz music and African drumming, demonstrating through this play, his distracted repulsion at the way black auditory culture is presented in what he might perceive as a half-hearted attempt at the “reform of public manners”. But when he encountered an image depicting the view from a slaveship window, which then beckons the couple to enter a curtained, darkened room where the famous narrative of Oluadah Equiano is recounted by a narrator, his countenance shifts. For the first time, the dynamic visuality of the film, described by the director as “reflecting the theme of a city with the color taken out”,²⁶⁶ withdraws as the couple are depicted in silhouette, as though they themselves are on the ship with him. Rather than slavery being rendered a relic of the past, the image as well as the invocation of smell by reference to “a salutation as I had never experienced in my life”, suggest the non-linearity of time emphasized by Proust, so as to foreground the cultural memory they and the audience both are experiencing. And then, as if to suggest that both serve as conceptual personae in different ways, Jenkins cuts to a shot in which they are positioned outside of the exhibit that is suddenly illuminated again, their bodily positioning now the inverse of what it had been in the darkened slaveship exhibit.

Here as in *Bamboozled*, African-American identity is not presented as quiddity but as a deeply conflicted haecceity exemplified in the two main characters who are shown to be divided upon themselves in multiple ways. Indeed, this is so much the case that it means that there is no central protagonist, as Jenkins himself confirms in his commentary on the film, which allows him to present multiple vantage points on the same question without arriving at a simple resolution. For instance, Joanne’s assumption of an alternate name immediately says more than just the name itself: narrativistically, she takes it on in order to hide her identity,

since she is already dating a white art curator when she meets Micah at a party. But implicitly, far more is at stake, since its introduction produces numerous shifts in what is already a multilayered experience, divided according to divergent renderings of sight and sound. This is notable in numerous scenes in which the name plays a central role: early on for instance, the sound is almost entirely muted upon the two having awoken together in bed before Micah and Joanne silently wash their faces and brush their teeth in preparation for the day. The silence persists as they are framed visually from above through a glass ceiling, while they put on their shoes and exit the high-end condominium they ended up in the previous night. Then when they go out for breakfast together, Joanne remains reticent even while Micah becomes excessively verbal, given what for him is a still inexplicably awkward interaction. Only after he escorts her home by and inadvertently discovers her driver's license in the bag she left behind, does Micah find that her legal name is not Angela but Joanne. It is this that tempts him to look up her MySpace account where he learns numerous other things that eventually lead them back together, while upending the audio-visual sense ratio that prevails up to that point.

Rather than her being reducible to the transparent character-type that African-American women are often portrayed as within mainstream cinema, here it is the complications of his initial perception that lead him to encounter her as an opacity. Thus, Joanne begins to appear for him and the audience too, as the haecceity that she is: and as we have suggested, the means by which this is conveyed is the rupture of invisible blackness by reconstituting the relation of sight and sound. Indeed, as with the Proustian notion that for the artist any expression is equally well expressed within any sensory domain, what this allows is a "breaking with the form-content duality, since there was a form of content no less than a form of expression".²⁶⁷ Hence, it is no surprise that it is only after her name is learned and the results of this revelation begin to unfold that Jenkins presents the couple as able to communicate not only visibly but audibly as well, as the film lead towards the central slaveship sequence. Indeed, it is only after

they have gone through this portal and the audiovisual relation is reversed, that experience enters into a repluralizing modality: from this point forward, rather than the double-consciousness that governs their relation before, Micah and Joanne acquire a self-consciousness in which that which has typically been considered black aesthetics is opened to them for reconstitution. For instance, immediately after they leave the MOMA they are framed walking their bikes through Yerba Buena Gardens, a newly-gentrified section of the city made possible by displacing several buildings full of public housing. It is important therefore that it is just after Joanne remarks that she was unaware of the existence of the subdivision which is referred to by the city as “San Francisco’s Front Yard”, that they come across the Martin Luther King quote emblazoned on the space dubbed a memorial for him: “I believe that the day will come when all God’s children from bass black to treble white will be significant on the constitution’s keyboard”.

It is at this point that the non-diagetic sound of violin strings played in the plucked pizzicato style emerges into the sense ratio, which rather than keeping them in a melancholy state, enables them to proceed to claim the Gardens as their own. Much as Claudio Monteverdi introduced the unorthodox instrumentation into an ossified 17th century music, here too the couple take an already-existing refrain and deterritorialize it, so as to replace signature with style. Indeed, the pizzicato increases in intensity as they race down to the nearly 100-year old Children’s Carousel, where Micah is shown smiling as he bobs up and down on a toy horse, while performing the role of captain rather than contents of an imaginary ship. Once again, the color scheme is important too, as while it is very close to black and white throughout the majority of the film, hints of tint are amplified at key moments in which alternative potentialities are suggested. Indeed, perhaps in an implicit nod to Goethe, the only full-color sequence appears when Micah intones “I hate the city but I love the city”. Because as he puts it, for all the city’s gentrification, it still cannot be denied that as opposed other places, here “any man that can find himself a street corner’s got himself a view. San

Francisco is beautiful and it's got nothing to do with privilege. It's got nothing to do with beatniks or yuppies, it just is". The perhaps most important line, as the full-color sequence interrupts the primarily black and white look of the remainder of the film, is Micah's conclusion, "you shouldn't have to be upper-middle class to be a part of that". Which is also the attitude he takes towards the largely white indie rock scene that Joanne and him are part of, when he notes that as African-Americans within that milieu, they are a minority within a minority, one that cannot escape the assumption that they are black first and individuals second.²⁶⁸

Indicative of Jenkins' intentionally-doubled conceptual personae then, Joanne retorts that this perspective leaves agency as such in the hands of those who believe themselves entitled to the defining. In spite of that belief, this does not exhaust their multiplicity. Indeed, as she put it just prior to their decision to spend the evening dancing at an indie-rock club that exemplifies the theme of the film in the audible sense, "you're everything else too". Of course, we should not forget that the postwar emergence of the microracial was constituted such that such a development could be part and parcel of the hierarchical interiorization of particular modes of blackness. But this is not what Jenkins' film puts forth: rather, like Lee's *Bamboozled*, he utilizes the capacities of post-cinematic cinema in order to provincialize not only the previously dominant filmic and musical aesthetic segregation. For instance, the matching shot that occurs when each take turns playing the acoustic guitar of the other, for the other, breaks with the genre assumptions of what constitutes black music in both media. First Micah plays "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" on Joanne's instrument with sufficient irony and humor to provoke a laugh, which is their first real connection in the film. Then towards the end, she plays him a song on his guitar but says she can't do so while Micah is watching her: for this reason, he turns around and allows her to play in the absence of his gaze but also in the absence of the off-screen audience's gaze, an act which directly invokes the aesthetic segregation of the postwar period, that of invisible blackness. The difference here however, which is what makes the approach deterritorializing rather than reterritorializing, is that while at first it

seems that it will not, ultimately the camera actually does show her while she plays in a classical style that is typically partitioned off from black music. In this sense, *Medicine for Melancholy* affirms what *Bamboozled* merely implies: that true self-consciousness references not only those cultural forms that have been ascribed as relevant to repluralizing experience but in fact, any aesthetic at all.

Of course Lee did in fact, affirm this himself: during one interview he asserts that a major motivation for *Bamboozled* was to challenge the aesthetic segregation that continues to relegate African-Americans to a narrow band of genre-bound material, while permitting Euro-Americans to accumulate symbolic capital by consuming and redeploying whatever they prefer. Indeed, here he echoes Glissant's suggestion that a fundamental aspect of the black experience in the Western Hemisphere had been that of making something out of nothing, since only traces remain of their cultural origins in sub-Saharan Africa. As he explains, "the ancient marronage, which was the quest for new traces, is once again operating, for all of us. In other words, ambiguity, discontinuity, traces and remembering, creolization, with its unpredictable results, are not signs of weakness...they counter the massive assertions of the thinking associated with the Conquest".²⁶⁹ Which is undoubtedly why all of the African-American characters in both films possess conflicted identities that display radically different relations towards categories and nomenclature, with none of them retaining sufficient authenticity as to successfully play the role of hero. From this perspective, the spiritual equivalent of Proust's aesthetic sensibility can be heard in Lee's query, although here it is applied to white middle-brow culture rather aristocratic high-brow culture:

who determines what is black? I always give the example, if you turn on the radio today, black radio, Lenny Kravitz is not black. Bob Marley wasn't black: in the beginning, only white college stations played Bob Marley. So there is this definition of black: if you're a young black kid

today in urban America and you speak correct English and you get great grades, you're not black.²⁷⁰

The postwar depluralizing of experience in other words, became such that African-Americans were perceived through a political ontology in which they were tolerated more in the ear than in the eye. But as we have seen, even the auditory register was such that this new mode of perception was largely depluralizing, since invisible blackness also involved the restriction to aesthetically segregated genres in sound. *Bamboozled* and *Medicine for Melancholy* intervene in this process in that they do not simply confirm the received associations generated in this period, but exemplify in form and content alike, the aesthetic shifts by way of which double-consciousness becomes self-consciousness and new modes of creation and perception become possible.²⁷¹ Rather than reproducing the ready-to-hand assortment of habits and dispositions associated with the orthodox rendering of postwar history, in which what counts are landmark legal cases like *Brown v. Board of Education*, they emphasize the becoming of the sensibility that enabled such things in the first place. As such, they provide a critical gloss on orthodox history that “severs its connection to [official] memory, its metaphysical and anthropological model, and constructs a counter-memory, a transformation of history into a totally different form of time”.²⁷² The refusal in *ISLT* therefore, of the hierarchical division of high culture and low culture, is affirmed as a means through which existence as such can be taken as the virtual domain of everyone, as a new commons. Rather than simply reproducing the automatic thought-reactions that were inaugurated by the microracial reconstitution of the postwar period, the task today is to become creative beyond its congealed partitions.²⁷³ Black music then, becomes something created rather than represented, encountered rather than consumed: of course, that is a foredrawn conclusion if identity is understood as marked by an ontologically continuous process of becoming. And furthermore, if it is encountered as haecceity rather than quiddity, the task is no longer only that of becoming familiar with what are represented as authentic expressions produced according to the various

phases of macroracial and microracial transformations, but instead that of becoming equally familiar with the differential relations of movement within African-American auditory culture as its Euro-American counterpart.

To conclude then, we will return to the origin of Harris' concept of invisible blackness that we originally engaged in relation to Sun Records' deployment of the visibility of a white man with what was naturalized audibly as the "Negro sound". In her book *Summer Snow*, Harris discusses her experience growing up in the South in the immediate aftermath of the World Wars, during the most contentious years of the Civil Rights movement. By no means does she deny that the achievements over the past half-century since that time for "some African-Americans":²⁷⁴ after all, in contrast to her experience as an adult, her own childhood was one in which she and her sisters, like the central figure of Ralph Ellison's famous novel, would routinely "try to be as invisible as possible when we left the boundary of our black neighborhood".²⁷⁵ Indeed, as noted in her book, her ability to speak confidently at all in a largely-white honors class only emerged fully when discussing *Invisible Man*, a novel she was heavily influenced by from a young age and which contributed to her later conceptualizations. In her role as a literature professor at the University of North Carolina however, she routinely interacted with people she would otherwise have avoided in the past, as she notes. But for Harris, these kinds of advances did not in and of themselves transcendently overcome the invisible blackness she experienced as a youth, but only really altered it: while macroracial stratification might still have been overcome, the aftermath that it introduced visibly and audibly continued to loom as microracial. Rather than confirming the truth of this claim through abstract statistics or the minutiae of legal decisions, the value of her approach resides in the immediately palpable account she gives of her experience of the cultural habitus it ensured:

take black music, for example; it is on the airwaves practically everywhere. I go into my spa, and fully *ninety-eight* percent of the

background music I hear as I work out is African-American, from Smokey Robinson to the theme from *Shaft* to the Staple Singers. In the malls in which I shop, the same thing is apparent. Television commercials are rife with such music. An airline ad even uses the theme from *Space Jam*. And, nowadays, wonderful black voices are frequently the ones that voiceover television commercials. Stage, film and TV luminary Ruby Dee tells us that New York Life “is the company you keep”. Actor James Earl Jones wants us to know “this is CNN”. These are forms of what I call “invisible blackness”. The nonblack American public will tolerate “blackness” more *in the ear* than *in the eye* (think of white suburban kids, in the ‘safety’ of their homes, listening to black rap artists who spout lyrics directed specifically against them). So the public doesn’t have to see James Earl Jones or Ruby Dee, and it can tap its foot or work its muscles to the spa music without giving too much thought to the musicians. These are patterns in American culture, ones that I simply recognize and keep on seeing. Nonblack Americans simply can’t tolerate too much “visible blackness”.²⁷⁶

The resonance that *Invisible Man* held for her then, was not cancelled by the advances she noted, because although hints of chromatic alteration entered the cultural habitus, as the color scheme of *Medicine for Melancholy* implies, they remain muted and thus, primarily monochromatic. For instance, she notes how departments of African-American studies rarely have more than four black faculty, since a little blackness “goes a long way”. Similarly, as she explained, while it would be rare to actually encounter a white person who would directly confront her in a racist manner in public, in private when these same people were not observed by their peers, they often failed to acknowledge Harris’ existence, even when she directly hailed them. In other words, in typical microracial form, she remained invisible to them ontologically, but when under the gaze of their peers, they would perform the postracial disposition the times demanded. Similarly, Harris recounts how upon arriving at a mostly Euro-American social

gathering, she is often greeted along the lines of “thank you for coming”, even by those who were neither host nor hostess, as though she had invaded on an already-existing group that didn’t include her. Finally, she describes the dispositions of what she calls “misguided liberals”, who walk on eggshells to such an extent that they are always apologizing, which for her produced an alternate mode of visibility that is not so different from invisibility. Harris’ critique of invisible blackness then, always had much less to do with the legal framework than with the cultural foundation it inculcated in order to naturalize its presuppositions. Although the postwar period produced a new, more pluralist circuitry of perception and recollection, the real problem for her was that as she put it, “we have not reached the point where acceptance is in the heart rather than in the law”.²⁷⁷

In this chapter we have seen this particularly through the aesthetic approach in *Bamboozled* and *Medicine for Melancholy* alike, the former of which rendered perceptible the depluralizing of experience into merely liberal pluralism and the latter of which deployed the repluralizing of that experience well beyond its confines. But as we have suggested, we are never speaking simply of one sensory domain or another, or of even of one cultural enframing or another, as though they could ever be seamlessly separated in everyday experience. Rather we are engaging the difference between all of them, which in any particular instance is always already in process: specifically, either proceeding from verb to noun, or in Nathaniel Mackey’s more affirmative response, “from noun to verb”. As both texts from which those phrases derive point out, the point is not at all to suggest that genres such as jazz, blues or hip hop were unimportant, but rather to affirm that they are not the sum total of possible African-American expression, since pre-individual singularity accords to no pre-established rule. Indeed, rather than simply verifying the authenticity of cultural particularity, what made the great musicians of black musical genres powerful was that rather than affirming visibility or audibility in a reactive, transcendental manner, they proceeded immanently and thereby “made poetry out of being invisible”.²⁷⁸ The task that

presents itself today then, is that which ends *Invisible Man*, a segment that speaks not only to or for a black audience but, precisely in order to open up what that means:

being invisible and without substance, a disembodied voice, what else could I do? What else but try to tell you what was really happening when your eyes were looking through? And it is this which frightens me: who knows but that, on the lower frequencies, I speak for you?²⁷⁹

It is in this that repluralizing experience depends: not in reproducing the unmarked centrality of the expert of black cultural forms, nor in denying the value of erudition *tout court*, but rather in denaturalizing which bodies are eligible for the claims it enables, so that cultural distinction and aesthetic redeployment become an aesthetic commons. These paradoxes of the postwar microracial habitus then, serve to indicate the prescience of Ned Polsky's response to Norman Mailer, which could well have served as an epigraph to *Medicine for Melancholy*, in which he noted "a built-in barrier to full acceptance of black hipsters by white ones...[that] even in the world of the hipster the Negro remains essentially what Ralph Ellison called him - an invisible man".²⁸⁰ Which is interesting since far from reproducing separate, entirely distinct cultural formations, Ellison asserted that black and white approaches were necessarily based on complex, intersectional modes of "interchange, appropriation and integration".²⁸¹ Certainly they encountered some opposition to such claims, but even the arguments put forth by self-proclaimed separatists often reluctantly came to similar conclusions.²⁸² The primary difference that emerged in *Invisible Man* is that rather than simply revaluing culture by asserting that black is beautiful the new emphasis would be that at least as much as it is anything else, the beautiful is black. It is interesting then, that just as the primary question of democracy is that of which bodies are countable as included, so too is that of aesthetics that of which are qualified for judgment. In contrast with the representations posited by Adorno and Bourdieu in the partitions of culture they essentialize, what this

convergence suggests is a reconstitution of the politics of the beautiful, just as in the last chapter we noted with respect to the sublime. In contrast with the emphasis on the latter, it has occasionally been argued that "the beautiful is more resistant than is the sublime to being appropriated by the discourses or forces of morality...[since] the aesthetic taste itself may not be subordinated to any pre-existing criterion".²⁸³ However, that depends on what is considered countable in the first place: hence our emphasis not only on the beautiful, but on its continuous reterritorialization and deterritorialization. Furthermore, the fact that the beautiful is singular and yet felt as universal, suggests radical democratic implications, given that we both feel conviction about it and require the assent of others in order to confirm its validity. Since there is no originary instance to which experience could refer but only that which we create, it also is in this sense that the beautiful is concerned neither with models nor copies but only with the affirmation of simulacra as such. The mechanical expertise championed in the postwar period prevents this under the pretense of having identifying it within the already-existing structure of feeling, as opposed to seeking it in the becoming upon which that sensibility relies. The truly political moment of the beautiful however, is not found in this but in the refusal of the subordination of experience to any concept.

Just as in the microcolonial relation with respect to which we argued that the everyday sublime can contribute to the repluralizing of the dominant habits of perception and recollection visually then, so too in the microracial relation might the commonly beautiful afford a similar decentering audibly. And yet, as with the senses more broadly, perhaps the dichotomy between the two has itself contributed to the normalization of these two domains, as well as many others. Certainly this is the case in relation to gender, since sublimity is typically associated with masculinity while the beautiful is with femininity, which means that transversal engagement beyond these dualisms is often precluded. Perhaps engaging this question then, would tell us something also about the micropolitical reconstitution of ethnicity in the postwar period as well, which is what the fourth

chapter will consider. While it is sometimes argued that Kant himself introduced the dichotomy as well as the examples through which it is considered, this is largely a matter of what mode of reading one affirms. If read in the most radical manner of Benjamin and Deleuze, his concepts of the beautiful and the sublime and as well will argue, the splendid, instead serve to overthrow precisely such dualisms, while provoking critical thought about them. Since each break with all conceptualization that presume to submit the imagination to the faculties, the contingent foundation through which they are developed within a particular cultural habitus must be taken into account as a matter of course. Thus perhaps it is the collapse of the distinction between them that is the most potentially interesting: if for Kant sublimity refers to unity and beauty to multiplicity, then it is in their convergence, which for him occurs in the splendid, that a community of difference becomes thinkable. It is to this subject matter that we turn in our final chapter, as we consider the reconsolidation of citizen-subjectivity with respect to ethnicity and the process through which it might be repluralized.

Chapter Four

Smell



"When nothing else subsists from the past, after the people are dead, after the things are broken and scattered the smell [...] of things remain poised a long time, like souls bearing resiliently, on tiny and almost impalpable drops of their essence, the immense edifice of memory"

- Marcel Proust

"She Likes to Bathe and Dress":²⁸⁵ phrased as though it were a surprise, this is how a subheading in the September 17, 1893 edition of the *New York World* referred to the grooming habits recounted in their interview of the German-Jewish immigrant anarchist Emma Goldman. Of course assumptions of this kind, that associate immigrant bodies with odors or grooming habits deemed less hygienic than those thereby implied to be the nonodorous, well-groomed citizen-subjects doing the perceiving, have not ceased since. Indeed, one only need consider the rhetoric that developed in the Taco Truck wars of the past several years, in order

understand how they have converged with the recent outbursts of opposition to Mexican immigration.²⁸⁶ But aside from these specific examples, why are such sentiments so common, even today? While they certainly do reveal the presence in the postwar United States of an overtly anti-pluralist disposition, perhaps it should not be forgotten that over the long course of human evolution, smell has consistently been associated with the identification of danger. Specifically moreover, of that which could pose a threat not only to the purity of the group in the general sense, but in the most extreme mode, to its very survival. It is therefore, a sense concerned not only with the rational associations often accorded to eye and ear, but also to specifically visceral, affect-laden reactions to the detection of disorder. Mary Douglas of course, was the first to note the relativity of such claims with respect to dirt, pointing out that that which is identified as such, is only judged to be so from a contingent locus of enunciation.²⁸⁷ But what is lacking today is neither a critical relation to smell nor a critical relation to law alone, but more importantly to that domain in which the two enter into a zone of indistinction, what we have been calling the cultural habitus. Contra the *New York World's* representation of Goldman's grooming habits or anti-immigrant legislators' reactive invocations with respect to Taco Trucks, there is no such thing as cleanliness or uncleanness in and of itself. Similarly, there are no odorous or non-odorous bodies in and of themselves, until they are mapped as such within a spatially and temporally-enframed grid of identification. Thus, just as we have interrogated the nature/culture and individual/collective dualisms in relation to the depluralizing of experience in other domains, here we will concentrate on the dualism of order/disorder so as to consider how it might be repluralized in the wake of the collapse of the dichotomy it requires.

In the previous two chapters, we considered the continuous becoming of the visual habitus on the one hand and the auditory habitus on the other, with respect to indigeneity and race in postwar America. Each of these we engaged by circumventing neo-Kantian orthodoxy in favor of a post-Kantian heterodoxy, following the minor tradition that developed in the wake of his thought and

applying them to the specific situations at issue. As opposed to the typical use of the sublime and the beautiful within the Western canon, we articulated the alternate concepts of the everyday sublime and the commonly beautiful so as to provincialize them. Through these critical lenses, we interrogated not only the habits of perception and recollection that have produced a new relief effect in sight and sound, but also the rationalist presuppositions of postwar liberalism exemplified in the image of the veil of ignorance. In the process, we questioned the foundation from which they sprung, a disposition that was deeply embedded in the cultural habitus at the time of Kant's writing, but which were provided conditions of possibility through which they might be overcome in the very ambiguity of his own assertions. In this respect we have followed Benjamin's early essay "On the Program of the Coming Philosophy", in which he suggests that orthodox readings that recount the critical philosophy only insofar as it introduces the rational apriori as a basis from which to arrive at legitimate knowledge miss the greater potentiality it offers in these other, under-referenced respects. It is no surprise then, that neo-Kantian applications of the beautiful and the sublime, insofar as they relate to aesthetics, are often based upon the supposedly objective senses of sight and sound that in the examples we engaged, reproduced the microcolonial and microracial presuppositions of the postwar period. Thus, rather than simply reproducing or opposing his framework *en total*, we noted that, as Benjamin and Deleuze both assert, it was also Kant who set the conditions of possibility conceptually by which such judgments might be deposed. Therefore, the habits of perception and recollection upon which the postwar citizen-subject was founded become opened up so as to proceed in an immanently from depluralization to repluralization. It is for this reason that we affirm that the argument being advanced is no more anti-Kantian than it is neo-Kantian, but instead that it is specifically post-Kantian: that which could only be engaged in his wake.

In the final chapter, we will continue this project in the domain of immigration by engaging the problem of the microethnic, that which identifies some practices as

outside of the norm while naturalizing that derived from an unmarked center of citizen-subjectivity. Whereas in the prewar period, anti-immigrant policy proceeded by way of the macroethnic identification and exclusion of specific cultural particularities, in the postwar period this proceeded by way of interiorization. Rather than simply excluding based on national origins as a determinant of which groups would be accepted, new legal environments emerged after the Immigration Act of 1965 that did away with such things on the formal level of the macroethnic. What replaced it was the microethnic, a disposition of normalization that could potentially be enfolded not only into the sensory-memory habits of Euro-Americans, but even of immigrants themselves, on their way to citizenship. Which is where Kant's under-referenced and under-developed notion of the splendid becomes interesting: for it is this that he defined as the zone of indistinction in which the sublime and the beautiful converge. This concept, developed here in dialogue with the concept of the splendor of the insignificant,²⁸⁸ is of perhaps even more interest to our general question than those already considered, insofar as it allows for the co-presence of monism and multiplicity and thus in practical political terms, of particularity and singularity. But like the sublime and the beautiful, it too can be applied in both radical and conciliatory ways, if not brought into an encounter with the micropolitical: indeed, in the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant notes this himself. There, he observes that while a palace might be beautiful and sublime at once and therefore exemplary of the splendid, the judgment of whether it is or is not is never a non-contingent judgment. For this reason, the important thing is recognizing that disinterestedness is the very condition of possibility for that process, which is why he points out that an egalitarian perspective would encourage a more discerning engagement, to "rebuke the vanity of the great who waste the sweat of the people on such superfluous things".²⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the critique of the restriction of the splendid to great palaces and other such privileged domains is in a certain way the point of this chapter: to focus on those elements of postwar perception and recollection judged insignificant in relation to the microethnic, in order to redeem their importance. Just as a depluralized concept of the sublime can contribute to a

relief effect that denies becoming and multiplicity to indigenous peoples and a depluralized concept of the beautiful can produce similar effects with respect to race, so too could a concept of the splendid recognize only the dynamism of those who live in the palace, while circumventing it in those who build it.

From within this same sensibility perhaps, Kant's deployment of the supposedly subjective sense of smell would seem well-placed to question the objectivity-claims so regularly accorded to sight and sound, especially since it is typically excluded from serious philosophical or political consideration. Here however, at least when considered within everyday life, its more radical province is the testament it provides to experience beyond subject and object. This is particularly telling with respect to immigration, because not only does it intervene in the state's production of sensory objectivity, it also disrupts the production of identity that allows for there to be such a thing as citizen-subjectivity at all. As in previous chapters, a consideration from the cinema can assist here too, in order to render perceptible as well as questionable, the contingency of the contemporary sensorium. Consider for instance, one of the key moments in Tony Kaye's *American History X* (1999), the laundry-room scene: it is only when the neo-Nazi skinhead Derek Vinyard recognizes the memories of others as potentially analogous to his own, by affirming a non-white inmate's assertion that the smell of freshly washed towels reminds him of a woman, that he begins to seriously confront his own cultural habitus. Prior to that point, the naturalized supremacy of what for him is an implicitly Euro-American citizen-subjectivity is taken as a given, serving as an ontological foundation through which the subjugation of minority population is legitimated. Much like those we have already referenced in the domains of sight and sound, what this suggests is that our perception of smell is never unmediated but is always produced by the spatially and temporally-embedded associations we make with it. But while it can be depluralizing in this way, it can also be repluralizing for that very reason, as it was for Vinyard: indeed, as neuroscientists have confirmed, a single odorant can be interpreted entirely differently depending on whether it is conjoined with positively or

negatively-associated words. Thus, the human response to specific odorants is not an innate quality but is instead, like every other sensory experience, a relief effect that becomes congealed into habit through learned associations. Specifically that is, associations between what are represented as countable as subjects or as objects: “not only is the odor believed to be what it has been labeled when presented as such, but people do not believe that the stimulus is the same when it is labeled differently, showing how powerful suggestion and context are in odor perception”.²⁹⁰

This, indeed, is why it is the insignificant that should be conjoined with the concept of the splendid, since that which is already significant within a given assemblage is more often than not, also that which is already dominant. It is in other words, it is that brought to consciousness by the order of the police, that which already exists, rather than that of the political, that which would displace it and open it up to further becomings. In the interest of the repluralizing of experience then, the displacement of microethnic habits of perception and recollection might begin by recalling the master perfumer Edmond Roudnitska’s famous confrontation with the exclusion of the olfactory from aesthetics, in which he argued that it too framed experience and should not simply be dismissed. Indeed, for him, an understanding of philosophy as well as music and the other sensorially-mediated arts was as central to composing splendid perfumes as was a familiarity with the multiplicity of its raw materials, since in his view all experience is always already synesthetic. In striking contrast to the neo-Kantian hierarchy of the senses, which for his less-experimental readers, privileged only the objective senses, what was argued here was that “perfumers are chemists no more than is the painter who manipulates chemical colors. In itself composing a perfume has nothing to do with chemistry”.²⁹¹ From this perspective one might go even further, so as to suggest that it is in art as such that the artificial nature of ready-to-hand olfaction might be most productively rerendered, not only in fragrances themselves but also in the cinema. Particularly in its post-cinematic form, which allows for the critical remediation not only of sound but of all the

senses, all of the habits, clichés and stereotypes that had been folded into the previous media environment can be placed under consideration. Indeed, not only does film mobilize in this sense the “cinematic body”,²⁹² it also allows the viewer to momentarily experience it through a profane illumination. As such, that which consciousness cuts out, including the postwar sensory-memory habitus as it developed over most of its decades can be selectively and critically edited back into perception. Just as with an audience reencountering Vinyard and his fellow inmate in the laundry scene, so too do many other fragmented cultural objects allow for the repluralization of our experience of smell and the deterritorialization of postwar habits of perception and recollection. The two films by which we divide the sections of this chapter then, are Clint Eastwood’s *Gran Torino* (2008) and Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland’s *Quinceañera* (2006). The first concerns the depluralizing of experience and the second its repluralizing, while both exemplify Benjamin’s concurrence with Proust that the so-called senses eschewed in some passages of Kant often bring one closer to truth, insofar as they enable access to unconscious perception and involuntary recollection. As the former put it in “The Image of Proust”, where he most directly relates the critique of neo-Kantianism to the concerns of the French novelist, “smell – that is the sense of weight of someone who casts his nets into the sea of the *temps perdu*”.²⁹³

It is through the lens that this statement provides that we should briefly consider the genealogy of the concept of the splendid, which Kant derives from Joseph Addison, an English philosopher who first articulated it in *Spectator* No. 412. As he put it there, “if there be a beauty or uncommonness joined with...grandeur, as in a troubled ocean, a heaven adorned with stars and meteors, or a spacious landscape cut out into rivers, woods, rocks and meadows, the pleasure still grows upon us, as it arises from more than a single principle”.²⁹⁴ In contrast with his other major aesthetic reference, the archconservative Edmund Burke, who had presupposed “an eternal distinction between them”,²⁹⁵ Kant repeatedly implies that there might indeed be some overlap, albeit without giving much weight to the more general sense given by Addison. Thus while doing so, he primarily

reproduces Burke's hierarchy of the senses, which as in the *Anthropology*, was meant to instantiate a clear, unsurmountable distinction between subject and object, even while the sublime and the beautiful in their most dynamic sense confound both. This is a particularly interesting choice when encountering the question of immigration in regards to the olfactory production of the microethnic, since for Addison not only are the beautiful and the sublime coextensive, but so are all sensory domains through which they are intuited. Much like Benjamin or Deleuze's emphasis on sensation beyond representation, he affirmed the importance of the most dynamic modes of experience, not eschewing but embracing smell. As he put, "if there arises a fragrancy of smells or perfumes, they heighten the pleasures of the imagination, and make even the colors and verdure of the landscape appear more agreeable".²⁹⁶ In contrast, Burke and the neo-Kantians reify the subject/object distinction, presupposing the partition of experience in the first place, thereby reproducing the modern sensorium. The often-unnoticed Addisonian dimension of the Kantian splendid therefore, is what we are seeking to redeem here, in particular the micropolitical implications that might be derived from a mode of experience that as he states, is irreducible to a single principle. Indeed, under the influence of its deterritorializing force, the contingency of postwar citizen-subjectivity might well be unconcealed, at least so long as it is encountered not as a received idea but as one produced in a productive manner that could be called post-Kantian.

Here then, we will extend the concept of the splendor of the insignificant in contrast to both Burke's suggestion that "no smells or tastes can produce a grand sensation",²⁹⁷ as well as Kant's notion that the olfactory is the least of all senses,²⁹⁸ while still drawing on the more useful aspects of the later critical philosophy. For if the splendid is rendered possible insofar as it combines beauty and grandeur, without the subjective interfering with the objectivity of sight and sound, it cannot affirm the becoming through which the transformation of belonging in the postwar period has emerged. But if we take seriously the post-Kantian approach of redeeming that which is useful while circumventing that

which is not, the splendor of the insignificant can provide an ontological basis from which to engage it. Thus rather than assuming that the olfactory is “contrary to freedom”²⁹⁹ since “others are obligated to share the pleasure of it”, we can instead consider the production of odorous/nonodorous dualism in the first place. Perhaps this is not entirely surprising of course, given that under liberal individualism, the body is a form of property and thus retains inviolable, state-protected rights from the interference of alterity. Indeed, as we have seen with indigeneity and raciality, the postwar American citizen-subjectivity in particular is a domain in which the becomings and multiplicities immanent to cultural difference are tolerated, but only insofar as an center of gravity remains at the core as a normalizing force. The microethnic habitus this produces is partially predicated upon the inclusion of smell then, but only in the specifically deodorized form so as not to be contrary to freedom. The splendor of the insignificant then, revalues that hierarchical distribution of the sensible and with it, those cultural assemblages that had been identified by it. In this sense too, it suggests a new disposition that would not only confront the existing habits of perception and recollection but would make a habit of questioning habit, what has been described as “revolutionary habit”.³⁰⁰ In this sense, Addison’s affirmation of the heightened pleasure of the imagination afforded by dynamic modes of experience serves not only as a contrast to that aesthetic which prevailed in modern liberalism, but also as one with political implications. As we will see in our engagement with *Gran Torino* and *Quinceñeara*, the microethnic invocation of suspicion that has often been voiced that the occlusion of smell in the modern period is related to a fear of gender and sexuality.

It is no wonder then, that smell has played such a prominent role in mobilizing anti-immigrant sentiment within a nation-state that in the wake of centuries of population reconstitution, claims to pride itself on having overcome national origin criteria after 1965. While the telos moving from migration to assimilation to integration is often cited as evidence of the pluralization of citizen-subjectivity, even this has been reterritorialized on the level of aesthetics. What this means

practically is that ethnicities historically associated with citizen-subjectivity, are presumed not to exist per se, which thereby enables the identification of those outside of its normalizing gaze, as disordered rather than ordered. The microethnic then, can exist either as aethnicity, or as optional ethnicity, the latter of which can be invoked as a reminder of the center of gravity in relation to which all are others are defined. The sense of belonging made possible in the postwar United States then, was not one that affirmed the splendor of cultural difference as such, but rather one that affirmed only the beauty and sublimity of the significant, which reproduced a depluralizing experience, often precisely in the name of diversity. In short, that which Kant was concerned egalitarian critics might point out, denouncing the manner the concept of the splendid might simply be invoked in order to prop up yet another hierarchy.

While the associations we recounted in relation to Goldman may have subsided in the direct sense, it might well be argued that it continues in other more indirect forms even more ubiquitously today, particularly within those modes of anti-immigrant sentiment that seek to affirm the objective definition order of disorder without directly invoking either specific ethnicities or odor per se. Indeed, the reference to smell became indecorous in the postwar period, which meant that citizen-subjectivity's claims to a uniquely deodorized cultural habitus were invoked indirectly, through linguistic and visual references to its hygiene that simultaneously marked immigrants as incapable of attaining it. Thus, just as Addison held that smell can inform the experience of sight, here we should not forget that the latter could also serve as a conduit for experience of the former, a process that would necessarily leave traces of the earlier odorous paranoia within the domain of the visual. This is found particularly in the city as it emerged in the wake of the sanitation revolution, which in response to the miasmatic theory of disease, originally diagnosed smell itself as the primary carrier. Once the germ theory took over, the earlier olfactory surveillance did not disappear entirely but instead produced a similar process within the "visualization of smell".³⁰¹ In this domain, rather than directly referencing aromatic difference, the deodorized

citizen-subject was simply rendered optically such that microethnic assimilation was enabled to unfold precisely, in the name of tolerance and multiculturalism. The relation of citizen and non-citizen then, is instantiated not only on the formal level of the law but also by the partition of objective from subjective sense, sublime from beautiful experience, and common from singular modes of being. Because smell was judged a lower sense it was associated with those bodies that are were historically excluded from the community, just as Burke and the early Kant excluded it from the higher senses, relegating it as a lesser sense in relation to sight and sound.³⁰² This of course, is another reason that the splendor of the insignificant is such a radical concept: the multiplicity it affords otherwise depluralizing modes of experience is without equal, particularly when it is taken in its most dynamic form, which problematizes the subject/object distinction upon which microethnic assimilation relies, by throwing into question the distinction of significant and insignificant.

Of course, given that immigrants have ever-increasingly been expected to perform the most intensive physical labor, it is no surprise that a deodorized aesthetic became common at the same time that the more well-established citizen-subject became increasingly immobile. What is surprising, is how rarely the contingency of this phenomenon is noted, given the often visceral, affect-laden manner in which olfactory and visual evidence of disorder alike, are invoked in order to preclude the extension of belonging. If we are to engage this then, here again we would do well to return to the notion of a relief effect, moving beyond only this time insofar as smell is invested in the production of the microethnic. Purified from an indigeneous or racial context, the cultural habitus that emerged with the enlistment of smell into the postwar sensory-memory habitus, served to demarcate ethnicity from context. As such, it operated within a deodorized environment that because it was implicitly normed, also foregrounded odor more than it otherwise would have. Thus its redeployment of signs of order rather than disorder, For this reason, it is important to remember that the sense of smell that was typically judged subjective in comparison with sight or sound, was not in itself more

critical simply because it was judged more intimate. Rather, it too was subject to reterritorialization, even if indirectly through the use of a visualized smell. The critical task then, is not simply the reproduction of phenomenological experience as it is lived but instead, that of “maintaining the two realities separate, and not falling into glaucoma”.³⁰³ Interestingly, Deleuze often referred to the splendid as providing this very function: particularly in *Proust and Signs*, in which the beautiful and the sublime were conjoined with everyday experience, as he notes occurs for instance, after the narrator encounters the odor of the madeleine.

At this moment, he said:

Combray rises up, not as it was experienced in contiguity with the past sensation, but in a splendor, with a “truth” that never had an equivalent in reality. This joy of time regained, this identity of the sensuous quality, this truth of the reminiscence – we experience them and we feel that they overflow all the associative mechanisms. But we are unable to say how. We acknowledge that it is happening, but we do not yet possess the means of understanding it. With the flavor of the madeleine, Combray has risen up in all its splendor; but we have by no means discovered the causes of such an apparition. The impression of the three trees remains unexplained; on the contrary, the impression of the madeleine seems explained by Combray. Yet we are scarcely any further along: why this joy, why this splendor in the resurrection of Combray?

Here, the splendid operates not merely through the sensation itself nor the associations made with it as in conscious perception and voluntary recollection, but as an excess of the world of immediate, depluralizing experience, so as to engage unconscious perception and involuntary recollection in an immanent manner. Of course, while implicitly suggesting the radical potentialities afforded

by a post-Kantian ontology, Proust himself critiqued the neo-Kantian orthodoxy in *The Captive*. As he put it, “the great renegade of Protestantism platonised in the German manner for a Germany prehistorically sentimental and aulic, ringing in all the changes of a Pomerian mysticism. It is still the *Symposium*, but held this time at Königsberg, in the local style, indigestible and reeking of sauerkraut, and without any good-looking boys”.³⁰⁴ In other words, while his writing was no doubt greatly influenced by the free play of the faculties afforded by the beautiful and the sublime, Proust’s aesthetic contrasted with both insofar as it emphasized the splendor of the insignificant. For as Benjamin argued, “the true reader of Proust is constantly jarred by small shocks”.³⁰⁵ taking the beautiful’s capacity to foreground the small and variegated and the sublime’s engagement with the large and overwhelming, what this suggests is the moment in which the two converge. The smell of the madeleine, despite its seeming banality, retains the capacity to produce profound shifts in consciousness, by clarifying the depluralizing of experience as nothing more than a contingent expression of a particular place and time. Thus as Ranciere asserts, in such an approach

everything that could be taken in at a glance had to have been already susceptible to being something artistic; the insignificant had in itself to be potentially art. The rupture of the system of representation was first brought about by what was so ineptly called ‘realism’; this ‘realism’ held that not only was everything that was represented equal, but also that there was an inherent splendor to the insignificant.³⁰⁶

Indeed, there is no domain of experience outside of the aesthetic: for just this reason, we proceed in this chapter to engage the production of citizen-subjectivity in relation to immigration through the sensory-memory circuits peculiar to the microethnic. Just as Proust accessed the splendor of the insignificant through the involuntary recollection and unconscious perception afforded by the smell of the madeleine, so too will we seek to demonstrate how post-cinematic film’s remediation of postwar American experience can render perceptible that which in

the current sensory order remains imperceptible. In the first section, we will do so by engaging contemporary manifestations of the microethnic as they appear in *Gran Torino*, in order to look at how integration and assimilation form a resonance machine with the depluralizing of experience. Then in the second section, we look at *Quinceñera*, in order to theorize its potential repluralizing, once the process of the identification of the significant and insignificant is understood as a contingent rather than essential process.

4.1 Depluralizing Smell: Clint Eastwood's *Gran Torino* (2008)

Between the three forces of indigeneity, raciality and ethnicity considered in this dissertation, it is the latter of the three that has functioned in the most elusive manner in the postwar cultural habitus, insofar as its various European derivations have often served to limit the claims of the former two. The manner in which it did of course, was not by way of the macroethnic identification of certain ethnicities as more worthy of immigration than others as in the prewar period, but by partitioning it off from the contextual determinants of indigeneity and raciality. Once this had occurred, inequalities encountered by those whose ancestries derived primarily from non-European ethnicities were experienced as naturally-occurring stratifications rather than the contingent, spatiotemporal result of power and authority that they were. It is in this manner that the microethnic invocation of aethnicity and optional ethnicity alike, converged with the hierarchy of the senses in the depluralizing of experience procured in the neo-Kantian frame. Indeed, as it was argued in *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View*, “the senses teach less the more strongly they feel themselves being affected”.³⁰⁷ in this statement, which preceded his subsequent attempt to denigrate smell as a means to legitimate knowledge, an entire politicization of the senses is revealed. It is particularly evident insofar as it also held that, as opposed to those percepts experienced individually, odor is one that “others are forced to share the pleasure of. And thus smell is contrary to freedom”.³⁰⁸ In everyday, ready-to-hand experience, this proscription of the nose and production of the liberal individual

subject was rarely understood as anything other than the natural primacy of eye and ear. But as Nietzsche asserted, this schema only retains an aura of logicity insofar as the visible and the audible are presupposed as the primary senses through which the supremacy of rational apriority is confirmed. While Kant claimed that sight and sound were external and thus trustworthy conduits for the object, smell for him was representative of the subject, the more ephemeral domain that Bataille referred to as “inner experience”.³⁰⁹ Indeed, it is for this reason that in the rationalist philosophical frame its force served primarily as a threat to subjectivity as such and practically speaking, citizen-subjectivity in particular. Kant of course, emphasized that rather than merely perceiving and maintaining our distance from the object of encounter as in other sensory domains, in the experience of smell we partake.³¹⁰ Thus the disinterestedness that allowed for instance, for the appreciation of the sublime in sight or the beautiful in sound, became impossible: one cannot contemplate but can instead only emotively react. Nietzsche’s rejoinder however, is that this hierarchy of the senses legitimates what nevertheless remains a contingently-situated, ontological depluralizing of experience. This became central to experience in postwar America, particularly in discourses that marked immigrant assemblages as a contamination of what would otherwise have been an undiluted and ethnically pure cultural habitus. In contrast to this, Nietzsche argued that a truly aesthetic orientation, that often referred to as Dionysian, is not exclusive of smell and is much to the contrary, a matter of “applied physiology”.³¹¹ Of course, there is some sense to such a logic: from the point of view of an artist, truth is not an object received by a subject but a haecceity in a zone of indistinction between and beyond both. As he continued the thought in *Ecce Homo*, “I was the first to *discover* the truth, in that I was the first to sense – smell – the lie as lie...my genius is in my nostrils”.³¹²

More than many of the films dealing with the subject, Clint Eastwood’s *Gran Torino* (2008) illuminates the functioning of this hierarchy of the senses in postwar microethnic practices, demonstrating through the visual rather than

olfactory register how order and disorder are identified today. Much like *Avatar* and *Bamboozled*, *Gran Torino* serves as an interesting case study, since even while it might be dismissed as providing no useful insights, if attended to in a critically redemptive manner, its seemingly non-critical dimensions could themselves confirm the contingency of precisely the project it seems to prop up. Furthermore, although the film is relatively conventional in terms of the technologies by which it was produced, the constant distraction produced for its characters by text-messaging and Internet-ready cell phones provincializes the means through which citizen-subjectivity is made to resonate with the microethnic, enabling throughout the film the decentering of the self. While the habits of perception and recollection assumed by the protagonist Walt Kowalski are deeply congealed, those of his granddaughter in particular are far more open. For instance, while Ashley is portrayed as bourgeois, nihilistic and self-absorbed as she hunches over her cell-phone at her own grandmother's funeral wake, her sense of subjectivity is not only an essence but a product of plasticity like Walt's. But importantly, she is also far more aware of that fact than he is. Indeed, long before we are introduced to any complaints he might have had about the Hmong immigrant neighbors beginning to predominate in his neighborhood, it is Ashley who first draws his disapproval when she shows up at church in a miniskirt hemmed several inches above the knee. Shortly afterwards beeping sounds issuing out of her cell-phone drawn the disapproving attention of other congregants, indicating the degree to which she had departed from the ritualized traditions they at least, still gave lip service to. But as Benjamin famously noted in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", such developments began long before the arrival of the cell phones, the Internet and other such technologies. For instance, whereas classical art privileged contemplative immersion in the work in a manner that naturalized culture, the cinema and other visual technologies of reproduction enabled a mode of perception that broke with it: "reception in a state of distraction".³¹³ Much as architecture is received without the perceiver being entirely aware of its impact, so too do technologies like the cinema enable a mode of thinking that is irreducible to contemplative immersion.

Indeed, even if *Gran Torino* was intended as a critique of the inattentive, unhygienic individual of the late modern United States, it could never be summed up within such a frame.

Aside from the negative role of new media technology in the film, that of smell and hygiene is perhaps the most important theme throughout, both with respect to his granddaughter's generation as well as that of the Hmong neighbors who are portrayed moving in next door. And yet here too, there are numerous scenes that could be read in a critically redemptive manner: for instance, there is the key moment in which Kowalski identifies with his Hmong neighbors for the first time when they bring roasted chicken to his house in recognition of what they perceive as a good deed on his part. Tellingly, neither their words nor their graciousness prove sufficient, but instead he is ultimately convinced to let them in to his abode by the food's savory smell. In this way, *Gran Torino* can be understood both as a quintessential image of the contemporary hierarchy of perception and its microethnic effects, as well as a potential critique of those who reproduce it uncritically. For instance, whereas smell is typically occluded as one of the lower senses today, contemporary neuroscience has revealed that the genes dedicated to olfaction in fact constitute the largest such family identified to date in mammals. Indeed, as an article in *Scientific American* put it, considering that humans can perceive well over 10,000 distinct scents, "the large family of odor receptors contrasts sharply with the far more restricted repertoire of receptors in the eye".³¹⁴ The rationalist distrust of smell as a path to truth then, is not only anachronistic philosophically speaking, but scientifically as also, as the scene in *Gran Torino* implies. Indeed, both the lifeworlds of much of the non-Western world today and the Western literature of much of the pre-modern period readily identify the contingency of what Lefebvre referred to as the West's "immense deodorizing campaign".³¹⁵ Of course, the old adage about the imperceptibility of one's personal bouquet which neuroscientists term "olfactory adaptation"³¹⁶ demonstrates as well that while it was largely a project of the modern West, it was not necessarily exclusively modern or Western per se. By emphasizing the

gestural, corporeal elements of the postwar sensory-memory circuitry, *Gran Torino* acknowledges this dimension, going quite far beyond the more commonly-invoked question of discourse. Indeed, Eastwood's posture, throat-clearing, squinting, head shaking and other such features serve to remediate the aesthetics of postwar American citizen-subjectivity as situated rather than timeless. And when considered in relation to those of his Hmong immigrant neighbors, as the reader of Proust experiences with respect to French citizen-subjectivity in his depiction of the *belle époque*, the disposition he assumes comes off as antiquated.

While it may well be the case that Eastwood understands the function of cinema and architecture as artforms through which to affirm hygiene and attention rather than conduits for critical reception in a state of distraction, the audience might well come to different conclusions after perceiving the contingency of Walt's lifeworld. Of course, there is a certain sense in which microethnic habits of perception and recollection are imperceptible to the one who adopts them, both for humans and for the larger animal frame from which they derive. At least since the ethological studies of Jacob Von Uexküll at the turn of the 20th century, the biosemiotic function of odor as a subjective marker of what is experienced as an objective territoriality has been known throughout the zoographical world. In the microcosmic lifeworld of the tick for instance, one could observe the self-interested habitus within which it experienced a sense of smell that was specifically attuned to the odorant qualities of mammals but not other beings.³¹⁷ We could extrapolate from this that the modern Western proscription of smell is at least as much a spatiotemporally-enframed lifeworld as the tick's. Indeed, even while it renders the contingency of the self imperceptible, it also increases the capacity for surveillance all the more, by marking all that failed to conform an alien presence. This biosemiotic function produces what Von Uexküll described as an environment (*umwelt*), a system of signs through which an animal maps its territory, incorporating its various elements into a subjective lifeworld that in the wake of sensory adaptation, is experienced as though it were objective. The dilemma however, is that because each animal presupposes their own

environment as universal, it is thereby forced into a constant state of threat as potentially infinite coexistents conflict with it. This of course, is what films like *Gran Torino* offer: they take us out of our cultural habitus and present to us the contingency of the depluralizing mode of experience upon which it is based. Indeed, this is precisely what was produced in the proscription of smell: it mistook the contingent environment developed in the wake of the “immense deodorizing campaign” for what Von Uexküll called the surroundings (*umgebung*), the splendor of the world as it exists beyond contingent experience. In other words, that judged within a contingent spatiotemporal assemblage such as Walt’s as insignificant. Thus, just as ethologists who studied the lifeworld of the tick could critically observe the situated sensory-memory circuitry within which it existed, so too could we provincialize our own embeddedness within a contingent, yet imperceptible environment. In other words, rather than our habits of perception and recollection merely reaffirming citizen-subjectivity by filtering out the multiplicity of the surroundings, cultural objects like *Gran Torino* might instead be confronted with a mechanism that delivers us over to that depluralizing structure of experience, particularly if encountered in the critical sense of distraction affirmed by Benjamin.

This cultural habitus of course, is the product of an environment in which one’s contingency is fused so thoroughly to the surroundings from which it is derives that its underlying becoming can only be perceived as an intrusion upon it. As a result it is routinely subjected to the thrall of the microethnic, that which occludes not just the sublime or the beautiful, but also the splendid: specifically that form of it dubbed the splendor of the insignificant. Pier Paolo Pasolini captured the essence of this failure of perception and recollection when he admitted, “I too, like Moravia and Bertolucci, am a bourgeois, in fact a petit-bourgeois, a turd, convinced that my stench is not only scented perfume, but is in fact the only perfume in the world”.³¹⁸ In this moreover, he was correct not only in the obvious sense, but also in that it was in fact, the specifically bourgeois prejudice with respect to smell: “while the imagined corruption of the poor was associated with

filth and stench, that of the aristocracy had its olfactory sign in heavy perfumes. The rising middle classes, in contrast, would find their niche in the safe middle ground of olfactory neutrality”.³¹⁹ Thus, whereas the hierarchy of the senses reproduced this sensory-memory circuitry by rendering imperceptible the environment from which it emerged, an awareness of the situatedness of the microethnic allows us to develop a more critical redemption of the surroundings that citizen-subjectivity occludes. Indeed, it is this interplay that itself reveals the subversive potential of Lefebvre’s insistence that “where an intimacy occurs between ‘subject’ and ‘object’, it must surely be the world of smell and the places where they reside”.³²⁰ In order to grasp how this functioned in the postwar United States however, we must recall that for him, deodorization derives not only from the discourse of hygiene, but much more dynamically from “the transposition of everything into the idiom of images, of spectacle”.³²¹ This depluralizing of the senses therefore, has reconstituted the world such that the contingency of the present appears timeless and the modern subject/object distinction appeared unquestionable. Instead of space being experienced as produced through the slow accommodation of an environment, it seemed a merely empty container spontaneously adapted to the sensibilities of its inhabitants. Lefebvre however, did not only limit the origins of deodorization to the history of philosophy but suggested that it could be understood as expressive of changes in the built environment, of what he called the “logic of visualization”.³²²

In the course of the process whereby the visual gains the upper hand over the other senses, all impressions derived from taste, smell, touch and even hearing first lose clarity, then fade away altogether, leaving the field to line, color and light. In this way a part of the object and what it offers comes to be taken for the whole.³²³

That partiality however, which could also be related to the microcolonial or microracial concerns of the preceding chapters, could never approximate the

multiplicity of the surroundings as such and moreover, unlike its counterpart, could not account for the “transient splendor”³²⁴ he recounted deriving from the odorous presence of a flower. Indeed, for this reason the logic of visualization did not put an end to the macroethnic habitus of the past, but instead allowed for its multiplication in an unprecedented variety of forms that were then experienced on the micropolitical level, as is repeatedly seen in *Gran Torino*. In this sense, the modern deodorization of the environment was itself a kind of reterritorialization enabled not only through visualization in general, but specifically the visualization of smell. Indeed, the modern principle of *embellissement*, according to which Hausmann’s Paris was remade in the 18th century, was such that “the precisely delineated masses, the shiny surfaces and sharp edges of the projected square [were reconstituted so as to] have a distinctly odorless look”.³²⁵ This introduction of hygiene as a basic component in the production of space stood in stark contrast of course, to the Paris depicted in novels concerned with the pre-modern city,³²⁶ in which it was teeming with smells of all kinds. Suddenly in the wake of the Enlightenment, it seems, the premodern dominance of ornament was overthrown, while the logic of deodorization rose to prominence, eventually settling in as the governing principle of design. In its wake, one could not fail to notice the increasing prevalence of white paint, pavement and polished glass, all artifacts of an increasingly-generalized aesthetic of *embellissement* throughout the built environment. Following the utopian architectural writings of his time, Benjamin described this as a “culture of glass”,³²⁷ in which not only was the detail of ornament disappearing, producing an aesthetic that he described as barbarism, but at the same time a new egalitarianism was becoming possible, precisely as a result of the conditions of possibility set by it. Indeed, all of these developments were intertwined not only with the sanitation revolution but also with the birth of the modern citizen-subject in the French and American upheavals: as bourgeois revolutions, both instantiated the olfactory associations that had long been accorded to those classes that were neither aristocrat nor proletarian.³²⁸ Thus, again we should not forget when considering the specificity of postwar America’s supposedly more tolerant disposition that “Nietzsche...points out how over the

course of history the visual has increasingly taken precedence over elements of thought and action deriving from other senses”.³²⁹ The obsession with hygiene that is commonly identified in the visualization of smell therefore, explains a great deal about why the dirty immigrant was such a common trope in the microethnic habitus, as well as the means through which it was mobilized in the new modes of power and control.

In order to really grasp the significance of the microethnic as it existed in postwar America however, one needs to engage specific examples: thus before moving on to the second section’s emphasis on the repluralizing of smell, we return to *Gran Torino*. As suggested above, insofar as it remediated the sensory-memory circuitry by which citizen-subjectivity was reconstituted in the postwar United States, the film is potentially useful for this kind of engagement. Walt is a retired Polish-American autoworker from Ford’s Highland Park plant in Detroit, who is reluctantly becoming acquainted with his new Hmong neighbors who have moved in next door. Which is an especially timely theme given the transformation of the US auto industry after the financial collapse of 2008, which lead to the emergence of numerous popular culture objects meditating on the historical significance of the region.³³⁰ However, while a superficial engagement with the narrative alone might suggest that by the end of the film Walt overcomes the narcissistic tendencies especially manifest early on, upon closer examination it becomes clear that he only really did so to the extent that immigrants were made to conform to received notion of national identity. Thus, the remediation it offers of the microethnic habitus in which he lives will not be for most viewers, that of the profane illumination spoken of by Benjamin, but that which is its condition of possibility. In other words, while he ultimately did not reproduce a centrifugal model of citizen-subjectivity as he might have been expected, he still reinforced a centripetal one in which his own microethnic habitus remained the assumed locus of enunciation. Rather than taking the Hmongs on their own terms, let alone his granddaughter on hers, Walt enlisted them in an apprenticeship of hygiene that from within his own set of assumptions, extended from gender to race and

beyond, an approach considered throughout the film in the divergent deployments of their respective lifeworlds.

For instance, while his home is flanked by massive, spotless, white columns, the Hmongs' house is shown through numerous matching shots to be unkempt and painted a drab, faded blue, coupled with a dirty white trim, both of which are ubiquitously peeling. Connecting architecture and film with the reception in a state of distraction both afford, here the *mise-en-scene* enables Walt to mutter to himself as the new neighbors pass by their freely-growing lawn and plants which contrast with his own which are carefully-manicured, "how many smokerats can you get in one room"? In another scene, he is shown sweeping the walkway to his home as well as the sidewalk in front of it, whilst surveying comparatively more-unkempt Hmong property, complaining "Powalski would roll over in his grave if he could see his lawn now". Similarly, shortly after one Hmong gangster admiringly observes that his GT is in mint condition, Walt is shown primming and polishing it before leaving it out to dry in the sun where he could observe it from the porch of his property. When the group come by to try to enlist Thao the neighbor boy into their gang, Walt responds once again from his microethnic locus of enunciation, appearing on the front porch with a shotgun, growling the response: "get off my lawn". Then when the neighbors first bring food in thanks for scaring them off, he describes it as garbage, indicating that he imagines himself the sole legitimate source for judging such a definition. And while he encourages the introduction of expletives into Thao's lexicon, he only does so in the service of what he considers a proper masculinity, indicated further when he immediately interrupts his sister when she tries to do so in turn. In many ways then, the remediation the film offers is one that inverts John G. Alvidsen's *The Karate Kid* (1984), in which an older Asian-American man instructs a younger Euro-American in achieving normative masculinity, largely by way of an apprenticeship in hygiene. Indeed, to take the analogy further, it hardly seems coincidental that in both films, after the youth completes his gender training, the reward is that he is allowed to take his date out in the adult's prized classic

automobile, since he didn't have a car of his own. But in the microethnic thrall presented in *Gran Torino*, there is no hint of the kinds of becomings that could be argued with respect to Daniel in Alvidsen's film: instead, Walt reverses the process so as to affirm the very logic of assimilation endured by Polish immigrants in the recent past.

It is on this foundation then, that the apprenticeship begins after Thao's family offers his labor free-of-charge as punishment for having attempted to steal the car: while at first reluctant, Walt eventually agrees and has him paint and fix up a similarly-rundown house across the street, presumably so as to improve his view while he sat on the porch drinking. This apprenticeship however, competes with that of the Hmongs, who within the confines of this filmic landscape are only capable of offering gangs as a possible form-of-life within which to recognize himself. As in Haraway's discussion of *Avatar* therefore, here too we might assert that even if the film does not produce an essentialist dichotomy in which immigrant=nature while citizen=culture, "nature-cultures are not always good!".³³¹ Thus, as Sue informs Walt at one point, "Thao is actually really smart, he just doesn't know what direction to go in": the assumption being then, that a citizen who has acquiesced to the assimilation narrative would serve as a worthy guide. Nevertheless, the microethnic disjuncture between the two is evident even before that, since the first thing Walt states when Thao comes by to ask for some jumper cables is "come on, get the shit out of your mouth". From that point forward, he is presented watering and mowing the lawn, painting the trim, cleaning out the gutters and polishing the GT. All of which are of course, demonstrations of the majoritarian disposition that Walt sought to train him in, rather than the deterritorializing becomings that would really begin to emancipate him. Finally, there is a scene in which the boy's grandmother complains, "look at him washing dishes! He does whatever his sister orders him to do. How could he ever become the man of the house?" The task set by *Gran Torino* then, is not simply the mobilization of the microethnic generally, but a specifically gendered

deployment of it, one that in this setting only an assimilated Euro-American ethnic could provide.

Whereas the film showcases Thao's apprenticeship in such scenes as the barbershop, where ethnic barbs are traded between Martin the Italian-American barber and Walt the Polish-American autoworker, this does not necessarily translate in an egalitarian fashion across lines of race. Indeed, Thao is then ordered to practice the banter with both of them, not only as though that would pass as acceptable dialogue,³³² but even worse, as though the colorlines separating their supposedly purely ethnic experiences didn't matter. They could laugh at ethnicity because they've already experienced its dissolution into citizen-subjectivity, whereas the Hmong boy could not. Indeed, if there is any question about that matter, it need only be recalled that the barber then pulls out a shotgun and rams it in his face when he attempts to engage in that which Walt is eligible for.³³³ Although this is of course, a remediation of previous images of white ethnicity, it is not particularly critical; its aesthetic that not that of ethnicity as such, but rather the micropolitical propagation of "Ethnicity, Inc.". Additionally, Walt assists Thao in courting Yule, a Hmong girl whom he was attracted to, saying that since he failed to ask her out he is "a big fat pussy", a term also used by the gangsters whose apprenticeship he is competing with. When the boy starts to come around though, this is indicated by the change in his posture to a more upright position, his sudden donning of a beige polo shirt and the introduction of expletives into his lexicon, all combined with an intentionally deepened voice. And whereas initially Walt is washing the GT, later in the film there is a scene of Thao doing so, to which his sister replies, "kind of ironic huh, Thao washing a car he tried to steal from you". And while Walt is often shot from below against the backdrop of the unevenly-kempt houses, Thao is more often framed from above, so that he appeared interminably stuck in a state of nature. Much like the depluralizing liberal pluralism theorized of neo-Kantians then, the image of citizen-subjectivity presented in *Gran Torino* is one that belies a persistent

olfactory nativism in which its centripetality is presupposed and the difference of others only ever appears as a stain upon it.

It is the microethnic habitus of postwar America that makes this the case: Thao is trained in an apprenticeship of hygiene with the assistance of Polish-Americans, Italian-Americans and Irish-Americans, even while African-Americans, Latino-Americans and Asian-Americans, for instance, are represented as incapable of such a task. Similarly, white ethnic masculinity is never in question, but Thao is repeatedly described in feminizing terms: gender and citizenship together then, are the glue that assembles the majoritarian telos in *Gran Torino*, just as they disassemble it in *The Karate Kid*. But rather than proceeding in the macroethnic manner of simply demonizing immigrants, instead it introduces a mode of personal governance in direction of the “ending of ethnicity”.³³⁴ Indeed, just as Walt perceives the Hmong neighbors as a stain on an otherwise orderly cultural habitus, so too does he feel that way about his own family. For instance after the wake for his late wife Dorothy, he berates his sons for having left the neighborhood to find employment as car salesmen selling Japanese imports. Physically, Walt is a tall, thin, muscular, man, while his sons are squat and overweight, which in itself suggests their own lack of masculinity. Similarly, he shrugs off his liberally-dressed granddaughter Ashley who is not only constantly distracted by wireless technologies, but complains at one point that she wants to leave the wake because “this ghetto is a deadzone for my cellphone”. Not only are their particular lifeworlds deployed as breaking with the family’s ethnic and class heritage, a mistake that Walt would never dream of, but their organization of smell is also shown to be disordered. In one early scene at the wake for his late wife Dorothy, who prohibited smoking in the house, Kowalski discovered Ashley with a cigarette in his garage, which she promptly drops and covers with her foot, as though if he could not see it, neither could he smell it. His scowling response is to put it out with a stern twist of his own foot and to then spit on the ground in front of her in the manner that he did upon witnessing the Hmongs moving in next door. Similarly, her distraction by wireless technologies is experienced by him as

problematic since it indicates a form of split attention that as Benjamin already knew, tends to disrupt attachments to previously naturalized forms of ritual. Ultimately, the model is that of snobbery, in which postwar habits of perception and recollection are mobilized such that while Walt's family looks down on him, he looks down on the Hmongs, who have no one below to look down upon.

In all of these ways, the visualization of smell in late modernity is showcased such that the cultural habitus is enabled to produce a disposition amenable to citizen-subjectivity. But there are also numerous references to odor alone that suggest this, if only for the contrast they provide: for example, he first connects with the Hmongs by way of fragrance, over the roasted chicken they bring to his door. But more broadly, it might also be noted that the funeral for Walt's wife takes place at Detroit's St. Ambrose Cathedral, a name that invokes *ambrosia*, the pre-Christian fragrance of the gods that incense provides an analog for, thereby signifying the "odor of sanctity".³³⁵ Only now, in secular late modernity would such an approach have meaning, since olfaction was much more celebrated in pagan as well as pre-modern Christian culture: indeed, the traces of both inform today's Catholic incense ceremonies. Furthermore, when Walt oversees Thao's upgrading of the house across the street while clearing away bushes, cutting down old trees and other such things, he does so while smoking, indicating thereby the selectivity of surveillance by which his olfactory nativism is enabled to emerge. Similarly, after Sue is raped and beaten, he is shown smoking while bathing in his bathtub, the first time he had done so since his wife's death, given that she explicitly forbade smoking in the house. In this way, although Walt is self-conscious about going against her wishes, he is nevertheless enabled to be dirty and yet clean at once, as we have suggested is central to the concept of the microethnic.³³⁶ While he is presumed to be dynamic in other words, the Hmongs are ineligible for similar freedoms: just as he could selectively choose what did and did not count as olfactory contamination, so too did he imagine himself positioned so as to identify what did and did not count as authentic citizen-subjectivity. What was left unconsidered in such an approach of course, was the

splendor of the insignificant, in which the depluralizing experience of the late modern period is no longer taken for granted but is called into question.

What can we learn then, from remediation of the microethnic habitus in *Gran Torino*? First of all, we should recall our argument from the second chapter that even cultural objects with which we might disagree can often be put to critically-redemptive use. For instance, grasping the importance of not conflating indigeneity, raciality and ethnicity as though they were always already of a piece, even if they are often overlapping can be achieved through a close reading of it. In this sense also, one lesson of the film's remediation of microethnic habits of perception and recollection was that anti-assimilationism isn't always politically useful. This became particularly obvious, as it repeatedly did for Walt, when Euro-American microethnicity encounters the indigenous or racial alterity that its assertion typically serves to occlude. What it demonstrates is the difference between cultural identity as voluntary selection as opposed to that arrived at by external ascription, which derives from being positioned at an involuntary distance from the established norm. Whereas minorities are submitted to involuntary identification with ethnicity in a manner that is always already in some way conjoined with a hierarchically-ordered raciality or indigeneity, already-dominant groups that are integrated into whiteness generally only ever experience what has been called "symbolic ethnicity".³³⁷ For them, the primary purpose it fulfills is a kind of possessive individualism, through which a more authentic self is imagined that might afford a "sense of belonging to a collectivity".³³⁸ What this produces however, was another type of narcissism in which although the category seems to refer to a general phenomena equally available to everyone, it is in fact experienced differently depending on the cultural implications associated with membership. A middle-class Euro-American for instance, could choose to identify with any one of their often myriad ancestral origins, but doing so would not typically impact relationships, housing, employment or education. On the other hand, it would for Latin Americans, Asian-Americans, African-Americans or Native Americans, precisely because

they do not have an option. Furthermore, doing so would simultaneously fulfill the desire for individuality and community while shoring up the belief that if white ethnics were able to assimilate and succeed in the face of initial discrimination, then any incoming group that failed to do so on an equally large scale today was simply not capable. What the microethnic reclamation of the Euro-American ethnogenesis forgets therefore is that this type of assertion is itself a product of mass individualism, one that ignores the very palpable “costs of a costless community”.³³⁹

In brief, it provides as Mary Waters notes:

a sense of rich culture through a community with no cost to the other contradictory values we also crave: individuality, flexibility and openness to new ideas...[however what it ignores was that] there is a subtle way in which this ethnicity has consequences for American race relations. After all, in much of this discussion the implicit and sometimes explicit comparison for this symbolic ethnicity has been the social reality of racial and ethnic identities of America's minority groups. For the ways in which ethnicity is flexible and symbolic and voluntary for white middle-class Americans are the very ways in which it is not so for non-white and Hispanic Americans. Thus the discussions of the influence of looks and surname on ethnic choice would look very different if one were describing a person who was one-quarter Italian and three-quarters African-American or a woman whose married name changed from O'Connell to Martinez. The social and political consequences of being Asian or Hispanic or black are not symbolic for the most part, or voluntary. They are real and often hurtful. So for all the ways in which I have shown that ethnicity does not matter for white Americans, I could show how it does still matter very much for non-whites. Who your ancestors are does affect

your choice of spouse, where you live, what job you have, who your friends are, and what your chances are for success in American society, if those ancestors happen not to have been from Europe.³⁴⁰

Ultimately of course, one should affirm the voluntariness of identity for everyone, including for those whom postwar citizen-subjectivity made that possible for even while it did not for others: but what must be questioned is the privileged assumption that doing so in contemporary conditions is likely to contribute to anything other than a conservative resonance machine. The narrative of Euro-American victimization, although historically indisputable in many cases, can also serve to undercut movements of indigenous and racial minorities today. Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans and Polish-Americans in short, are not at all in the same position as Chinese, Persian or Mexican immigrants, not to mention Native Americans or African-Americans. Indeed, one need only turn to Michael Novak's *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* in order to note how the resurgence of white ethnic identity after the Sixties more often than not did so in a manner that opposed the claims of more recent drives toward repluralization. As he put it in that book which served as one of the white ethnicity movement's central texts, "a Pole who knows he is a Pole, who is proud to be a Pole, who knows the social costs and possibilities of being a Polish worker in America, who knows where he stands in power, status and integrity – such a Pole can face a black militant eye to eye".³⁴¹ In other words, a rising microethnic consciousness on the part of Euro-Americans could and often has interfered in the ability to empathize with those who are always already microcolonially and microracially-situated. Since for them, the rediscovery of the ethnogenesis is costless, enjoyable and voluntary, it often becomes difficult to grasp how for others it is none of those things. The only kind of identification possible then, becomes that which is falsely imagined equivalent, rather than a more radical, heteropathic resonance.³⁴² This becomes especially poignant of course, when the inability to grasp that ethnicity is always already imbued by an indigenous or racial context, becomes an excuse to claim

that the experience is the same regardless of one's loci of enunciation since, "people are people".³⁴³

Ironically, the unspoken presupposition for such a statement is that the microethnic experience of Euro-Americans is somehow more complex than those consigned to a specifically indigenous or racial subjectivity. For the latter two, if their loci of enunciation are invoked at all, the assumption is that they are simply stuck in identity politics, as if that were not also the case, albeit in a different manner, for those who had the option not to. Thus, much like the proscription of smell from the beautiful, the sublime and the rational alike, here too capacity is circumscribed. In order to grasp the problem this presents in a more intuitive, immediate sense, recall one of the key aesthetic choices made in the production of *Gran Torino*. Throughout the film the Hmongs are filmed from an angle slightly above their heads while Euro-Americans are shown at eye-level, thereby naturalizing the vantage point of the latter, as though it is non-contingent. This choice becomes especially problematic when juxtaposed to the high vantage point at the end of the scene in which Walt confronts several African-American men who had been harassing Sue. Implying their embeddedness within an environment they were naturally of, rather than one they might shape culturally, the camera position rises in altitude as the sequence fades out, until the viewer can barely make out the characters' facial features. Indeed, it is in this scene that Eastwood's character matches almost exactly the words he uttered in reaction to Spike Lee's critique of *Flags of Our Fathers*, that he had edited out the presence of black soldiers in the events depicted. When asked about it in an interview, Eastwood spat out, "a guy like that should shut his face": in the film's implicit reference to the exchange, Walt says to one of the African-Americans, "shut your fucking face". What this indicates of course, is just what Novak said of the unmeltable ethnics: that so long as a white ethnic naturalizes the pain of the former above the adversity of the latter, they will be able to "face a black militant eye to eye". Rather than identification being enabled only in a narcissist manner then, perhaps the challenge of the film is that suggested by the scene in which he takes in the

odor wafting in from the dishes brought by his Hmong neighbors, which is to say that of heteropathic identification. Far from evading it, here smell is what brings forth truth, precisely insofar as it brings forth difference: this is what Lefebvre meant when he stated that “transitional objects to which desire becomes attached in seeking to escape subjectivity and reach out to ‘the other’ are founded primarily on the olfactory sense”.³⁴⁴ So the assertion that people are people is indeed correct, but they are so only as distributed within a particular spatial and temporal frame, one that in our space and time, naturalizes inequality in the name of equality itself: on the basis of this insight, we proceed to the second section to consider the question of repluralizing.

4.2 Repluralizing Smell: Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland’s *Quinceanera* (2002)

Thus far we have examined how a proclaimed and even demonstrated embrace of ethnicity could in fact produce an intensification of anti-immigrant sentiment, expressed within sensory-memory circuitry in the deodorization of everything that exists as well as the corresponding visualization of smell. In this respect, the neo-Kantian privileging of sight and sound over smell was shown to be not only analogous to but complicit with that which organized indigenous and racial minorities around an unmarked center of citizen-subjectivity. However, whereas in the previous two sensory domains it was held that subject and object remained distinct, in the latter the fear was that they might enter into a zone of indistinction, producing a new sense ratio held to be contrary to freedom. Similarly, we showed how the partition of the splendor of the significant from the splendor of the insignificant propped up wholly different sensory-memory habits, as Kant himself had noted in the relation between the palace and its builders. As we will see in the conclusion, the discourse of an undivided, static citizen-subjectivity is ignorant not only of the difference and becoming of which it is composed, but also of considerable miscegenation between the particularities it consolidates. In other words, it is predicated on the continuing ignorance of what actually occurred in

the earliest years of the nation's founding so as to construct a vertical rather than horizontal microethnic sensibility. The myth of a purely European past is quickly dislodged by anyone who cares to interrogate the prevailing wisdom and consider the internal difference and becomings that gave rise to it. Indeed, as the landscape of *Gran Torino* demonstrated in our own analysis, the spectator who seeks alternate perceptions and recollections in contrast with the prevailing sensory-memory circuitry is not confined to the intentions of a director. Rather, the critique made possible by the cultural object itself allows for a multiplicity of interpretations that might or might not affirm those commonly given. One might engage a film like Cameron's *Avatar* for instance, not as itself an exemplar of the depluralizing of experience but rather as a lens through which to perceive its more general functioning within everyday life as such. Or one might engage *Gran Torino* as asserting the necessity of its repluralizing as we did here: within the sphere of an artform predicated first and foremost upon montage, and even moreso in the wake of its reinvention within a post-cinematic media environment, nothing is ever entirely of a piece including the film itself.

In this respect, one recent film that emphasizes a repluralizing aesthetic in relation to immigration in the postwar United States is Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland's *Quinceñera* (2006), which presents the microethnic habitus as it became enfolded within the upper-middle class sections of the gay community. Immanent to even while submerged within the historically Mexican-American neighborhood of Echo Park in Los Angeles, both communities are marginalized as disordered, unhygienic and distant from the higher senses of sight and sound. For the former, the correlation recalls Freud's suggestion that civilization is largely predicated upon the suppression of libinal drives, in which an upright posture liberated one from the odor of the sexual organs. And for the latter, the recent nationwide anti-taco truck campaigns as well as a long tradition of associating immigrant bodies with odor and contamination have consistently reinforced such sentiments. Certainly the gay and Mexican-American communities are not mutually exclusive constituencies, despite what might be

suggested in the prevailing habits of perception and recollection. But as with *Gran Torino*'s ascription of a greater dynamism to the unmarked citizen-subject, here too a broader range of possible gender and sexual expressions is rendered possible within that fold. The difference with the cinematic landscape assembled by Glatzer and Westmoreland is that rather than utilizing film as an apparatus of capture through which to further naturalize the existing cultural habitus, they remediated it as a means through which to render its contingency perceptible in cross-cultural environments. Whereas the audience in Eastwood's film identifies with the Hmongs largely because of their relation to the already-existing American discourse of anticommunism, that presupposed in *Quinceñeara* suggests a mode of identification with Mexicans that is heteropathic. This is important because in contrast with its impact on indigeneity and raciality, the thrall within which citizen-subjectivity reconstitutes ethnicity as microethnic is one that as a matter of course, produces a telos of assimilation. Whereas Eastwood's film could easily be reduced to either the beautiful or the sublime in the conventional dichotomies ascribed by the neo-Kantian orthodoxy, *Quinceñeara* attains not only splendor as such but in a post-Kantian sense, specifically the splendor of the insignificant, affirming sensory-memory multiplicity while throwing the basic units of measure into question on the grandest as well as the most intricate scale.

Before we move too quickly into Glatzer and Westmoreland however, recall one of the specifically microethnic points suggested by Eastwood's film, that not all immigrant populations are equally disenfranchised. Indeed, while Thao is represented in *Gran Torino* as capable of assimilation despite the taunting of the other Hmong males his age, the Latino gangsters who do the same in the early scenes are deployed as beyond hope. For instance, while he is shown walking at the same time as reading a book, the Latinos are represented as a unitary, undifferentiated mass, much like the African-Americans the camera leaves to languish in a ghetto environment. Indeed, the gendered dimension of this assimilationist imperative is evident in the first thing they say to him as they drive

by, handguns hanging out the windows: “is that a boy or a girl, man, I can’t tell?” The Hmong gangsters also refer to him with feminizing expletives, as does Walt in several later scenes: in contrast with Latinos and African-Americans in other words, Asians are deployed as at least potentially more dynamic with respect to gender, indeed to an extent that directly threatened Walt’s hold on citizen-subjectivity. The implication of what transpires in response of course, is that there is a correct and incorrect mode of resonance that links race and masculinity and that only the assimilated white ethnic can properly teach Thao how to attain it. It is not that citizen-subjectivity prescribes a totalizing masculinity, with no element of gender or sexual dynamism, but rather that it composes a mode of it that within its sphere of influence pushed some indigenous and racial populations to a more exclusively masculinized zone and others into a more exclusively feminized one. Latinos, like African-Americans, were ineligible for even that which Walt was grudgingly willing to extend to the anticommunist Hmongs. Their car for instance, was much more decrepit than the one driven by the Asian gangsters and the pistol they hung out the window was a rusty-looking older model, particularly when compared to the new uzi brandished by their competition. Given this complex, hierarchical sensibility, the task could not be simply one of assimilation or anti-assimilation, or even of habitualizing or dehabitualizing per se, but instead the opening of potentiality across all cultural partitions in order to encounter the raw, creative material of unconscious perception and involuntary recollection. Indeed, it should not be forgotten that one way in which microethnic control functioned was not only by encouraging but also by denying the potential assimilation of entire collectivities judged as incapable of doing so.

Consider then, Samuel Huntington’s final addendum to *The Clash of Civilizations* entitled *Who Are We?*, which appeared four years prior to his death in 2008: as an expansion on an earlier piece comparing Asian and Latin American immigration to the United States, its primary mission was to issue a warning and implicit endorsement of the rise of nativism in response to the immigration of what he made a point to emphasize were specifically Catholic Latinos. Like the Know

Nothings of the 19th century who opposed the shift of migration away from England and towards Ireland and other non-Protest nations like Poland, Huntington's argument was that the United States was historically and should remain a nation-state that is fundamentally "Anglo-Protestant". Although he claimed to oppose directly racially-imbued instantiations of that same sentiment, the myriad traces that it left on his microethnic assertions are evident throughout, much like the environment Von Uexküll's tick mistook for its surroundings. Indeed, this contrast is particularly stark when contrasted to *The Clash of Civilizations*, which regained currency in the years immediately after 9/11. At that moment, the emphasis had been on Islam, with merely a few, largely unconcerned lines devoted to immigration from Latin America: thus, given the very different task he had set himself, at one point he stated that "the differences between the West and Latin America remain small compared to those between the West and other civilizations".³⁴⁵ Within the analytic frame of his time, the telos of assimilation was still available to Latinos, for while they were largely Catholic and thus at odds with the American theological trajectory, they were still Christian and thus according to Huntington, more likely to assimilate than non-Christians. In other words, within a text dedicated to foregrounding the contrast between Islam and Christendom, the representation of Latinos was one that emphasized continuity rather than discontinuity. But by the mid-00s, Huntington's answer to the question *Who Are We?* had shifted so profoundly that he would emphasize the divergence between them, thereby arriving at the conclusion that the assimilation of Latin American migrants was unlikely to succeed. Supposedly, due to the greater magnitude of the populations, in this case he decided it was Asian immigrants who were most likely to assimilate. In addition, they exhibited greater willingness to intermarry with non-Asians and thus, at least according to his own microethnic assumptions, adopt rather than transform the basic values of the dominant cultural habitus. Discussing the possibility of a cultural rather than biological definition of Anglo-Protestantism then, Huntington notes that "Hispanic Americans already define themselves this way, referring to non-Hispanic, nonblack Americans, including Asian Americans,

collectively as ‘Anglos’. If this term is given only a cultural and not an ethnic meaning, it is not inappropriate. It affirms the centrality of America’s Anglo-Protestant culture, the English language, and English political, legal and social institutions and mores to American identity”.³⁴⁶

In his reading of the Latino definition of Anglo as already inclusive of Asians in other words, the important thing was not that European-descended peoples retain an exclusive biological claim on national identity, but that immigrant groups conform culturally to the unmarked cultural habitus that underlies it. As we have seen however, the contingency of this logic of assimilation is already clear in comparing the relatively pro-Latino rhetoric in Huntington’s earlier piece to the suddenly anti-Latino bent of the latter. Indeed, aside from the in the Von Uexkullian sense, the disjuncture between environment and surroundings also indicates that the microethnic circuitry is itself always-already in motion. Indeed, as has recently been asserted with respect to the relation of race and immigration, “the structure of race is rarely binary, but tripartite. Racial divisions depend upon a dominant group, a nearly outcasted group, and a group that has received fresh attention, because of its unruly potential”.³⁴⁷ In addition to the divergent rhetoric he employed then, the divergent reception of Latin American and Asian immigrants reveals the instrumentality of Huntington’s claims that the latter assimilate more readily. Indeed, it was within this anti-Mexican atmosphere in particular that in the late-00s, city governments across the country singled out taco trucks for fresh attention. Of course when questioned, officials then claimed their regulatory structures were non-discriminatory despite the fact that as one Houston-based attorney pointed out, “95% of the people who own them are Hispanic”.³⁴⁸ The microethnic habitus this mobilized was particularly clear for instance, in locales like California’s Paolos Verdás Estates, which enacted a law in which taco trucks were only permitted to park in the vicinity of a public restroom and for only half an hour at a time. Similarly, in Des Moines, Iowa, a neighborhood association in the city’s south side convinced a council member to introduce legislation after they formally complained about the prevalence of

“transient merchants”.³⁴⁹ Tellingly, the move was then defended by referencing the fact that Des Moines was already diverse on account of its white ethnics (“the largest population of Italian-Americans in the Midwest”)³⁵⁰ and was thus not enacting legislation that could be reduced to anti-immigrant and particularly anti-Latino sentiment. In all of these cases, the basic reference to unhygienic conditions (“litter”, “traffic”, “garbage”, “disruptive”, were all common descriptors),³⁵¹ left no room for the critique of the contingency of such judgments. Thereby allowing optionally-invoked ethnicity to stand in for non-optional raciality, an article in the *Los Angeles Times* summarized the neutrality of the legal environment: “the aim of their regulations is to ensure the food is sanitary, safety codes are followed and noise, late-night crowds and garbage don't get out of control”.³⁵²

What this indicates of course, is how pervasive the discourse of assimilation was in the postwar United States; indeed, so much so that it was not limited to already hegemonic groups, but instead operated in a purifying manner that brought all of them into their fold, to varying degrees. Aside from the microethnic sentiments of Anglo-Protestants such as Huntington, many naturalized Mexican-American citizens, particularly those who had lived in the United States for several generations, themselves participated in the opposition to the taco trucks, claiming that they tended to be run by illegal aliens rather than citizens like themselves. What this reflects of course, is a phenomenon not entirely unlike that which scholars of whiteness suggested in relation to white ethnics, a state-prescribed ending of ethnicity, followed by an inhospitable attitude toward the more recently-arrived. At the same time, the tremendous difference in this case was that there is no telos of whiteness awaiting them once the assimilation process is complete, as was the case for the descendants of Europeans. Rather, what it portended was a micropolitical mode of ethnicity that kept Latinos, Asians and others within its thrall centripetally, functioning as a center of gravity that would be constantly receding. All of this is further complicated by the fact that Mexican-Americans in particular, have at different moments been legally defined as white

or non-white, depending on what was convenient to the nation at the time.³⁵³ For that reason, they were positioned in a zone of indistinction between race and ethnicity that ultimately depended upon which direction the kaleidoscope has turned most recently. Just as fresh attention would no doubt be revisited upon Asian Americans were the United States to go to war with North Korea for instance, a conflict with Venezuela or Cuba would similarly reconstitute Latin Americans.

In contrast therefore to the image of majoritarianism that we encountered in *Gran Torino*, consider the minoritarian aesthetic that might be perceived in the remediation of the postwar cultural habitus offered by *Quinceañera*. As the directors affirm, it was inspired largely by the British Free Cinema, particularly its “Kitchen Sink” realist depictions of Northern working-class life. As such it actively sought to reconstitute the dominant sensibility, such that the splendor of the insignificant, or at least that judged to be so, could be juxtaposed to that already considered significant. For instance, the directors cite as an influence Tony Richardsons’ *A Taste of Honey* (1961), in which a working-class woman who becomes pregnant after a one-night stand, is taken in by a gay male who offers to marry her and help raise the child. Within the dominant cinema of the time, such narrative elements were considered unworthy of being rendered in film, or at least uninteresting. Furthermore, just as the Kitchen Sink tradition later informed the aesthetic of television shows such as *Coronation Street*, Glatzer and Westmoreland already had a great deal of experience with visual media outside of film, working on broadcast television series, directing special productions for HBO, music videos for VH1 and even producing adult videos. Obviously then, the disjuncture with *Gran Torino* would be considerable from the beginning, as becomes even more clear when considering the details not only of content but also of form. For instance, with respect to the former, whereas in *Gran Torino*, Thao succeeds only when he accepts the value of Euro-American, masculinized citizen-subjectivity, the reverse is the case in *Quinceañera*. In this case, Carlos, the gay protagonist, provincializes both the Euro-American and Mexican-

American sensory-memory circuitry within which his self-understanding emerged, so that his own singularity is foregrounded instead. As in *Gran Torino*, the relation of race and ethnicity figure prominently as they are filtered through the lens of gender: but rather than reproducing a civilizational account as with Huntington, the concept of a unitary subjectivity is itself questioned through the remediation it provides. And rather than presenting contingent representations of hygiene and deodorization, the mobilization of architecture and montage in *Quinceañera* renders perceptible the non-objectivity of both: it does not remediate the archive of anti-immigrant clichés simply for the purpose of reproducing them in a new form (although that too could provoke critical thought, depending on how it used), but instead so as to render their plasticity perceptible.

For instance, the film begins with a sequence featuring Carlos' sister Eileen's practice Quinceañera at the family's evangelical church, an association that already contrasts with the received image of a solidly Catholic theological culture amongst Latin Americans. At the same time, the filmmakers also focus on the tradition insofar as it predates both evangelical and Catholic Christianity, deriving originally from Aztec culture near five centuries prior. Fittingly then, this event doesn't just occur in any room, but specifically one wallpapered with a nature scene that is imperfectly aligned, uneven and split, redoubling periodically at the seams, such that the same scene appeared at slightly higher and lower angles in the background of the action. Already then, the *mise-en-scene* has thrown the naturalization of the existing sensibility into question, before anything else has even happened. Then when the actual Quinceañera occurs, rumors spread that Carlos isn't coming, but when he does he is promptly asked to leave by a relative who proclaims, "you disgust me, get out of here". It is at this point that the film cut to the first visualization of smell, as he is then shown at home lighting a joint, blowing out the smoke throughout the household. In contrast to the strict containment of smell throughout most of *Gran Torino*, here the olfactory is celebrated as a momentary act of rebellion: indeed, it is one mobilized precisely in opposition to the real implications of the subject/object split that Carlos must live.

Particularly given that his great-uncle Tomas then tells him he will take him in since his immediate family rejected him, the sudden introduction of the olfactory just after the order/disorder dualism had been foregrounded seems particularly important. Similarly, the *champurrado* cart Tomas wheels around Echo Park emits visual signs of odor that disrupt the citizen-subjectivity predicated on the objectivity of its absence. As he is shown pushing it up a hill for instance, the cart is forced to move out of the way of a red convertible Mustang owned by Gary and James, his landlords. He then pushes on past their freshly-painted family-occupancy house, bearing a large sign that reads “Sold”, an indication not only that the Mexican-American character of the neighborhood is undergoing change, but also that the incoming white, upper-middle class are ushering in a new aesthetic of olfactory neutrality. *Quinceañera* then, is not a film that merely reproduces the majoritarian temporality in which immigrants are simply assimilated to a received sensory-memory circuitry, but instead one in which the traditional is itself a becoming, one that might well offer a much greater range of possible ways of being than even that considered modern.

Just as the olfactory problematizes the subject/object distinction, so too are new communications technologies featured in this role when Mexican-American youth are portrayed text-messaging one another in a manner that fragments not only the urban space as it is emerging along with gentrification but also the Mexican-American cultural mores that preclude youth autonomy. As with the Kitchen Sink genre, the seemingly insignificant features of wallpaper, pot smoke, *champurrado* steam and cell phones are at least as important as the narrative itself in revealing the microethnic features of Echo Park. Indeed, insofar as they render possible a mode of experience that arises from more than a single principle, they each together exemplify the splendor of the insignificant already discussed. It is through this lens that we should also consider the narrative itself: juxtaposed to Tomas and his makeshift family are the Euro-American gay males Gary and James who have bought the property along with the one next door, meaning that the latter are the landlords of the former. Whereas the Mexican-Americans’ house

is marked by a vernacular architecture that foregrounds ornament, the latter's is primarily marked by straight, clean lines: an aesthetic, in other words, with no room for tradition. And yet it was not simply Tomas and Carlos that offered the promise of an authenticity that might be attained once more, as though the culture of glass affirmed by Gary and James had nothing to offer. Rather, just as the latter's embeddedness within *Erlebnis* could benefit from an encounter with *Erfahrung*, so too could Carlos' locus of enunciation from within his Mexican-American subjectivity, particularly in its Evangelical dimension, benefit from a politicization of its aesthetics. Thus when Carlos asks whether the new landlords have an adjustable wrench for the garbage disposal and they invite him over for a housewarming party they had planned, the primary conversation is about how exuberant the Echo Park neighborhood is for the upper-middle class, mostly-white gay community. This however, does not prevent Gary and James from engaging in a threesome with Carlos once he has gotten drunk at their place: tellingly, in the following scene, Tomas and his nephew are shown sharing glasses of *champurrado* back at the house, the elder relating his happiness that Carlos has found some new friends. In many ways then, the remediation of the microethnic habitus is critical, insofar as Mexican-American tradition as reified by Carlos' father is rendered as the flipside of Euro-American gay male normativity: both of them occlude the multiplicity always already immanent to the former, even if for different reasons.

The aesthetic intervention does not end there however, but continues as the matching shot that pairs the steam from Tomas' *champurrado* and the smoke from Carlos' joint reappears again when they are both discussing rising housing prices in Echo Park. The latter development of course, is a primary reason for the phenomenon previously described as the deodorization of everything that exists. By linking the formal visual material of the *champurrado* steam and joint smoke at the very moment rising house prices are invoked discursively by two who refuse both the naturalized citizen-subjectivity and normalized Mexican-American identity, Glatzer and Westmoreland explode the subject/object

distinction upon which postwar microethnic control relied. In many ways this pairing was fitting given that Tomas never married: and while his sexuality was never fully revealed, there is no doubt that both refused to conform to familial expectation. The family photos that he adorns his house with for instance, serve for him as an alternate mode of belonging, one that shortly thereafter is indicated as imperiled when a brief shot of a sign with a phone number is juxtaposed in the montage, reading “Accent Elimination”. Indeed, this sign appears just after a long shot of the neighborhood, coupled by numerous signifiers of the continuing presence of Mexican-Americans there.³⁵⁴ Similarly, a family barbecue held outdoors in casual clothing is juxtaposed to a dinner party in Gary and James’ home, in which olive green paint contrasts with the bright yellow, pink and blue pastels of the former. Unsurprisingly, the color utilized in Gary and James’ home matches that endorsed by the actually-existing Echo Park Historical Society (EPHS), as being properly Victorian,³⁵⁵ which is a prime source of gentrification. Rather than the approach of Tomas and Carlos, these scenes reveal the workings of an aestheticized politics, the means by which *Erlebnis* is enabled to parade around in the garb of *Erfahrung*. Indeed, throughout the film, pink and eggshell yellow-painted, photograph-covered walls, mismatched furniture, flowery curtains, Tecate beer and champurrado in the Mexican-American contrast with light-olive walls, white trim, long-drop lighting, steel refrigerators and copper pots and pans in the gay white male’s house. Nevertheless, the problem is not simply that the real history is occluded by the EPHS’ instrumental rewording of housing codes in the service of gentrification: indeed, as Nietzsche famously insists in “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life”, there is no such thing as history in and of itself, but only history in the service of some group, individual or idea. For this reason, the real task is to achieve what he calls the suprahistorical, so as to not be subordinated to the uses of the historical that deny that they are indeed, doing so. As he argues, “we need history...not so as to turn comfortably away from life and action...we want to serve history only to the extent that history serves life”.³⁵⁶ As a result of the remediation of the microethnic habitus offered by the film, Tomas and Carlos alike seem entirely aware of this

point and even moreso of the difficulty of making history serve their lives rather than those of the incoming populations. But once again, we learn this not simply through their dialogue or the cinematic form as such, but even more through the numerous shots concentrated on the exteriors of the Mexican-American owned homes, in which the bright paint colors are featured in a manner that conflicts with that approved by the EPHS. Indeed, as Mike Davis argued in *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City*, this naturalization of what were obviously contingent housing codes was one of the major conduits enabling the suppression of the suprahistorical by the historical and thus as a result, of gentrification through architecture:

Neighborhood aesthetic wars have become commonplace as Latino carnality collides with the psychosexual anxieties of *Truman Show* white residential culture. Thus the glorious sorbet palette of Mexican and Caribbean house paint – *verde limón, rosa mexicano, azul añil, morado* – is perceived as sheer visual terrorism by non-Hispanic homeowners who believe that their equity directly depends on a neighborhood color order of subdued pastels and white picket fences. Even upwardly mobile Chicanos have joined in the backlash against “un-American” hues, as in the L.A. suburb of South Gate where the City Council recently weighed an ordinance against tropical house colors.³⁵⁷

Finally, whereas Tomas and Carlos’ home consists primarily of a shrine to his extended family and friends constructed out of hundreds of photos, some of which are framed in ornate trim and others of which are unframed, Gary and James’ images consist largely of consumer art intended to match only the wallpaper and furniture. Rather than being enframed by ornamentation of various forms, they are thin, shiny and inornate, like the newest office buildings in LA’s business districts. It is only once this comparison has been sufficiently deployed that the audience learns that the landlords are plotting an eviction of Tomas and Carlos. In

contrast to their spacious, vernacularly reconstituted rental property, the only apartments they are able to find on the market are small, devoid of life and painted white, with no trim and little variation. Thus an important cut occurs in a flashback to Tomas just after learning of the eviction, in which he is shown looking up to the sky and crying in his backyard near a shrine of bottles and wooden beams that he painted himself. This self-made environment contrasts sharply with that employed by Gary and James, the majority of which is purchased prefabricated: the Mexican-American reality therefore, is shown to be one in which that which nothing is simply received but must always itself be redeployed, so as to fit the singular, whereas for landlords, the primary concern seems to be fitting in with an already-established notion of what the built environment ought to consist of. In many ways, Tomas puts the suprahistorical to work for himself at least as much as the gentrifying populations do by legally encoding historical preservation: however, rather than contributing to the destruction of *Erfahrung* as such, his approach produces a zone of indistinction between the two, an alternate mode of which is instantiated by Carlos shortly after the eviction. At this point, he is depicted at the carwash where he works, keying the words “Fuck You” into James’ red convertible, at just the moment when he remarks into his cellphone how much happier Gary is now that he is not distracted. Thus, when Gary and James first enter Tomas’ backyard afterwards, they make evident their appreciation for what he did with the place, but only to then suggest that a hot tub and some landscaping are what it really needs. When they come across the shrine however, which featured numerous images of Carlos, as well as the entire family that lived there previously, Gary asks quietly, “what’ll we do with this?” Rather than mere *Erlebnis*, they are confronted with the *Erfahrung* it excluded, as are the implicit audience: but given that this is a film, what is most important is that this occurs by way of *Erlebnis* itself, such that the critique is immanent rather than transcendental. Perhaps the most telling scene in this respect is when Carlos shows the neighbors how to do the local gang signs that signify the neighborhood as their territory. When they appear surprised, asking incredulously, “wow you really do live in a whole other world, don’t

you?”, the response is neither one of affirmation nor of consolation: instead it is, “no you do”.

What then, can we retain from Glatzer and Westmoreland’s post-cinematic aesthetic that might contribute to the repluralizing of experience after the microethnic cultural processes that appended the legal enframing of immigration in the postwar United States? As the experience of Tomas and Carlos suggest, the answer does not lie only in returning to cultural particularity as a bulwark against the universal, for the critique of identity in favor of the telos of a universal humanity has been the province not only of the most but also the least privileged particularities. At the same time, the two do not seek the recognition of their belonging to a universal humanity either, for as *Gran Torino* demonstrates, that path more often than not lead towards a majoritarian politic. Instead they evacuate both the reterritorializing version of Mexican-American subjectivity as well as the reterritorialized version of universal humanity, in order to attain the domain of pre-individual singularity: one not simply in opposition to either cultural particularity or universal humanity per se, but in addition to both. Indeed, it is the only one in which politics begins to attain not only the commonly beautiful and the everyday sublime, but also the splendor of the insignificant, encapsulated most succinctly in Tomas’ backyard shrine. In this respect, the remediation of the microethnic sensory-memory circuitry offered by *Quinceañera* trumps much of the theoretical work on this question that occurred in the early 21st century. For instance, in the wake of 9/11, the critical attention that suddenly became focused on the concept of bare life generally failed to grapple sufficiently with its origins in the writings of Burke and Arendt. Instead, the preference had been to either critique the critique of human rights in order mount a more complex defense of it or to simply suggest that such a politics had been based upon a foolish utopianism. For this reason we would no doubt do well to recall that in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, it is Burke whom Arendt cites as her inspiration, for it was his thought that suggests for her that when put to the test in the post-Revolutionary period, “the world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness

of being human”.³⁵⁸ Indeed, it is in reaction to the American and French Revolutions that Burke first argued that the generalization of rights to the level of the universal is merely an abstraction, one that endangers those already guaranteed through national embeddedness, which is to say, in citizen-subjectivity. Implicitly invoking the creation of the Israeli nation-state, these are the words employed by Arendt: “the survivors of the extermination camps, the inmates of concentration and internment camps, and even the comparatively happy stateless people could see without Burke’s arguments that the abstract nakedness of being nothing but human was their greatest danger”.³⁵⁹

Of course, for an arch-conservative like Burke, statelessness amounts to nothing other than the stripping away of rights as such so as to replace them with the state of nature: however not only does this set the conditions of possibility for the reproduction of Zionism in Arendt, but in the macrocolonial imagination of his own time, it also presupposes that the only potentiality it would afford otherwise was the “right of the naked savage”.³⁶⁰ For both and for many critical thinkers in the wake of 9/11, only the restoration of belonging through a retooled citizen-subjectivity could hope to prevent the kinds of atrocities that unfolded during Germany’s descent into fascism and that began to in the U.S. under George W. Bush. However, as the examples of Tomas and Carlos suggest in *Quinceañera*, it is only on the basis of bare life itself that a radical pluralist mode of being-in-the-world becomes possible. In contrast to the Burkean-Arendtian critique of the critique of human rights, their approach seeks the destruction of neither cultural particularity nor universal humanity, but instead the ontological formulation of pre-individual singularity, against the microcolonial, microracial and microethnic alike. In this move, which we might refer to as the critique of the critique of the critique of human rights, Huntington’s acceptance of the ending of ethnicity is no more anti-Burkean than are those who affirm the importance of the nation’s reinsertion into what had increasingly become a neoliberal, anational state. Much like his approach, Huntington simply could not imagine a mode of worlding that did not derive from an microcolonial, microracial and microethnic set of

assumptions about the state of nature: in this manner, it converged with that of Arendt while ignoring the possibility of a politics beyond the modern state itself.

And yet despite her Burkean tendencies, Arendt did at times suggest the possibility of another potentiality beyond that ascribed by nation-states: her “We Refugees” article in particular, published in a 1943 edition of *The Menorah Journal*, was one in which she suggested that in the wake of the World Wars, a new type of person had emerged who was no longer considered significant but now belonged to the insignificant, the superfluous populace as such. Indeed, she asserted that following the banishment and extermination of the Jews, the next item on sovereignty’s agenda was the banishment of the European peoples themselves from its protection, so as to render its power absolute. From this perspective the condition of statelessness is increasingly that not only of minorities but of a majority of the world as such, a condition that after the World Wars forced numerous internal as well as external migrations. As a result, whereas in the past, some bodies were diasporic while others were not, insofar as some were made to be while others were not, today the term is at the very least, of potentially universal reference. Ontologically speaking, in our own time there is no such thing as citizen-subjectivity, but only that which is represented as such, while even that much is increasingly precarious. The task then, is to reconstitute the sensory-memory circuitry that underpinned it, not by reinscribing citizen-subjectivity as Burke or others would affirm, but instead by way of the disposition that Arendt referred to as that of the “conscious pariah”.³⁶¹ Of course, this would play out differently depending on one’s locus of enunciation in relation to the sensibility developed within the confines of particular situations. But what was most radical about the concept was how the phrase “We Refugees” could be read as a nomination that not only those already understood as diasporic could identify with, but that potentially everyone could, not so as to produce a mode of identification that is that of the same, but rather that of the different, since it is only there that a politics of the splendid awaits. Only by deploying the immanent politics of the conscious pariah rather than that of the liberal snob (which Arendt,

in a nod to Proust, called the *parvenu*), could the subject/object distinction be thrown into question and the sensibility upon which it was based be reconstituted. Indeed, as Agamben put it in the final passage of his essay by the same name, "it is only in a land where the spaces of states will have been perforated and topologically deformed, and the citizen will have learned to acknowledge the refugee that he himself is, that man's political survival today is imaginable". Indeed, "we have all been uprooted to different degrees, and for different reasons, but not everyone is aware of it. Here/there, homelessness, border culture, and deterritorialization are the dominant experience, not just fancy academic theories".³⁶²

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Proust and the Political: From Citizen-Subjectivity to Insurgent Citizenship

"and the kaleidoscope once more reversed its colored lozenges"

- Marcel Proust

5.1 Principal Findings

At the beginning of this dissertation, we made the case that contrary to postwar American liberal theorists such as Rawls, the macropolitical concept of the citizen-subject constructed behind a veil of ignorance occludes not only the embodied and affected structure of feeling specific to time and place, but more specifically the sensory-memory circuitry that produces it in the micropolitical. Thus, while the Termination Act of 1954, the Civil Rights of 1964 and the Immigration Act of 1965 all transformed the formal meaning of citizenship in the postwar period, they too correlated with a sense of belonging that was in each case, both power-laden and contingent. As we argued, this bracketing off of congealed habits of perception and recollection is precisely what prevents the cross-cultural transversality it ostensibly sought to enable, blocking the emergence of a radical, dynamic pluralism with a merely formal, liberal one. Rawls referred to this of course, as “reasonable pluralism”, defined as that mode of differentiation which would not exceed the limits imposed by the postwar state: in which an unmarked, yet contingent rationality would form its center of gravity. Prior to the American liberal theorist, as well as Benjamin and Deleuze, Kant was the major figure to have considered such themes: not only those of the liberal

image of citizen-subjectivity however, which was emphasized in neo-Kantian readings of his legacy, but also of many of the critical, but still affirmative, post-Kantian responses to it. Thus, refusing to simplify the density of his writing, we have engaged both the neo-Kantian and the post-Kantian arguments, mobilizing Benjamin and Deleuze alike as means through which to reconstitute the critical philosophy, not simply in the mode of negation, but as critically redemptive, what the latter of the two described in his book on Nietzsche, as the “Dionysian yes”.³⁶³

In contrast to other post-Kantian thinkers, we have argued that neither Benjamin nor Deleuze simply sought the interruption of habit as such, but instead affirmed a selective mode of repetition in the service of the redemption of difference. Rather than affirming simple dehabitualization *tout court*, as a means through which to return to primordial reason on the one hand or to dislodge its center of gravity while enabling a becoming without horizon on the other, what Benjamin and Deleuze offered our investigation instead, is an approach that suggests that there is no outside to habit. That is, one in which there are only ever depluralizing or repluralizing modalities within which it is formed, such that what is affirmed is neither the modern (and potentially authoritarian) interruption of habit, nor the late modern embrace of its cyclicity.³⁶⁴ Rather, it is the critical redemption and critical remediation of habit that we have embraced, encouraging reflection and the ethical reconstitution of the self, as it is composed in relation to late modern citizen-subjectivity, whatever that relation might be. Rather than allowing this training of experience to simply edit out sensory-memory flows that break with the neo-Kantian hierarchy of the senses in other words, it affirmed a post-Kantian project of creating one’s own mode of experience, as might a film director or better yet, a mashup artist on YouTube. In short, not simply rupturing congealed habits without offering an alternative horizon, but specifically bringing back in that which consciousness cuts out, so as to create a selectively repluralizing rather than nihilistically depluralizing cultural habitus.

Importantly then, the argument we made was never simply a philosophical one, but was always already grounded in the micropolitical, that domain which legal decisions such as the Termination Act, the Civil Rights Act and the Immigration Act amongst others, inform but do not determine. Indeed, concerned with neither materiality or ideality alone, but with the realm of memory and creativity that conjoins both, we soon learned that far from a distraction from the subject matter of the dissertation, it was only in the convergence of the literary figure of Proust with the political theoretical critiques of Benjamin and Deleuze that we were able to proceed. By placing both in dialogue with the functioning of what we called the microcolonial, the microracial and the microethnic sensory-memory circuitry that constituted the American cultural habitus, we were able to critique the rational apriori upon which the neo-Kantian philosophy of experience was based. And by enlisting rather than being enlisted by the distraction of *ISLT*, we were able to affirm that not only did the post-cinematic media environment that emerged in the wake of the Internet enable the most radical depluralizing of experience in the postwar period, but it also enabled unprecedented potentialities for critical remediation and ethical self-reconstitution, as we showed in our theoretical juxtapositions of films, concerned with either the depluralizing or repluralizing of a particular domain of experience. Whereas habits of perception and recollection derived from the postwar period in particular, were often taken as transcendental advances compared with the previously fraught domains of indigeneity, race and ethnicity, they could now be revealed as still-contingent and, to the extent that they remained hierarchically-distributed, immanently and thoroughly changeable.

Just as works of art from after this period became increasingly disenchanted with production as the inverse of reproduction, instead engaging the retrospective processes of post-production,³⁶⁵ so too did we refrain from treating the films as marked only by cult value and thus unsusceptible to critical intervention. Rather, within the recurring theme of the continuous depluralizing and repluralizing of experience, we composed our own critical theoretical mash-ups, juxtaposing specific elements and fragments, while critically redeeming in the process even

that which might otherwise have been opposed, for instance as occurred in the conventional left reactions to *Avatar*, *Bamboozled* and *Gran Torino*. In this manner, we practiced not the simple interruption or abolition of habit, so much as its infusion with a mode of creation that would be irreducible to the dualisms of nature or culture alone, thereby producing a new domain of nature-culture. Just as mashup artists redeploy already-existing sounds and images so as to reconstitute our perception and recollection of even the immediate past, we invoked the sense of Ravaisson's final sentence in his famous 1837 text: "the history of Habit represents the return of Freedom to Nature, or rather the invasion of the domain of freedom by natural spontaneity".³⁶⁶ In this manner, the dominance of a specifically postwar American notion of reason could be denaturalized and subjected to alternate contestations, as could that which had through the neo-Kantian reading of the critical philosophy, been deployed as one-dimensional renderings of the sublime, the beautiful and the splendid. Beginning not from the liberal autonomous individual in other words, but instead from its genesis in the transversal relationality of the pre-individual, we demonstrated not only its contingency, but also its capacity for self-consciousness and therefore, self-reconstitution.

Chapter 1 first set up this project in the form of a literature review that would then be applied in each of the three central chapters: but as we noted, it quickly exceeded the political theoretical canon we initially thought would dominate the majority of references, drawing thereby on literature in the broader sense of the term. Comparing the *belle époque* of Proust's period to the American half-century as it developed in the wake of the World Wars for instance, we noted that while the country became more formally inclusive of indigenous, racial and immigrant particularities, it also became less so afterwards, on the level of the micropolitical. Indeed, while the kaleidoscope may have shifted even further from that which prevailed throughout the postwar period to allow for the election of President Obama, that event was just as quickly reterritorialized so as to maintain the social, cultural or political conditions within which much of the African-American

population for instance, would remain subjected to a hierarchical inclusion. Following the Deleuzean engagement with the shift from disciplinary society to control society, just as the floating exchange rate enabled the economic integration of nations while predicating it upon the imperative of universal modulation, so too we argued, were indigeneous, racial and ethnic groups integrated formally into citizen-subjectivity even while being forced to adapt to a normalizing force that operated inclusively rather exclusively, micropolitically rather than macropolitically. While the Rawlsian liberal approach merely reinforced the image of a pluralism that had already been accomplished, that which we considered affirmed the redeployment not of pluralism per se, but of pluralization, not of the citizen as an identifiable subject, but rather as the act of citizenship.

And while many studies have engaged the production of subjectivity in disciplinary society, what we considered in this dissertation was the difference made not by a more complicated identity politics within the realm of minority particularities, but instead the thrall of citizenship that itself made each of them resonate, according to the center of gravity it dispensed in emergent control society. Rather than simply engaging indigeneity, raciality and ethnicity on one side and singularity on the other then, as often occurred in previous studies concerned with identity politics, we specifically affirmed the Deleuzean image of pre-individual singularity, in which the latter is never outside of relation, as would be for instance, the liberal individual, but is instead precisely its result. The sense of belonging, we argued therefore, is not only the perception or feeling of belonging, but also the contingent logic that serves as its condition of possibility, even while appearing not to. Put differently, the sense of belonging is the logic by which perception and recollection congeals into a particular circuitry, enabling in the process, some modes of sublimity, beauty and splendor, while disabling others, just as it enables some forms of perception and recollection, while preventing others. In contrast with phenomenological approaches however, we argued that these processes are irreducible to the lived experience of the body

itself, but are instead always already composed between subject and object, the channeling of the pre-individual domain into habits of perception and recollection that became individuated through and because of that dualism. Indeed, as we have argued, this is why despite the ubiquity of such processes, unconscious perception and involuntary recollection retain immanent, deterritorializing capacities, if approached in a critical manner. Since they derive from the pre-individual domain that modern subjectivity occludes (as much as does modern objectivity), they also contain the malleable, potentially reconstitutable material of that which, as Deleuze put it so provocatively in his book on Proust, “was never experienced”.³⁶⁷

But the reason this was rarely understood is that, given that the postwar United States was no longer overtly exclusive of difference as it had been prior to the wars, but had now become engaged with a mode of integration that proceeded by way of hierarchical inclusion, the primary mode by which it captured its own internal alterity was through the proscription of ontology itself. In line with the Rawlsian schema in other words, it proceeded in explaining the process of individuation by means of the individual, rather than the individual by means of the process of individuation. As such, at the same time that it reproduced citizen-subjectivity as an unmarked center of gravity, it supplanted the colonial with the microcolonial, the racial with microracial and the ethnic with the microethnic. It was this genetic and relational rather than autonomous and individual process that we considered in section 1.1: the depluralizing of experience that served to occlude potentiality, as it emerged along with the United States’ procession to a position of planetary dominance. Thus, we considered how for Rawls, the original position’s reliance upon on a neo-Kantian rational apriority occluded dissensus, such that the politics it affirmed merely cites already-existing pluralism rather than pluralizing it further. Thus while all particularities are understood as formally equal before the law, the neoliberal dispensation it assumes ensures the enfolding of inequality into the sensory-memory circuitry that underpins the juridical expression of citizen-subjectivity, thereby producing at its core, an unmarked and yet all the more ubiquitously hierarchical disposition. For this reason, cases such

as the Termination Act, Civil Rights Act and Immigration Act coalesce with rather than contradict this sensibility, such that they can then be cited as evidence that formally speaking, no further transformation is necessary.

Rather than reopening what was deployed as a universal mode of reason to a multiplicity of minor deterritorializations in other words, it served to proclaim an already-existing equality enshrined by the state, such that any remaining inequality appeared not as exemplars of a permanent state of exception, but as failures of the indigenous, racial or ethnic minorities themselves to labor sufficiently. Rather than encountering the ontological becoming within which indigenous, racial and ethnic particularities are deployed differently at different times, according to ever-changing events that enable and disable them differently, the neo-Kantian citizen-subject exists within an ontology that legitimates only its own temporality. Furthermore, rather than acknowledging the specifically neoliberal contingency of late modern sensory-memory experience, let alone the manifold non-economic domains by which it was also shaped, the depluralizing of experience proceeded by denying relation itself. This is why it is so interesting that even Rawls could not avoid the invocation of the Anglo-Protestant thematics that lurked in the background of his assertion of the non-metaphysical. As we showed, not only did he cite Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus, he even admitted the specific theological origins of his own universalizing conceits. What we argued then, was that the sensory-memory circuitry itself consolidated this apparent plasticity, which was always already in motion such that it appeared in specific iterations according to the kaleidoscopic rendering of differing places and times.

Section 1.2 then moved on from these more negative thematics of depluralization, to consider how the reproduction of the subject/object distinction that produced the citizen-subjectivity of the postwar period could be overturned. In the process of course, allowing not only for rational apriority or neo-Kantian judgments of the sublime, the beautiful or the splendid, but also the multiplicity of experience that

was occluded by it. We did so by engaging the Deleuzian concept of transcendental empiricism as well as the Benjaminian concepts of profane illumination and positive barbarism. As with the three central chapters, here too, these served as specifically post-Kantian critiques of the selective reading of the German thinker's legacy that had for neo-Kantians like Rawls, congealed the plasticity of perception and recollection into a depluralizing cultural habitus. The higher experience thereby engaged, sought to legitimate those modes of experience typically occluded by neoliberal and related forms of rationalization, engaging the genesis of individuals rather than reproducing the liberal image of the individual as though it could simply exist as such. In so doing, we revealed the ontological contingency of postwar remnants of the colonial, racial and ethnic, upon which the United States had been historically founded, while attending to the profound difference of their contemporary manifestation, which allowed for the pointing out other possible trajectories that their micropolitical rendering unintentionally opened up. But rather than simply interrupting the production of the cultural habitus as such, the emphasis in this section was in fact within a particular horizon: that of self-consciousness, an ethical mode of perception articulated by a number of thinkers, in which one reflectively engages the production of the self so as to affirm only those repetitions likely to produce the version of the self and the world that is actually desired.

Given the emergence after the turn of the 21st century of a post-cinematic media environment, one of the primary ways through which this could occur we held, was in relation to contemporary films that critically remediate earlier forms produced within what has become an entirely reconstituted moving-image archive. Indeed, whereas transcendental empiricism constitutes a philosophical term that could be debated in relation to a Rawlsian transcendental idealism, the emphasis upon moving-image culture as well, enables a dynamic engagement with Benjamin's concept of profane illumination as well as positive barbarism. For whereas in order to grasp the sense of the first of the three, one would have to become familiar with a voluminous archive of philosophical texts, which would

make it a task usually only available to a privileged few, the sense of the latter was potentially open to anyone and everyone, particularly in the wake of the ever-increasing number of platforms by which film could be discovered and accessed after the turn of the 21st century. Or to put the same statement differently, whereas neo-Kantians sought the “abstract conditions of any possible experience”, in this section we affirmed the practical implications of post-Kantians who instead proceeded from the more egalitarian premises of “the real conditions of actual experience”.³⁶⁸ The reason however, that this attention to the history of habit and its effect on conscious perception and voluntary recollection mattered, was that rather than reproducing congealed modes of particularity, it enabled its reconstitution beyond the presuppositions of hierarchical inclusion. In modeling this potentiality then, we also set up the conditions of possibility within which the philosophy of transcendental empiricism could become the experience of profane illumination and in which the experience of profane illumination could become the activity of positive barbarism.

How exactly to produce a resonance that would enable a relation between these three moments however, remained the question the dissertation was most concerned with: it was also the primary reason it engaged not only philosophical questions, but specific examples in popular film culture and political conflict alike. As important as the first chapter was for setting up the overall focus of the dissertation therefore, the primary source of insight is not found there, but in the second, third and fourth chapters, as well as the relation between them. The second and third of course, focused on the microcolonial depluralizing of vision and the microracial depluralizing of sound respectively, while the fourth engaged the microethnic depluralizing of smell. Still, it was not in any one of these alone, but only in the dialectic between the central chapters and the potentially repluralizing examples from popular film culture and political conflict, that the potentiality of positive barbarism was enabled. Whereas postwar citizen-subjectivity maintained the dynamic potentiality of sight and sound even while deploying it in congealed form, in the wake of the French and American

revolutions as we have shown, smell was recoded in accordance with the bourgeoisie, which required its simplification and neutralization. Historically of course, sight and sound had been conceptualized as the distance senses, whereas taste and touch were understood as contact senses: a schema which left smell as an intermediary between the two. It is appropriate then, that this perceptual hinge was so often associated with ethnicity, the one form of identity that is always open even to micropolitically dominant particularities, that would otherwise remain unmarked. While whiteness for instance, is predicated upon the relative insignificance of indigeneity and raciality to its sense of invokable collective identity, its ability to reference an ancestral ethnicity is one of its key traits. Indeed, temporally, while the teleologies of indigeneity or raciality were either a consignment to a past that never was or a present that never will be otherwise, that associated with ethnicity's relation to the modern state only increased microethnic modes of control in the postwar period. For while the future of full acceptance in the heart as well as the law would never really come within the microcolonial and microracial domains, it had already been self-verified for those enabled to separate ethnicity from other ascribed identities.

Thus, while sight and sound were mobilized so as to congeal citizen-subjectivity's experience of indigenous and racial alterity, smell was not only depluralized but was even neutralized in a manner that at the same time, naturalized assimilation and normalization. Bringing together the two major threads of the dissertation therefore, the task for transcendental empiricism, profane illumination and positive barbarism alike, would not only be to recognize the importance of the involuntarity of indigenous and racial particularity within the micropolitics of citizenship, but to grasp the relation of that process to involuntary memory and unconscious perception within the sensory-memory habitus specific to citizen-subjectivity. Indeed, as Deleuze has told us with respect to *ISLT*, the most powerful element of Proust's formulation was not that of the past as encountered in lived experience, but much to the contrary, the absolute as never experienced. The bracketing of indigeneity, raciality and ethnicity by the postwar liberal mode

of citizen-subjectivity in other words, also disenables a dynamic empathy, as opposed to the condescending, liberal pity that prevailed instead. What is important about critical remediation then, is its ability to facilitate a reengagement with that which has already been experienced, so that which had been edited out of conscious perception and voluntary recollection in the process, which is to say in order to consolidate the citizen as subject rather than as citizenship, can be selectively and critically edited back in. Mapped back on to self-consciousness, this would necessarily imply an ethos of responsibility not only for taking account of the history of one's congealed habits of perception and recollection but also for taking charge of their future shape. Sight and sound would no longer appear as objectively depluralized, just as smell would no longer appear as objectively neutralized: instead, the sense of belonging would appear as an aesthetic creation that could be deployed entirely differently than it has been.

Furthermore, just as the active and the passive are never simply opposed when it comes to habit, since even the most embedded habits derive from what was at one point a change, perception and recollection are not either, and particularly not in the age of the internet's infinite multiplication of technological reproducibility. As a medium of course, film enables the voluntary editing back in of that which is involuntarily cut out, not only directly by showing what was occluded but also by way of association. For instance, that which was at one time consciously perceived or voluntarily remembered, but cannot be any longer, can in the present, be recalled even with only the slightest, most incipient traces. Indeed, in the wake of the Internet, it is even more the case that involuntary memory is never simply involuntary as such, but is always already voluntarily involuntary, just as unconscious perception is never simply unconscious today, but is consciously unconscious. The ethos of responsibility can be thrown into motion therefore, by considering the genesis of one's relation to citizen-subjectivity, rather than simply accepting the depluralizing of experience within which the neo-Kantian ontology reterritorialized the populace throughout the postwar period. Particularly in a post-cinematic media environment, that capacity is available today as never

before: with this stated then, perhaps we can proceed to consider the three central chapters and their attempt at a profane illumination of the microcolonial, the microracial and the microethnic.

Within these core chapters, as we have seen thus far, we juxtaposed three films that dealt with the consolidation of perception, recollection and subjectivity - Cameron's *Avatar*, Lee's *Bamboozled* and Eastwood's *Gran Torino* - with three that engage their potential reconstitution - Alexie's *The Business of Fancydancing*, Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy* and Glatzer & Westmoreland's *Quinceañera*. In each of these latter three, rather than just showing the result of microcolonial, microracial and microethnic control, that which has often been occluded from the imagery of postwar American film is selectively edited back in. What is peculiar to this post-cinematic approach is not so much the intensity of the remaining vestiges of cultural hierarchy per se, although that might be a subject of considerable concern, but rather the more general making sensible of that which was historically occluded from perception and recollection. These latter films then, resist the hierarchical inclusion that the postwar cultural habitus allows, instead asserting belonging not in the traditional sense of belonging to being, but rather the more dynamic mode of belonging to becoming.³⁶⁹ Our argument however, was that it was only in the midst of the disintegration of the postwar sensory-memory circuitry that such films could be expected to emerge. Indeed, much as with Proust, these films' primary concern was the critical remediation of the characters, dispositions and stereotypes peculiar to the period, at least in the manner in which we sought to put them to work. Furthermore, what characterized all three was not the assertion of the model as opposed to the copy, but the affirmation of the copy itself as real, in other words, as pure simulacra. Against the Platonist aesthetics of so much of American film that had been concerned with questions of the colonial, the racial and the ethnic, in our reading, each of them asserted the tremendous plasticity of perception and recollection, as it itself wholly real. More than many films then, *The Business of Fancydancing*, *Medicine for Melancholy* and *Quinceañera* offer lenses through which to

reconstitute our understanding not only of the recent past, but of ourselves as subjects who were constituted within it.

The second chapter dealt with precisely this, engaging the first of the three major fault lines of power we considered, insofar as it functioned by creating a relief effect between actual visual perception and the regime of expectation through which it became congealed. As we saw in section 2.1, this rendered Native Americans imperceptible by emphasizing microcolonial images of indigeneity that contributed to the consolidation of hierarchical modes of inclusion in the wake of the Termination Act. What was particular to *Avatar*'s iteration of this process was the manner in which it deployed not only the Sa(l)vage that was common to postwar representations of Native Americans, but a version of it that invoked clichéd characteristics of indigenous peoples from every continent on the planet. They were portrayed therefore, not only as a vanishing but also a vanished race, by way of what was rendered visible and not simply by what was not: however, although some critics argued that whereas the Euro-American military figures were deployed as dynamic while the Na'vi were stuck in an immobile state of nature, we argued for a possible alternate reading. For as several of our thinkers of habit have argued in their own ways, if the film invokes a change adopted into postwar habits of perception and recollection, it necessarily remains for both a further change and thus a further interpretation. One of the best examples of the movement from profane illumination to positive barbarism in this respect we argued, was that of the refrain of the phrase "I see you". This originally appeared in a moment in which the characters actually perceived only mutual particularity, but it was then followed by the final scene when they are in fact, co-present to one another as singularities. Whereas some critics argued that the film only reproduces the founding violence of the macrocolonial, we suggested that it was actually the fact that it remained within the realm of preserving violence that ensured that it was also open to a multiplicity of alternate interpretations. This is the case of course, because the microcolonial is always open to such developments, since it occurs within a media environment that is

post-cinematic and as such, subject as never before, to the intervention of active spectatorship.

Indeed it was no doubt a similar sensibility that motivated our primary concern in 2.2, when we moved on to consider the first of our three contrasting films, *The Business of Fancydancing*. In this one as we noted, Alexie presents a critique of the indigenous sublime congealed in early American captivity narratives, as well as postwar noble savage cinema, by presenting that which is typically not seen within either. In short, what he presents is the everyday life of Native Americans as embedded within rather than separated from culture and technology, for the purpose of reproducing the image of a vanished race. Here then, it was not simply images of nature and/or destitution that would be juxtaposed to dominant perceptions, but also images of Native Americans as cultural and creative, which is to say, as equally subject to the underlying ontology of becoming as are non-indigenous people. Furthermore, by embracing an ironic mode of subjectivity rather than a synecdochal one, *The Business of Fancydancing* was able to resist the hierarchical assumption that some narratives are more natural or more essential than others. And by placing the technologies of visual reproduction within the diagesis of the film rather than keeping them invisible to the viewer, Alexie also foregrounded the process through which perception becomes consolidated, so that alternate visualities could be produced with relation to indigeneity in rural and urban environments alike. In this respect, the repluralizing of vision was also a repluralizing of the sublimity that has often been associated with perceptions of Native Americans. Under the direction of Alexie, it is not found in the moralist representations of Evil or Good, captivity or nobility, Hobbes or Rousseau, but instead in the very implosion of these dichotomies. In presenting the native as nomad, which is to say, as wholly embedded within the ontology of becoming like non-indigenous populations, *The Business of Fancydancing* necessarily foregrounded the everyday sublime: that mode of sublimity that is sublime insofar as it renders visible the contingency of the unit of measure by which the sublime itself was previously defined and appended to indigenous lifeworlds.

Much like Chapter Two, Chapter Three was also concerned with one of the primary distance senses privileged within the neo-Kantian hierarchy, that of sound as reconstituted in relation to the microracial in the postwar period. Here as well, it functioned by creating a relief effect between actual sonic perception and the regime of expectation through which it became congealed, thereby producing a public acceptance of audible blackness while visible blackness remained taboo. As we saw in section 3.1, this rendered the haecceity of African-Americans imperceptible from the standpoint of citizen-subjectivity, by emphasizing those sounds that after being reterritorialized, contributed to the consolidation of hierarchical inclusion in the wake of such advances as the Civil Rights Act. What is offered by *Bamboozled* in this respect, is an aesthetic that foregrounds the training of sonic perception, specifically as it developed in relation to the even more circumscribed domain of sight. By utilizing television cameras when film would have been expected and film cameras when television would have been, Lee confounded the habits of perception accorded to postwar visual images of blackness. But he did the same with respect to the audible, although perhaps more radically, by questioning the extent to which the legacy of minstrelsy continues in the guise of some forms of not only gangsta rap, but also political hip-hop, while at the same time claiming not only blues, jazz and other genres as legitimately black musical genres, but also classical. As we argued, it is the final tableau that is the most important moment in which sound is reconstituted in relation to vision by Lee, because it is here the viewer is exposed to a montage of macroracial images from the history of television and film over the past century, all of which are accompanied by the theme song composed by Terence Blanchard, which resists the strictures of genre. Rather than simply reproducing the double-consciousness that is usually ascribed to blackness, this section of the film affirms the microracial effects on habits of perception and recollection that could be affected by the introduction of self-consciousness into citizen-subjectivity.

Then in 3.2, the second of our three contrasting films, *Medicine for Melancholy*, took this theme further, explicitly engaging musical genre and the subcultures that often attend to it as domains not only of aesthetic segregation but also of aesthetic transformation. By challenging the established particularities' monopoly on the claim to distinction, in which for instance, the beautiful is only identifiable by those whose judgments render from a proper background of acculturation and accreditation, Jenkins suggests the importance of understanding the beautiful as a commons, as that which is always open, as in the post-Kantian modality, to redetermination. The commonly beautiful therefore, suggests that just as historically African-American musics could be microracially revalued as they were in the counterpublics of the early postwar period, so too did this itself contribute to hierarchical inclusion in the ensuing decades. Hence the emphasis in the film on Micah and Joanne as opaque, conflicted singularities, mobilized between their involvement in a largely-white hipster subculture on the one hand and the desire to overcome hierarchically-included modes of blackness on the other. The slaveship scene in particular captures this theme, insofar as it reverses the sense ratio of the audible to the visible that continues throughout the rest of the film, which also in turn reverses the congealed aesthetics of invisible blackness. In his rendering of the becoming through which perception is constituted therefore, Jenkins enables alternate audibilities and visibilities, such that visible blackness would become possible as a means through which to interrupt congealed, neo-Kantian renderings of the beautiful, in favor of the commonly beautiful. Rather than the reactive, identitarian assertion that black is beautiful, an often-heard refrain from the postwar period, *Medicine for Melancholy* suggests the more dynamic, affirmative perspective that just as much other cultural particularities, the beautiful is black.

Finally in Chapter Four, the contingent foundation upon which the separation of the other two had been based was noted as the dialectic between the voluntary and the involuntary was brought into focus, as that which produced the citizen-subject as such. In section 4.1, this was interrogated by way of *Gran Torino*, in which an

aging Polish-American autoworker enlists a young Hmong immigrant in an apprenticeship of citizen-subjectivity, predicated upon his nationalist, inculcated assumptions about the objectivity of order and disorder. While these sometimes explicitly invoked the sensory domain of smell, more often than not it followed the modern approach emphasizing its visualization through the medium of architecture. The visual contrast between the Hmong's overgrown and the Polish-American neatly-trimmed lawns therefore, between the former's peeling, faded and the latter's spotless, brightly-painted homes, and the former's steaming foods and the latter's odorless appearance, reappear throughout. Whereas Walt, the Polish-American autoworker, can voluntarily invoke ethnicity without at the same time being interrupted by the impediments of a microcolonial or microracial force, Thao, the Hmong boy, is involuntarily excluded from this verification of one's full citizen-subjectivity. And this is not even the full extent of *Gran Torino*'s hierarchical presuppositions, insofar as it suggests like several recent assimilation narratives, that while Asian immigrants are potentially assimilable, due to their higher rates of conversion to Protestantism, intermarriage with Euro-Americans, and other such features, Latino immigrants are not.³⁷⁰ However, much like *Avatar*, although the film has been criticized for the many ways in which it might be read to simply reproduce the image of the white hero in the guise of a more tolerant mode of acceptance, it is also for this reason that it can be instructive when considering the contingent training of perception in olfactory and related domains. In other words, precisely because it does shore up typical images of assimilation, it can also be utilized not to champion but to critique the manner in which microethnic experience produces a hierarchy that is rarely invoked. That which Walt embodies, in which his Polishness can be voluntarily invoked or not, depending on the situation at hand, is precisely that which comparatively speaking, leaves no choice at all for Thao.

Following this realization, we then concluded the central chapters of the dissertation in section 4.2 by engaging the film *Quinceañera*, in which an alternate relationship between the voluntary and involuntary is introduced, in

order to expand rather than circumscribe political potentiality. Here, instead of reproducing the existing particularities as though they were evenly-rendered, they are each brought into dialogue with the pre-individual singularity that is their underlying condition of possibility. Prior that is, to the hierarchical individuation that the centrality of citizen-subjectivity ensures. Whereas in *Gran Torino*, smell is troped largely as evidence of disorder, in *Quinceañera* it serves to question the logic of assimilation itself, not only with respect to citizen-subjectivity but also to congealed immigrant particularities, particularly those that have been reterritorialized according to the former's regime of expectation. Carlos therefore, does not simply embrace his Mexican ethnicity as a bulwark against Euro-American gentrification, but questions that which makes almost everything about his lifeworld choiceless and that of his landlords' the opposite. In this respect, the film deploys both the odorous and its visualization not as evidence of disorder, but of an order that is contingently-defined, according to wholly changeable relations of power. From the champurrado cart to Tomas' backyard shrine, Glatzer and Westmoreland's rendering of perception therefore, like that of Alexie and Jenkins, enables an alternate sense of belonging. One in which it serves in this case, as a means through which to interrupt congealed, neo-Kantian representations of the splendid. Rather than the assertion of immigrant particularity as a constitutive outside, *Quinceañera* suggests it exists a constitutive inside, as well as that the dichotomy between the sublime as unitary, and the beautiful as divergent, produces an image of the splendid that is still ultimately dualistic. This is then reproduced in the model of community that is often affirmed in its name, or an equivalent: instead, the model the film asserts is the splendor of the insignificant, a political monism in which that which is occluded in the neo-Kantian rendering is instead edited back in as a post-Kantian reply: or to put the same thing differently, a monism of substance conjoined with a ontology of difference.

We conclude this dissertation then, with the theme of the voluntary and the involuntary that we have argued thus far forms a hinge between the microethnic

on the one hand and the microcolonial and microracial on the other, which enables the production of postwar citizen-subjectivity. The neo-Kantian reading, as we have seen, suggests that because one cannot control the experience of smell, insofar as it submits one to the domain of the involuntary, it should be considered contrary to freedom. Thus, freedom is understood as non-interference: but what if this is in fact, a very impoverished, notion of freedom, a liberal, negative one that is ultimately predicated, although it seems not to be, on the impulse to control? Perhaps, in other words, it is precisely the attempt to produce an impermeable mode of subjectivity, which we have argued is that of the autonomous individual, that is the utmost expression of control (even if discipline is not the right word for it any longer), rather than the exemplar of freedom it represented to be. The point of such an assertion is not simply to fetishize the involuntary however, as though it were inviolable, or something that could not be critiqued. Indeed, it is precisely because the involuntary is always ultimately voluntary that we are concerned with it, since this means that the order of things as currently deployed could nevertheless, be reordered differently. The change that begat it, in other words, as we have said repeatedly of habit more broadly, implies that it remains for a further change. Thus, the argument we have sought to make is that it is not in the efforts of the rational and intelligent, but rather in that of the creative and affective, that thought is most deeply compelled. And because this is the case, the creation of a new world in the shell of the old is thereby enabled there as well, just as the narrator of *ISLT* discovers over the course of the novel that what he actually sought in returning to the shell of the old, was not the redemption of his prior unconscious perceptions or involuntary recollections alone, but much more specifically, that which would enable the reconstitution of aesthetics as such, so as to move beyond the modern distinction of subject and object.

As Deleuze puts it in *Proust and Signs*:

of course, there is an objective aspect of the phenomenon, for example, the flavor of the madeleine as the quality common to two

moments. There is also a subjective aspect: the associative chain that links this flavor to all of Combray as it was actually experienced. But if the resonance has both objective and subjective conditions, what produces it is of an altogether different nature: the Essence, the spiritual equivalent, the Combray that was never seen and that breaks with the subjective chain.³⁷¹

It is this essence that is capable of breaking with indigenous, racial and ethnic subjectivity as produced within a particular relation of space and time, just as it can with the citizen-subjectivity that produces them within its normalizing, depluralizing center of gravity. Not in order to escape particularity as such, but rather to render palpable the pre-individual singularity out of which it is always already composed, so that affective and creative forces can be mobilized. Once this has been perceived in other words, it can then be reconstituted differently, as occurs in the theoretical montage between *The Business of Fancydancing*, *Medicine for Melancholy* and *Quinceanera* on the one hand, and *Avatar*, *Bamboozled* and *Gran Torino* on the other. So long as citizen-subjectivity remains simply within the realm of the voluntary, which is to say the order of representation, a critically redemptive relation to aesthetics remains elusive. But once the involuntary is encountered, whether through sublime, beautiful or splendid experience, the distinction of subject and object breaks down, thereby enabling a reconstitution of political community and political subjectivity alike. Thus, rather than understanding citizenship as it exists in the neoliberal mode as a normalizing, unmarked center of gravity, we can proceed to articulate an alternate mode in which it is open to continuous reconstitution. This insurgent citizenship, which is not so much concerned with subjectivity as it is with sensitivity towards incipient claims to equality, would require the cultivation of a reflective rather than naturalizing disposition to underpin it, or rather, one in which nature is inseparable from culture.³⁷²

While it might appear at first glance that the explosion of the notion of community would be more useful to such a project, this perspective could just as easily resonate with nationalist and nihilist modes of neoliberal subjectivity. Rather, as Nietzsche has insisted, what is needed is a horizon for becoming, one that can make singularities resonate as haecceities rather than quiddities, as ironies rather than synecdoches. As opposed to neoliberal citizen-subjectivity then, insurgent citizenship would remain attentive to the tension between depluralizing and repuralizing modes of perception and recollection, so as to maintain a democratic engagement with the cultural habitus that is its condition of possibility. But as Proust emphasizes in the final volume of *ISLT*, *Time Regained*, the point would not be the phenomenological return to embodied experience, but rather the creation of entirely new potentialities, informed by what is revealed in the process. As opposed to arboreal, hierarchical citizen-subjectivity, insurgent citizenship would affirm a rhizomatic, asubjective ontology, that would emphasize verb over noun. As such, rather than normalizing that which it encounters, it is transformed by the encounter itself, so that its capacity to be affected is expanded, as its capacity for democracy is as well. Rather than thinking of citizenship as a subjectivity that one either is or is not, what this suggests is a modality in which it is not that which you are but that which you do. Because it foregrounds verb rather than noun, insurgent citizenship circumvents hierarchical presuppositions derived from the late modern juridical regime, and because it maintains an ongoing, reflective relationship with the depluralizing and repluralizing of the aesthetics through which it is composed, it cannot be captured within any cultural particularity. As it was put by Deleuze, this ethical engagement with the cultural habitus is possible because “art is capable of adding to nature: it produces resonances themselves, because style sets up a resonance between any two objects and from them extracts a 'precious image', substituting for the determined conditions of an unconscious natural product the free conditions of an artistic production”.³⁷³ *ISLT* is not ultimately about perception or recollection, but instead the apprenticeship of one who would become a creator, because the ultimate task it proposes is that of expanding one’s capacity to be

affected so as to also expand one's capacity to affect. It is this that an insurgent citizenship would proclaim as its central task, a becoming-with predicated on the central project of reflecting on one's inculcated habits of perception and recollection so as to enliven one's self-consciousness. Doing so necessarily produces a relationship between culture, nature and history that throws into question representations of citizenship as subjectivity, emphasizing instead the underlying becoming which that image of belonging occludes.

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NOTES

¹ M. Proust, In Search of Lost Time, Vol. I: Swann's Way, (New York: The Modern Library, 1981) , 353

² G. Deleuze Proust and Signs (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2000) , 181

³ G. Deleuze Proust and Signs , 5

⁴ As translated from the French in S. Wolitz The Proustian Community (New York University Press; New York, 1971) ,14. The Kilmartin translation, which provides greater context, reads: "The idea of a popular art, like that of a patriotic art, if not actually dangerous, to me seemed ridiculous. If the intention was to make art accessible to the people by sacrificing refinements of form, on the ground that they are 'all right for the idle rich', but not for anybody else, I had seen enough of fashionable society to know that it is there that one finds real illiteracy and not, let us say, among electricians. In fact, an art that was 'popular' so far as form was concerned would have been better suited to the members of the Jockey Club than to those of the General Confederation of Labor - and as for subject, the working classes are as bored by novels of popular life as children are by the books which are written specially for them. When one reads, one likes to be transported into a new world, and working men have as much curiosity about princes as princes about working men". M. Proust, In Search of Lost Time, Vol. VI: Time Regained (New York: The Modern Library, 1981) , 280. See also R. Soucy, "Bad Readers in the World of Proust", *The French Review* 44:4 March, 1971, where he invokes Proust's critique of the function of the aristocratic canon within French salon culture in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair. Given that his novel itself became the most canonical work of French literature, perhaps a "proper" reading would be one that took its as a kind of Joan of Arc, for if it has become a marker of cultural distinction more than a source of critical insight, then only those who affirm a non-canonical ethos truly appreciate the insight it bears.

⁵ G. Deleuze "Postscript on Control Societies" in G. Deleuze Negotiations: 1972-1990 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990) , 177. Here it is suggested rather than the molds of disciplinary society, which retain the discrete individual as the citizen-subjects of the various nation-states, in the society of control it is instead modulation that appears, such that interiors and exteriors become broken down and singularity and subjectivity enter into a zone of indistinction.

⁶ W. Connolly The Ethos of Pluralization (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995). The argument here is that "individualist pluralism" and "group pluralism" are two sides of the same coin, in which for instance, "social pluralism...is presented as an achievement to be protected, while the eruption of new drives to pluralization are often represented as perils to this achievement". Instead, what is needed is a politics of "agonistic respect between interdependent and contending identities". Rather than defending the primary hegemonic identity on the one hand or the already-existing minority identities on the other, both of which are rendered static by the centrality of citizen-subjectivity, what a pluralizing ethos of agonistic respect does is emphasize what Deleuze calls the "ontology of sense", upon which both are always already based. Such a politics is minoritarian rather than majoritarian because a tension between pluralism and pluralization is introduced, in which rather than an outside constituting the inside, the two are constantly trading places, producing a constantly receding horizon. "The task is to turn disturbance of what you are into critical responsiveness to what you are not", xviii.

⁷ M. Proust In Search of Lost Time Vol. II: Within a Budding Grove (New York: The Modern Library, 1981) , 3

⁸ W. Benjamin "The Image of Proust", Illuminations (New York: Schocken Books, 1969) , 212

⁹ See especially M. Foucault, Discipline & Punish: the Birth of the Prison (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) , 30 Referring to Ernst Kantorowicz's theory of the king's two bodies [specifically the section in which the body of the condemned man becomes the inverted figure of the body of the sovereign], he argues: "If the surplus power possessed by the king gives rise to the duplication of his body, has not the surplus power exercised on the subjected body of the condemned man given rise to another type of duplication? That of a 'non-corporal', a 'soul' as Mably called it. The history of this 'micro-physics of the punitive power would then be a genealogy or an element in a genealogy of the modern 'soul'. Rather than than seeing this soul as the reactivated remnants of an ideology, one would see it as the present correlative of a certain technology of power over the body...this is the historical reality of this soul, which, unlike the soul represented by Christian theology, is

not born in sin and subject to punishment, but is born rather out of the methods of punishment, supervision and constraint...on this reality-reference, concepts have been constructed and domains of analysis carved out: psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc.; on it have been built scientific techniques and discourses, and the moral claims of humanism. But let there be no misunderstanding: it is not that a real man, the object of knowledge, philosophical reflection or technical intervention, has been substituted for the soul, the illusion of the theologians. The man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself. A 'soul' inhabits him and brings him into existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; *the soul is the prison of the body*" [my emphasis].

¹⁰ M. Proust, Time Regained 280

¹¹ G. Deleuze "Postscript on Control Societies". The "individual" was the subject appropriate to prewar disciplinary society, in which one's identity as a "criminal", "soldier", "madman" or "homosexual" was the primary issue, depending on the institution one was embedded within, whereas in postwar control society, subjectivity is no longer referred only to a particularity that expresses it but instead "substitutes for the individual or numerical body the code of a 'dividual' material to be controlled". Thus, whereas a prewar citizen-subject would be constituted as an isolated body that could be "individualized and totalized" in various forms of institutional enclosure (including the nation-state), in the postwar period what emerges is a liquefied version of citizen-subjectivity in which the enclosures begin to blend into one another and/or disintegrate to such an extent that, rather than disciplining bodies through isolation, more occurs is that power operates through relation, insofar as doing so "opposes individuals against one another...dividing each within". The postwar dividual casts off the old "molds", which were based on the signature and the number, in order to adapt to the new "modulations", which are founded on the basis of codes and competition.

¹² G. Deleuze, Proust and Signs, 182 Deleuze suggests that "there is less a narrator than a machine of the Search, and less a hero than the arrangements by which the machine functions...indeed, the narrator is an enormous Body without Organs".

¹³ G. Deleuze, Logic of Sense (Columbia University Press: New York, 1990) , 103. "We cannot accept the alternative which thoroughly compromises psychology, cosmology, and theology: either singularities already comprised in individuals and persons, or the undifferentiated abyss. Only when the world, teeming with anonymous and nomadic, impersonal and pre-individual singularities, opens up, do we tread at last on the field of the transcendental". Later in the same text, Deleuze suggests that "singularities are not imprisoned within individuals and persons; and one does not fall into an undifferentiated ground, into groundless depth, when one undoes the individual and the person. The impersonal and pre-individual are the free nomadic singularities. Deeper than any other ground is the surface and the skin", 141. See also p. 19: "thus the condition of truth would be defined no longer as the form of conceptual possibility, but rather as ideational material or 'stratum', that is to say, no longer as signification, but rather as sense...an incorporeal, complex, and irreducible entity at the surface of things".

¹⁴ G. Deleuze, "Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*", in J. Hyppolite, Logic and Existence (State University of New York Press: New York, 1997) , 191

¹⁵ G. Deleuze, Proust and Signs, 12

¹⁶ W. Connolly, Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 2002), xiii

¹⁷ J. Lehrer Proust Was a Neuroscientist (Houghton Mifflin; Boston, 2007). "The one reality science cannot reduce is the only reality we will ever know. This is why we need art. By expressing our actual experience, the artists reminds us that our science is incomplete, that no map of matter will ever explain the immateriality of our consciousness", xiii.

¹⁸ J. Lehrer , 80 "In 1911, the year of the Madeleine, physiologists had no idea how the senses connected inside the skull. One of Proust's insights was that our senses of smell and taste bear a unique burden of memory...neuroscience now shows that Proust was right. Rachel Herz, a psychologist at Brown, has shown - in a science paper wittily entitled "Testing the Proustian Hypothesis" - that our senses of smell and taste are uniquely sentimental. This is because smell and taste are the only senses that connect directly to the hippocampus, the center of the brain's long-term memory. Their mark is indelible. All our other senses (sight, touch and hearing) are first processed by the thalamus, the source of language and the front door to consciousness. As a result these senses are much less efficient at summoning up our past".

¹⁹ J. Lehrer , 80

²⁰ G. Deleuze and M. Foucault, "Intellectuals and Power", in D. Bouchard, ed. Language, Counter-Memory and Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michael Foucault (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980) , 208

²¹ G. Edelman and G. Tononi A Universe of Consciousness: How Matter Becomes Imagination (New York: Basic Books, 2001) , 83

²² J. Rawls Political Liberalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) , 4

²³ M. Proust, Within a Budding Grove , 118 Speaking about the Grand Duchess to Mme de Guermantes in a manner to reassure her of her own superiority, Swann states, "I don't suppose for a moment that she has mastered the *Critique of Pure Reason*; still, she's not unpleasant".

²⁴ J. Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1971) , 252

²⁵ J. Rawls Political Liberalism, 8

²⁶ C. Stagoll "Transcendental Empiricism", in A. Parr, ed. The Deleuze Dictionary (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) , 283

²⁷ M. Proust Within a Budding Grove , 122 "In the days of my early childhood, everything that pertained to conservative society was worldly, and no respectable salon would ever have opened its doors to a Republican. The people who lived in such an atmosphere imagined that the impossibility of ever inviting an 'opportunist' - still, more a 'horrid radical' - was something that would endure forever, like oil-lamps and horse-drawn omnibuses. But, like a kaleidoscope which is every now and then given a turn, society arranges successively in different orders elements which one would have supposed immutable and composes a new pattern. Before I had made my first Communion, right-minded ladies had had the stupefying experience of meeting an elegant Jewess while paying a social call. The Dreyfus case brought about another, at a period rather later than that in which I began to go to Mme Swann's, and the kaleidoscope once more reversed its colored

lozenges. Everything Jewish, even the elegant lady herself, went down, and various obscure nationalists rose to take its place".

²⁸ See for instance, D. Panagia, The Poetics of Political Thinking (Duke University Press, 2006) , 5. Panagia shows that while he claims to occlude the aesthetic dimension entirely, "Rawls tacitly endorses an image of thought that inadvertently collapses the distinction between aesthetic and moral evaluation; that is, in his strategies of argumentation there is as much of an appeal to sense experience as to cognitive ratiocination". Indeed, he further indicates how Rawls is directly indebted to the Kantian beautiful and thus to "two central aesthetic principles: mimetic representation and narrative continuity" (16). In other words, while Rawls formally reifies the Kantian distinction between determinative moral judgment and reflective aesthetic judgment, for Panagia he does not succeed in doing so beyond the domain of representation. In particular, since aesthetic judgment occurs beyond object and subject alike (i.e., it has no recourse to preexisting, universalizable sources of authority) and the argument presupposes instead an ethos that presumes this immanent ontology to be always already the case within the "non-aesthetic" domain of politics as well, such concepts as the "original position" are revealed as presupposing a situated, embodied, affected aesthetic sensibility. As for those who would thereby read aesthetic judgment as a purely private matter of opinion, Panagia emphasizes that in the *Critique of Judgment*, it is only that which presumes an extended judgment beyond the purely utilitarian domain of the personal that truly warrants the "aesthetic" nomenclature, since rather being based upon the liberal individual, what is always already involved is the individual experience of "imagining oneself in company with others" (73). Thus the artificial separation of politics and aesthetics in contemporary thought relies upon a selective reading of Kant, since one of his most important insights is that "the human capacity to judge is not merely a faculty - a property of the mind - it is also a condition of political freedom grounded in aesthetic experience. The idea of an *a priori* freedom pursued and defended in *Critique of Practical Reason* returns as a sensation of autonomy experienced through encounters with the beautiful in the *Critique of Judgment*" (75).

²⁹ K. Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844" in R. Tucker The Marx-Engels Reader (WW Norton & Co.: New York, 1978) , 89 Marx's argument was essentially that the capitalist mode of production had produced a specific mobilization of the senses directed towards individual consumption, whereas the socialization of the economy would enable a new assemblage within which the satisfaction of human needs would transform this individuation into what Deleuze would have called a "transindividual" sensory experience. "The senses of the social man are other senses than those of the non-social man", 88.

³⁰ G. Deleuze & F. Guattari , A Thousand Plateaus (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 382

³¹ K. Karatani Transcritique: On Kant and Marx (MIT Press: Boston, 2005) , "In the age when dissertations had to be written strictly about the classics, it was only natural that contemporary problematic concerns were superimposed therein. There is no doubt that Marx was really problematizing his contemporary materialism and idealism. Moreover, his Epicurus is reminiscent of Kant, who criticized both Hume and Leibniz from their intermundia. In this phase Marx was Kantian par excellence. But this was not because Marx consciously followed Kant. Quite the opposite. It was his own engagement that brought him close to Kant...it was because Marx himself lived transcritique" , 163

³² While Kant's critique was not only to argue for the analytic *a priori*, but much more for the synthetic *a priori* (it was after all, called *Critique of Pure Reason*), Rawls seems to have emphasized the rational over the empirical in his conception of the original position. Furthermore, the synthetic *a priori* derives not from the addition of experience to judgment, but rather from the separation of subject and predicate; if one says "all bachelors are unmarried", the subject and the predicate are conjoined, but if one says "all bachelors are happy", that judgment obviously requires further investigation. The assertion that interior angles of a triangle add up to a straight line is a better example of the synthetic *a priori*, insofar as the "sum" is not a predicate of the triangle (the subject in question), but one need not refer to experience in order to verify it. Similarly then, to take Rawls' example, "all humans are self-interested" is an *a priori* judgment; whether it is analytic or synthetic: whether self-interest is self-evident or not, is itself a matter of judgment.

³³ J. Rawls, Political Liberalism , 124

³⁴ J. Rawls, Political Liberalism , 29

³⁵ J. Rawls, Political Liberalism , 31 Consider for instance, the distance between Rawls' claim that "for the purposes of public life, Saul of Tarsus and St. Paul the Apostle are the same person" (32) and that asserted by Paul in 2 Corinthians, 5:17 "if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come". Rawls also suggests via Descartes, Leibniz and Kant that "psychological criteria of memories" do not interrupt "the same person who endures over time" (32).

³⁶ W. Connolly, The Ethos of Pluralization , 1

³⁷ W. Benjamin, "On the Program of the Coming Philosophy", in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume I 1913-1926 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006) "The concept of the naked, primitive, self-evident experience, which, for Kant, as a man who somehow shared the horizon of his times, seemed to be the only experience given - indeed, the only experience possible. This experience, however, as already indicated, was unique and temporally limited...[it] was that of the Enlightenment" , 101

³⁸ G. Deleuze "On Gilbert Simondon", in Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974 (Semiotexte: Brooklyn, 2004) , 89

³⁹ W. Benjamin "Experience and Poverty" in M. Jennings, H. Eiland and G. Smith Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol II, Part II 1931-1934 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999) , 732.

⁴⁰ See K. Yoshino

⁴¹ M. Omi and H. Winant Racial Formation in the United States (Routledge: London, 1994) , 66

⁴² M. Omi and H. Winant , 66

⁴³ D. Bell "Comment: Brown vs. Board of Education and the Interest Convergence Dilemma", *Harvard Law Review* 93 524-25, 1980. In this respect, one might consider the so-called Jazz Ambassadors, who served as America's "sonic weapon" during the Cold War, in order "to counter Soviet propaganda portraying the United States as culturally barbaric...[since] many jazz bands were...racially mixed, a potent symbol in the mid to late '50s, when segregation in the South was tarnishing the American image". So important was the global American image of an accomplished pluralism to the postwar state that shortly after Louis Armstrong refused to participate in a 1957 trip to the Soviet Union in protest of

the federal government's refusal to send National Guard troops to Little Rock in order to integrate the high school, they did so and Armstrong renegotiated the agreement in order to play a different tour to South America. F. Kaplan, "When Ambassadors Had Rhythm", *New York Times*, June 29, 2008.

⁴⁴ M. Proust, *Within a Budding Grove*, 123

⁴⁵ G. Deleuze "Postscript on Control Societies", 178

⁴⁶ W. Benjamin, "On Perception" in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 1 1913 - 1926*, 94

⁴⁷ W. Benjamin, "On the Program of the Coming Philosophy", in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 1 1913 - 1926*, 102

⁴⁸ P. Quadrio "Benjamin Contra Kant on Experience: Philosophizing Beyond Philosophy", *Philament: An Online Journal of the Arts and Culture* 1:1, 2008. Available: http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/publications/philament/issue1_philquadrio.htm

⁴⁹ P. Quadrio

⁵⁰ P. Quadrio

⁵¹ W. Benjamin, "Perception is Reading", in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 1 1913 - 1926*, 92

⁵² W. Benjamin, "On Perception", in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 1 1913 - 1926*, 93 Additionally, it is noted that "we may perhaps venture the supposition that in an age in which experience was characterized by an extraordinary superficiality and godlessness, philosophy, if it was honest, could have no interest in salvaging this experience for its concept of knowledge...previously the symbol of the unity of knowledge that we know of as 'experience' had been an exalted one; it had, even though to varying degrees, been close to God and the divine. During the Enlightenment, however, it was increasingly stripped of its proximity to God. In this changed situation the basic philosophical interest in the logical deducibility of the world, the fundamental interest of knowledge, inevitably suffered because of the...confusion between 'experience' and 'knowledge of experience'...Kant was as ignorant as his predecessors of the distinction between 'experience' and 'knowledge of experience'", 96.

⁵³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Prometheus Books: Amherst, 1990), 1

⁵⁴ M. Proust, *Time Regained*, 264

⁵⁵ G. Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life* (Cambridge: Zone Books, 2001), 25

⁵⁶ C. Stagoll "Transcendental Empiricism", in A. Parr *The Deleuze Dictionary*, 283

⁵⁷ G. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 20

⁵⁸ B. Baugh "Transcendental Empiricism + Politics", in A. Parr *The Deleuze Dictionary*, 285

⁵⁹ W. Benjamin "On the Program of the Coming Philosophy", in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 1 1913 - 1926*, 102

⁶⁰ T. Rockmore *In Kant's Wake: Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (Blackwell: Oxford, 2006), 10

⁶¹ Cited in "Translator's Introduction", G. Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xv

⁶² On this manner of reading Deleuze's relation to the history of philosophy, and how it intersects with the approaches of other major figures, see D. Smith "Deleuze, Hegel and the Post-Kantian Tradition", *Philosophy Today* 2001: 44. "Deleuze pushes the thought of the thinker at hand to its 'differential' limit, purging it of the great three terminal points of metaphysics (God, World, Self) and thereby uncovering the immanent movement of difference in their thought. This is the point where Deleuze's own 'system' would begin...Deleuze reads every philosopher in the history of philosophy - friend or enemy - in the same manner, following the same strategy, pushing each thinker, so to speak, to their differential limit. (Indeed this is a point of affiliation with Hegel: Hegel pushes thought to its point of contradiction; Deleuze, to the point of difference)". , 122

⁶³ G. Deleuze *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, xiii

⁶⁴ W. Benjamin "On Perception", in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 1 1913 - 1926*, 93

⁶⁵ D. Panagia *The Poetics of Political Thinking*, 94

⁶⁶ W. Benjamin *Illuminations*, 208

⁶⁷ W. Benjamin *Illuminations*, 204

⁶⁸ I. Kant *Critique of Judgment*, 125

⁶⁹ J. Habermas *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (MIT Press: Cambridge, 1991). From the Introduction by Thomas McCarthy: "Habermas traces the interdependent development of the literary and political self-consciousness of this new class [the bourgeoisie], weaving together accounts of the rise of the novel and of literary and political journalism and the spread of reading societies, salons and coffee houses into a *Bildungroman* of this 'child of the eighteenth century'". As with our own study, albeit in a different manner, McCarthy points out that "he notes the contradiction between the liberal public sphere's constitutive catalogue of 'basic rights of man' and their de facto restriction to a certain class of men". , xii.

⁷⁰ G. Deleuze "The Simulacrum and Ancient Philosophy", in G. Deleuze *The Logic of Sense*, 253, 262

⁷¹ The quote paraphrases that of R. Brown *In Her Day* (Plainfield: Daughters, Inc., 1976), 17 "in America, the world revolutionary is used to sell pantyhose".

⁷² M. Proust *In Search of Lost Time, Vol. 1: Swann's Way*, 221

⁷³ Cited in L. Oel, "AMC Renews *Mad Men* for a Fourth Season", Available: <http://blogs.amctv.com/mad-men/2009/09/mad-men-season-4-renewal.php>

⁷⁴ The quote is from J. Leonard, "Twilight Over Baltimore", *New York Magazine* December 30, 2007. Available: <http://nymag.com/arts/tv/reviews/42386/>

⁷⁵ I owe the term "microspectacle" to a term used in a Facebook post by Charlie Bertsch.

⁷⁶ For the more pessimistic version of the argument, see especially S. Sontag, "The Decay of Cinema" *The New York Times*, February 25, 1996 and C. Leigh "Contemplating the New Physicality of Cinema" *The Believer*, March/April 2009.

For an affirmation of the post-cinematic similar to that deployed here, see C. Coonan "Greenaway Announces the Death of Cinema – and Blames the Remote-Control Zapper", *The Independent*, October 10, 2007; M. Clayfield "A Cinema Exploded: Notes on the Development of Some Post-Cinematic Forms", *Braintrust DV*, Available: <http://www.braintrustdv.com/essays/cinema-exploded.html>; R. Brody, "Cinephelia Follow-Up", *The New Yorker*, March 9, 2009; M. Dargis "Floating in the Digital Experience", *The New York Times*, December 30, 2009 and the S. Shaviro lecture outlining what he calls "Post-Cinematic Affect". Available: <http://www.streaming.mmu.ac.uk/eri/deleuze/shavaro.wmv>

⁷⁷ Benjamin said this in numerous places, but for a recent example, see A. Badiou "Cinema as a Democratic Emblem", *Monthly Review*, April 6, 2009. Available: <http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/badiou050609.html> As he puts it there, the cinema is "the first great art which is mass in its essence appears and develops in a time which is the time of the avant-gardes. The derived form: cinema imposes impracticable relations between aristocracy and democracy, between invention and familiarity, between novelty and general taste"

⁷⁸ G. Deleuze *Proust and Signs*, 182 "The Search is not constructed like a cathedral or gown, but like a web. The spider-narrator, whose web is the Search being spun, being woven by each thread stirred by one sign or another: the web and spider, the web and body are one and the same machine"

⁷⁹ G. Deleuze *Proust and Signs*, 3

⁸⁰ W. Connolly *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed*, 13

⁸¹ G. Deleuze, *Cinema 1* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 58

⁸² M. Shapiro, with L. Rinelli "To Get What We Have Lost: a Discussion With Michael J. Shapiro on Cinema and Politics". *JG Cinema: Cinema and Globalization* September 21, 2009.

Available: <http://www.jgcinema.com/single.php?sl=shapiro-cinema-politics>

⁸³ Quoted in W. Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht* (London: Verso Books, 1998), xi

⁸⁴ M. Shapiro *Cinematic Geopolitics* (London: Taylor & France, 2008), 7

⁸⁵ W. Benjamin *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility* (Harvard University Press: Boston, 2008), 37

⁸⁶ V. Burgin *The Remembered Film* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), 8.

⁸⁷ G. Deleuze "Doubts About the Imaginary" in G. Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 65. "Cinema has given rise to its own particular signs, whose classification is specific to cinema, but once it produces them they turn up elsewhere, and the world starts 'turning cinematic'". The translator's note referring to this passage suggests that what Deleuze intended here was a play on the French term *'faire du cinéma'* ('turning cinematic'): 'to make films, or to make (amount to) a film, to look like or work like a film, or to playact, act as though one's in a film', 193. There is also an implicit reference here to the Kantian revolution, which Deleuze sees as being subsequently cinematically enacted in the disjuncture between the prewar movement-image and the postwar time-image: as he describes it, "when cinema...stops subordinating time to motion, when it makes motion dependent upon time". Recall that in *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, he makes a similar statement about the three critiques, suggesting that "time is no longer related to the movement which it measures, but movement is related to the time which conditions it: this is the first great Kantian reversal in the *Critique of Pure Reason*", xvii.

⁸⁸ J. Interlandi, "Are You a 'Digital Native'?" *Newsweek* October 14, 2008.

⁸⁹ J. Interlandi.

⁹⁰ G. Debord *The Society of the Spectacle* (Zone Books: New York, 1995), 12.

⁹¹ W. Benjamin "The Image of Proust" in *Illuminations*, 210

⁹² G. Deleuze *Proust and Signs*, 22

⁹³ This image, from the most often-cited sequence-image of William Arntz, Betsy Chasse and Mark Vicente's "What the Bleep Do We Know?" (2004), reenacts a pop science claim that when Columbus' clipper ships first arrived on the horizon, the indigenous peoples of the Americas couldn't see them since they had no concept for "ship". On the film's website, the physiological aspect of the claim is defended by citing contemporary neuroscience that shows that the brain receives billions of bits of ocular information every day while only a small portion of that which is taken in is consciously seen. With respect to the anecdote, the source is listed simply as "other scientists" and a "historical document in the South Americas...[that] has not yet been found". Undoubtedly, in any case, the sequence-image tells us far more about the visual habits of navel-gazing New Age adherents than it does the indigenous peoples they claim unmediated access to. See "The Bleeping Herald: Questions and Quandries" Available: <http://www.whatthebleep.com/herald3/quandries.shtml>

⁹⁴ Virilio mentions this concept of "relief effect" in J. Adams "The Speeds of Ambiguity: An Interview With Paul Virilio", *Boundary 2* 36:2 (2009). "stereo-reality means that there is 'virtual reality' with technology, and actual reality. The present is composed of both these realities. And somewhere, we have a 'relief effect' between virtual reality (real-time) and actual reality. And so there is a possibility of a visual relief of 'stereo-reality'".

⁹⁵ Virilio also mentions the stereoscopic in J. Adams "The Speeds of Ambiguity: An Interview With Paul Virilio": "Reality today can become stereo-reality by way of screens and direct perception. There is an effect of the field of vision that comes from this doubling of stereo-real, stereoscopic perception, as in stereophony. I think for the moment we are fascinated by the virtual and have a tendency to fall into glaucoma and lose actual vision, direct vision. I think tomorrow we will have to restructure ourselves around a new type of perspective which I call the perspective of 'real-time', this effect of the visual field. We must take into account the new relief of both fields of vision because we won't lose the screens or direct perception. Here I think we have to go back to the perspectivists of the Middle Ages to the Paolo Uccello to understand the importance of this 'real-time' position of perception".

⁹⁶ Cited in A. Smith *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Boston: South End Press, 2005), 9 "An 'absence' that reinforces at every turn the conviction that Native peoples are indeed vanishing and that the conquest of Native land is justified".

⁹⁷ P. Deloria *Indians in Unexpected Places* (University Press of Kansas: Kansas City, 2004)

⁹⁸ G. Debord *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* (London: Verso, 1998). Briefly, for Debord the diffuse spectacle was that which prevailed prior to 1968 in the Americanized West while the concentrated spectacle was that which in this same period congealed within the fascist state. "Since then, a third form has been established, through the rational

combination of these two, and on the basis of a general victory of the form which has shown itself stronger: the diffuse. This is the integrated spectacle, which has since tended to impose itself globally", 8 Interestingly, Debord emphasizes that one of the most important elements of this new form of the spectacle was a structure of feeling oriented around the "eternal present", which "wants to forget the past and no longer seems interested in a future...spectacular domination's first priority was to eradicate historical knowledge in general", 13

⁹⁹ M. Raheja "Reading Nanook's Smile: Visual Sovereignty, Indigenous Revisions of Ethnography and *Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)*" *American Quarterly* 59:4 (2007) 1159-1185. "Salvage anthropology stressed that indigenous peoples were destined to disappear off the face of the earth in a matter of years. Therefore, great pains should be taken to preserve any indigenous material or linguistic artifact. This anxiety-driven form of anthropology was less concerned with representing indigenous culture as the indigenous peoples interpreted themselves than with the value of future scientific research on tribal/non-Western cultures", 1184.

¹⁰⁰ R. Berkhofer, Jr. *The White Man's Indian* (Vintage Books: New York, 1978) , 85

¹⁰¹ R. Berkhofer, Jr., 85

¹⁰² M. Heidegger, *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit* (London: Blackwell, 1978) , 173 "Idle talk is the possibility of understanding everything without previously making the thing one's own. If this were done, idle talk would founder, and it already guards against such a danger. Idle talk is something anyone can rake up; it not only releases one from the task of genuine understanding, but develops an undifferentiated kind of intelligibility, for which nothing is closed off any longer".

¹⁰³ Recollection is largely imagistic, regardless of what specific sensory experience triggers it: this is why the other senses are so potentially subversive to official collective identity narratives. See W. Benjamin, "The Image of Proust" in *Illuminations*: "To be sure, most memories that we search for come to us as visual images. Even the free-floating forms of the *memoire-involuntaire* are still in large part isolated, though enigmatically present, visual images. For this very reason, anyone who wishes to surrender knowingly to the innermost overtones in this work must place himself in a special stratum - the bottom-most - of this involuntary memory, one in which the materials of a memory no longer appear singly, as images, but tell us about a whole, amorphously and formlessly, indefinitely and weightily, in the same way as the weight of his net tells a fisherman about his catch. Smell - that is the sense of weight of someone who casts his nets into the sea of the *temps perdu*. And his sentences are the entire muscular activity of the intelligible body; they contain the whole enormous effort to raise this catch", 214 We return to the quote in Chapter Four, which is concerned with power, smell and the latter's translation into image.

¹⁰⁴ See for instance D. Zahn "Kindergarten Pilgrim, Indian Costumes Banned". *WorldNetDaily*.

Available: <http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=81966> Clearly there is a difference between a person who is for all practical purposes white, despite being part-Native American (i.e., with no tribal affiliation or cultural connection), and a person who is both visibly of color and the daughter of a tribally-enrolled Seneca.

¹⁰⁵ C. Macpherson *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964). One might think of this as a variant on the argument about postracialism as itself a reconsolidation of white power and authority made in G. Lipsitz *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

¹⁰⁶ F. Ravaissou argues that this is the means through which perception becomes habitualized in F. Ravaissou *Of Habit* (London: Continuum, 2008) , 49 "Prolonged or repeated sensation diminishes gradually and eventually fades away...the sensations in which we seek pleasure soon fade. Taste becomes more and more obtuse in the one who, by passion, is delivered over to the frequent use of strong liquors; in the connoisseur who discerns flavors, it becomes more and more delicate and subtle. As the sensation gradually diminishes, so to do the please and pain attached to it - particularly the pain".

¹⁰⁷ This comment comes from a letter from "Deena", read on the air of "The John and Ken Show", November 30, 2008.

¹⁰⁸ G. Deleuze *The Logic of Sense* , 262

¹⁰⁹ The quote is taken from B. Massumi "Realer Than Real: The Simulacrum According to Deleuze and Guattari" Available: http://www.anu.edu.au/HRC/first_and_last/works/realer.htm Therein, he compares this approach to that of Baudrillard's "Simulacra and Simulation", the chosen approach of Gerald Vizenor, to whom we will return throughout the chapter. "It makes for a fun read. But do we really have no other choice than being a naive realist or being a sponge? Deleuze and Guattari open a third way. Although it is never developed at length in any one place, a theory of simulation can be extracted from their work that can give us a start in analyzing our cultural condition under late capitalism without landing us back with the dinosaurs or launching us into hypercynicism... Baudrillard sidesteps the question of whether simulation replaces a real that did indeed exist, or if simulation is all there has ever been. Deleuze and Guattari say yes to both". As such, their approach would seem to avoid the increasingly-common retort which draws upon the icon of the Sa(l)vage in order to deny any continuing collective responsibility to indigenous peoples.

¹¹⁰ P. Hallward *Absolutely Postcolonial: Writing Between the Singular and the Specific* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

¹¹¹ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus*, 178

¹¹² Benjamin wrote "The Image of Proust" at the same time as "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia" *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings* (New York: Schocken Books, 1978) in 1929, suggesting he retained some of Proust's meaning in the titles. Indeed, in a letter to Hugo von Hoffmannsthal in which he enclosed both essays, he stated that together they could be considered a prolegomena to *The Arcades Project* - itself dedicated to the distinction between the representational snapshot and the multidimensional image as it stands prior to representation. Thus, according to Max Pensky, "there is much to commend reading these two essays together, both as 'counterpieces' and as counterpoles. Read in tandem, they constitute both explorations and critiques of tactics of remembrance, critical models for the way that subjective memory, directed onto a collection of cultural artifacts, might serve to disrupt a hegemonic historical continuity, thereby rescuing images of the past of an individual life or of an entire historical epoch". M. Pensky, "Tactics of Remembrance", in M. Steinberg, ed. *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996) , 170

- ¹¹³ M. Proust, Time Regained, 254
- ¹¹⁴ W. Benjamin "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", in Illuminations, 237
- ¹¹⁵ M. Proust, Time Regained, 256 This passage exemplifies the notion of "haptic recollection" noted by Siegrid Weigl vis-à-vis Bergson and Nietzsche in Body and Image Space: Re-reading Walter Benjamin (London: Routledge, 1996), 189
- ¹¹⁶ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 56 "Relative movements should most assuredly not be confused with the possibility of absolute deterritorialization, an absolute line of flight, absolute drift. The former are stratic or interstratic, whereas the latter concern the plane of consistence and its destratification".
- ¹¹⁷ G. Deleuze, Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation (London: Continuum, 2003), 195 Here he cites the early 20th century theorist Alois Riegl as the origin of the term ("*haptisch*", in German), a figure who also exerted influence on Benjamin's use of the concept in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction". See A. Vacche The Visual Turn: Classical Film Theory and Art History (Fredericksburg: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 4 In short, the term refers to the sensation itself prior to representation, no longer merely optical, but now in a multidimensional, or haptic form: rather than representing the chaos of visual perception as an objective experience of the visible, Riegl held that the ancients had assumed that other forms of sensory experience were also required, including touch. While touch provides a sense of the materiality of an object, vision provides a sense of its dimensionality: both Deleuze and Benjamin argue that the cinema provides the potential of moving beyond the mere opticality of late modern habits of perception and towards a more complex hapticity. See G. Deleuze, Cinema 2 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 13 ("it is the tactile which can constitute a pure sensory image, on condition that the hand relinquishes its prehensile and motor functions to content itself with a pure touching. ...it is Bresson...who makes touch an object of view in itself...the whole eye doubles its optical function by a specifically 'grabbing' [*haptique*] one, if we follow Riegl's formula") and W. Benjamin "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", in Illuminations, 240: "The tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation".
- ¹¹⁸ M. Proust Time Regained, 264
- ¹¹⁹ F. Ravaisson, 55
- ¹²⁰ J. Fernandes Challenging Euro-America's Politics of Identity: The Return of the Native (London: Routledge, 2008), 1 Michael J. Shapiro explicates the concept as such: "Jorge's book, based on his dissertation, takes its subtitle The Return of the Native, from Thomas Hardy's 1878 novel. However, unlike Hardy's returning native, the native with whom he is concerned is a nomad whose trajectory of movement maps important aspects of the contemporary, increasingly globalized world. His subject is thus not nativism either as a marker of belonging or of entitlement, but the native as a 'haecceity' (a Deleuzian concept that treats bodies not as static bits of materiality but in terms of their 'relations of movement'). The focus on the body's movement...is on the native's self-referential/self-identical quality as a source of terror that disrupts the post-imperial socio-political order"., vi
- ¹²¹ D. Scotus, Philosophical Writings: A Selection (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987).
- ¹²² G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 261
- ¹²³ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari A Thousand Plateaus, 8 While the subject matter at hand was that of Chomskian linguistics, the insight is equally applicable to Wundtian psychology: "They do not reach the ABSTRACT MACHINE that connects a language to the semantic and pragmatic contents of statements, to collective assemblages of enunciation, to a whole micropolitics of the social field. A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles".
- ¹²⁴ By moving beyond conscious perception to the non-representational layers of the unconscious, one renders them perceptible: it is only by entering into this process that the citizen-subject can become an absent presence that would cancel out the rendering of indigenous peoples as a present absence. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari A Thousand Plateaus, "what does becoming-imperceptible signify, coming at the end of all other molecular becomings that begin with becoming-woman?...a first response would be: to be like everybody else" (279).
- ¹²⁵ The retouched version of Edward S. Curtis' *In a Piegan Lodge* (1910), in which an alarm clock has been removed: more on this below.
- ¹²⁶ It should be noted of course, that while the "New Western" countered the traditional narratives, it did not do so in the manner I am suggesting here.
- ¹²⁷ Plato "Republic", in J. Cooper, ed. Plato: Complete Works (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 1141
- ¹²⁸ I am indebted here to S. Fiennes' "The Pervert's Guide to Cinema" (2006) which includes a clip in which he interrogates this distinction, suggesting that Žižek would like a "third pill", which is obviously that of the simulacra itself.
- ¹²⁹ J. Cameron, "Avatar" (2010).
- ¹³⁰ As with their self-proclaimed intent to create the Na'vi language such that it would draw on so many different sources that it would be irreducible to any of them and yet expressive of all them, at least in the instrumental sense.
- ¹³¹ A. Leonard "'Avatar' as a Chinese Metaphor" *Salon* January 7, 2010. Available: http://www.salon.com/tech/htw/2010/01/07/avatar_in_china/
- ¹³² Tej "Avatar is..." Available: <http://avatar.typepad.com/entry/6a012876991825970c0128769936d0970c?fbid=4HUW8TqTvPA>
- ¹³³ Ecognoscente, "Going Native on Pandora". Available: <http://www.ecognoscente.com/months/december09/22.html>
- ¹³⁴ J. Piazza, "Audiences Experience 'Avatar' Blues" *CNN Entertainment*, January 11, 2010 <http://www.cnn.com/2010/SHOWBIZ/Movies/01/11/avatar.movie.blues/index.html>
- ¹³⁵ J. Piazza, "Audiences Experience 'Avatar' Blues"
- ¹³⁶ D. Haraway "Avatar", talk at Revolution Books, February 2010. Available: <http://www.zoepolitics.com/sharing.html>
- ¹³⁷ D. Haraway
- ¹³⁸ D. Haraway
- ¹³⁹ D. Haraway
- ¹⁴⁰ D. Haraway

- ¹⁴¹ P. Deloria, 4
- ¹⁴² Plato, 1140
- ¹⁴³ A. Kitaoka "Functional Brain Imaging of the Rotating Snakes Illusion by fMRI", *Journal of Vision* 8:10 (2008). The classic treatment of anomalous motion (the phi phenomenon) however, was first theorized by Gestalt psychologist Max Wertheimer in M. Wertheimer, "Experimentelle Studien über das Sehen von Bewegung [Experimental studies of motion perception]", *Zeitschrift für Psychologie* 61 (1912).
- ¹⁴⁴ G. Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies" in *Negotiations*, 179 "In control societies you never finish anything - business, training, and military service all being coexisting metastable states of a single modulation, a sort of universal transmutation". Interestingly, this brings postwar control society very close to Gilbert Simondon's notion that the pre-individual is always already remobilized in the process of individuation and that it is this alone that accounts for the metastability of the grid of identities. See G. Deleuze "On Gilbert Simondon" in *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974*, 87. "
- ¹⁴⁵ J. Bramhall "The Catching of the Leviathan", excerpted in T. Hobbes *Leviathan* (London: Broadview Press, 2005) , 568
- ¹⁴⁶ G. Vizenor "Edward Curtis: Pictorialist and Ethnographic Adventurist". Available: <http://lweb2.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/essay3.html>
- ¹⁴⁷ Quoted in G. Vizenor, "Socioacupuncture: Mythic Reversals and the Striptease in Four Scenes", R. Ferguson, M. Gever, T. Minh-ha and C. West eds., *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures* (Boston: MIT Press, 1992) , 412
- ¹⁴⁸ L. Owens *Mixedblood Messages: Literature, Film, Family, Place* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001) , 128
- ¹⁴⁹ E. Curtis, "In a Piegan Lodge", cited at the Bruce Kapson Gallery. Available: http://brucekapson.com/dynamic/artwork_display.asp?ArtworkID=343
- ¹⁵⁰ M. Raheja "Reading Nanook's Smile", 1160
- ¹⁵¹ S. Lobo *Urban Voices: The Bay Area American Indian Community* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002) , 3
- ¹⁵² L. Owens, 128
- ¹⁵³ Paul Watson for instance, said "today, with speed boats, military weaponry and the draconian assistance of the US government in stifling all dissent, American whalers managed to blast a whale out of existence in American waters on the pretext of cultural privilege". See S. Sunde, P. Shukovsky and M. Barber, "Today the Makah Have Brought the Whale Home", *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, May 18, 1999.
- ¹⁵⁴ B. Browne, commenting on G. Chittim, "Makah Whale Hunt Indictments", *King* 5. Available: http://blogs.king5.com/archives/2007/10/makah_whale_hun.html
- ¹⁵⁵ Quoted in R. Van Ginkel "The Makah Whale Hunt and Leviathan's Death", *Entnofoor* 17:1/2 (2004) , 73.
- ¹⁵⁶ G. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense* , 103. "We cannot accept the alternative which thoroughly compromises psychology, cosmology, and theology: either singularities already comprised in individuals and persons, or the undifferentiated abyss. Only when the world, teeming with anonymous and nomadic, impersonal and pre-individual singularities, opens up, do we tread at last on the field of the transcendental". Later in the same text, Deleuze suggests that "singularities are not imprisoned within individuals and persons; and one does not fall into an undifferentiated ground, into groundless depth, when one undoes the individual and the person. The impersonal and pre-individual are the free nomadic singularities. Deeper than any other ground is the surface and the skin", 141. See also G. Deleuze "On Gilbert Simondon", in *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953-1974*.
- ¹⁵⁷ G. Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994) , 177
- ¹⁵⁸ G. Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* 178
- ¹⁵⁹ W. Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility*, 9
- ¹⁶⁰ L. Moholy-Nagy "Production-Reproduction", in C. Phillips, ed. *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writing 1913-1940* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989) , 80
- ¹⁶¹ L. Moholy-Nagy, 82
- ¹⁶² G. Vizenor, *Manifest Manners*
- ¹⁶³ Alexie uses this descriptor in the Director's Commentary track available on the DVD version.
- ¹⁶⁴ E. Glissant *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997) , 189
- ¹⁶⁵ E. Glissant, 190
- ¹⁶⁶ A. Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Era of Global Capitalism* (London: Westview Press, 1998).
- ¹⁶⁷ *The Business of Fancydancing*
- ¹⁶⁸ *The Business of Fancydancing*
- ¹⁶⁹ *The Business of Fancydancing*
- ¹⁷⁰ S. Alexie *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (New York: Hachette Book Group USA, 2007) , ii
- ¹⁷¹ S. Alexie , 13
- ¹⁷² S. Alexie , 230
- ¹⁷³ F. Ravaisson , 25
- ¹⁷⁴ J. Newton "Sherman Alexie's Autoethnography" *Contemporary Literature* 42:2 (2001)
- ¹⁷⁵ N. Campbell *The Rhizomatic West: Representing the American West in a Transnational, Global, Media Age* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008) , 230
- ¹⁷⁶ Cited in N. Campbell , 231 Raheja makes a similar case for the virtual reservation in "Reading Nanook's Smile".
- ¹⁷⁷ J. Ranciere, "The Emancipated Spectator", *Artforum* 45:7 (2007), 274
- ¹⁷⁸ G. Deleuze *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) , 73
- ¹⁷⁹ Cited in J. Lehrer , 97
- ¹⁸⁰ G. Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, 58
- ¹⁸¹ Giorgio Agamben made this argument with respect to the work of Yves Klein in a seminar I took with him at the European Graduate School, August 16-24, 2006.

- ¹⁸² J. Ranciere The Politics of Aesthetics (London: Continuum, 2006) , 27 Thanks to Chad Shomura for pointing out the "worlds" aspect of this quote.
- ¹⁸³ G. Vizenor, "Edward Curtis: Pictorialist and Ethnographic Adventurist".
- ¹⁸⁴ G. Vizenor "Edward Curtis: Pictorialist and Ethnographic Adventurist".
- ¹⁸⁵ N. Widder "The Rights of Simulacra: Deleuze and the Univocity of Being" *Continental Philosophy Review* 34 (2001). Widder demonstrates that Badiou's claims that this oneness contradicts the emphasis on multiplicity is a self-serving representation intended to affirm his own approach "as the more genuine thinker of multiplicity" (438). The case he makes is that "univocity is hardly concerned with establishing a unity among differences, but rather with linking differences through their difference" (439). The distinction that Aristotle asserted between univocity and analogy is crucial here: "as Deleuze makes clear, the analogical solution does nothing to answer the question of the diversity of individuals within a species, for these are related by simple commonality and not according to any proportion" (443). Actually-existing beings, in other words the simulacra themselves (rather than the models or copies they are supposed to be related to), are incompatible with analogy since it is based on a distinction between divine and worldly substance: univocity on the other hand, is predicated on their indistinguishability and thus allows for the absolute singularity of actually-existing beings. It is not the triumph of the One over the Many or the Many over the One, but the triumph of multiplicity itself as the truest possible expression of the univocity of being: "univocity...is not to be confused with the Platonist One, even where this One is internally self-differentiating. Rather it is what overturns this very model, affirming simulacra as the multiplicity that escapes the One and the Many" (447). In other words, it is both immanent and multiple at once, which means that Badiou's claim that the multiple is simply "unreal" simulacra is off the mark: to the contrary, the simulacra are absolutely real, far moreso than that which derives from the proposition of the duality of substance.
- ¹⁸⁶ G. Vizenor "Edward Curtis: Pictorialist and Ethnographic Adventurist".
- ¹⁸⁷ G. Vizenor "Edward Curtis: Pictorialist and Ethnographic Adventurist".
- ¹⁸⁸ Quoted in J. Leher, 97.
- ¹⁸⁹ B. Stafford, Visual Analogy: Consciousness as the Art of Connecting (MIT Press: Boston, 2001) , xvi
- ¹⁹⁰ M. Heidegger, Poetry, Language and Thought (New York: Harper & Row, 1969) , 219 Deleuze, however, is not satisfied by this assertion: we will return to this question in the Conclusion.
- ¹⁹¹ G. Deleuze, Logic of Sense , 103. "We cannot accept the alternative which thoroughly compromises psychology, cosmology, and theology: either singularities already comprised in individuals and persons, or the undifferentiated abyss. Only when the world, teeming with anonymous and nomadic, impersonal and pre-individual singularities, opens up, do we tread at last on the field of the transcendental". Later in the same text, Deleuze suggests that "singularities are not imprisoned within individuals and persons; and one does not fall into an undifferentiated ground, into groundless depth, when one undoes the individual and the person. The impersonal and pre-individual are the free nomadic singularities. Deeper than any other ground is the surface and the skin", 141.
- ¹⁹² G. Deleuze Difference and Repetition , 209 "Whereas differentiation determines the virtual content of the Idea as problem, differentiation expresses the actualization of this virtual...differentiation is like the second part of difference".
- ¹⁹³ J. Bennett, Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma and Contemporary Art (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005) , 94
- ¹⁹⁴ J. Bennett, 94
- ¹⁹⁵ K. Silverman Male Subjectivity at the Margins (London: Routledge, 1992) , 264 She derives this concept ultimately from Max Scheler's *In the Nature of Sympathy*: "Scheler distinguishes between an idiopathic or interiorizing variety of identification, which conforms to the Freudian paradigm, and a heteropathic, or exteriorizing one. He characterizes idiopathic identification as "the total eclipse and absorption of another self by one's own, it being thus, as it were, completely dispossessed and deprived of all rights in its conscious existence and character. Within heteropathic identification on the other hand, the 'I' is 'so overwhelmed and fettered by the other 'I' that its 'formal status as a subject is usurped by the other person's personality, with all of its characteristic aspects. In such a case, Scheler adds, 'I live not in 'myself' but entirely in the other person'". Interestingly, there is considerable overlap here as well with Deleuze's text on masochism, which suggests that there is a potential ethics implied in its distinction from sadism.
- ¹⁹⁶ J. Bennett , 7
- ¹⁹⁷ J. Bennett, 128
- ¹⁹⁸ E. Glissant, "Creolization in the Making of the Americas" in V. Hyatt and R. Nettleford eds. Race, Discourse and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995) , 274
- ¹⁹⁹ W. Benjamin "Experience and Poverty" in H. Eiland, M. Jennings, G. Smith and R. Livingstone, eds., Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 2, part 2, 1931-1934 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999) , 732
- ²⁰⁰ Quoted in S. Choron, ed. Elvis! The Last Word (Citadel Press Group: New York, 1991) , 7
- ²⁰¹ Based on the holdings at numerous bookstores in Honolulu, Hawaii; Portland, Oregon and Jonesboro, Arkansas.
- ²⁰² I make this argument, that it was not until the Eighties that this first emerged, with respect to Michael Jackson's 1983 music video "Billie Jean", the first on MTV to feature black musicians. See J. Adams "The King's Two Faces: From Michael Jackson to the Postracial Presidency", J. Adams & A. Saldanha Deleuze & Race (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2011).
- ²⁰³ For more on this aspect as it applies to non-indigenous racial minorities, see in particular A. Saldanha, "Re-ontologizing Race: The Machinic Geography of Phenotype", *Environment and Planning* 24 (2006) and G. Yancey Who is White? Latinos, Asians and the New Black/Nonblack Divide (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003).
- ²⁰⁴ W. Du Bois The Souls of Black Folks (New York: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1907). vii
- ²⁰⁵ T. Harris Summer Snow: Reflections From a Black Daughter of the South (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007) , 151
- ²⁰⁶ Junker is an ethnomusicologist at the University of Hawaii who is known for repeating these lines in every course he teaches.
- ²⁰⁷ M. Proust, Time Regained , 259
- ²⁰⁸ A. Baraka Blues People: Negro Music in White America, 142

²⁰⁹ W. Echard, "Sensible Virtual Selves: Bodies, Instruments and the Becoming-Concrete of Music", *Contemporary Music Review* 2 (2006) , 12 "'metaxis' is a term used in performance studies to denote the state of mind in which performers and/or audiences simultaneously inhabit two different worlds: in this case, being aware of both the virtual and actual sides of a musical event".

²¹⁰ T. Terranova *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age* (London: Pluto Press, 2004).

²¹¹ Cited in A. Saldanha , 19

²¹² P. Bourdieu *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984) , 367 "whereas the old morality of duty, based on the opposition of between pleasure and good, induces a generalized suspicion of the 'charming and attractive', a fear of pleasure and a relation to the body made up of 'reserve', 'modesty' and 'restraint', and associates every satisfaction of the forbidden impulses with pleasure and guilt, the new ethical avante-garde urges a morality of 'pleasure as a duty'".

²¹³ See for instance, P. Vannini and D. Waskul "Symbolic Interaction as Music: The Esthetic Constitution of Meaning, Self and Society" *Symbolic Interaction* 29:1 (2006).

²¹⁴ S. Frith *The Sociology of Rock* (London: Constable and Company, 1978) , 25

²¹⁵ J. Fiske "Popular Culture" in F. Lentricchia and T. McLaughlin *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) , 326 "industrialized mass culture is not popular culture, though it does produce many of the resources out of which popular culture is made, and its market centered approach means that it is often more effective in producing texts that people can use for their own purposes than was Brecht with his explicit progressive intentions".

²¹⁶ M. Mason *The Pirate's Dilemma: How Youth Culture is Reinventing Capitalism* (New York: Free Press, 2008) Mason argues that the just as rock-and-roll was recuperated, the DIY ethos first embraced by punks has now become the dominant system of production and consumption as well. Thus he asserts a balance between competition and altruism, with American Apparel and VICE Magazine as his examples: "punk has survived in many incarnations musically - it became new wave, influenced hip-hop, and conceived grunge and the notion of indie bands. But more importantly, its independent spirit also spurred a do-it-yourself revolution. DIY encourages us to reject authority and hierarchy, advocating that we can and should produce as much as we consume. Since punk, this idea has been quietly changing the very fabric of our economic system, replacing outdated ideas with the twenty-first century upgrades of Punk Capitalism" (12).

²¹⁷ M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno "The Culture Industry", in *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 130

²¹⁸ I am referring to K. Pearson, *How to Read Nietzsche* (London: Granta Books, 2005) , 57 in which he speaks of Nietzsche's philosophy of memory as something that should not be encyclopedic but should instead aspire to a "critical or selective" condition, that is, if it is to assist in the flourishing of the living being, whom would otherwise be incapacitated by the flood of useless information, (much like that which is characteristic of Internet experience): "Nietzsche says that the person in whom this capacity has been damaged can be compared to a dyspeptic who cannot cope because they cannot finish with anything. Instead they engage in endless regurgitation and suffer from undigested experiences". Indeed, without such a capacity, "we would find ourselves unable to create anything new or ever to be receptive to the arrival of the new" (57).

²¹⁹ Quoted in D. Ferris *Walter Benjamin: Theoretical Questions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) , 137

²²⁰ K. Marx, "The Commodity", in *Capital: Volume 1* (London: Penguin, 1990) , 131 While a thing can be a use-value without being an exchange-value, for Marx it cannot be an exchange-value without also being a use-value, for if a thing is useless it necessarily has no value: "in order to become a commodity, the product must be transferred to the other person, for whom it serves as a use-value through the medium of exchange. Finally, nothing can be a value without being an object of utility. If the thing is useless, so is the labor contained in it; the labor does not count as labor, and therefore creates no value". Contrast to Horkheimer & Adorno's remarks on the culture industry: "As the demand for the marketability of art becomes total, a shift in the inner economic composition of cultural commodities is becoming apparent...what might be called use value in the reception of cultural assets is being replaced by exchange value; enjoyment is giving way to being there and being in the know, connoisseurship by enhanced prestige" (128).

²²¹ W. Benjamin "Experience" in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume I 1913-1926* , 3 "But let us attempt to raise the mask. What has this adult experienced? What does he wish to prove to us? This above all: he, too, was once young; he, too, wanted what we wanted; he, too, refused to believe his parents, but life has taught him that they were right. Saying this, he smiles in a superior fashion: this will also happen to us - in advance he devalues the years we will live, making the into a time of sweet youthful pranks, of childish rapture, before the long sobriety of life. Thus the well-meaning, the enlightened. We know other pedagogues whose bitterness will not even concede to us the brief years of youth; serious and grim, they want to push us directly into life's drudgery. Both attitudes devalue and destroy our years". Benjamin's argument essentially, is that this claim of lived experience is one of philistinism, one that always ignores that "there exists something other than experience, that there are values - inexperienceable - which we serve. Why is life without meaning or solace for the philistine? Because he knows experience and nothing else. Because he himself is desolate and without spirit. And because he has no inner relationship to anything other than the common and the always-already out-of-date. We, however, know something different, which experience can neither give to us nor take away: that truth exists, even if all previous thought has been an error...tell him that when he becomes a man he should revere the dreams of his youth' [Benjamin is citing Schiller here]. Nothing is so hateful to the philistine as the 'dreams of his youth'. And most of the time, sentimentality is the protective camouflage of his hatred. For what appeared to him in his dreams was the voice of the spirit, calling him once, as it does everyone. It is of this that youth always reminded him, eternally and ominously. That is why he is antagonistic toward youth. He tells young people of that grim, overwhelming experience and teaches them to laugh at themselves. Especially since 'to experience' without spirit is comfortable, if unredeeming. Again, we know a different experience. It can be hostile to spirit and destructive to many blossoming dreams. Nevertheless, it is the most beautiful, most untouchable, most immediate because it can never be without spirit while we remain young. As Zarathustra says, the individual can experience himself only at the end of his wandering. The philistine has his own 'experience'; it is the eternal one of spiritlessness. The youth will experience spirit,

and the less effortlessly he attains greatness, the more he will encounter spirit everywhere in his wanderings and in every person. When he becomes a man, the youth will be compassionate. The philistine is intolerant" (5).

²²² W. Benjamin "Experience" in M. Bullock and M. Jennings, ed. Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume I 1913-1926, 3

²²³ W. Benjamin "Experience", 3

²²⁴ W. Benjamin "Experience", 3

²²⁵ W. Benjamin "Experience", 3 "

²²⁶ Plato The Republic (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2000), 93

²²⁷ Plato, 73

²²⁸ Plato, 94

²²⁹ D. Hesmondhalgh, "Music, Emotion and Individualization", *Reseaux* 25:1 (2007), 8 "After all, music has come to be linked, perhaps more than any other cultural form, with the emotional dimension of our selves...in a hedonistic society of the kind hypothesized by Honneth, music may actually be attached even more strongly than other socio-cultural forms to a certain duty to have pleasure...in grossly unequal and competitive societies, this capacity to portray oneself in such terms is likely to be very unevenly distributed" (12). "In a society marked by Honneth's 'organized self-realization' and intense status competition over that self-realization, people's discussions of music cannot be read only, or even predominantly, as expressions of personal taste or as resources for self-identity and emotional self-management" (15).

²³⁰ D. Hesmondhalgh, "Music, Emotion and Individualization", 8

²³¹ F. Kaplan, "When Ambassadors Had Rhythm", *New York Times*, June 29, 2008.

²³² F. Kaplan, "When Ambassadors Had Rhythm".

²³³ F. Kaplan, "When Ambassadors Had Rhythm".

²³⁴ Plato, 93

²³⁵ Aristotle "Problems" in J. Barnes, ed. The Complete Works of Aristotle: Volume II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1429

²³⁶ It is true of course, that in the final section of "The Politics", Aristotle partially affirms Plato's arguments, when he concedes that "for the purposes of education, as I have already said, those modes and melodies should be employed which are expressive of character, such as the Dorian, as we said before". However, the concluding fragment of this sentence leaves the aporia introduced in *Problems*, quite open: "though we may include any others which are approved by philosophers who have a musical education", 2129

²³⁷ M. Proust, Time Regained, 264

²³⁸ I. Kant, Critique of Judgment (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2000), 92

²³⁹ I. Kant, 90 "The purposiveness of an object, in so far as this is perceived without any representation of a purpose".

²⁴⁰ I. Kant, 100

²⁴¹ E. Lott Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)

²⁴² D. Bell "Brown vs. Board of Education and the Interest Convergence Dilemma" "I contend that the decision in *Brown* to break with the court's long-held position on these issues cannot be understood without some consideration of the decision's value to whites, not simply those concerned about the immorality of racial inequality, but also those whites in policymaking positions able to see the economic and political advances at home and abroad that would follow abandonment of segregation. First, the decision helped to provide immediate credibility to America's struggle with Communist countries to win the hearts and minds of emerging third-world peoples. At least this argument was advanced by lawyers for both the NAACP and the federal government... Second, Brown offered much needed reassurance to American blacks that the precepts of equality and freedom so heralded during World War II might yet be given meaning at home. Returning black veterans faced not only continuing discrimination but also violent attacks in the South which rivaled those that took place at the conclusion of World War I. Their disillusionment and anger were poignantly expressed by the black actor, Paul Robeson, who in 1949 declared, 'It is unthinkable ... that American Negroes would go to war on behalf of those who have oppressed us for generations against a country [the Soviet Union] which in one generation has raised our people to the full human dignity of mankind'. It is not impossible to imagine that fear of the spread of such sentiment influenced subsequent racial decisions made by the courts. Finally, there were whites who realized that the South could make the transition from a rural plantation society to the sunbelt with all its potential and profit only when it ended its struggle to remain divided by state-sponsored segregation... Thus, segregation was viewed as a barrier to further industrialization in the South".

²⁴³ K. Ferguson The Politics of Judgment: Aesthetics, Identity and Political Theory (Oxford: Lexington Books, 1999), 142

²⁴⁴ K. Martin, "The Digital Cinematographer". Available: <http://www.cameraguild.com/technology/bamboozled.htm>

²⁴⁵ K. Martin.

²⁴⁶ A. Saldanha, 7

²⁴⁷ K. Martin, Ibid.

²⁴⁸ M. Koresky "Rebirth of a Nation", *Reverse Shot* 20. Available: <http://www.reverseshot.com/article/bamboozled>

²⁴⁹ A parallel to "Springtime for Hitler", a similarly-deployed "show within a show" from Mel Brooks' *The Producers* (1968). For the reference to Du Bois, see the below remark on "double-consciousness".

²⁵⁰ P. Virilio Open Sky, 44

²⁵¹ *Bamboozled*.

²⁵² A. Gronstad and O. Vagnes, "An Interview With WJT Mitchell" *Image & Narrative* 15:1 (2006) Available: http://www.imageandnarrative.be/iconoclasm/gronstad_vagnes.htm

²⁵³ V. Agawu Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions (London: Routledge, 2003), 12 Indeed, critiquing the supposedly unmediated knowledge of the anthropological genre expert derived from "fieldwork", such as that which reifies "rhythm" as a symptomatological characteristic of blackness, he proceeds to affirmatively describe opera as "a genre that is more African than it seems at first".

- ²⁵⁴ F. Schiller The Aesthetic Education of Man (New York: Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965) , 27
- ²⁵⁵ J. Ranciere The Politics of Aesthetics (London: Continuum, 2006) , 29
- ²⁵⁶ A. Saldanha Reontologizing Race: The Machinic Geography of Race", 10
- ²⁵⁷ The first six streams of American popular music according Phillip H. Ennis, were pop, black pop, country pop, jazz, folk and gospel, each of which contributed to the final form that drew upon elements of each of the others (as well as musics never previously accepted as "popular" in the Euro-American sense of the term, such as the blues), while producing a new demographic in the process: "youth". "Each of these musics, from their central cores and from their boundary zones with the others, successively touched and mixed, producing rocknroll. It was a boisterous and infectious music, directed to, and embraced almost exclusively by young people...it was a stance against adult authority [that] was unprecedented, for at no time in the nation's history had such a unifying cultural identity spread so widely and so deeply among the young of every social class, region and race". See The Seventh Stream: The Emergence of RocknRoll in American Popular Music (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1992), 17. For the rejection of Native American musical contributions to the national repertoire as well as its eventual incorporation, see M. Shapiro "Composing America" in Deforming American Political Thought (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 136, in which he notes Antonin Dvorak, Edward MacDowell and Arthur Farwell's conscious engagement with indigenous musical themes, as well as the Native American contribution to gospel music as well as all genres that include a call-and-response component. Also see T. Browner, Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890-1990 (PhD diss, University of Michigan, 1995) and M. Maynor "Making Christianity Sing" in J. Brooks, ed. Confounding the Color Line (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), upon which he draws.
- ²⁵⁸ F. Schiller The Aesthetic Education of Man (New York: Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965) , 27
- ²⁵⁹ A. Rabinbach, ed. The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), viii , "educated German Jews [created] their own kind of tradition, one which took the best from German culture and ignored the rest...Goethe, Schiller and other titans of German philosophy and literature...".
- ²⁶⁰ D. Chakrabarty Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) , 6
- ²⁶¹ G. Deleuze, Cinema 2, 217
- ²⁶² M. Proust Time Regained, 280
- ²⁶³ R. Cook "Democratic Dandyism as the Political Cultivation on Sens", presentation at the *Political Theory and the Sensorium* conference, Trent University: May 9, 2009.
- ²⁶⁴ T. Bennett The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics (London: Routledge, 1995) , 90
- ²⁶⁵ G. Deleuze, Cinema 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) , 93
- ²⁶⁶ D. Lim "Examining Race and a Future Beyond It", New York Times, January 21, 2009
- ²⁶⁷ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari A Thousand Plateaus , 43
- ²⁶⁸ "Black folks are 7% of this city and then you take the 1% that considers itself punk or indie or just not what you see on BET, you ever realize how few of us there are?" *Medicine for Melancholy*.
- ²⁶⁹ E. Glissant "Creolization in the Making of the Americas" in V. Hyatt & R. Nettleford, eds. Race, Discourse and the Origins of the Americas (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995) , 274
- ²⁷⁰ C. Fuchs "Interview With Spike Lee, Writer/Director/Co-producer of *Bamboozled*" *Pop Matters* Available: <http://www.popmatters.com/film/interviews/lee-spike.shtml>
- ²⁷¹ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 349
- ²⁷² M. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", in D. Bouchard, ed. Language, Counter-Memory and Practice, 160
- ²⁷³ H. Arendt On Revolution (London: Penguin Classics, 1990), 223 "nothing, after all, compromises the understanding of political issues and their meaningful debate today more seriously than the automatic thought-reactions conditioned by the beaten path of ideologies which all were born in the wake and aftermath of revolution". I am indebted to Iftekhar Kabir of Trent University for this reference.
- ²⁷⁴ T. Harris , 151
- ²⁷⁵ T. Harris , x
- ²⁷⁶ T. Harris , 152
- ²⁷⁷ T. Harris , 158
- ²⁷⁸ R. Ellison, Invisible Man (New York: Random House, 1952) , 8
- ²⁷⁹ R. Ellison, 581
- ²⁸⁰ N. Polsky, in N. Mailer, 26
- ²⁸¹ R. Ellison, Going to the Territory (New York: Vintage International, 1995) ,116
- ²⁸² Cited in D. Remnick "Visible Man", *The New Yorker*, March 14 (1994).
- ²⁸³ S. Shaviro, "Beauty Lies in the Eye", in B. Massumi, ed. A Shock to Thought: Expression After Deleuze and Guattari (London: Routledge, 2002) , 12
- ²⁸⁴ Scene from *American History X*.
- ²⁸⁵ C. Falk, B. Pateman and J. Moran, eds. Emma Goldman: A Documentary History of the American Years, Volume One (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) , 158
- ²⁸⁶ See the second section of this chapter for more on that.
- ²⁸⁷ M. Douglas, Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Purity and Taboo (London: Routledge, 2002) , xvii
- ²⁸⁸ S. Guenon: "An Interview With Jacques Ranciere: Cinematographic Image, Democracy and the Splendor of the Insignificant" *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies* 4:2 (2000) , 253
- ²⁸⁹ I. Kant, Critique of Judgment , 47
- ²⁹⁰ R. Herz "Understanding Odor Preferences" in J. Drobnick, ed. The Smell Culture Reader (London: Berg, 2006) ,195
- ²⁹¹ Quoted in R. Calkin Perfumery: Practices and Principles (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 1994) , 7 She points for example, to the fact that young children who are exposed to the smell of sweat and feces do not immediately exhibit a disgust response but often report enjoying the very notes officially proscribed by adult society.

- ²⁹² S. Shaviro The Cinematic Body (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
- ²⁹³ W. Benjamin "The Image of Proust" in Illuminations , 214
- ²⁹⁴ J. Addison The Spectator (Boston: JM Dent & Co, 1898) , 50
- ²⁹⁵ E. Burke A Philosophical Enquiry Into Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1844) , 153
- ²⁹⁶ J. Addison The Spectator ,
- ²⁹⁷ E. Burke A Philosophical Enquiry Into Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful , 108
- ²⁹⁸ I. Kant Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) , 50
- ²⁹⁹ I. Kant Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View , 50
- ³⁰⁰ K. Shapiro Sovereign Nations, Carnal States (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003) , 153
- ³⁰¹ R. el-Khoury, "Polish and Deodorize: Paving the City in Late Eighteenth-Century France", in J. Drobnick, The Smell Culture Reader, 18
- ³⁰² I am referencing G. Agamben, "What is a Paradigm" Available: <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/agamben/agamben-what-is-a-paradigm-2002.html> in which he juxtaposes "exclusive inclusion" as the example and "inclusive exclusion" as the exception. The latter is the outside of the law which is its necessary foundation, for instance, when a President invokes executive authority that is not normally available to him, but is in a constitutionally-mandated state of emergency. The former is the member of a category that throws the category itself into question, because even while it is exemplary it is nevertheless transgressive.
- ³⁰³ J. Adams "The Speeds of Ambiguity: An Interview With Paul Virilio", 177
- ³⁰⁴ M. Proust, In Search of Lost Time Vol. V: The Captive (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 2006) , 676
- ³⁰⁵ W. Benjamin Illuminations, 298
- ³⁰⁶ S. Guenon , 253
- ³⁰⁷ I. Kant Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View , 50
- ³⁰⁸ I. Kant Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View , 50
- ³⁰⁹ G. Bataille, Inner Experience (Rochester: SUNY Press, 1988).
- ³¹⁰ This is the terminology used in the Mary J. Gregor translation of I. Kant Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View (New York: Springer, 1974), 36
- ³¹¹ F. Nietzsche The Case of Wagner (New York: H. Henry, 1896) , 67
- ³¹² F. Nietzsche "Ecce Homo" in (New York: Random House, 2000) , 514
- ³¹³ W. Benjamin, Illuminations, 40
- ³¹⁴ R. Axel, "The Molecular Logic of Smell", *Scientific American* December 2006 , 72
- ³¹⁵ H. Lefebvre The Production of Space (London: Blackwell, 1991) , 197
- ³¹⁶ "Olfactory Adaptation Occurs in Several Stages", in L. Squire, S. McConnell and M. Zigmond. Fundamental Neuroscience (London: Academic Press, 2003) , 610 "Increases in intercellular calcium following odor stimulation have been documented using calcium-sensitive dyes...[adaptation] involves continued desensitization of the response by calcium...followed by long term adaptation".
- ³¹⁷ J. Von Uexküll, Instinctive Behavior: The Development of a Modern Concept (New York: International Universities Press, Inc. 1934).
- ³¹⁸ B. Gascoigne, "Pier Paolo Pasolini" Available: <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/pasolini.htm>
- ³¹⁹ C. Classen Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell (London: Routledge, 1994) , 83 "The French Revolution, with its revolt against aristocratic excess, furthered this trend toward sobriety. While the imagined corruption of the poor was associated with filth and stench, that of the aristocracy had its olfactory sign in heavy perfumes. The rising middle classes, in contrast, would find their niche in the safe middle ground of olfactory neutrality".
- ³²⁰ H. Lefebvre, 197
- ³²¹ H. Lefebvre , 198
- ³²² H. Lefebvre, 98
- ³²³ H. Lefebvre, 286
- ³²⁴ H. Lefebvre, 198
- ³²⁵ R. el-Khoury in J. Drobnick, ed., The Smell Culture Reader, 18
- ³²⁶ Such as P. Süskind Perfume (London: Penguin, 2008).
- ³²⁷ W. Benjamin "Experience and Poverty", in Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings 1927-1934: Vol. 2, 734
- ³²⁸ C. Classen Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell, 83 "The French Revolution, with its revolt against aristocratic excess, furthered this trend toward sobriety. While the imagined corruption of the poor was associated with filth and stench, that of the aristocracy had its olfactory sign in heavy perfumes. The rising middle classes, in contrast, would find their niche in the safe middle ground of olfactory neutrality".
- ³²⁹ H. Lefebvre , 139
- ³³⁰ For instance, John Rich's country song "Shutting Detroit Down", which debuted at #34 on the country charts and featured a video with Kris Kirstofferson and Mickey Rourke playing disaffected autoworkers who get in a scuffle with police who are evicting their home after an unexpected layoff at the plant. Additionally, the HBO series "Hung" is concerned with a former public school basketball coach who is forced to survive by recourse to his possession of an unusually large penis, taking a female poet on as his pimp, such that the typical gender roles are reversed.
- ³³¹ D. Haraway "Avatar".
- ³³² Interestingly, the actual barber who owned the shop said he was shocked by the kind of language they used, noting he would never talk like that with any of his customers.
- ³³³ This is the general theme of M. Waters Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
- ³³⁴ S. Huntington Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005) ,

³³⁵ C. Classen “The Breath of God: Sacred Histories of Scent”, in J. Drobnick, ed. The Smell Culture Reader, 375

³³⁶ Much as in Season 2, Episode 4 of *Kitchen Nightmares*, in which Ramsay presents a Mexican restaurant called “Fiesta Sunrise” with a new sign after “cleaning up” their kitchen, only for it to then be placed entirely off-center: of course, as with Kowalski and his cigarettes, Ramsay’s own oversight is not perceived as a mistake.

³³⁷ M. Waters, 7

³³⁸ M. Waters, 151

³³⁹ M. Waters, 156

³⁴⁰ M. Waters, 156

³⁴¹ Quoted in M. Waters, 157

³⁴² Hence the fraught exchange between two Irish-Americans and two Asian-Americans cited in a Dear Abby column from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, in which the former claimed not to understand why the question “what are you?” could be offensive for them, when for a Euro-American it would not be. The latter responded by asserting the inequality between their experiences, asserting that while it would be an innocent question were it asked between Caucasians for whom ethnicity was symbolic, costless and voluntary, “when it is asked of an Asian it takes on a different tone”. See M. Waters, 159

³⁴³ Quoted in M. Waters, 160

³⁴⁴ H. Lefebvre, 1980

³⁴⁵ S. Huntington The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 241

³⁴⁶ S. Huntington Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity, 301

³⁴⁷ V. Sheth Toward a Political Philosophy of Race (Albany: State University of New York, 2009), 171

³⁴⁸ J. Gottlieb, “Taco Trucks Are Feeling the Crunch Across the U.S.”, *The New York Times*, May 20, 2009.

³⁴⁹ J. Gottlieb, *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ J. Gottlieb, *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ J. Gottlieb, *Ibid.*

³⁵² J. Gottlieb, *Ibid.*

³⁵³ G. Martinez, “Mexican-Americans and Whiteness”, in R. Delgado and J. Stefancic, eds. Critical White Studies (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 210 Here, Martinez notes for instance, that an Indiana court found that “Mexicans” should not necessarily be considered white persons, since according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, only 1/5th of the population is non-Mestizo, black, Japanese or Chinese, whereas a Texas court decided that they were “for purposes of immigration”, since the United States had entered into treaties with Mexico that guaranteed their rights to become citizens. Similarly, he notes that given that Mexicans are largely of Mestizo ancestry, it is relevant to note that people of mixed race have variably been narrated as white and non-white, depending on the presuppositions of the judge deciding on a particular case. Similarly, while a Texas school district decided that Mexican-Americans could not be segregated from “other white races”, those who failed to assimilate in terms of mobility and language, could be. The overriding point that Martinez makes is that the variation in the legal construction of Mexicans as white has not generally served to privilege them, but rather to protect anti-Latino whites from being labeled racist when they were systematically ghettoized, discriminated against while pursuing employment or education, targeted by law enforcement and the judiciary or excluded from public services altogether. Specifically, Martinez holds the fact of “racial mixture” to be the primary source of the divergence between legal construction and practical engagement, derived from the suspicion that it was either the Indian blood of Mestizos that made them “cruel” on the one hand (one of numerous such prejudices), or the heritage of the Spanish inquisition so on the other. “Through this discourse on Mexican-Americans, Anglo Americans also reformulated their white selves. Anglo judges, as we have seen, did the same, ruling that Mexicans were co-whites when this suited the dominant group – and non-white when necessary to protect Anglo privilege and supremacy” (211).

³⁵⁴ These include a set of stairs frequently used by the community to two women talking together to a barbecue, Spanish-language signs on cornershops and other such things.

³⁵⁵ This can be found on the EPHS website.

³⁵⁶ The essay is included in F. Nietzsche Untimely Meditations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 59

³⁵⁷ M. Davis, Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City (London: Verso, 2000), 54.

³⁵⁸ H. Arendt The Origins of Totalitarianism (San Diego: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1994), 299

³⁵⁹ H. Arendt The Origins of Totalitarianism, 297

³⁶⁰ E. Burke Reflections on the Revolution in France (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), xvii Technically, these are the words of the editor E. Payne, who also introduced the book: but this is undoubtedly the source of Arendt’s rhetoric, since the wording matches exactly.

³⁶¹ H. Arendt “We Refugees”, in The Jew as Pariah (New York: Grove Press, 1978), 65

³⁶² G. Gomez-Peña “The Free Trade Art Agreement/El Tratado de Libre Cultura,” in The New World Border (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1996), 6.

³⁶³ G. Deleuze Nietzsche and Philosophy (Continuum: London, 2006), 175

³⁶⁴ K. Shapiro makes this argument in K. Shapiro, Review, F. Ravaissan, “Of Habit”, *Theory & Event* 12:4 (2009)

³⁶⁵ Nicolas Bourriaud, Post-Production (Lukas & Sternberg: New York, 2007)

³⁶⁶ F. Ravaissan, Of Habit, 77

³⁶⁷ G. Deleuze Proust and Signs, 152

³⁶⁸ B. Baugh “Transcendental Empiricism + Politics” in A. Parr, ed. The Deleuze Dictionary, 284

³⁶⁹ I owe this phrase to a Facebook status update from Chad Shomura.

³⁷⁰ S. Huntington Who Are We: The Challenges to America’s National Identity, 239.

³⁷¹ G. Deleuze, Proust and Signs, 154

³⁷² I take the term from James Holston, Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2007).

³⁷³ G. Deleuze, Proust and Signs, 155