



PALGRAVE STUDIES IN
EDUCATIONAL FUTURES

Pedagogical Explorations in a Posthuman Age

Essays on Designer Capitalism,
Eco-Aestheticism, and Visual and
Popular Culture as West-East Meet

jan jagodzinski

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Palgrave Studies in Educational Futures

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The series Educational Futures would be a call on all aspects of education, not only specific subject specialist, but policy makers, religious education leaders, curriculum theorists, and those involved in shaping the educational imagination through its foundations and both psychoanalytical and psychological investments with youth to address this extraordinary precarity and anxiety that is continually rising as things do not get better but worsen. A global de-territorialization is taking place, and new voices and visions need to be seen and heard. The series would address the following questions and concerns. The three key signifiers of the book series title address this state of risk and emergency:

1. **The Anthropocene:** The ‘human world,’ the world-for-us is drifting toward a global situation where human extinction is not out of the question due to economic industrialization and overdevelopment, as well as the exponential growth of global population. How to we address this ecologically and educationally to still make a difference?
2. **Ecology:** What might be ways of re-thinking our relationships with the non-human forms of existence and in-human forms of artificial intelligence that have emerged? Are there possibilities to rework the ecological imagination educationally from its over-romanticized view of Nature, as many have argued: Nature and culture are no longer tenable separate signifiers. Can teachers and professors address the ideas that surround differentiated subjectivity where agency is no long attributed to the ‘human’ alone?
3. **Aesthetic Imaginaries:** What are the creative responses that can fabricate aesthetic imaginaries that are viable in specific contexts where the emergent ideas, which are able to gather heterogeneous elements together to present projects that address the two former descriptors: the Anthropocene and the every changing modulating ecologies. Can educators drawn on these aesthetic imaginaries to offer exploratory hope for what is a changing globe that is in constant crisis?

The series Educational Futures: Anthropocene, Ecology, and Aesthetic Imaginaries attempts to secure manuscripts that are aware of the precarity that reverberates throughout all life, and attempts to explore and experiment to develop an educational imagination which, at the very least, makes conscious what is a dire situation.

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This book is dedicated to Jeong-Ae Park

*Without her support,
this book would not have been possible.*

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박 교수님의 지원이 없었다면,
이 책은 세상에 나오지 못했을 것입니다.

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CONTENTS

1	Introduction: The Paradoxes and Worries in Contemporary Times	1
Part I When West-East Meet		
2	Inflexions of Deleuze Guattari: For a New Ontology of Media, When West-East Meet	27
3	Korean Visual and Popular Culture: An Outsider's View	63
4	Exploring Korean Visual and Popular Culture	93
5	Kim Ki-duk's Cinema of Imperceptibility: The Flaying of the Senses	119
Part II Aesthetics of Designer Capitalism		
6	Aesthetic Wars: Between the Creative Industries and Nomadology	165
7	Art Education: In the Service of Designer Capitalism	183

8	Reconsidering Visual Cultural Studies Interrogating Representation	203
9	Challenges for Art Education: The Digitalized World of New Media	227
Part III The End of the World: Posthuman Consequences		
10	Art Education at the ‘End of the World’	251
11	Thinking ‘The End of Times’: The Significance of Bioart BioArt for Art Education	271
12	Between the Nonhuman and Inhuman: The Challenge of the Posthuman for Art Education in the Twenty-First Century	293
	Index	311

LIST OF FIGURES

Screen image 2.1	<i>Lone Ranger</i> (2013)	40
Screen image 2.2	<i>Lone Ranger</i> , TV series 1950s	41
Screen image 2.3	Matthew Ritchie, PBS Art:21, ‘Structures’	43
Screen image 2.4	Matthew Ritchie, screens PBS Art:21, ‘Structures’	43
Screen image 2.5	Duchamp T-Shirts, screen image	48
Screen image 5.1	<i>Address Unknown</i>	127
Screen image 5.2	<i>Address Unknown</i>	127
Screen image 5.3	<i>Address Unknown</i>	128
Screen image 5.4	<i>The Isle</i>	129
Screen image 5.5	<i>Bad Guy</i>	129
Screen image 5.6	<i>Dream</i>	130
Screen image 5.7	<i>Dream</i>	131
Screen image 5.8	<i>Dream</i>	133
Screen image 5.9	<i>Dream</i>	133
Screen image 5.10	<i>Crocodile</i>	134
Screen image 5.11	<i>Wild Animals</i>	135
Screen image 5.12	<i>Crocodile</i>	136
Screen image 5.13	<i>Birdcage Inn</i>	137
Screen image 5.14	<i>The Isle</i>	138
Screen image 5.15	<i>The Coast Guard</i>	138
Screen image 5.16	<i>The Coast Guard</i>	139
Screen image 5.17	<i>The Bow</i>	140
Screen image 5.18	<i>Breath</i>	143
Screen image 5.19	<i>Bin-jip (3-Iron)</i>	146
Screen image 5.20	<i>Crocodile</i>	148
Screen image 5.21	<i>Address Unknown</i>	153

Screen image 5.22	<i>Time</i>	155
Screen image 10.1	Bin-jip: <i>Becoming insect</i>	254
Screen image 10.2	Bin-jip: <i>Tae-Suk becoming space\floor</i>	254
Screen image 10.3	Bin-jip: <i>Tae-Suk becoming space\floor</i>	255
Screen image 10.4	Bin-jip: <i>Tae-Suk becoming space\floor</i>	255
Screen image 10.5	Bin-jip: <i>Shadow</i>	255
Screen image 10.6	Bin-jip: <i>Floor shadow</i>	256
Screen image 10.7	Bin-jip: <i>Eye-hand</i>	256
Screen image 10.8	Bin-jip: <i>Empty wall</i>	257
Screen image 10.9	<i>Save the Green Planet!:</i> Out-take, Lee Byeong-gu as boy with parents	264
Screen image 10.10	<i>Dead Albatross, still from Midway</i>	265



CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Paradoxes and Worries in Contemporary Times

What of this fourth information revolution: the other three being Copernicus, Darwin, and Freud that have decentered ‘Man’?

We are living through extraordinary times, a phrase that has been said often enough historically. Yet, it is difficult to not think otherwise. Some, like Yann Moulier Boutang (2011), have placed their own twist on this state of affairs following the lead of Foucault. He has called it ‘third capitalism’ or ‘cognitive capitalism’ that goes beyond mercantile, industrial, and financial capitalism. Boutang (50–56) provides fifteen separate descriptors, which succinctly map out this phase of capitalism. Such a society has come to be known as a ‘the knowledge society.’ Boutang follows Foucault when he says that such “capitalism produces knowledge and the living through the production of the population. This production of life can be called ‘bio-production.’ And the power that has, as its function, the control of this ‘bio-production’ is called ‘biopower’” (56). The full force of such ‘biopower’ is felt globally as the COVID-19 pandemic spreads hysterically around the globe as governments declare a ‘national emergency’ and close their borders to stop an invisible invader that has no boundaries; it’s a nonhuman agency capable of ‘stilling’ a capitalist economic system as the stock markets go into a freefall. Conspiracy theories abound as China is accused of bioengineering a synthetic virus in order to destroy global economies; its release in Wuhan was simply an accident! The irony of this global

event should not go unnoticed. What climate advocates desire, and those of us who argue against the inequalities of a capitalist system are being realized, at least during this special moment of the *event*: air and cruise ship travel is down, meaning less pollution filling our skies and oceans; dolphins have been spotted in Venice canals now that boat traffic has stopped; emission of toxic nitrogen dioxide drastically cut in Beijing has saved lives; the economy has tanked forcing governments to think in more ‘socialist’ terms, even in the United States where, with reluctance, those who must stay home and isolate because of the virus, or who have had their small businesses suspended as the service sector is placed on hold are to receive (reluctantly) monetary benefits of some kind, which will never be enough. Concerns for the aging and at-risk populations (homeless, disabilities, the unemployed, and the uninsured) have entered the public discourse via government spokespeople, if only by recognition. The Anthropocene era has its first ‘confirmed’ *global* case, so to speak. As numerous ecologists and environmentalists have shown, zoonotic diseases have increased due to the constant destruction of ecological niches and biodiversity (Vidal 2020). We now live in an era of chronic emergency and global bioinsecurity, an unprecedented turn from ‘business as usual,’ and an ontological turn that is only beginning to be recognized. The oeuvre of Bernhard Stiegler (2010, 2014, 2015, 2018) is crucial here as he maps out the capture of ‘tertiary memory’ via contemporary digital grammatization. COVID’s nonhuman agency, a ‘classical’ case of biopolitics infused with biopower (following Foucault), requires an account of “noopolitics of psychopower,” supplanting Foucault’s ‘care of the self’ (Heideggerian *Sorge*) with *soin* (the care of something or somebody) (Stiegler 2016, Webpage).

Unquestionably, the technological marvels of digitalization, the so-called third industrial revolution that is constantly ‘progressing’ in computer speed, the constant upgrading of smart technologies, and commodity capitalism since the 2008 economic crash in the United States (so many thought that this was the knell toll of capitalism!) were steadily recovering globally, but with COVID-19 the knell tolls once again, it seems. Trump gloated as his corporate tax cuts increased profits through right-wing conservative ‘trickle-down economics.’ The problem is that very little ‘trickles down.’ The top 1% simply become richer as they buy back their own stock with new profits. Financial capital reigns along with a state capitalism. Yet, a global recession is now at hand,

and markets are sent into a fever pitch; presidential hopefuls like Bernie Sanders present this uncomfortable truth to many Americans.

It seems technocratic governments are pervasive globally. With the ascendancy of Trump, with the help of Russian electoral interferences and Cambridge Analytica, there is no pretense left that this was not the case, and state and business have become One. Trump has begun to privatize government under his oligarchy; he has attorney general William Barr, an evangelical, in his pocket, along with Ivanka, Jarrod, and his sons in tow. Trump has infused US politics with a sycophant GOP under his brand of bullying, temper tantrums, and above all a new means of communication for political advantage: the Twitter platform that targets his minions of followers and believers in the ‘cult of Trump.’ It’s a machinic assemblage capturing affect to divide and polarize their country: you are either a Trumper wearing your red hat and shouting ‘Make America Great Again’ at his rallies, or a non-Trumper or even a never-Trumper is in danger of being scorned by the president of the United States, maligned and then fired. Quite extraordinary.

Too many have pointed out the fascism of Trump and his White House with West Wing figures such as Steven Miller, a known xenophobe and white nationalist, advising him regarding immigration policy. But his train keeps rolling along. The experiment known as ‘democracy’ is slowly fading as the judicial branches in countries like the United States, Poland, and Hungary are usurped of power. Trump and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell continue to stack as many conservative judges as they can muster. The US Supreme Court as an impartial body for the people has lost its credibility with the appointments of Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh. This was always a tenuous question ever since the Supreme Court, with the help of conservative judges, spearheaded by Antonin Scalia, and then joined by William Rehnquist and Clarence Thomas, sided with Bush against Al Gore in the 2000 US presidential election concerning the ‘hanging chads’ of punch cards in the Florida election, which eventually resulted in the country’s turn to conservatism, a turn away from climate reform and warmongering on Iraq that assured Bush Jr. a second term. Chief Justice John Roberts has favored the Trump administration, exempting Trump for his indiscretions to interfere with court trails (especially regarding the trial of Roger Stone), yet castigating Chuck Schumer, democrat senate minority leader, for questioning the political bias of the Supreme Court. Adam Cohen’s

(2020) book, *Supreme Injustice*, charts the history of the ups and downs of the Court's record.

According to Alain Badiou (2019), a mere “264 people have the same amount of money as a total of 7 billion other people” (15). Capitalist ethics and corporate responsibility, as Jean-Pierre Dupuy (2014) has long argued, come too late and too little as politics has been overshadowed by business management. Luciano Floridi, Director of the Digital Ethics Lab at the University of Oxford, provides a wide-ranging discussion on information ethics, concluding that AI is a force for the good when used responsibly via a ‘soft ethics.’ Floridi (2002) has been on the forefront on what has been called the philosophy of information (PI) (Floridi 2002). The turn is toward computational methods to shine new light on philosophical problems. Any philosophical question, he states, can be repositioned as being informational or computational. Information in this case is organized into three domains: first, information *as* reality; that is, information is *ontological* and corresponds to the philosophy of communication. Second, information is also *about* reality. This descriptive link addresses semantic information with actual objects and concepts. It covers the philosophy of the linguistic sciences. Third, there is information *for* reality. This last domain is pragmatic, which is operational in character where philosophy of computing science comes into play. Floridi's (2011) neologism for this PI paradigm is “demiurgology.” This is a comprehensive and ambitious philosophy that is to harness the powers of AI for human well-being. Floridi draws from the Greek word *demiourgos*, which literally refers to a ‘public worker,’ an artisan who practiced his (sic) craft or trade for public use. A *demiurge* is an artisan who extends ontic powers of control, creation, design, and so on over oneself through a variety of dimensions. Floridi has ethics, genetics, neurology, narratology, and physiology in mind. But, this is not all. This ontic power must be extended to society as a whole: culturally, politically, economically, and religiously. If that is not enough, Floridi also includes the domains of natural and artificial environments that require physical and informational care of humanity's use. Hence, the combination of these three forms of information is to provide for a comprehensive ethics informed by computing sciences. It is the ultimate anthropocentric dream of stewardship of the planet.

If only it was that easy! As if there will be no bad actors like Cambridge Analytica in the future! Despite Floridi's plea and vision for AI's use for a social good, ethics are breached daily by platform capitalism.

Machine intelligence is the new ‘means of production’ for capitalism. The trajected irony here appears complete: keep replacing workers with automated AI technologies until there is no more need for them. If there are no workers, then there is no longer the need for profit to be made. The success of this technological revolution leads to the very elimination of profit and accumulation. The capitalist machine will then ‘stop’ its relentless cycle of territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization. Such a trajectory is but one claim by accelerationist theorists like Nick Land. Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek (2014) state in their May 14, 2013, Manifesto in section 21: “We declare that only a *Promethean politics* of maximal mastery over society and its environment is capable of either dealing with global problems or achieving victory over capital.” Their idea is to revamp technology and develop an accelerationist politics for a post-capitalist society built on self-mastery and self-criticism that completes the Enlightenment project, a more rational society. Perhaps the nihilistic realism of Ray Brassier (2007) is the best example of such a philosophy. Such a scenario seems to be a farce and should generate skepticism. For instance, the fascist tendencies of twentieth-century Futurism with its celebration of technology are well known, as if technological control was possible (Noys 2014). Given the COVID-19 pandemic, where there are shortages of intensive care units (ICUs) and respirators in rich countries like the United States, the idea of generating a ‘rational’ society that will come together for the common good seems far-fetched as the panic buying of food and (of all things!) toilet paper, beach gatherings (rather than practicing isolation and distancing), and major airline carriers gouging passengers for seat prices to fly home seem to be impossible behaviors to outright stop. Significant global unity is an unrealizable goal. Sadly, nationalism increases only when an outside invader threatens borders. Perpetual war presents this paradox in countries like Israel where the right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu (Likud-National Liberal Movement) has managed to enrich the country’s economy at the expense of its democratic ideals. But what if the invader is molecular, invisible, not burdened by identity politics, and knows no borders?

The capitalist perpetual machine is like the ‘glorious’ train in *Snowpiercer*; it seems to go on without end, yet it needs the children of the lumpenproletariat to run it; or as Karl Marx put it in *The Grundrisse* (The Divisions of Machines): [it is] “an automatic system of machinery ... set in motion by an automaton, a moving power that moves itself”

(1993, 692). The scene is not changed in contemporary times: the brightest young minds end up as programming engineers for platforms such as Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, Hyundai, and Sony. Creon is ‘Eating his Children’ yet again, as I have argued in another context (jagodzinski 2008). Even the best hackers of the Free and Open Source Movement (Richard Stallman) or the Maker Movement are persuaded by wealth and the good life, and are drawn into the corporate world once their wares have been recognized and their ‘startups’ lucratively bought up. A television series like *Mr. Robot* is an exception in this case, giving the hacker a paranoid profile, flawed by schizophrenia; or in Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) terms, a schizophrenic who has insight into the capitalist system itself (jagodzinski 2016). Gregory Ulmer (2005, 2012) developed a neologism for such changes: electracy, and Jan Holmevik (2012) brilliantly shows how a “hacker noir” is possible. Of course, there are many dystopian sci-fi movies where the revolutionary underground must work with an undetected networked communication system that flies under the radar of state surveillance, as in *Blade Runner 2049*. Such is the projection of globalized and monopolized capitalism with the Tyrells of the World sitting on top of their pyramidal and ziggurat-like buildings of the future as in what has become a ‘Blade Runner World.’ Or, better still, living in floating cities in the clouds above the earth as in the Netflix sci-fi series *Altered Carbon*. But what of the Replicants? and the Terminators? Is there a clamor that goes unheard? Of course, all of this can be viewed as a farce. Workers will not be eliminated just yet, merely constantly enhanced and supplanted with economically viable AI; the auto industry via the ‘Toyotism’ of Taiich Ohno already provides the paradigmatic model. But more to the point, as discussed below, we all have already been harnessed into a ‘Matrix World’ to keep the supercomputer operating, supplying it with the battery power it needs to keep running.

South Korea, Asia’s fourth largest economy and twelfth largest in the world, a country that I draw on throughout this book, is dominated by family-owned conglomerates—the chaebols, who shape the country’s economy and have their hand steering the country’s political elections, as well as its industries. Both Hyundai and Samsung CEOs have been involved in scandals to bring down President Park Geun-hye. This is but one incident of many around the world. The nation-state is constantly weakening, unable to provide the social services to its electorate. Designer capitalism, as I have called it elsewhere (jagodzinski 2010),

has the uncanny ability to target and cater to select populations' desires, needs, and wants, using Big Data, the 'new' oil, that is able to mobilize algorithms with greater and greater specificity. The oxymoronic term, spoken in complete irony as 'mass customization,' sees to it that 'prosumer society' sustains itself by cybernetic feedback loops that prevent the horizon line for the next cycle of goods to be sold from ever closing. It is a perpetual machine: everything now becomes 'smart' or 'personalized' with 'digital assistants' to help manage the increasing complexity of social life. Amazon's delivery system of goods and Wal-Mart's innovations in supply chain logistics pretty much assure that the commodification of goods will be sustained via on-time deliveries. As Jeremy Rifkin wrote in 2014, this is an Age of Access, but access limited to a privileged population globally, and even within this privileged group, the access divide to technology is obvious as to who is 'wired.' We are our own oppressors, as Maurizio Lazzarato (2015) reminds us, as debt and credit climbs.

Platform capitalism, as Nick Srnicek (2017) aptly maps out, comes in many forms: advertising platforms (Google, Facebook), cloud platforms (to rent out hardware and software), industrial platforms (converting traditional manufacturing into Internet connections), product platforms (transforming traditional goods into services—like Spotify), and lean platforms (these are businesses that require minimal ownership such as Airbnb and Uber). Together, they are able to cater to a broad cross-section of users: "customers, advertisers, service providers, producers, suppliers, and even physical objects" ... (43). As intermediary digital infrastructures, they further empower this range of users "with a series of tools that enable to build their own products, services, and market-places" (ibid.). To increase network activity and generate more data, free products and services are offered. Through cross-subsidization, platforms expand their reach, and in this way, a 24/7 platform is able to constantly garner users and dredge up data, a perpetual machine that never sleeps.

What Srnicek did not elaborate in his short book has been brilliantly explored earlier by Benjamin Bratton's (2016) *The Stack*, subtitled "on software and sovereignty." Bratton provides a comprehensive grasp of the contemporary computerized global situation as a megastructure (the titular stack) through six layers: Earth, Cloud, City, Address, Interface, and User. From the Earth, the geological demands for computing are harnessed through materials. The Cloud layer names the

sovereignty of platform capitalism such as Google and Facebook, whereas the City layer is the lived experience of cloud-computerized daily life, as explored, for instance, by Simon Gottschalk's (2018) concept of the 'terminal self.' With the Address layer, Bratton tackles identification as a form of management and control, with the Interface layer coupling users to computers. Finally, User layer refers to human and nonhuman [I prefer *inhuman* as we shall see] agents that also interact with computational machines. The *dispositif* Bratton maps out is the new form of governance and sovereignty that has blanketed the globe with dire political consequences, "a possible new nomos of the earth linking technology, nature and the human" (Bratton, in Terranova 2014b: 390). Bratton presents a form of Accelerationism as well. There is some hope for a 'Red Stack,' as Tiziana Terranova (2014a) presents it, which would require the reappropriation of fixed capital in the age of the networked society, based on the use of technology for a Commons, thereby overturning this capitalist nightmare through a new currency (such as bitcoin), social networks that increase participation and education, and via bio-hypermedia that try to refigure subsumption of the human body made possible by a myriad of wearable smart devices so as to generate a new breed of imaginary apps via Maker Movements and artistic movements like Electronic Disturbance Theatre who develop hacker apps to skirt border controls (Dardot and Laval 2019). The question emerges as to how a nonhuman other, like the current pandemic virus, so easily disrupts and puts to flight this established *dispositif* of capitalism to such an extent that it begins to collapse? A Red Stack would have to rethink the established assemblages by recognizing the nonhuman and inhuman (AI) emergent *interactions* for any future hope for a Commons to be imagined.

BIG OTHER

The implications of Bratton's 'Stack' are alarming. It is remarkable that Shoshana Zuboff's (2019) seven-hundred-page book on 'surveillance capitalism,' which works out the politics of 'The Stack,' yet makes no mention of Bratton's extraordinary achievement! If Bratton's analysis is dense and theoretically difficult, Zuboff's makes what's afoot more accessible. From my point of view, Zuboff analyzes how designer capitalism has now morphed into 'surveillance capitalism' (or cognitive capitalism) via the pervasive influx of algorithmic platforms. Zuboff

offers this as a shift in emphasis given the capitalist digital platform's emphasis on Big Data that changes the capitalist 'game' ever since the dot-com bubble burst took place at the turn of the twenty-first century. "Surveillance capitalism unilaterally claims human experience as free raw material for translation into behavioral data. Although some of these data are applied to product or service improvement, the rest are declared as a proprietary *behavioral surplus*, fed into advanced manufacturing processes known as 'machine intelligence,' and fabricated into *prediction products* that anticipate what you will do now, soon, and later. Finally, these prediction products are traded in a new kind of marketplace for behavioral predictions that I call *behavioral futures markets*" (2019: 14, original emphasis). This dependency on platform mediation is addictive. When Facebook crashed in the Los Angeles County and in other US cities for a few hours in the summer of 2014, many Americans called their local emergency services at 911! (Mosendz 2014).

And what of love when it comes to platform capitalism? I am reminded of Anna Longo's (2019) study of algorithmic dating online to find the perfect partner and the risks involved. I quote her first paragraph in length as it captures so well as to what is at stake in contemporary postmodern order.

Once, the purpose of knowledge was to give form to reality; then its aim became the production of possibilities; now it has become nothing but a risk manager. Once, we were producers; then we became consumers; now we are products. Once, the body's strength was exploited to produce goods; then the energy of desire was exploited to consume goods; now one's creativity is exploited to produce the self as a commodity. Once, we had children; then we desired children; now we have become children. Once, love was a pact of mutual support; then it was a desire; now it is the price at which we sell ourselves. Once, machines were a means to our ends; then they were the ends for which we were the means; now they are oracles that interpret signs and whose prophecies we interpret. Once, we were in a disciplinary society; then we were in a society of control; now we are in a risk society. (Longo, online)

We search Google only to have Google searching us; we naively thought that digital services were free, but it is us who are 'free' to be used by capitalist platforms. Digital surveillance capitalism is a perfect form of 'algorithmic governmentality' with a surprising inflection of pastoralism (Cooper 2020). The focus is on populations

shaped by well-defined signifiers according to the usual sociological litany: age, gender, sex, race, religion, district, state, and so on. This way cities can be surveilled and gerrymandered, even entire societies evaluated by intergovernmental agencies like the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Developments (OECD) and World Bank to assess loan risk, and so on. With COVID-19 amongst us, now it becomes even more worrisome as an invisible enemy is evoked, national emergency declared, and ‘war’ measures are talked about. Trump even bloats himself as becoming the new ‘FDR’ to politicize the pandemic. Recession and depression are on the horizon as the Trump administration continues to use ‘disaster capitalism’ (Klein 2007) to benefit the corporations (especially travel, entertainment, and pharmaceutical sectors) at the expense of the working poor (less than 20% of American workers will receive assurances of paid sick leave), an economic play that has repeated itself often enough despite alternative economic visions as generated by the most left progressive voices (like US presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders), and even the more moderate ones who advocate for ‘progressive capitalist’ policies like Nobel laureate recipient in economics, Joseph Stiglitz (2019).

Zuboff, in effect, presents us with an inverse panopticon model of the discipline society and a better mapping of Foucault’s biopower that Deleuze continued to articulate as a ‘society of control’ with its refinement of the third phase of social cybernetics (Deleuze 1995: 180). Surveillance also applies to the entertainment industry in such an account (Andrejevic 2007). Only a very few are elevated to be read, watched on screens, and heard: actors, singers, writers (mostly popular fiction writers, not academics who form a very small and (perhaps) insignificant voice in the larger picture), politicians, newscasters, and talk show radio hosts. State surveillance and its capitalist platform counterpart divide society into those who are watched and those who are the watchers (sitting behind the scenes). The entertainment factor must not be forgotten as ‘work becomes play.’ Trump’s success cannot be imagined without the performative aspects of his rally speeches (recall Hitler practicing his facial expressions in the mirror, and the passion and vigor of his speeches). Affect (as emotion) has been captured through our screen cultures. Nature seems to have become culture or second nature as some critics have put it, like the fable of the King, or usually his daughter, who lives in a golden cage. She must disguise herself and go out among the peasants to experience ‘true’ nature and

‘real’ life. But, in the contemporary scenario, the virtual and actual have already collapsed into one large infosphere so brilliantly captured by sci-fi films such as *eXistenZ* and *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets*. Google-incubated Pokémon Go, an interactive mobile game, uses a smart phone’s GPS data and location tracking that sets kids chasing and capturing these ‘creatures’ electronically. Jason Wallin (2018) persuasively argues that the experience of ‘real’ animals has taken a back seat to these virtual imaginary ones. Well-documented scientific studies now on ‘emotional contagion’ (Kramer et al. 2014) show how Facebook is the perfect platform to manipulate emotion. Long-lasting moods like depression as well as happiness can be transferred through networks. What is unnerving is that such emotional contagion occurs without direct interaction between people and with the complete absence of nonverbal clues. The amazing BBC television series *Black Mirror* is perhaps as good as it gets to show these near-future technologies that plunge us into dystopian worlds that are being shaped at the unconscious bodily levels through the ecological assemblages shaped by desire as the intra-actions of human, nonhuman, and inhuman agencies. COVID-19, for example, is an intra-action of the virus with the human, discourses on China (especially conspiracy theories of them inventing a synthetic virus to ruin the global economy), role of politics, news channels, fear, and so on. COVID-19 is not ‘just’ a virus but an emergent dispositif of intra-actions that shape the global noosphere. Nature (nonhuman), culture (human), and technology (inhuman) as an assemblage shape an array of differences that structure those who are most vulnerable to those least, including which animals are to be consumed according to ‘westernized’ standards. So, ‘wet markets’ that serve the poor for much of Africa and Asia that include pangolins, live wolf pups, scorpions, civets, salamanders, crocodiles, and so on, are now prohibited or perceived as the next source of a pandemic.

One of the contributions Zuboff makes in her book, which parallels such theorists as Bernhard Stiegler’s (2010) concern over the transmittance of ‘tertiary memory’ or mnemotechnics via media technologies, is the “industrialization of memory” in terms of the “division of learning in society” (176) that is produced. Knowledge is shaped by Google and company by reducing it to its lowest common denominator: as information, or as ‘facts’ within well-defined narratives that can be ‘communicated.’ These narratives are then deeply politicized. Controlling and steering the ‘narrative’ shape public opinion and affect. Narratology as

a scholarly pursuit has exploded, as each group and culture enlist the repertoire of its storytelling to establish its identity. Who distributes such knowledge, who decides which information is distributed, and who ultimately decides which knowledge is to be made available become the contested questions. Knowledge distribution, authority, and power triangulate to determine what screen-platform technologies are able to shape a consuming public. Such public experience is easily shaped and manipulated as we have seen in countries like the United States and Italy who have networks to spread their ideology as ‘opinion’ rather than news: Trump’s The Fox Network, or Silvio Berlusconi’s Media S.p.A (Gruppo Mediaset); his family still owns more than a third share of Italy’s largest commercial broadcaster. As Bratton (2016) puts it, these ‘social bubbles’ generate new forms of “doctrinal cognitive fundamentalisms” (239). And, Rifkin (2014) notes on the ‘end of the nation states’: “The deregulation and commercialization of the world’s telecommunications and broadcasting systems is stripping nation-states of their ability to oversee and control communications within their borders. Global media companies are establishing a worldwide network of communications that bypasses political boundaries altogether and, in the process, changing the fundamental character of political life on earth” (223). Such is the state of affairs in ‘democratic’ countries where media shapes thought and behavior below the level of consciousness—at the level of affects, feelings, and emotions.

In Deleuze (1992) terms—we are now reduced to ‘dividuals’—or ‘digital subjects’ (Goriunova 2019), where behavior patterns crunched by the algorithms provide insights as to what desires and needs are so as to both stabilize and hedge a futures market, a form of divination as Joshua Ramey (2018) argues. Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) *Body without Organs* (BwO) is now read as so many data points. They become “values, dynamically re-instantiated correlations, rules and models, shreds of actions, identities, interests, and engagements, which are put into relation with each other, disaggregated, categorized, classified, clustered, modelled, projected onto, speculated upon, and made predictions about” (Goriunova 2019: 133). The BwO now becomes the ‘digital subject’ as mediated by AI technologies. “Digital subjects are future orientated. Computationally, they span different spatio-temporal scales; they can differ in length of alphanumeric strings, in complexity, in forms of composition and proposition, in proximity of evaluated parameters, in number of units, in frequency of

occurrence, and in types of future they propose” (133). A digital subject never corresponds to a classically constituted individual: “*it is always more and less than a human*” (133, original italic); that is, inhuman. They are “pulled together in plastic aggregates of subjects, which are sets of associations, propositions, and probabilities” (134). The picture that emerges is like Star Trek’s transporter system: as if an individual (as a bundle of big data) could potentially be totally deconstituted into ‘bits,’ which could then be reconstituted in another place via a computational infrastructure; although impossible now, the principle is the same as this now happens in ‘real’ time via FaceTime, Skype, and many other forms of tele-imaging.

Zuboff (2015) offers yet another frightening scenario to what is already a dark picture, which she calls the Big Other. “Surveillance capitalism thus qualifies as a new logic of accumulation with a new politics and social relations that replaces contracts, the rule of law, and social trust with the sovereignty of Big Other. It imposes a privately administered compliance regime of rewards and punishments that is substituted by a unilateral redistribution of rights. Big Other exists in absence of legitimate authority and is largely free from detection or sanction. Big Other may be described as an automated coup from above: not a *coup d’état* but rather a *coup des gens*” (83). In this scenario, *AI Is now running us*. “Unlike the centralized power of mass society, there is no escape from Big Other. There is no place where the Other is not” (82).

This inhuman Big Other is not the symbolic Big Other of psychoanalysis popularized by Slavoj Žižek (1989). In my terms, it is inhuman rather than nonhuman. As Bratton (2016) warns, Google’s famous mission statement to organize the world’s information has dire consequences. It “changes meaning when the world itself is seen as being information, such that to organize all the information is to organize all the world” (87). Such an apparatus of planetary-scale computing enables a “full-spectrum governmentality” (101). Google is basically building a contemporary Tower of Babel. Besides scanning every possible book that Google could get its hands on (with or without copyright), their project is one of universal translatability. Google Translate attempts to make this a reality—to smoothly translate any language into any other, where all surviving languages form a *lingua franca*. This is now superseded by Babel Fish in their attempt to link all their communication platforms together: Google Talk, Hangout, Google Plus Messenger, and other communication tools. This is again a crass form of knowledge

translation, hardly poetic, but certainly useful on certain pragmatic levels. It shows, however, the gap between algorithmic AI and a human translator who must grasp structures of feeling and thought in another tongue, something AI is far from doing. Google's PageRank sorts the results of search queries, while Facebook EdgeRank automatically decides in which order users get their news feeds; there are a host of other programs whose functions are equally specific: Appinions, Klout, Hummingbird, PKC, Perlin noise, Cinematch, and KDP Select. John Durham Peters (2015) sums Google up in his chapter, 'God and Google': "Google inherits the narrative of the priestly class that discerns the universe, renders order out of chaos, answers our entreaties, and invites us to take part in manic arts of divination. ... Google is a clergy defined by its control over the means of inscription and retrieval – as clergies and priesthoods always have been" (333–334). Basically, Google has become the Big Other of surveillance capitalism, materializing, reifying, and concretizing Žižek's symbolic Lacanian Big Other.

THE NEUROLOGICAL FRONTIER

Mark Andrejevic's (2013) 'Infoglut' provides a review to show how the market forces see the 'brain' as the frontier to be mined so that its advertising engineers can write the music and make us dance accordingly; the 'emotional' brain, which is habitually structured and easily manipulated shows a plasticity for constant change. Giorgio Griziotti (2019) maps this out in 'neurocapitalism,' in a section "what Foucault could not predict" (166–170) has become standard fare now. Through neurosciences, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence and robotics, the dichotomies (separation) between humans and machines, nature and cultures have become a continuum, with 'genetic capitalism' around the corner as "the perfect complement to the qualitative ranking algorithms" (171), closing the circle of "political, social and biological domination over the whole of society" (ibid.). The COVID-19 vaccine, estimated to be 18 months away at the time of this writing, will prove to be a test as to whether the pharmaceutical sector will score unprecedented profit.

Neuroplasticity leads to 'brain-hacking.' It sets the tone for experimentation; millions of dollars are spent on negative political ads in the United States because they are effective. It is no longer a question of 'facts' (if there ever were naked facts), but manipulating the

narrative, reaching the next level of ‘spin’ doctoring. Colin J. Bennett (2015) has pretty much mapped out how such micro-targeting works in the way affect is channeled. So much for the self-determination of the people’s Will in a democracy, a tentative experimental myth that never was, but has now become obviously apparent, and no longer hiding in the shadows. All this is done without direct coercion, entirely self-authorized. It addresses as to how and why Deleuze and Guattari (1987) maintained that the masses are always subject to oppressing themselves, transferring their hopes, fears to dictators, cult figures, and priests to their own detriment. Desire, which itself is revolutionary, can easily lead to fascism—that is, desire turning on itself when its revolutionary trajectory becomes blocked. We see this phenomenon over and over again; yet it seems today especially pernicious in countries like the United States and Britain. The utopian impulse of ‘make America Great Again’ and Brexit is bringing back the mythic glory days of US leadership and UK’s colonial rule and self-sufficiency. These populist movements become a way to mobilize repressed desire by the working classes in both countries. Some, however, claim that such movements are not entirely negative, presenting the promise of a renewed democracy (Eklundh and Knott 2020). Hillary Clinton and Jeremy Corbyn become despised for blocking their utopian ideal—that is, their desire which escapes their social conditions. Fascism signifies the blocking off desire. Coming from ‘below’ it turns into a love for the state by its supporters for the form of power the state creates (Trump is a ‘businessman’ not a Washington politician. He is draining the ‘swamp’ and so on). In this way, 40% of the country that are his ‘base’ supporters ignore his pathology. Boris Johnson’s performative rants and acting out were also dismissed by 40% of the population that voted in the conservatives to ensure Brexit. As Deleuze and Guattari (1983: 367, 380) maintain, fascism reveals both sides of desire: both its revolutionary form and its self-destructive suicidal one as they can no longer be distinguished. The GOP now blindly follow Trump as do the conservatives blindly follow Johnson as each leader makes the necessary purges for those not following party policy and loyalty. Alain Badiou (2019) calls this new development, ‘democratic fascism.’ Both leaders have been severely criticized for their mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both are politicizing the pandemic for their own gains. Trump, for example, attempted to secure a future vaccine development by the German pharmaceutical firm CureVac exclusively for the United States, as reported by *Die Welt*.

Big Data is some sort of Big Other where a flat ontology emerges—where everything is harvested (extracted), including ‘data exhaust,’ seemingly inconsequential data that then is crunched to see if it reveals new unseen useful correlations. The Big Other as “a ubiquitous networked institutional regime that records modifies and commodifies everyday experience from coasters to bodies, communication to thought, all with a view to establishing a view to establishing new pathways to monetization and profit” (Zuboff 2015: 81). It appears that Object-Oriented Ontologies (OOO), like that of Graham Harman (2018), seem perfectly suited to surveillance capitalism (and its cognates: designer capitalism, neurocapitalism, cognitive capitalism) with its parade of never-ending objects as infinite data information along its flat ontology. I am reminded here of Alexander R. Galloway’s (2013) explicit critique as to how such theory supports the spirit of post-Fordist capitalism. While it may have brought on the ire of some, the question remains as to why there is such a close connection, if not a mirroring between object-orientated computer languages such as Java or C++ and philosophies of speculative realism such as Bruno Latour, Quentin Meillassoux, and Alain Badiou’s numerology (existing outside of history), and more to the point, especially Graham Harman focus on non-relationality. Bratton (2016) for one is not so convinced: “Flatness here refers not to ontology or the withdrawal of objects, but their functional communication and their mechanically withdrawn relations” (205). Yet, Harman’s ‘aesthetics of allure,’ which posits the transference of communication at a distance, seems to suggest otherwise, quite different than Bratton’s recognition that “relationality between things ... exceeds the relations they might already possess as natural objects” (ibid.).

This last claim is consistent with theorist of assemblage theory like Deleuze and Guattari. In this sense, there would be a distancing from Ian Bogost’s (2012) ‘alien phenomenology’ with his flat ontology maxim: “all things equally exist, yet they do not exist equally” (11). Zuboff’s Big Other is also a ‘realist notion.’ She maintains an external world exists independently of ourselves and our languages, thoughts, and beliefs. As Zuboff (2015) puts it: “Big Other is the sovereign power of a near future that annihilates the freedom achieved by the rule of the law. It is a new regime of independent and independently controlled facts that supplants the need for contracts governance, and the dynamism of market democracy. Big Other is the 21st century incarnation of the electronic text that aspires to encompass

and reveal the comprehensive immanent facts of market, social, physical, and biological behaviors” (81). AI becomes the new God that divines reality.

Can it get any gloomier? Yes, it can! Paul B. Preciado (2013) outlines what she calls the *pharmaco-pornographic era*, which builds on Foucault’s analysis of biopower as the introduction of new chemical, pharmacological, prosthetic, media, and electronic surveillance techniques for controlling gender and sexual reproduction. In her scenario, we find ourselves in the strange landscape of the opiate barons of the dystopian film series, *Into the Badlands*. I am exaggerating, of course, but we are taken to extraordinary ‘architectures’ of the medical professions where cybernetics meets the neurosciences, meets the genetic sciences, meets the biosciences, and so on. In the twenty-first century, analytic companies such as GNS Healthcare amass data from genomics, medical records, lab data results, mobile health devices to provide information about users to health insurance companies. It then becomes a question of manipulating the costs of health insurance given the different categories of applicants. Data collected about one’s emotional stability, happiness, and the likelihood of having a baby influences the job market in terms of hiring, being retained or promoted. Perhaps one of the most frightening figures of such machinic production is Oracle, the largest consumer data broker acquiring any number of data companies: Datalogix, BlueKai, AddThis, and CrossWise. It lists 100 data providers in its directory, providing some 300,000 different data categories that may be assigned to consumers. The Oracle data cloud provides information to Visa and MasterCard (Christl 2017). It is a social hyperobject that can’t be fathomed and would seem to satisfy Zuboff’s description as an instance of the AI Big Other, raising the anxieties of control, a narrative that is repeated in the *Terminator* film franchise and the television series *Star Trek: Picard*.

THE RETURN OF NATURE? THE ANTHROPOCENE AND NONLIFE

I end this brief review of the state of global capitalism by turning to the question of the Anthropocene, as some of the essays that follow directly draw on this state of ecological worry, COVID-19 pandemic being yet another symptom of the anthropogenic devastation of the Earth by Man. Designer, cognitive, platform, and neurocapitalism draw

on the biosciences of engineering in two set directions. On one side, bioengineering exploits the life of the nonhuman world of organic nature through various sciences that are covered by the signifying term: biomimesis. The designing ‘with’ Nature is said to be the new direction for the continued ‘greening’ of capitalism. In this scenario, we have the emergence of the ‘good’ Anthropocene under the rubric of ‘ecomodernism’ complete with a manifesto signed by eighteen scientists and entrepreneurs (Asafu-Adjaye et al. 2015). This manifesto states that technological imagination will fix the problem of ‘climate change’ as the next phase of the Earth continues, what is often called the ‘god-complex’ of our species (Lynas 2011). The idea is to make this a planet for us and only in our interests by harnessing AI at the expense of all other species. The ‘us’ here is generally confined to a small population who have the wealth and resources mentioned earlier. If that fails to materialize, the terraforming of Mars awaits. This is already being prepared for as a billionaires’ space race: Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Richard Branson, and Yuri Milner.

On the other side of the ledger is the ‘life’ of inorganic matter that is being put to use for the development of AI: lithium and silicon being especially important minerals, but all kinds of rare minerals as well are required for the production of smart technologies. Jussi Parikka (2015) has called this development the ‘Anthroscene’ as technological waste accumulates. He shows how closely media is wedded to nature. Natureculture has now become a common trope to be used when dealing with the new phase the Earth is entering given the added global input of anthropogenic labor by our species. As AI slowly pushes into the realm of wetware and, as developed above, smart technologies are continually used to harness life of the human species for capitalist ends on the grounds that this offers a ‘better’ life, the distinctions between ‘life’ and machine have effectively disappeared. Gilbert Simondon’s basic insights overcoming hylomorphism, and his notions of individuation and creative invention that link technology, culture, and organization, as furthered by the numerous writings of Luciana Parisi (2013, 2017), lead to a machinic understanding already nascently developed by Deleuze and Guattari in the 1970s. What the human ‘becomes’ is shaped by these forces—both organic and inorganic as harnessed in various capitalist assemblages. The category ‘human’ has had a long history of exclusions and what is being prepared for in the future is no exception as transhumanism dovetails with the current modes of global capitalism.

Such pronouncements like Timothy Morton's (2009) 'ecology without Nature' that has received so much attention seem short sighted/sited/cited as the excess of Nature can never be controlled, although that is the grand narrative that is shaped today.

Our species extinction is certainly a strong possibility, and an apocalypse is not out of the question, which I have struggled with elsewhere (jagodzinski 2018). This side of the problematic, namely discourses that are not fixated on 'life,' has received less attention. Given this situation, something else has emerged that now draws our attention. Elizabeth Povinelli's (2016) notions of *geontology* and *geontopower* were developed to mark a distance from Foucault's biopower and Achille Mbembe's necropower to recognize that the event of the Anthropocene in late settler liberalism has shaped a "distinction between Life and Nonlife" (4), which itself seems to be a looming dichotomy. A form of death has emerged that ends in Nonlife – "the extinction of humans, biological life, and, as is often put, the planet itself" (8). This "takes us to a time before the life and death of individuals and species, a time of the *geos*, of soulessness" (9). NonLife as *geos* (as the inorganic and inanimate) takes on this added nuance. It conveys the paradox of human extinction, yet at the same time, the planet (*Geos*) will simply continue on without us. We see this in 'atopic' areas like Chernobyl, the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea, and (as mentioned earlier) the effects of halting human production on the climate during the COVID-19 pandemic. One might just as well call these developments AfterLife.

This predicament of bios (human life) is analyzed by Povinelli through three figures of geopower: the Desert, the Animist, and the Virus, the last one being the most prescient given COVID-19. These seem to be three diagnostic and symptomatic levels of entanglement between Life and NonLife. Carbon forms the central imaginary of the Desert so as to restabilize the Life vs. NonLife distinction. The Desert stands for denuded Life (perhaps *bare* life) that can be revitalized through technologies. The fossil plays a special role here: not only by way of fossil fuels like oil, but also by the possible reviving of extinct animals through fossil DNA via bioengineering. The figure of the Animist (Indigeneity) presents no distinction between Life and NonLife; rather, it is a bridge figure. Lastly, the Virus has the Terrorist as its central imaginary, a disruption of Life and NonLife in such a way that the dichotomy itself is put into doubt. The obvious figure here is the zombie: the living

dead who mark the existential crisis of late liberalism. A pandemic like COVID-19 changes the landscape into the ‘walking dead’ where a paradoxical reversal takes place: the anxiety of not becoming infected disrupts the everyday routines of Life, which slowly begin to transform into NonLife. In this view, our species horizon is closed via extinction, unless a contingent event takes places that can initiate global transformative change. Given the pandemic, the outcomes are far from certain.

The chapters that follow draw on this backdrop that has been presented here in various direct and oblique ways. My experiences in Korea are very much part of the interface between popular culture, media, and visual art as related to my (mis)understandings of Korean culture. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari created concepts that offered me significant ways throughout this book to theorize the ‘wired’ world in a ‘post-way.’ We have been launched into an era of Big Other algorithmic governmentality where art, media, and education demand more of us than ever before to grasp our condition in the twenty-first century. We are immersed in a society of ‘control,’ which is overshadowed by the Anthropocene: a tension between posthumanist projections of planetary control and a posthuman unknown, better to be called an *abuman unknown* (MacCormack 2020) that points to species extinction. We all are digital subjects (dividuals); the electronic body that we possess is constantly captured by and within the circuits of data. This ‘shadow electronic self’ remains visible, ready for categorization by Facebook’s Lookalike Audiences advertising service, and a host of other devices to position and track our movements. Rosi Braidotti’s (2019) excursions into critical posthumanities are perhaps indicative of where we must proceed in the future. Perhaps this book has some worth when considering such a direction?

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PART I

When West-East Meet



Inflections of Deleuze|Guattari: For a New Ontology of Media, When West-East Meet

The philosophical importance and impact of Deleuze|Guattari are experiencing a strong interest in Asia. In 2013, Tamkang University in Taipei Taiwan, under the directorship of Hanping Chiu held the First International Asia Conference on Deleuze. Korean scholars were among its participants. In 2014, Japan's Toyonaka University, in Osaka, hosted the second International Deleuze|Guattari conference with theme of "Islands." In 2014, *Deleuze and Asia* (Bogue et al. 2014) published papers from the Taipei conference. The Deleuze-Asian connection continues. Before this sudden uptake, there has been a trickle of essays that show the links between Deleuze|Guattari and Zen-Tao (Maliavin 2011; Vodka 2013; O'Sullivan 2014a; Zhang 2016). It is to the credit of Korean Society of Education Through Art (KoSEA) to continue to recognize the importance of this line of thinking for the twenty-first century by hosting the 13th KoSEA International Conference on October 26, 2013, under the title: Nomadism, Art, and Art Education. This chapter addresses insights a Deleuze|Guattari understanding can bring to art and its education especially for the twenty-first century, a time of

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continued rapid technological change, capitalist globalization, and the planetary disaster of ‘climate change.’ The future of education depends on how we, as artists and teachers, address these questions with our children and students who face such difficult issues. Youth around the globe expect a response despite the lack of initiative by many of the key global leaders, most notably Donald Trump. Greta Thunberg has been elevated to the post as the leading youth activist and spokesperson. She has managed to spearhead the Fridays for Future (FFF) movement where students in many major cities around the globe skip school in their attempt to rally together and send a message to their legislators.

The philosophy of Deleuze|Guattari forms a bridge between Taoism that is pervasive in the East and a revival of non-representational thought in the West by what generally has been called materialist transcendental philosophies. The influences between them are obviously rhizomatic in the Deleuze|Guattarian sense. “If I had been born in China, I would have been a calligrapher, not a painter,” Picasso once famously said, hinting that there has always been an artistic exchange between East and West. The complexity and interrelationships that exist between Taoism and Deleuze|Guattari philosophy require scholarship to explain the many difficult concepts that, at times, seem tenuous; nevertheless, they open up interesting questions. This is remarkably illustrated by Amir Vodka (2013) who makes the claim that the cinema of kung fu can be related to Deleuze|Guattari’s Body without Organs via Tao, which forms its own kind of BwO as “the shape that has no shape, the image that is without substance” (Lao-Tzu 1963: 18). When Deleuze|Guattari ask, “is the Tao masochist?” (*TP*, 1987: 174), the answer is that pain, torture, and restraint are part of the kung fu master’s ‘way’ to absolve his ego and provide a way to reconfigure his/her BwO. “The masochist uses suffering as a way of constituting a body without organs and bringing forth a plane of consistency of desire” (*TP*, 172). While Vodka refers to the famous films of Bruce Lee, Marvel’s TV series *Iron Fist* is equally instructive, as the narrative follows Danny Rand as he searches for his identity, quelling his anger to focus his Chi (material force of free energy) into the part-object as weapon: his fist. The intensive body without organs is Tao, while iron fist becomes a channeled ‘bloc of sensations.’ Vodka argues that ‘becoming animal’ is quite prevalent in many kung fu movies. It is taken up in Chapter 5 with the cinema of Kim Ki-duk, while ‘becoming insect’ is sequentially illustrated in Chapter 10.

‘Becoming imperceptible’ is equally at play in kung fu cinema when new potentials emerge from the virtual, and reality then changes through such events. *Vodka* draws on the *Matrix*, and such digitalized effects like ‘bullet time’ to show how for Neo, the hero who ‘wakes’ up to a new reality is able to discern all durations that coexist on a shared plane of consistency—durations that are at once too slow and too fast, enabling him to dodge bullets as he is too fast for them (and they are too slow). This is ‘suspended time,’ the time of Aion—the living present “precisely where the imperceptible is seen and heard” (*TP*, 278). In brief, digital cinema in this case is able to visualize the imperceptible as *pure movement*, an abstract plane understood as *any-plane-what-soever* that traces movements. There are only relations of its singularities. We can point to the artwork of Morgan O’Hara to illustrate what is being inferred. Her ‘scribble-art’ presents the performative line drawings of a *generic human*, which are imperceptible movements that emerge through her translations of her *Lebenswelt*. What is mistakenly taken to be the most extreme example of *abstract* art is in fact the most concrete. Her drawings capture only movement, drawn at speeds with things she ‘vibrates’ with. This is not her ‘translating’ life experiences; rather, it is a collapse of subject and object, a direct expression. François Laruelle (see Galloway 2014: 153–215) says as much and illustrates this same phenomenon through the pencil-music drawings of August Von Briesen. While these drawings give graphical forms to musical sounds via lines, dashes, points, variations in length, line weight, width, orientation, curvature, and so on, a clear case of synaesthesia (see Chapter 9 in this book), Laruelle takes this a step further. Von Briesen’s syncretism is an “automatic registration” of the Real itself.

Imperceptibility in this sense is a difficult concept. If it is analogous to an Outside Real, then it also has affinities with Lacan’s *objet a*; something from the outside, something imperceptible and non-categorizable makes us think. This part-object (like the iron ‘fist’) would be an “automatic registration” of Chi much like Von Briesen’s pencil drawings, who generated as many as 10,000 of these gestures a year! ‘Becoming imperceptible’ is *performative*. It calls forth the experience of time, which Deleuze, following the Stoics called Aion (as opposed to Chronos) and, in Taoist thought, referred to as ‘pure’ time, beginning-less, yet non-eternal. The Tao is understood as a concept that can simultaneously hold opposite values. Time is immanent, yet never changes. It has no beginning, yet it is not eternal; most

strange of all: it is everything, yet it does not even exist. Aion sustains this same idea of infinite time, the ‘gaps’ between past and the future. In quantum physics, the smallest imaginable unit of time is Planck time (5.4×10^{-44} sec.) and Planck distance (10^{-33} cm). At that point, time and distance become meaningless. In mathematics, continuous and discontinuous numbers remain complementary, the paradox repeating energy as both wave and particle. There is no unifying *mathesis universalis*.

As Deleuze maintains, self and other, subject and object, outside and inside collapse into an empty present, “which is subdivided ad infinitum into something that has just happened and something that is going to happen, always flying in both directions at once” (Deleuze 1990: 65). The sequence of the living present is sustained by the ‘Tao’ of time, “which divides it [the present] eternally into a proximate past and an imminent future” (ibid.: 63). The Tao, like ‘becoming’ itself, is both permanent and impermanent. The second chapter of Tao Te Ching (see Moeller 2006) states:

Therefore having and not having arise together.
 Difficult and easy complement each other.
 Long and short contrast with each other;
 High and low rest upon each other;
 Voice and sound harmonize each other;
 Front and back follow one another.

Performance artists place themselves into such a time, and by doing so, they become imperceptible to themselves as they move in this *virtual gap*, or *virtual Real* of chronological time. They emerge changed after the performance. This is precisely where ‘true’ creativity occurs, but it is also the moment of greatest risk where life = death becomes a ‘cut’ in the fabric of the actual.

The Deleuzian ‘w(hole),’ as an open-becoming, has affinities with the Taoist zero; it is the Open, the impossible ‘set of sets,’ without exteriority. Neo in the *Matrix* should be regarded as a singularity, a ‘zeroness’ of the BwO, an Open Whole, perhaps best understood by their formula: PLURALISM = MONISM. Here, we can push Deleuze and Guattari even further by suggesting a quantum twist to their claim by maintaining that this ‘monism’ is also an infinite “multiverse,” as a majority of physicists claim. As a true infinite, the multiverse (as

Tao) is both Everything and Nothing, or ‘happening’ itself of infinite creation: pure potential. Our universe is just one of many, which supports a Taoist notion of the permanence as well as the impermanence of time. Even the notion of rhizome’s nonlinearity, non-hierarchy, and multi-dimensionality is not a simple task to comprehend, but describes the relationships and principles of Tao, and the sensibility to Chaos through the creativity of ‘non-action,’ as *Wu Wei* (non-doing, or doing nothing, to be in the flow, to be imperceptible). Intentionality becomes transformed into intuition. Intuition holds no rigid and set plan as much as a direction of speed and slowness. Yet, the paradox is that this requires a repetition of practice, and in that practice, to discover always anew. The artistic process is intuitive rather than strictly methodological. Overcoming dualisms, stressing creativity as affirmation, and overcoming transcendentalist thought are shared by both philosophies. As Deleuze and Parnet (2007) puts it:

It would not be enough to oppose the East and the West here, the plane of immanence which comes from the East and the plane of transcendent organization which was always *the disease of the West*, for example, eastern poetry or drawing, the *martial arts*, which so often proceed by pure haecceities and grow from the ‘middle.’ The West itself is crisscrossed by this immense plane of immanence or of consistence, which carries off forms and strips them of their indications of speed, which dissolve subjects and extract their haecceities, nothing left but longitudes and latitudes. (94, added emphasis)

The Korean scholar, Hyeyoung Maeng (2020) has provided many parallels between Deleuze’s process ontology and the practice of Korean Bunche painting. She shows that many of their concepts can be transposed and illustrated through this painting process. Perhaps more impressive are Maeng’s (2017) many attempts to provide the linkages to Tao in her impressive doctoral thesis. There she notes, in *A Thousand Plateaus* there are many passages that confirm such rich parallelism. Deleuze|Guattari describe the Tao as “a field of immanence in which desire lacks nothing and therefore cannot be linked to any external or transcendent criterion” (157). Where Yin and Yang are processes of stratification and destratification, while the state of Tao as the plane of consistency can be thought of as “the totality of all BwO’s, a pure multiplicity of immanence” (158).

There are many more parallels, of course. Both Taoism and Deleuze|Guattari are process philosophies: they are about change and becoming, and not about being and representation. It is very difficult to articulate the significance of Deleuze|Guattari for art and its education in any simple and easy way. There is no ‘method’ for art, only emergent processes that are not always successful; there is no ‘research’ in art as is so often wanted, only ‘research creation.’ The second stanza of Chapter 2 of Tao Te Ching states:

Therefore the sage goes about doing nothing, teaching no talking.
The ten thousand things rise and fall without cease,
Creating, yet not possessing,
Working, yet not taking credit,
Work is done, then forgotten.
Therefore it lasts forever.

Research creation in art speaks to ‘the Way’ in Tao. As Lieh-tzu (Graham 1990) says: “Will the Way end? At bottom it has had no beginning. Will there never be more of it? At bottom it does not exist?” (22–23). James Elkins (2001) once wrote a book maintaining that *art cannot be taught*. Artistic research creation presents this paradox of creation by artists who never ‘arrive,’ are never finished, and are constantly ‘on their way,’ searching for ‘the Way,’ which does not exist, working with contingencies, surprises, accidents so as to enter a zone of imperceptibility: becoming-impersonal, becoming-indiscernible.

The Tao also seems to address the plane of immanence (or plane of consistency). As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) put it in *What is Philosophy*: “The plane is clearly not a program, design, end or means: it is a plane of immanence that constitutes the absolute ground of philosophy, its earth or deterritorialization, the foundation on which it creates its concepts” (41). We read in the book of Lieh-tzu: “There was Primal Simplicity, there was Primal Commencement, there were Primal Beginnings, and there was a Primal Material. The Primal Simplicity preceded the appearance of the breath. The Primal Commencement was the beginning of the breath. The Primal Beginnings were the breath beginning to assume shape. The Primal Material was the breath when it began to assume substance. Breath, shape and substance were complete, but things were not yet separated from each other; hence the name ‘Confusion.’ ‘Confusion’ means that the myriad things were confounded

and not yet separated from each other” (18–19, Graham’s translation). Confusion and chaos, what Félix Guattari called ‘chaosmosis,’ appear to be the same concept, while the virtual provides for the quantum notion of superposition: the potential configurations of an assemblage—as an arrangement of particles or fields—that actualize as singularities within specific ecologies. Thinking this way avoids considering only a ‘big bang’ theory of the universe—that is, a Plank epoch or Plank era that starts the arrow of time (e.g., 13.8 billion years). Rather, it suggests a multiverse as a timeless state of indeterminacy, closer to a Hartle-Hawking universe, which claims it an emergent singularity. It is precisely singularity or an event, as Deleuze and Guattari stress, that generates form. Perhaps the emergence comes from black holes, for it is in these w(holes) where chaos as ‘confusion’ reigns supreme; it is precisely here where light is bent and gravitational force becomes the stumbling block to complete the search for an all-encompassing unification of quantum mechanics and general relativity as a ‘Theory of Everything’ that would combine the four known forces together: gravity, electromagnetism, the weak, and the strong interaction. It is the quantum nature of gravity that remains enigmatic and allusive in this quest (Snaches 2019). It is not difficult to see how Deleuze|Guattari envision a cosmology and the interplay of the cosmological forces of chaos as inorganic energy (unleashed energy, Zoë), a pure BwO, the Tao of Zero, Laruelle’s One (a radical Real), the ‘given as given,’ and the material force of Chi (Ki) of Tao, and so on, where ‘mad’ particles abound.

AGAINST REPRESENTATION

For those who have tried to read Deleuze|Guattari will readily testify how difficult this task can be. One doesn’t comprehend their writing style or philosophy easily. Yet there has been an explosion in various areas concerning their work in virtually every scholarly area: including literary studies, cinema, education, urban planning, literary studies, architecture—the list goes on. Perhaps the most significant shift by scholars who have embraced their work has been the realization that representational thought dominates most disciplines globally, and this needs to be urgently and constantly questioned. Artistic research in particular needs a complete rethinking here where thought and image are in tension with one another (see especially Vellodi 2019). In the field of art education, this is particularly true when it comes to visual cultural studies a sub-discipline

that emerged out of cultural studies. (I discuss this development in Chapter 8.) Here, the usual approach of representational thinking is to understand difference always in relation to sameness. This is a very seductive way of thinking as it appears that social equality is being pursued, and that justice is being achieved as the question of human rights is meant to put everyone on an equal footing. From a Deleuzian standpoint, representational thinking simply reinstates inequality by masking the situation. Representational thought places the question of the Other, *either too far or too close*. What do I mean by this? By ‘too close,’ difference is masked under a humanist universalism: we are (after all) all the same despite our differences. But, despite these differences, we somehow ‘know’ or try to ‘know’ and understand the Other. We are ‘like’ them, and we try to communicate and get to know them despite the gulf between us, because, in the end, we are all ‘human beings.’ Such a stance generates fantasies of compassion by maintaining distance, for it is we, after all who are reaching out to the Other and trying to grasp *their* identity. It is not them who are reaching out to us. For a trained anthropologist, this seemed to be a commonsensical approach. After all, the intent is to get an inside ethnographic view to *close* the distance. Ideally, this would lead to *becoming* the Other, but when this happens, if the collapse is complete, then ‘differences’ are no longer discernible. “Going Native” now becomes ideologically questionable as does the question of ‘cultural appropriation.’ Artists such as Paul Gauguin, Emily Carr, and ‘Haida’ artist Bill Reid have all been criticized for getting ‘too close’ so that the self-Other gap is reinstated and identity preserved.

By being ‘too far’ from the Other moves in the opposite direction. This means “we” are “unlike them,” or unlike the Other, so we must remain silent in relation to what is alien; otherwise, we do away with their difference, or interfere with it. This leads to fetishization and exoticization of the Other because it is this very *difference* that supports our fantasies. This is how difference always forms a dualism with sameness. Representational thinking, through this either-or logic always, generates a hierarchy in relation to the structure of sameness and difference. The Other’s difference is always ‘used’ to position the relationship in unequal ways on the grounds that equality is being pursued. Theorists like Balibar (1992) called this post-racism, neo-racism, and even cultural racism. Let me offer an illustrative example.

EXPOSING BENETTON

There is a rather ingenious advertisement by Benetton. It shows three hearts, which are similar but slightly different. They are images of pig hearts but they seem human enough as photographed by the Italian designer Oliviero Toscani in 1996, who spearheaded its ‘The United Colors of Benetton’ campaign. Benetton has since cut ties with Toscani in 2020 over his remarks concerning the collapse of the Morandi bridge in Genoa. (I encourage the reader to look up this image on the Internet as copyright laws prevent me from including it in this chapter.) Despite their minor differences, the three images fall under the categorical signifier ‘heart.’ Each heart, however, has another signifier that ‘represents’ a race in an essentialized way in terms of identity formation: white, black, and yellow are the colors that signify three different races. The implication being that all three races, beneath their skin, are equal or the same. At first glance, this is a very seductive advertisement, for it appears that Benetton is certainly making a claim as to the inequality of the ‘surface’ color and comparing it with the ‘depth’ of bodily organs where we are all the ‘same.’ We all have ‘heart.’ We are all ‘human’ says the advertisement despite the color of our skin and despite that these are animal hearts. So, how can this possibly be ‘post-racist’ advertisement? This seems counter-intuitive.

Differences (as particularities) are contrasted to the generalization of sameness: we are all of the species *homo sapiens* (or ‘pigs’ in this case!). Difference in-itself, as singularities, is what is negated, and it is precisely this oversight that Deleuze|Guattari attempt to overturn. They base their philosophy on pure difference alone. When *negation* happens (as discrimination for instance), the idealization of *homo sapiens* at a *physical level* of idealization is then ‘smuggled’ in. This has been the primary problem with the signifier ‘human’: who belongs and is given privilege and access to this category? Like the hearts in this advertisement, it appears to be an all-encompassing inclusive category, yet we know historically who is justified by this signifier is selective and exclusive: the most obvious examples are women, indigenous peoples, and African Americans. They quickly come to mind, but the entire post-colonial landscape is shaped by this exclusionary term, human, that appears inclusionary. The advertisement appeals to an impossible category of equality called ‘human,’ which is endlessly discriminated against due to the logic of the multiple binaries

it generates within the sameness-difference logic of representation based on the *purity* of visible color: red, white, yellow. Such color boundaries become troubled very quickly when shades, tints, and tones come into play; their intensities of affect begin to blur boundaries between colors, introducing confusions of ‘distancing’ and ‘passing’ which representational identities present politically and ethically. Deleuze, in *Difference and Repetition* (1994), succinctly listed four postulates of such logic: (1) identity, (2) opposition of predicates, (3) analogy when it comes to judgment, and (4) resemblance in perception.

When it comes to Benetton’s *Unhate Campaign* (again, I encourage the reader to find these images on the Internet), all the President of the United States (Barack Obama at the time) and the Former General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (Hu Jintao) have to do is simply *kiss* each other. Collapse distance and then world harmony will begin. All will be forgiven. This is a very Hegelian move: two opposites come together (thesis and anti-thesis) and an *Aufhebung* will take place, elevating the contact to a higher plane of resolution. Simple, isn’t it? Love overcomes all, in this case homoerotic love. But just how races (or nations, or ethnicities, or women, or men and so on) are the same, overcoming their dichotomous binds, remains a representational illusion. This is a transcendental ideal that can never be reached. The physical heart, just like the ‘kiss,’ is itself an ambiguous sign that says we are all biologically the same when we know that there are psychocultural differences that cannot be easily dismissed. Traumas that prove too deep to be flippantly done away with. The Judas ‘kiss’ of betrayal is repressed. North Korea and South Korea present this difficult paradox of difference and sameness.

There is a half-truth to the *Unhate Campaign*, which again makes it so seductive. Bodies do affect each other. “We do not know what a body can do,” a phrase that is so often repeated in the secondary Deleuzian literature. This was Deleuze’s great insight when he embraced Spinozian philosophy. Unquestionably, great diplomacy can overcome what are impossible differences, even when they are in the end thwarted, as happened when Bill Clinton brokered a peace agreement (the Oslo Accords) in 1993 between Israel’s Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Yasser Arafat. Two years after, in 1995, Rabin was assassinated at the Kings of Israel Square in Tel Aviv for his moderate liberal views by a radicalized right-wing rabbi extremist. East Asian cultures tend to define the self in

relation to a group or collective whereas within Western cultures there is greater emphasis on the self to be viewed as unique and independent of the social group. In these Benetton advertisements, the assumption is made that (1) races are categorical, there is no overlap, and (2) they resemble one another on the physiological level. We all have ‘heart,’ and therefore (3) we are all equivalent under the general law that we are ‘human beings’ capable of great compassion and care. True. Especially when it comes ‘to our own.’ This is the commonsense view that is continually reproduced in the current image of thought, especially in multicultural societies where there is a deep need to ‘tolerate’ differences under an assumed sameness of equality by human rights legislation. “Diversity,” as Deleuze (1994) argued, “is not difference. Diversity is given, but difference is that by which the given is given, that by which the given is given as diverse” (222). Diversity is rather the negotiation of distances and toleration for the Other within representational logic. For Deleuze, thought as reproduction, the common image of thought simply affirms identity; it is thought that produces the new images that are not in circulation, which stimulate and create the new. Benetton manages to stabilize differences along colored lines via a universal ideal, or generalization that, on its surface, seems perfectly fine, but that means erasing all ‘differences’ as singularities so that we end up with really nothing at all in relation to justice, rights, equal treatments, peace rather than war, and so on. Identity politics continues to sustain its affective force.

Difference in representational thought is always in relation to a conceived identity; it is a judged analogy (the Other is too close) or an imagined opposition (the Other is too far). For Deleuze, thinking in terms of generalities and particulars operates within the limits of representation, which is a “transcendental illusion.” “‘I think’ is the most general principle of representation” (Deleuze 1994: 174). This means that the human subject ‘grounds’ knowledge in relation to a metaphysical notion of an outside reality, as if a thinking subject is able to transcend and represent the meaning of an object (e.g., culture) in accordance with an external reality. The authority of the subject is always in play to establish truth claims. Deleuze|Guattari are against any forms of identity as the “dogmatic image of thought.” All representational thinking presupposes a subject-object gap, a ‘correlationism’ (Meillassoux 2008). Our consciousness produces images *from* or *of* things that our perception grounds in representation. This is the Kantian axiom where the transcendental field is in the image of the empirical

field. “I think” is added so that a transcendental ego is shaped; there is a “Transcendental Unity of Apperception,” and thus a distinct anthropocentrism established to all judgments. Deleuze, on the other hand, maintains that this transcendental field remains differential, impersonal, and pre-individual. The condition for ‘real experience’ is *virtual*, which has no identity. Correlationism is already the product of actualization of this prior differential field.

Against representational thought of any kind, Deleuze|Guattari develop a philosophy of *becoming* where time is always a factor (as discussed above). Like the Tao, which says, “The movement of Tao is to return; The way of Tao is to yield” (Verse 40, Tao Te Ching) (Lao-Tzu and Takuan Sōhō 2010). In *Anti-Oedipus* (1983), Deleuze|Guattari draw on the figure of the schizo as exemplifying such an ego-loss, a yielding: “[the schzo who practices a psychic minorization] produces himself as a free man, irresponsible, solitary, and joyous, finally able to say and do something simple in his own name, without asking permission; a desire lacking nothing, a flux that overcomes barriers and codes, a name that no longer designates any ego whatever” (131). This suggests the creativity of singularity, of becoming imperceptible. The Tao of Zen seems to follow this: “[n]othing remains the same for two consecutive *ksanas* (the shortest imaginable periods of time)” (Hanh 1995: 39). Nothing has a fixed representational identity, what persists is the paradox of difference itself.

THE PERFORMATIVITY OF THE IMAGE

The most sophisticated forms of representation are the performative and constructivist approaches to subjectivity as exposed by Michel Foucault’s discourse theory. Representation is considered in terms of what it does and not in terms of truth or accuracy; the question is how both the subject and the object are mutually structured or constructed by a discourse. The discursive image implies an ideal subject position or an Ideal Ego in Lacanian terms, and asks the spectators to emulate or take part in this image through their own ego ideal. Here the *performative notion* of the image is usually shaped cleverly by and through company image or logo branding.

A brilliant example comes from the country of Peru that re-branded its national identity in the globalized world. In what is a case of reverse post-colonialism, a busload of well-known Peruvians—actors, dancers,

and chefs—traveled to Peru, Nebraska in the United States to sell the Peruvian culture to a population of 569. Nebraskans danced, ate Peruvian food, and learnt a few words of Spanish. This delightful ‘invasion’ can be viewed on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOR3lhyMOcU>. It is a marvelous example of performative and representative notion of the image: what it can ‘do,’ that is, the power of its affect to influence and shape desire. What an image’s effects are for global capitalism is what Deleuze|Guattari worry about as Deleuze (1992) briefly mapped out in a short article on a ‘societies of control’ that draws on the capacity of third-generation cybernetics to program algorithms to run smart machines (as discussed throughout this book). When it comes to performative imagery, the subject is never certain. One has to be lured into comply with an Ideal Ego that is being offered. The inhabitants of the small village of Peru, Nebraska have to identify with something that is ideally, essentially, and nationalistically Peruvian in Latin America to insure recognition of the Peruvian logo that categorizes their difference (as diversity). What is ‘different’ as abject is meant to turn into its opposite, as something that becomes acceptable, even enjoyable, and thereby increasing the comfort level of being with the Other. Its performative affect is thereby achieved.

This is the repetition of difference in the postmodern sense. The so-called interactive social media attempt to continually adjust what customers and spectators are saying, voting, tweeting, posting, and so on, so that the discursive formation of the Ideal Ego can be maintained by the company, state, or those in charge. Management becomes a huge industry while prosumers do their bidding inadvertently. In a *modulated* society of control, says Deleuze (1992) and Guattari, consumers become produces and vice versa in a never-ending look to maintain some sort of structure so markets are stable within certain degrees of freedom. As Judith Butler (1990) has developed this, the performative (or active) notion resides in the possibility of always contesting the Ideal Ego image: the so-called norm or ideal is always changing historically. The problem is that such resistance or protest is always co-opted inside this machine; the negative resistance fuels change through conflict, if only to reverse trends in a never-ending question to have equity and equality that can never be achieved, a metaphysical ideal. There are/were ‘accelerationists’ like Nick Land in the 1990s (Warwick University) who thought that speeding up the cyber-technology invented by global capitalist system would lead eventually to its collapse via a ‘cyberpunk phuturism’ complete with a ‘zombie

apocalypse.’ Although this wasn’t likely to be the case, one wonders today about such a scenario when SARS 2 (COVID-19) has been let loose? Land’s ‘Dark Enlightenment Manifesto’ (2012) continues to be thought provoking if not an earth-shattering view of a dystopian capitalist future. Simon O’Sullivan (2014b), with strong roots to Deleuze|Guattari, has attempted to provide a strong and worrisome assessment of accelerationist thought as has Benjamin Noys (2014). But, on to more humorous note.

An intentionally funny and ironic example of this never-ending quest for equality in representational terms comes from the American film culture. The film, *The Lone Ranger* (2013, d. Gore Verbinski) (Screen image 2.1), based on a well-known television series in the 1950s (Screen image 2.2), was meant to intervene in the myth of the Wild, Wild West in order to subvert the historically inequitable Indian|White Man relationship. Try as the film might, the exotic First Nations ‘warrior,’ Tonto (played by Johnny Depp), set up as the true brains behind the Lone Ranger (played by Armie Hammer), was just not convincing enough. The film was a flop. Identity politics around gender, sex, ethnicity, race, and so on is continually in flux in representational thought. The ‘Hollywood’ solution to this is to work out a politically correct neutrality by having ‘one of each’ so to speak, for equal



Screen image 2.1 *Lone Ranger* (2013)



Screen image 2.2 *Lone Ranger*, TV series 1950s

representation. Hence, an equal number of men and women, or an equal number of races represented in films. Companies like Disney have become particularly sensitive to such political correctness.

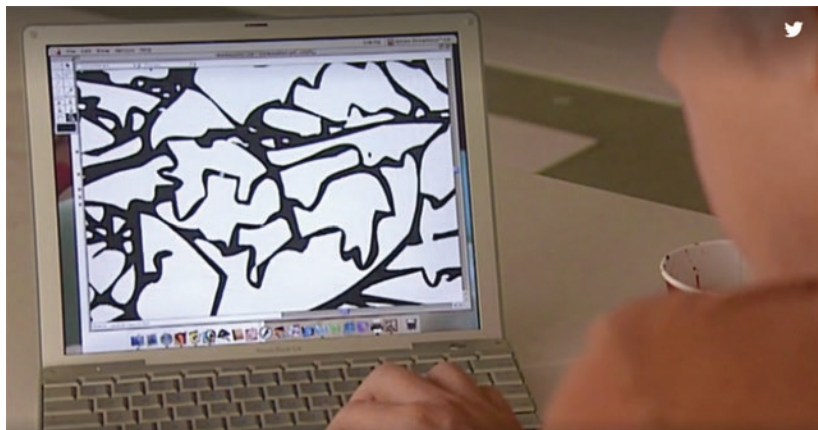
Again, this is precisely what Deleuze|Guattari in *TP* attempt to dispel and query. They introduce the term ‘minoritarian’ rather than minority to worry and confuse the numerology that majority-minority dualisms represent. Minoritarian is always an ethico-political positioning that requires action when challenging power and discrimination to deterritorialize itself from the majority, and hence not necessarily bound by number. It marks the potentiality for change through a new becoming or singularity. Most of art and its education are structured by this “transcendental illusion.” The power of Deleuze|Guattari’s shift is to a position beyond representation, toward anti-representationalism that strives to think beyond all subjectivism, to free thought of the illusion of transcendence. In this sense, Deleuze|Guattari are closer to Eastern thought than Western, which remains caught by representation. Deleuze|Guattari drew on what was a “minor philosophy” in the West—Spinoza, Whitehead, Nietzsche, Hume—to develop non-representation processes of creative becoming. Of course, it must be understood that an encounter with art that creates thought is not an experience that is decided in advance; its advent cannot be planned. Deleuze|Guattari reserve the term becoming

imperceptible (as developed above) where what is experienced cannot be recognized; a limit is reached when common sense becomes unhinged. For Deleuze|Guattari, this is an indication that an event of art, an encounter has indeed taken place. A thought *without image* has been engendered, which gives a hint of what ‘imperceptibility’ is about.

REPETITION WITH A DIFFERENCE

One of the main concepts Deleuze develops against representational thought of any kind is that of the *simulacrum*. The most common notion of a simulacrum is a copy of a copy, like photorealism where the painting is a copy of a photograph, which itself is a copy or representation of the world ‘out there’ that acts as the originating model. Whereas a copy is made to stand in for its model, simulacra as repetitions of the model introduce a difference that turns against the ‘original’ in order to open up a new space and a new world. It affirms its own difference and unfolds a multiplicity of new problems and solutions. It is what Deleuze refers to as the *powers of the false*. Simulacra are non-representative because they are nothing but appearances—just ‘qualities’ of things as part-objects. There is nothing ‘behind’ the image.

The will to art (*Kunstwollen*) consists of extracting differences from repetition by reversing copies into simulacra. Art neither represents nor imitates because it simply repeats. Everyday life is characterized by repetition, as a return to the same, through habit, primarily through standardized production of commodities and the proliferation of information. Art, from a Deleuzian standpoint, is not opposed to such a mechanical, stereotypical, and habitual repetition, but it embraces this standardized production of the commodity to expose its limits and extract what is differential and virtual within it. The task of art is to open a “line of flight” (*ligne de fuite*) that passes from the virtual to the actual by interrupting repetition with a difference. Gradually, repetition is transformed from the repetition of the return of the same to creation based in difference. The contemporary artist, Matthew Ritchie’s repetitions that involve his process approach to drawing, is an appropriate example (Screen images 2.3 and 2.4 were taken from the PBS Art:21 featured segment on Ritchie called ‘Structures’). Ritchie works with a computer program that enables him to play with fractal spaces. He can enlarge drawings, manipulate them, and further turn them into sculptures. Each time the installation travels to a new gallery, a difference



Screen image 2.3 Matthew Ritchie, PBS Art:21, 'Structures'



Screen image 2.4 Matthew Ritchie, screens PBS Art:21, 'Structures'

has been introduced to the point where the exhibition itself has morphed into something different. Richie's 'play' with drawing enables a de-anthropocentrism to take place as human scale is no longer a viable measure. The assemblage consists of the computer program, Richie, as one of many assistants who rework the installation each time, and the new gallery space he is assigned. Completing each renewed assemblage are viewers who are thrown into a rhizomatic web of lines that never seem end.

Virtual in the Deleuze|Guattari lexicon does not mean 'virtual reality'—the 'virtual' as seen using special VR headsets or 3D cinema glasses. Rather, it refers to a realm of the invisible where memory and different orders and combinations of time are in play (past-future, present-past, present-future). These enfoldments of time are worked out in Deleuze's two cinema books (the movement-image and the time-image). Like Tao, or The Way, time is an eternal intuitive process, not chronological. The act of genesis does not have some set method. It is profoundly enigmatic. For instance, no one knows how or from where the 'blueprint' for the 'origin' of any species takes place. There are only speculations like those of the 'heretic' Rupert Sheldrake's (1981) 'morphic resonance' theory where a shared species memory is posited, perhaps located in the nowhere time-space of Aion, or Tao, being the dark matter and energy itself. Where do the morphogenic field instructions for cell growth come from to form an embryo? How does such self-organization come about? Epigenetic processes have put a damper to the jubilation on any claims to genetic determination. Either way, it is the virtual that is of key concern. Deleuze rejects the notion of the 'possible,' which remains attached to the logic of representation. It is an empirical event that will be actualized sometime in the future. It is based on prediction and calculation. Possible events are posited, then, depending on circumstances, one of them will be realized, but this a 'hedged' future. In contrast, Deleuze also maintains that the virtual is fully 'real.' The virtual "is not opposed to the real, it possesses a full reality by itself" (1994: 211). For genesis to occur, the 'real' multiplicity within the virtual must be actualized, which is to say, the potentiality of co-existent differences becomes 'real.' There is no predictability in this, only radicalized contingency as to how this virtual transcendental field is integrated or resolved. This is a true 'event' where the future has not been predicted; that is, evolution proper for Deleuze where the virtual is creatively *actualized*, whereas the possible is simply 'realized' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 148–150). This

is simply to say that the possible ‘real’ is already preordained either through limitation or resemblance of a preconceived image as to what is about to happen. Following this logic, Deleuze (1988) can say in his book on Bergson that the ‘virtual’ is not opposed to ‘real’ but opposed to ‘actual,’ whereas the ‘real’ is opposed to the ‘possible.’ Repeating his Proust formula, he says that such states of virtuality are “real without being actual, and ideal without being abstract” (96). The creative event belongs to the Real as an actualization of something new.

The artist draws on an Event that has moved him or her. This Event is a disruption of chronological time; it belongs to cosmic time. The artist draws from cosmological forces—the rhythms of ‘A Life’ or Zoë. These terms are used interchangeably as in Deleuze’s last monograph called *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life* (2001). Zoë is unbound creative energy as *inorganic life* (it has no organs). This is like the Tao of the ‘Uncarved Block,’ which is capable of infinite characterizations, all possible ordered worlds, what Deleuze calls univocity. The Tao Te Ching, the main text of Taoism uses the term ‘Pu’ as this ‘Uncarved Block’: all nature is as its most powerful when considered in its original form—as energy (or Zoë), which would be quite consistent again with PLURALISM=MONISM, monism being equivocal to pu=uncarved block as the virtual of potentiality for multiple actualization, not unlike the concept of a ‘perfect quantum vacuum.’

SIMULACRA

Another example of simulacra is in order as developed by Gregory Minissale (2013). Everyone is familiar with Duchamp’s infamous *Fountain*, his ready-made that put to question art ‘outside’ the sacred halls of the gallery or museum. Unfortunately, his *Fountain* was destroyed, but he also miniaturized it hundreds of times, 300 times to be exact in his *Boite-en-Valise* (1935–1941) series. *The Box in a Suitcase* began as a 20-box edition. It then went through a further 6 editions of 20, until the final series was completed in 1966. This sequence of Duchamp’s art process is a precursor to the developments Deleuze discusses in *Difference and Repetition* in 1968. Duchamp raised concerns over the *copy* or *facsimile* in an age of reproduction, which has only intensified in our digitalized age. The 69 miniatures of Duchamp’s work that are reproduced in the suitcase are meticulous replicas of his oeuvre. It took 23,000 reproductions and the development of a new laborious

process of replication to ‘copy’ his work over the span of 6 years. This was to be the ‘end game’ (like the chess that he loved so much) of the idea that a gallery and a museum were the custodians of unique original works of art. Duchamp offers a strange autobiography where his past works are preserved, yet an impossible equivalence is maintained between the original and the copy, where A and A’ are ‘different’ only because, A’ (as a perfect clone) is displaced only by space and time. It is the Idea or the problematic that Duchamp wishes to ‘preserve’ by embracing the copy or multiple, which now becomes an uncanny simulacrum, like the difficulty of telling a recording from someone actually singing. Duchamp, in effect, was articulating what Deleuze was to do by overturning the Platonic distinction between original, copy, and simulacra wherein the Idea of an essentialized ideal reality—a superior reality—justified the judgment of inferiority. Identity prevails. Copies as icons most closely resembled the eternal Idea, whereas simulacra in which no semblance was found were the most inferior. Deleuze transformed this Platonic Idea as an *intensive multiplicity*. “Overthrowing Platonism refers to allowing simulacra to assert their rights over icons or copies. The motive of Platonism is to distinguish essence from appearance, the intelligible from the sensible, the Idea from the image, the original from the copy, the model from the simulacrum” (Deleuze 1983: 47).

Deleuze’s simulacrum is not a false copy, nor is it a lack of similarity; rather, it is an image without a resemblance to a model. Simulacra have internalized differentiation, or difference-in-itself as justified by an ‘eternal return,’ wherein difference in kind, not degree, occurs. Intensity changes and is actualized differently. The Platonic Idea now becomes a *virtual* multiplicity, a chaosmosis of differences. It is qualitative multiplicity. It cannot be divided up without changing its nature as its intensity would then change. It is continuous, non-numerical, subject to change whenever it is divided. But, there is also a quantitative or external multiplicity: discontinuous, measurable, and calculable. The Idea as a virtual multiplicity forms various *problematics*, which are actualized through a process of differentiation where numerous differences in *kind* are created by its movement. Differentiation refers to the processual virtual content of an Idea. In contrast, Deleuze reserves the word *differentiation* for quantitative multiplicities of representation. Ideas, the power and potential of thinking as such, unfold a never-ending creative problematic. This problematic is only realized ‘after the fact’: looking back as much as forward. In Tao, the Way forms a visible trace through sensation. The

virtuality of the problem is revealed, so to speak, by the conditions that were in place. The Idea of the Anthropocene, for example, is of great concern. It forms the current problematic.

While the above discussion is complex, it helps to grasp Duchamp's problematic; his Idea of asking about art its own status, and it brings us back to repetition with a difference. I draw on some remarks by Alain Badiou (2008) on Duchamp here to make my points. Part of Duchamp's anti-retinal and anti-romantic problematic was the idea of the "infra thin," "to pass into the infra thin interval that separated two identical things." This is the foundation for his use of reduplication, copies, and multiples that constituted his reputation. He would sign a copy, or a miniature or a multiplication of one of his works by the famous inscription "certified true copy," even when done by an assistant. The infra thin is a point of minimal discontinuity from the same to the other same. As Badiou says, "The new productive and reproductive thought must pass by this point." This point, then, belongs to the Tao of the immanent plane, the in-between, the middle-of-things, the rhizomatic line of flight, the infinite regress between 0 and 1 of complex numbers, like the square root of -1. It is the same concept as Paul Klee's *Graupunkt*, the grey-point of chaos. The *Graupunkt* is cosmological and virtual. It is the point before color establishes itself, the Tao of Color, like the pre-Plank universe. Duchamp's Idea is not 'embodied' in the artwork, or by his oeuvre. It is there 'on the surface,' like the Way is 'on the surface,' but at the infra thin "point that separates that being-there from itself." It is but a touch, a trace.

Simulacra and repetition take on yet another twist via the writings of Jacques Baudrillard (1983). His claim was that we had entered an age of hyperreality, a world of simulacra—a copy of a copy, or a hyper-copy where artificial rubber trees have stronger scents in Disneyworld than they have in nature. However, this is not the simulacra of Deleuze. It is the affect or the 'force' of the artwork that begins to matter. Deleuze in 1968 was heading in the same direction as Duchamp, as were Fluxes artists who continued this line of thought. André Malraux's "museum without walls" presents a similar idea: in the twentieth century, images become uprooted from their geographical contexts and can be organized purely along stylistic grounds. The entire history of images becomes a virtual past that then allows both cross-cultural and transcultural (that is global) comparisons among artists to take place. Deleuze picks up on this as well through the writings of Henry Bergson. Images are now put on a virtual

plane, and in a similar way, Walter Benjamin’s “optical unconscious” drew on the idea that images have been released from site specificity, to “any place whatsoever.” Baudrillard’s simulacra become a world of screen images; his “precession of simulacra” meant the blurring of true|false, real|imaginary. Simulation begins when opposites collapse. This brings to fore a whole new problematic.

Duchamp’s *Fountain* can no longer be held up as an original. When we look at the variety of T-shirts that are found advertised on the Internet (Screen image 2.5), these are obvious tacky imitations reproduced commercially, we immediately wish to dismiss them as just cheap copies—mere simulacra following the Platonic aesthetic. Yet, the “T” shirt raises the same status of art that Duchamp’s *Fountain* did. Underneath it says, “The great attack on the institution of art.” The T-shirt is not found in an art gallery or institution, while Duchamp’s mass-produced urinal is, and yet both the urinal and the T-shirt are mass produced, mundane objects, one referencing the status of the other. The T-shirt raises the same issue about the status of art as Duchamp’s *Fountain*. It raises the questions about identity (jokingly it can be an invitation to urinate on it) and status of fashion discourse in relation to



Screen image 2.5 Duchamp T-Shirts, screen image

body and self-image. The T-shirt is a simulacrum; it takes its Idea from Duchamp's *Fountain* and sets it in motion to the realm of fashion, uncomfortably destabilizing the world of ordinary objects and the world of art.

A "Fountain dress" (available on the Internet), designed and copyrighted by Philip Colbert, offers another example of the Duchampian Idea. The concave urinal, a container for oncoming urine, is presented as being visually the opposite of a full pregnant woman's belly when placed on this model and worn like a dress. The sexual joke of the model having a penis is also evident as the drawing of a pipe that drains the urinal is placed directly below the model's waist emerging from her pubic area. What is this dress performing? What are its affects when worn in public, or even on a model runway? This can lead to many misogynistic and homophobic examples of Duchamp's *Fountain*, all repetitively exploring the Idea in a variety of representations. There are a number of examples to cite here. Meike van Schijndel has designed a "Kiss Urinal," essentially a woman's open mouth with full-bodied crimson-colored lips that forms the urinal itself, with two white teeth showing on the top lip. Its implications are pornographic, alluding to 'water games.' There is also a 'Jaw urinal.' Imagine the dark open mouth of a shark with long razor teeth. I gather that male urination in this case is both out of fear and against fear itself. There are outright misogynistic urinals as well: quite literally a urinal is placed between a model of a woman's outspread legs, as if the urinal was an exaggerated vulva (see image 3, https://www.oddee.com/item_97723.aspx). The 'Holy Mary' urinal is a half bust of the Mary figure; the male urinates into the cavity of her chest (image 4, same website). There is also a homophobic urinal that has a contorted male figure with testicles and erect penis, his hands seem to be spreading his anus, while his feet are vertically in the air (<https://imgur.com/gallery/qxtJOTa>). I encourage the reader to find these urinal designs on the Internet or to go to the websites I have listed.

So here we have a series of simulacra that are ethically worrisome as they perpetuate a male|female binary. These urinal variations become a never-ending loop, a form of representation where no difference is allowed in, no Duchampian 'infra thin interval' at play. The public toilet becomes a marginal space, personal and yet shared, to spread hate and division among gender and sexes. The Tao of Yin and Yang seems perverted rather than complicated. Each play of *Fountain*, as simulacrum, introduces a difference, which parodies the Idea of art in an

“age of mechanical reproduction,” to echo Walter Benjamin’s well-known and studied essay. There are many, many more variations of the urinal. When the urinal becomes a self-repeating loop, an eternal binary that shuttles between male and female, simply an object where a female is to receive a mouthful of urine or her vaginal filled by male urine, then difference in the Deleuze|Guattrian sense is not possible as the dualism plays into the same|difference of representational thought. There is no ‘difference’ that makes a difference in any of these examples: again there is no thought-provoking interval that might lead us into the cosmology of sex, the yin-yang of Tao, or difference-in-itself that Duchamp’s Idea problematizes. As Deleuze puts it, an Idea is “neither one nor multiple, but a multiplicity constituted of differential elements” (Deleuze 1994: 278). In contrast, Korean director Kim Ki-duk’s film *Dream* (2008) problematizes Yin and Yang forces (see Chapter 5 for this exploration). However, Sherrie Levine’s *Fountain (Buddha)* (1996) might be an exception here as well. Copyright prevents me from showing you the image, but I encourage you to look it up on the Internet. The sculpture is clearly a parody on the shape of Duchamp’s urinal as a ‘significant form.’ The urinal looks like a ‘sitting’ Buddha. She seems to be riffing on Duchamp’s Buddhist leanings when thinking outside the box, at the same time it is made of shinning brass—as if gold, suggesting that Duchamp has also profited from his transgression making it a ‘golden commodity.’ The paradox is that Duchamp introduces a Taoist Idea, yet it remains caught by the simulacra of capitalism. Of course, there is a lot of nonsense spoken about this piece, which adds to the nonsense that I am providing—the best being that Levine is alluding to Brancusi’s bronze sculptures who Duchamp mentioned when referring to his own urinal. It seems the blatant allusion to Buddha drops out in such formalist analysis that dwells on artistic genealogies.

POWERS OF THE FALSE

The simulacrum dispels any form of representational truth or essence or category of an object or thing, and works with what Deleuze calls the “powers of the false,” where the only truth is time itself; that is change, the “eternal return of difference” as theorized by Nietzsche, where and when the new emerges. Lacan made the same differentiation between *Wiederholung* and *Wiederkehr*, only the latter brought a ‘true’ change. What is significant for art and its education is that a Deleuzian approach

is always concerned with becoming, but a becoming-*Other*. How might it be possible to break the categorization of an object through art? This is a huge challenge. One way to break with representation is to place the object in such an arrangement or frame or modification so that the object or thing takes on a ‘supplementary dimension’; sides of existence emerge that were never seen before or thought of before, like Mathew Barney’s strange cremaster cycle of films, for example, that explore the inner workings of the male cremaster muscle that raises or lowers the testes in response to temperature. The object is made strange, abject, or made to tell a story never imagined before. The object is made to do what it was never imaged to do, or show its secret life—that is, its other life to produce a seeing that is beyond the object’s everyday existence as we know it. In other words, other qualities of the object, what Deleuze calls its virtual multiple dimensions, are exposed. He called this a shift from the object to the objectile, from the subject to the superject, and from essence to event (Savat 2009).

All objects are “part-objects” in this sense, so the usual representational understanding of ‘object’ is mistaken. An object is always in flux, never stable, always in process and elusive. When such an object becomes strange, Lacan referred to it as *objet a*. It is alluring, strange, coming from the Outside, magical in its own way. Part-objects are always formless and functionless, composed of particles that increase and decrease at various speeds and intensities. They are cosmic in this sense, like those allusive elementary quark particles that are mathematically posited, but are yet to be ‘discovered.’ Such an understanding of ‘object’ follows the Taoist saying: “Though formless and intangible—It gives rise to form; Though vague and illusive—It gives rise to shapes; Though dark and obscure—it is the spirit, the essence, the life-breath of all things” (Lao-Tzu, Verse 21) (Lao-Tzu and Takuan Sōhō 2010). In a Deleuzian saying (coming from Spinoza): “We never fully know what a body can do,” or what it is, or how other bodies affect it, or how it affects other bodies when placed in different assemblages. Let me show you two examples of this as related to visual culture. We all know that bottled plastic water damages the environment. The Coca Cola Company is the worst offender but does everything in its power to claim it is concerned about water for the earth. It is difficult for people to stop drinking bottled water, especially in the West, which already has good quality water. How could art intervene in such a problematic, a term Deleuze|Guattari use, for there are no easy solutions?

The first example is directed at commodity culture. Duchamp's repetition and *infra thin* point are used effectively in a creative way. Seattle-based artist Chris Jordan in his exhibition *Running the Numbers I and II* has tried to intervene in this problematic by exposing the waste in our throwaway capitalist economies so that the numbers of thrown away commodities become sublime and incomprehensible for us to grasp. We are unable to imagine the number of thrown away goods that happens every second of every day. The numbers become non-representable. His illustrations transport the viewer to this place of incomprehensibility; they become cosmic equations of the Tao. I encourage the reader to view Jordan's website to view the many examples that startle you as to how wasteful capitalist commodity societies are. In one such image, 426,000 phones are shown that are thrown away each day in the United States. Through repetition and miniaturization, these objects confuse the anthropocentrism of scale that keeps the frame of art together. Jussi Parikka (2015) called this state of affairs the *Anthroscene* rather than the *Anthropocene*. The rare minerals needed to keep the technological machinery in production are likely to run out.

The second example is an artistic intervention into this ecological problematic: advertisements that are part of the Filter For Good campaign. I encourage the reader to go on the Internet and look at the images for this campaign. You will see two portraits of a man and a woman with black tar running out of their mouths, onto the white T-shirts they are wearing. These advertisements encourage you to drink filtered water and try to precisely intervene in our throwaway society of bottled water by showing a side of plastic we don't realize. It is an 'assemblage' that recognizes the agency of plastic as a petroleum product, which is made of tar, and tar is shown in these images as an abject object that is not to be swallowed. Yet, it appears that we have done so inadvertently, and it is now oozing out of our mouths on its own. Plastic becomes transmogrified (mutated) so that as an object its affects are felt at the deep level of our nerve-body, what Deleuze|Guattari called a *Body without Organs* (BwO). These images make us hesitate and (potentially) stop drinking water out of a plastic bottle. Plastic becomes more 'nonhuman' in the way it interacts with us; at the same time, its agential force is recognized as it has now become visible and materialized. It becomes an agent in its own right as it acts on us. This is what Deleuze|Guattari call an *assemblage*, when the human

and the nonhuman come together in a form that is entirely unexpected. Heterogeneous elements combine in this case to present a repulsive affect. They encourage a political strategy where striated space, that is, space that is already occupied by the Coca Cola Corporation is intervened by a ‘smooth space,’ an opening that introduces difference into an already occupied and full molar assemblage. One can say that this intervention is an *n-1* that opens up a new space and time. Again, this is a Taoist move when we read “The most yielding thing in the world will overcome the most rigid; the most empty thing ... will overcome the most full” (Lao-Tzu Verse 21, Verse 52) (Lao-Tzu and Takuan Sōhō 2010). There is always a way to the Outside to force thought. Plastic as a petroleum product becomes an *objet a* in Lacan’s terms.

BECOMING IMPERCEPTIBLE: NOMADIC

The subjectivity of the artist, for Deleuze|Guattari, is not one that elevates the ego; rather, it is a subjectivity of what they call nomadic becoming—to rid the “self” in such a way as to become ‘imperceptible’—that is, to become someone who falls outside the usual categorizations, and who creates possible worlds through their art, provoking sensibilities that enable encounters of another ‘compossible world.’ Duchamp was such a nomad. Deleuze calls on Jorge Louis Borge’s story “The Garden of the Forking Paths,” where the Chinese philosopher, Ts’ui Pên, presents the Tao of the myriad of bifurcating paths that can be followed. Of course, as a virtual multiplicity, they are all simultaneously available, like all colors are available at the *Graupunkt* of Klee’s color theory. Impossibilities and dissonances that the virtual real presents have to be ‘walked’ by the nomad to find the Way. There is always an attempt made to be *attuned* with the world in Deleuze|Guattari terms, and this is very Taoist attitude. To become ‘imperceptible’ as an artist means constantly being attuned to difference in the world, what Deleuze|Guattari call ‘signs’ that affect you when the world looks at you, rather than you looking at it. Something from the Outside forces thought.

Some artists, as we know, use their own bodies as a technology of self-knowledge to become nomadic and imperceptible. I think here of the famous performance artist Orlan in this regard. For example, in her ‘self-hybridization series’ (Internet image search: ‘Orlan, self-hybridization series’ will generate an array of these images.

Copyright prevents me from inserting these examples into this chapter), Orlan tries to confuse any notion of racial, national, and ethnic hybridity by playfully generating possible visions of beauty that remain outside of Western consciousness. She brings in identity elements of beauty from other cultures like the long-ringed necks or flat small noses. These hybridizations are compossible worlds. In this way, Orlan goes against what Deleuze|Guattari call the “faciality machine” as developed in *TP*, the way we are always produced and coded as signifying subjects into various categories so that a meaningful and stable world is maintained, like the Benetton advertisement I spoke of earlier. Beyond the face lies altogether a different *inhumanity* and different modes of organization that form strange new becomings. Orlan explores this inhumanity. She becomes a “probe-head” in Deleuze|Guattari’s terms (*TP*, 190–191, O’Sullivan 2006; Mills 2015). Such a probe-head is cosmic as well; it belongs to the Tao of the Face, or in François Laurelle’s terms to the ‘generic human.’

Artists, according to Deleuze|Guattari, try to work with blocs of percepts and affects emerging from the transcendental Cosmic plane so as to impact and shake up our commonsense perceptions. They do so, so that the duality of subject and object can be overcome via creative becoming; the same principle as Yin |Yang where the Yin as passive nonbeing is equated to the Deleuzian understanding of the virtual and Yang, as the active being is equated with the actual. These two forces are also analogous to the qualitative and quantitative multiplicities. Let me explore this through a well-known Korean contemporary artist, Myoung Ho Lee, working in Seoul who explores the Tao of trees. She isolates trees in such a way that we see ‘tree’ again as a singularity. (Internet Image search: ‘Myoung Ho Lee tree’ will generate an array of these images. Copyright prevents me from inserting these examples in this chapter.) A singular ‘tree,’ by being extrapolated from its environment and then photographed, raises questions of scale and interconnectedness with Nature. They take on a singularity in their personalities, a materialist vitalism of spirituality that Deleuze argues is part of the plane of immanence as the membrane of the Cosmos. Each photographed tree is like a cosmic Dogon egg as Deleuze|Guattari discuss in *TP* (164). Each tree is a BwO. It is both permanent and impermanent at once, under constant transformation, which itself is a permanent process. ‘Treeing’ presents this very paradox. The tree’s seed contains both its existence and non-existence, like the embryo discussed

earlier; like the Dogon egg. In the Taoist sense, each tree has its own *te*, or virtue, its own intrinsic excellence. The notion of ‘site’ specificity of Lee’s trees disappears and it becomes (in the Deleuzian sense) “any-site-whatsoever,” raising questions about the empirical world as such. Each thing has its own internal and immanent order. The Idea of tree is not transcendentalist and not Platonic; rather, the Idea of tree becomes a singularity: its own order. Yet, its seed bears its existence and non-existence at once; it is both Nothing and Everything bringing us back to the Tao of Tree.

It is a series, again repetition, that preoccupies Lee’s photography (refer to Internet image search). The series, another Deleuzian concept, requires that each tree, like the Duchampian urinal series that constitutes his ‘strange’ autobiography, introduces a difference. One cannot help but think of the Japanese art of Bonzai. As Lao-Tzu wrote in the Tao Te Ching: “Seeing your own smallness is insight” (Verse 52) (Lao-Tzu and Takuan Sōhō 2010). Bonzai-ing the natural environment through serialization amplifies it by repetition to make a new imaginary field. Such an installation shifts the corporeal scale of the viewer to see the order of tree differently, perhaps rhizomatically. Bonzai=the Tree of Life as it is tended from generation to the next generation in potentially an unending succession (or serialization).

In much different way, Mark Dion’s *Neukom Vivarium* is also a tree, a dying western hemlock tree. (Internet Image search: ‘Mark Dion, Neukom Vivarium’ will generate an array of images of this installation. Copyright prevents me from inserting these examples in this chapter.) It is perhaps the Western response to the care of a Bonzai Tree. Begun in 2004 and completed in 2006, housed in the Seattle Art Museum, it has received wide attention and shows the irony of how to maintain a ‘dying’ western hemlock tree by putting it on artificial life support systems within the confines of an art gallery. Once again, a smooth space is created within a gallery setting, and a pedagogical element is also a part of this installation to explore its newly developing ecosystems. The tree becomes *das Ding* [The Thing] through its isolation. The rhizomatic connection of the assemblage of creatures, microbes, and artificial greenhouse apparatus that keeps it alive once more vivifies the singularity and interconnectedness of things themselves, which Lee’s tree so vividly shows. We can also point to Jean-Claude Didier’s installation, *Trapped Inside* (2006) as yet another tree put on life support on the grounds of the United Nations Environment Programme located in Gigiri, Nairobi. This time the

Warburgia Ugandensis (African Greenheart) tree was specifically selected because of its endangered status and its spirituality, holding a special place given its use in traditional medicine.

ART AS AN ENCOUNTER

There is a YouTube video of Myoung Ho Lee's Tree exhibition where a gallerygoer made a one-minute video. You can watch it at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=07LSo_ukndY. I use it to illustrate my next Deleuzian point. As you will see, what is startling is the scale of these images, but worse is that the spectator is rushing from photograph to photograph, merely recording these tree-images. It raises the question as to when art becomes an object of encounter. Pedagogically and artistically, the encounter has become more and more of a concern in consumer culture; consumers have become participants in order to become producers of their own desire; in other words, good corporate marketing solicits what their consumers *want*, and then sells these *wants* back to them to maintain their brand and market share. Desire in the capitalist order is shaped by lack as Lacan constantly reminded his audiences. When I brought my Volvo a few years back, I became part of the Volvo family that sold me a particular lifestyle primarily based on the idea that my Volvo was one of the safest cars around. Should I be in an accident, I would most likely survive. My Volvo is sold as a fetish object, a desirable commodity, which is precisely what capitalism does. The encounter I had to buy my Volvo was shaped by my desire for safety, especially in Canadian winters. This is not the encounter Deleuze|Guattari are interested in, and it is not the type of participation displayed on this video. Many gallerygoers simply take images of artworks with their cell phones never to look at them again.

An encounter with art depends very much on the participant-spectator; something has to happen, something has to "look back at you." It's an encounter only when the object; or the world of things deterritorializes you so to speak. Lee's trees have to "speak" to you as signs. Such a moment can only be 'sensed.' Your time has to be thrown "out of joint" as Deleuze says: there has to be a desubjectification taking place; you as a subject have to be dissolved as you become in tune with that object in such a way that your common sense or frame of reference is somewhat shaken or even shocked. If the object is simply recognized, like in the above video, either through your imagination, or perception,

then your experience becomes limited. You fall again into representation. My Volvo was such an object. I had seen many televised commercials as to its safety record and its performance in winter storms. With objects of recognition, we are reconfirmed and reaffirmed into everyday life as we understand it. There is no *thought* in the Deleuzian terms, only cognition supported by a feeling of security. An art object of encounter has to rupture this self-confirming mechanism. It performs a cut where a different kind of subjectivity might begin. This is again a Taoist principle, as a Deleuzian encounter means you try to dwell in its center as a form of emptying the ‘self,’ which is a becoming-itself of Tao. Deleuze calls this ‘becoming-imperceptible.’ In contrast, my Volvo supported by ego; it fed the image of a future accident or being struck in the snow. I became my own prosumer.

EVENT

Deleuze calls such an encounter an event. As one’s world is ruptured another is opened up. Such a rupture need not be huge. It can be small, but then develop into something huge. Just like chaos theory that says a butterfly flapping its wings may cause a storm somewhere else on the earth, this is precisely what Deleuze|Guattari mean by their notion of event. Only when an event-encounter is responded to can you say the participant-spectator has been affected, changed at the unconscious molecular level. The notion of affect is very important here, and much has been written about it—as the so-called ‘affective turn’ in the West (Clough 2008). Deleuze|Guattari are all about the virtual intensity of the affect, the way the nerves are affected most at the unconscious and intrinsic body levels. This is where thought *without* an image can take place. Affect is something that happens to us below the level of language and the image. Often, we can call affect as life force of *Zoë*, Taoist for *Chi*, before it is captured into emotion, what has been called *Bios*, life energy that has been categorized or actualized. The event is able to rupture what Deleuze|Guattari call striated space and open up a smooth space, a deterritorialization of space and time so that thought can take place.

To generate affect requires an event. Let me introduce you to a spectacular example via the photographic work of Spencer Tunick (Internet Image search: ‘Spencer Tunick, Aletsch Glacier, Switzerland’ will generate this image. Copyright prevents me from inserting this example in this chapter). Spencer Tunick’s (along with Greenpeace

Switzerland) installation of a ‘living sculpture’ (hundreds of naked men and women) was situated in the Aletsch Glacier, Switzerland, on August 18, 2007. This mass of bodies, all huddled together, symbolized the vulnerability of glaciers under climate change. The site of the installation created a smooth space in the public domain of the National park, a domain that is rapidly changing so that attention can be brought to the state of global warming. An element of duration is also evident. The disappearing speed of the glacier and the time it took to set up such a photo formed a basis of comparison. They illustrate the speed and intensity of the ecological processes that were being explored. We could say that this was akin to Duchamp’s *infra thin interval*.

By photographing a mass of nude bodies in various environments, Spencer Tunick’s photographs attend to a non-representational sense of equality; for example, 5200 volunteers stripped in front of Sydney’s famed Opera House during Australia’s Gay and Lesbian Alliance Parade. Gay men and women lay naked with straight neighbors to deliver this message. (Turnick’s photos of this event, ‘Sea, Earth, Change’ can be found on the Internet). Deleuze|Guattari’s aesthetic is constantly about becoming; hence, the notion of commodity is always being questioned. It is what art can ‘do’ that matters; what’s its force does is the educational question. What is its political and performative ethic? It is but *one* attempt to avoid the commodity structure of capitalism, and the forces of its capture. Such art cannot be ‘hung’ on a wall, sold, traded, and so forth. It tries its hardest not to be a commodity by ‘disappearing,’ becoming anonymous and imperceptible once its “forcework” has been done (Ziarek 2004). Relations affirmatively change here as well—the relation with the inhuman glacier in Tunick’s case, and the relations between the huddling mass, cold, and shivering naked bodies who are affected. One can imagine the exchanges that took place among this ‘living sculptural mass’ in relation to themselves and the emergent ‘will’ that this project manifested. The stark exposure of nude bodies raises many questions regarding human vulnerability. It is an event that can then be *counter-actualized* in Deleuze’s terms, revisited for its transvaluational affects, to engage with its monumentalism as it addresses climate change, and our species vulnerability in the face of it.

Lastly, I want to end by describing another event where the commodity form disappears and an encounter can take place. *Army of Melting Men* by Brazilian artist Néle Azevedo is a repeated installation performed

in Brazil, France, Japan, Italy, and Germany. (For images, please do an Internet search: ‘Néle Azevedo’s Army of Melting Men.’ Copyright prevents me from including images in this chapter.) Each repetition is counter-actualized and introduces a difference, not unlike the expansive drawing installations of Mathew Ritchie mentioned earlier. Azevedo’s installation addresses global warming and presents the precariousness of existence under climate change. 1000–1300 cast mold ice figurines, generically male and female, approximately 18 inches high, are placed on site usually on the steps of some well-known state building of legislative authority (but not necessarily) by a participating public. Like the melting of the Arctic ice in Greenland and Antarctica (sea levels will rise over a meter by 2100), these statuettes begin to ‘disappear’ as they melt—as quickly as 20 minutes. They are vulnerable and frail just like Turnick’s sculptural mass of nude bodies. During this duration, the melting ‘sculpturines’ undergo subtle differences of form before ‘becoming extinct.’ Their inactivity as they melt away (not unlike Turnick’s stilled nude bodies without gestured movement) speaks directly to the inactivity of humankind toward climate change. The sculptural minimalism and autonomy addresses ‘every[man]’ who cannot escape, regardless of class, wealth, and power, the impending apocalypse. I would like to end this chapter by reiterating that there are many touchstones between Taoism and Deleuze|Guattari’s philosophy. Creativity is always an invention to bring new life into the world for a “people to come” as Deleuze says. Art education must take seriously the ecological crisis we face today and both of these process philosophies can give us a meeting of East and West that is needed.

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CHAPTER 3

Korean Visual and Popular Culture: An Outsider's View

Franco ‘Bifo’ Berardi (2015), a well-known left activist, wrote a chapter called “A Journey to Seoul.” It summarizes his impressions and attempts to grasp North-South Korean differences on the occasion of being invited to do a presentation for a group of art-activists, Sujonomo N. Based on Korea’s rapid modernization, he writes of “the desertification of daily life, the hyper-acceleration of rhythms, the extreme individualization of biographies, and an unbridled competition in the work market” (91). Bifo maintains that “frailty and violence are two of the most visibly recurrent themes in these key works of contemporary South Korean cinema. This should come as no surprise: the young South Korean generation can be regarded as the epitome of the contemporary condition of lonely togetherness, of shared isolation” (73), especially given that South Korea is one of the most ‘wired’ countries in the globe. Is he right? Exaggerations? One-sided claims?

In the first part of this two-part chapter examination, I draw on a great deal of scholarly work written by Korean researchers in English to help me understand the socio-historical background to make my case of understanding popular culture as further developed in Chapter 4. The Korean artists and educators will be sure to make their own judgments as to the success or failure of this exploratory experiment.

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VISUAL CULTURE, CULTURAL STUDIES, HYBRIDITY

Visual culture is very much part of the broader discipline of culture studies. Kang Myung-Koo (1999, 2006, 2007), Professor and Director in the Institute of Communications Studies, Seoul National University, when addressing the reception of cultural studies in Korea universities, offers a number of warnings and criticisms. He mentions the blind acceptance of Western concepts that do not apply to Korea. He feels there is also the danger of what he calls ‘imposition’—that is, the application of certain research questions that do not apply to the Korean context. Lastly, he fears that the simple employment of Western theories and concepts is used simply to enrich explanations. When it comes to Cultural Studies (CS), from which visual cultural studies draw its theories, there is rightly ‘some’ concern here. A quick example is in order concerning the usual tension that addresses the differences between modernism and postmodernism. Where should the line be drawn between them? Is there such a line, or is like that paradoxical question: ‘when are you bald?’ How much hair loss tips you into the bald category? There is certainly agreement that there has been a shift from compressed modernization or rushed modernization (Chang 1999; Cho 1997) to a post-Fordist and consumerist Korean economy since the financial crisis of 1997 (Cho 2005; Hart 2003). However, Kang Myung-Koo (1999) makes the startling claim that the reception of postmodern discourse as produced by Korean television advertisements presents postmodern consumer culture “*without postmodernity*” (my emphasis). Kang claims that Korean advertising agencies (Oricom, Korad, and Kumkang) are more interested in copying the Western postmodern style to sell a lifestyle to ‘Apgujeong’ culture (the new upper and middle-class yuppie culture), so as to produce a specific class distinction of a sophisticated cosmopolitan look.

Such a claim speaks to the same phenomenon when it comes to the popularity of (racialized) cosmetic eyelid surgery (blepharoplasty) to enlarge the ‘Asian’ eye so as to achieve a Western look, which is considered to be the norm (Aquino 2017). There are disputes, of course. Lee Keehyeung (2000: 479–480) maintains that Apgujeong-dong culture (a ward of Gangnam-gu in Seoul) is not necessarily bourgeois and points to a study with the same name (Apgujeong-dong) that disputes Kang’s claim that Western postmodernism is a critique of modernism. According to Lee, postmodernism’s nihilistic, ironic, and cynical vision of the world

is left out of the Korean appropriation. This certainly raises many questions as postmodernity is also a heightened extension of modernity. Lee Keehyeung (2006) has also explored the popular culture of youth especially as constructed in the street spaces of the Hongik University Area and Apgujeong-dong district in south central Seoul. Lee summarizes these hot spots or 'pleasure zones' to be a kind of liminal space or 'stage' where the rigid, normalizing, and boring regulative cultural norms and ideals are temporarily suspended and upset. The more diverse, playful, and tolerant kinds of cosmopolitan antics are on display: individualistic, non-traditional conduct, styles, repertoires, and demeanors that are performed and mimicked as a resistance against a strict work ethic. PSY's hit video song 'Gangnam Style' has received over three and a half million hits on YouTube. This technological utopia is presented simultaneously with 'human touch' advertisements (Dawoo Family, Samsung's washing-machine, and Choco Pie) that play into residual neo-Confucianist values of traditional communities and family-orientated human relations. Postmodernism and modernism go hand-in-hand depending on the target consumer. Traditionalism ('Koreanness') is constantly being mediated by globalization that continually threatens to disperse national identity. Literary scholars like Kim Uchang (2006) maintain that a Western-style rule of law cannot simply be implanted. "The difficulty is that institution being is inextricably embedded in the network of other institutions" (232).

Kang makes the point, as well as do others (Lee Keehyeung 2008), that Korean culture is not a hybrid culture as famously developed by Homi Bhabha's (1994) post-colonial conceptualization of 'third space.' Hybridity in Bhabha's sense is the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to translate the identity of the colonized (the Other) within a singular universal framework, but fails to do so producing something familiar but new. In the Korean context, the imitated postmodern style does not challenge or discursively destabilize the regime of American commodified culture (Kang 2006). Hybridity is more a question of innovation and appropriation, as is evident in dance music, especially hip-hop and reggae as seminally introduced by Seo Taiji with his debut hit song, Yo! Taeji! in 1992. Seo Taiji and Boys blended hip-hop, dance, rock, ballad, and even Korean traditional music to set new record sales (Lee Hee-Eun 2006). Since that time, Seo Taiji has moved on to have worked with four different boys' bands (Seo Taiji & Boys IV). Marwan M. Kraidy's (2002) review of the problems with

the concept of hybridity shows that the rhetoric, as it appeared so often in the *Washington Post*, posits American technology and American popular culture as a benchmark for developing countries to shed their allegedly unsophisticated tastes as they attempt to emulate the cultural sensibilities of American audiences. Hybridity becomes a practice of hegemony, a charge that has also been levied against *Hallyu*, the Korean Wave (Shim 2006) for its spread throughout Southeast Asia. It is only when hybridity is understood as an open ‘process’ within intercultural and international communication, appropriated by transnational capital at any given time, can it still remain useful as a map of the diffuse workings of power (Kraidy 2002).

When is hybridity to be treated as potentially progressive and when does it revert to hegemonic deployment? For educators of art, media, and visual culture, this is a conundrum and a major concern. There is an obvious mimicking of Western-style blockbuster films like *Shiri* (1999) and *Joint Security Area* (*Gongdong gyeongbi guyeok*, 2000) based on Hollywood blockbuster genre. Korean directors have *intentionally out-done* Hollywood and the Hong Kong film industry. Yet, these films are marketed and are well received by Japan, China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong. This phenomenon unfolded within a regionalist framework given that *Hallyu* was an indigenous cultural phenomenon. Is this progressive or hegemonic hybridity? I would like to say the former, rather than the latter, since it has the potential for a *pan-East Asian consciousness* that reaches beyond official state relationships, and often beyond bitter post-colonial memories, especially with Japan as exemplified by the television drama series, *Friends* (2002, TBS Japan and MBC South Korea), and of course, *Winter Sonata* (2002, KBS2, South Korea). *Friends* was the first time in the history of televised drama that the two countries collaborated to produce the series. Yet, not all of such exported ‘national’ Korean culture can be said to open up dialogue in Asia. Much is exploitive, in the interests of transnational capitalism, like action movies that are part of the Wuxia genre (Chinese martial arts fiction) and of course Korean melodramas. In relation to the previous chapter, one wonder how the philosophy of Toa is exploited?

Japanese female admirers of Bae Yong-joon a Korean superstar millionaire think that Korean men are taller, more sensitive, and have better bodies than Japanese men. As of 2004, there has been a thousand-fold increase for membership applications by Japanese women to ‘matchmaking companies’ that are operating between the two countries

(Shim 2006). Perhaps this is a start? The most spirited attempt to generate an 'East Asian pop culture' that speaks to the potential of a minimalist commonality among the countries is presented by Chua Beng Huat (2004), a Singapore sociologist. Chua argues that the crisscross of traffic in popular culture between Hong Kong, Taipei, Singapore, Shanghai, Seoul, and Tokyo will eventually lead a greater cohesiveness of a pan-East Asian identity through an appreciation of differences. Is this overly optimistic? Or, does it further the West-East divide in sensibility? Sun Jung (2011) seems to agree. He uses the term *mugukjeok* (non-nationality) in globalized South Korean popular culture as the specific concept for transcultural hybridity. The word is borrowed from Koichi Iwabuchi's (2002) concept of *mukokuseki* (non-nationality or non-Japaneseness). However, Sun Jung slightly modifies its meaning. *Mugukjeok* refers to how popular cultural flows enable the mixing of particular cultural elements (national, traditional, and specific) with globally popular cultural elements, which then causes those particular cultural elements to become less culturally specific. *Mugukjeok* implies transcultural hybridity of popular culture, but also as it is influenced by traditional (national) elements.

PAN-ASIAN VISUAL AND POPULAR CULTURE?

Chua Beng Huat (2006) presents the other side of this argument, maintaining that the potential for people-to-people exchanges has no structural avenues for pop culture consumer communities to intervene in international processes. There may be Internet sharing of televised dramas through the free labor of subtitles, but nothing that is sustainable. He speaks of the resentment of the Korean Wave in various parts of East Asia. For example, Bae Yong-Joon's visit to Taipei to promote *April Snow* (2005) ended up being lampooned by self-fashioned Taiwanese nationalist rock musicians. While there is certainly some 'pan-East Asian identity,' it is rather tenuous since nationalism often shows its ugly head when politics are at stake. The bottom 'economic line,' I would claim, is the necessity of East Asia in the future to become a unified trading block. But of course, China is the main player and dominant in shaping the region. The necessity to construct some common regional identity is on the horizon (like the European Union, for instance), but the political will is not there. There is too much turmoil in the area, and China dominates matters. Confucianism is often suggested as the common ground, but not only is that simply a fallback into patriarchy, the ideological and

emotional desire for a Confucian East Asia is bogus (Huat 2006). Such ‘Asianism’ has always been present in South Korea (Shin 2005) with unification of the North a deep desire and an open wound. Koichi Iwabuchi and his colleagues (2004) argue that the new Asian regional culture’s main feature is not Asian values or traditional culture, but capitalist consumer/popular culture. That’s the common thread. I find this too much of a blanket statement. It handcuffs creativity and remains defeatist. But, how does one sort out within the context of designer corporate capitalism what would be seen as progressive visual culture that teachers could promote and explore? Should it be strictly based on national protectionist grounds? Surely not! Differences are then excluded.

In this regard, Kang’s (2006) indictment of fellow Korean scholar’s engagement with Western thought and styles seems to be overly harsh, and I think over-stated. However, he makes an opening for someone like myself, an ‘outsider,’ when he states: “If theories and concepts are useful and heuristic, it does not matter whether they are from the West or elsewhere” (89). Unfortunately, it is not a question of theories ‘just’ being simply ‘useful’ or ‘heuristic.’ There are ethical and political difficulties. My intention is not to tell Korean educators what they should be doing when it comes to visual art and media education. Nor is it my place to simply remain useful and heuristic. There are plenty of educators and journals in North America who claim what to do and how to implement curriculum. Given what I said regarding hybridity, Korean artists and teachers of art will constantly modify examples for their own ends. This is the lesson I take from Rachel Mason and Jeong-Ae Park’s (1997) early study of Korean artists who have incorporated elements of Western art into their work. The significant question is whether art and media education repeat and support the current neoliberal global capitalist agenda, what I call designer capitalism (jagodzinski 2010a). Is it possible for a different vision for artistic and media pedagogy? This question forms my personal commitment given the state of the globe in the problematic of the Anthropocene.

Chung Kyung-Won’s strategies for promoting Korean design excellence in 1998 follow precisely a designer capitalist agenda. In 2015, Chung Kyung-Won repeated this same agenda. Featured in *Business Week* (Sept. 30, 2009), he is a member of Korean Advanced Institute for Science and Technology (KAIST), located just outside of Seoul in Daejeon, spread over 85,000 square kilometers! It is linked by a high-speed train to make it virtually a ‘suburb’ despite the distance from

Seoul, a city perceived as the most advanced technological city 'on earth' (so billed). Chung's design agenda pretty much is in step with global designer capitalism. The rhetoric is that design should be for all, especially for the poor, but the bottom line, it is an *economic question*. The question of excellence and the use of the most advanced digital innovations are promoted by this institute. Chung has been instrumental to make South Korea a leading design innovator, hosting international design conferences to ensure prestige and the world's lead for chaebol companies such as Samsung. His notion of *designomics* speaks for itself: design+economics is applied to the city of Seoul to provide for its urban renewal. A film like *Parasite* [*Gisaengchung*] (Bong Joon-ho, 2019), winner of four Academy Awards in 2020, gives us an insight into the division of classes, where it requires the cunning of an underclass to 'worm' its way into the lives of the very rich only by relying on their resources and cleverness. It is no wonder that the 'Bitcoin Syndrome' among Korea's young people are a desperate attempt to escape the hellish reality of the nation's neoliberalist policies (Bradley and Lee 2018).

The working papers on arts education during the Rho government had no provisions concerning popular culture. It reiterated the traditional and conventional role of the arts in education. Yong Hoseong's (2004) Arts Education Task Force report by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT), in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEH) entitled: the Government Policy to Enhance Arts Education in the Republic of Korea was a document that sought the task of the arts to cultivate talent, creativity, flexibility, and the creative mind with crisis management capabilities. (Yong Hoseong was the Director of Culture and Arts Education Division, Arts Bureau, Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the Republic of Korea.) This report called for cultivating cultural sensibility, but was silent on media except in recognition that there was a widening gap between fast developing, digital audiovisual media and conventional school facilities. There was no mention of the media influence, nor the relationship between the arts and media! Since the Roh Moo-hyun presidency much has happened: namely the continued spread and impact of *Hallyu*. Presidents Lee Myung-bak, Park Geun-hye (ousted in 2017 by National Assembly for influence peddling by her closest aide), and especially Moon Jae-in have all benefited from this spread of Korean pop culture, enabling a way to further public diplomacy throughout the globe by way of less aggressive and softer approaches (Ayhan 2017).

Lee Alex Taek-Gwang (2018a) offers an explanation as to why this became possible. He provides a sweeping history of the relationship between popular culture and state culture. In the 1980s, there was direct censorship via military dictatorships, but by the 1990s this trend was no longer possible. Popular culture in terms of the Korean Wave, as Lee argues, was an effect of modernization (consumerism), affirming capitalism and introduced a semblance of democratization following the military dictatorships: “popular culture [like Korean Wave in the 1990s] serves to suture the irreconcilable gap between modernization and tradition,” a way “to weaken the balance of tension between two rival ideologies (i.e., revolutionary nationalism and anti-communist patriotism)” (Lee 2018a: 16). Lee maintains that the Korean culture industry since the 1990s has been able to further national identity by overcoming the contradiction of Korean traditional culture and the United States push to introduce their own popular culture as a means of modernization. The Korean Wave is the solution to the dilemma of post-colonial nation building. “The identity of South Korea becomes national and at the same time, global, traditional and at the same time, modern” (ibid.).

Lee Alex Taek-Gwang’s assessment is complicated by the remarks of Paik Peter Yoonsuk (2018: 129) in his review of the way Korean cinema has been taken up by American Koreans such as Kim Kyung Hyun (whom I mention below). Paik calls on the sociologist Chang Kyung-Sup, who maintains that South Korea presents a rather unique state of affairs in relation to its modernization. There is the “coexistence of traditional, modern, and even postmodern cultures,” which doesn’t present any harmonious arrangement. Rather, it is the primary sources of ‘tensions and conflict’ between different generations who have experienced Korean history differently, and “who have been exposed to these diverse cultures in varying degrees” (Chang 2010: 15). Paik maintains that this situation is quite different from the West, which takes its modernity for granted, whereas the disharmony arising from such tententious coexistence provides an allure for an ‘historical consciousness,’ well served and explored by Korean cinema. Paik insists that Western theories of postmodernity (Baudrillard, Jameson, post-structuralism) have no currency in relation to South Korean modernity. “To understand South Korean modernity, one must be capable of doing the one thing that is beyond the grasp of post-structuralist theory: to reconstruct and to imagine the work from the standpoint of tradition” (132). One wonders if Paik’s position is not the very tension he rails against: between

the young and the postwar generation that worked hard and sacrificed so much for their children? Paik maintains that the global appeal of Korean television dramas around the world is because of their traditional values and moral conservative ideals: family loyalty, filial piety, sibling affection, spousal devotion, loyalty to elders and mentors, and tutelage of the young. This may well be, however, the struggle of youth to fit in a globalized world of consumerism is obvious—simply by the cultural pockets of resistance found in the various districts in Seoul.

EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS

What is more troubling, perhaps, is to read about the competitiveness (so-called education fever—*gyoyungnyeol*) and harshness of testing that prevails throughout the Korean educational system, abetted by the phenomenon of ‘manager mothers’ (*maenijeo eomma*) (Park 2007). This is a fierce struggle based on the idealized notion of a middle-class stay-at-home mother, or a mother that has more time in comparison with the working class or poor, to ‘manage’ and sacrifice herself for her young children by becoming involved in the private after-school education market (‘shadow education’). The change of name to Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEH) is an indicator that the purpose of education is to nurture competitive and creative individuals to enhance Korea’s global competitiveness. The development of the self-reliant entrepreneurial self that supports Korean liberal citizenship, where the rhetoric of *creativity* and *performativity* is promoted, is no different than what is taking place in Western countries on the grounds of meritocracy. The formation of this subject position is especially pushed through art and media education since ‘creativity’ and ‘performativity,’ as the key terms for one’s own entrepreneurial survival in a globalized competitive climate, have become the new signifiers of an ‘image’ society (jagodzinski 2010b, Chapter 6). Parents are held hostage to such an ideology, so it is no wonder that theirs is a ‘choice without a choice,’ to climb ahead in social mobility by sending their children to private after-school tutoring programs. Yet, as Lim Hyunsoo (2007) points out, it is precisely the traditional legacy of Confucian theory of ‘salvation’ where parent-child relationships (*hyo*) are understood to be inseparable, which sustains the excessive zeal for education in Korea. However, the burden of education falls on the mother’s shoulders. Reports on university competitiveness and assessment are equally alarming (Abelmann et al. 2009; Hong 2009). Suicide rates among students remain high.

The centralized military government of Park Chung-hee (1961–1979) instituted two critical educational reforms: Middle School Non-Examination Entrance Exams (*junghakgyo musiheom iphak*, 1968) and High School Equalization Policy (*gogyo pyeongijunhwa jeongchaek*, 1974). These two policies already stressed efficiency and competition. Past Korean educational critics (Ahn and Rieu 2004; Chun 2003; Kim 2003; Kim Ki Su 2004; Lee Ju-Ho 2004; Phang 2004; Sang-bong Kim 2004; Shim and Park 2008; Shin Joop Sop 2004; Sim 2006) debated the use of the ‘equalization policy.’ It seems clear enough that this was a push toward neoliberalist reforms. The call for reform is generally in the direction of less government control, more parental say as to what kind of schools they want, more school choice, more autonomy for selecting students and teachers, more autonomy to form their own curriculums, autonomous school management, and so on. The push is toward a continuation of a neoliberalist direction with less government control. This is a general trend in the West especially among OECD countries. The move is toward private and charter schools, voucher systems, self-reliant private schools, special purpose high schools, performance evaluation, and teacher assessment. Art and media education find themselves under the rubric of visual culture labor in this climate of neoliberalism. The turn is to technology and the performative self to learn the skills of ‘survival’ in a competitive globalized world. This has been the ‘reality’ fashioned by designer capitalism, and certainly the reason for the phenomenon of ‘wild goose’ families (*kirogi kajok*) where mothers with their children move overseas to be educated, while fathers stay in Korea and financially support them (Kim Kyounghee 2007).

POST-CONFUCIANISM/FEMINISM

The country, however, is undergoing a post-Confucianist development (in the West this is a post-Oedipalized decentering) when it comes to the family. There is a rise of divorce rates and an increase of feminist voices since 1997 when the house roles of men and women were reversed and melodramas spoke to the strong contradictions between Confucianist values of women at home and what was expected of them at work. Unquestionably, many of the melodramas (in Western terms, soap operas) as part of the *Hallyu* (Korean Wave) like *Autumn in My Heart* (or *Autumn Tale*, produced by KBS), *Beautiful Days*, and *All About Eve* spoke to these contradictions of traditional feminine passivity.

Women were portrayed to be the more assertive, rational, and independent of men, equally capable of handling difficult managerial positions (Lin et al. 2004). Ma Sheng-mei (2007) argues that melodramas such as *Han Ju*, where female repression is released, simply recode femininity under patriarchal disguise. In another context, Ma (2006) maintains that the Korean national character of *han* as the sentiment of savoring one's misery and self-denial, which dominates films like *Seopyeonje*, remains one of the key successes of the Korean Wave since it speaks directly to this psychic formation. *Han* is a 'transgenerational phantom.' It is passed on unconsciously from one generation to the next (see especially, Lee 2018). One can also understand this to be one possibility as to 'why' the melodramatic form remains so popular in Korea. Kim Sumi (2008) draws the same conclusion when discussing *Lovers* and *The Woman Next Door*. The Korean TV series, *Viva Women (Yeoja Manse)* as described by Park Bongso (2003), seems to be a version of US serial hit, *Sex and the City* (1998–2004). Yet, there are counterclaims as to why these melodramas have become a global-Asian phenomenon, extending to Thailand, Taiwan, the Philippines, and even to large audiences in Russian, Uzbekistan, Iraq, and Egypt (Hong 2014). Their popularity, claim popular cultural researchers like Paik (2018), is due to the traditional values that are being promoted, which appeal to many countries where tradition remains a core concern.

Women and feminists have made progress for equality in Korea. Kim Dae-jung's administration claimed that the twenty-first century is a women's century. A Ministry of Gender Equality was established. *Hojuje* (a patriarchal family registration system that restricts women's legal rights within family relationships) was challenged; namely, that only men, regardless of their age, were to be the head of the family. The saying: *Sam-jong-ji-do*, where a woman must serve only three men in her life: father, husband, and son, was severely criticized. There is a division between older and younger women when it comes to women's issues and the question of 'femininity,' not to mention queer issues (Hoffman 1995). A Queer festival in Seoul has been started (Kim Jeongmin 2007). Anti-Miss Korea Festival and the Menstruation Festival seem to reassert a generational division.

Educators who desire to embrace a visual culture perspective must face the contradictions that emerge with 'post-feminism,' which are just as prevalent in the West. Popular feminism in Korea emerges from a consumer neoliberal culture where the 'missy look' prevails (Lee Keehyeung 2000)

and ‘hot’ Korean models like Ha-Yul Kim, Ji-Hyun Jun, and Hye-Rim Park are adored and elevated as in every consumerist country. Yet, perhaps this ‘post-feminism’ in South Korea is deceiving? Can it be compared to its Western counterpart? Kim Taeyeon (2003) claims that the neo-Confucian ideology that Korea had adopted for over 500 years has *not* disappeared. In her assessment the neo-Confucian body, where the material vital force of *Gi* (in various Asian cultures as *qi*, *ch’i*, *ki*, *khi*), meaning ‘life force’ or energy, flows differently between men and women. This continues to gender divide the country despite ‘feminist’ appearances. Both men and women under Confucianism are to enter a state of selflessness, but this traditionally meant that men were to transcend their self and body while women were *confined* to their body. *Gi* flowed with the family body, but women did not need to strive for transcendence. They could not become wise sages. With the advent of postmodernism, specifically in June 1994 Kim argues, the Korean advertising industry was allowed to use foreign models and celebrities. The legacy of ‘subjectlessness’ of Korean women began to express itself through the conformity of consumption and fashionable beauty culture, including the free use of plastic surgery. To be like everyone else was the fulfillment of ‘subjectlessness.’ Kim (2003) maintains that the idea of the self as an individual whose physical limits are defined by the corporeal body was an unfamiliar concept in traditional Korean societies. Written in 2003, Kim’s assessment of Korean women no longer holds so tightly, or if it ever did. It is very much a generational issue, like second-wave feminism and postfeminism, very much a generational clash in the West, especially in the United States around concerns of beauty, self-independence, and pro-choice regarding abortion rights. Korean youth have become much more media savvy. However, the conformity issue is still very much present.

Lee Alex Taek-Gwang (2018b) writes about the Korean reality TV show called *Let Me In*, which specifically is about plastic surgery makeovers for young women. The series clones the US television series *The Swan* (2004, season 1), which had a similar theme of complete extreme makeover. An entire team was unleashed on a young woman’s body (coaches, trainers, orthodontists, psychologists, and cosmetic experts). Lee says, ‘Let’ (美人) has a double meaning in Korean: ‘let me live a happy life’ and ‘let me be beautiful.’ The Chinese character 美, or ‘beauty,’ is pronounced in Korean like ‘me’ in English, so “the title of the show indicates the symptomatic reality of Korean society” (209). As Lee maintains, the distribution of pleasure is intimately tied to

utilitarianism, which brings aesthetics and ethics together so that the distribution of such pleasure throughout a society is ‘just.’ Korean popular culture is shaped by an egalitarianism of pleasure. This “is an axiomatic rule to enforce the equal state of the individuals of the community. ... *Let Me In* insinuates the truth of Korean society, the truth that the neoliberal materialism of human capital becomes the dominant norm of life” (210). The signifier ‘plastic surgery’ as opposed to ‘cosmetic surgery’ reduces the suggestion of lust. The new norm is to enhance your human capital via your looks. It becomes a normative responsibility. *Let Me In* is a symptom of Korean biopolitics where to have ‘pretty eyes’ and a ‘high nose’ will give you an edge getting a job due to the hyper-competition. The idea is to improve the photo that appears on your job application. For Lee, Asian modernization functions with a biopolitics that is informed by social Darwinism. The “ideal community of citizens” is different than the West, more attune to populations as “entities of life” that constitute the forces of production, “a politics without citizens,” or a “modernization without liberalism.” In the twenty-first century however, the self-management of desire has become the fundamental idea of neoliberal egalitarianism, which paradoxically plays out as a winner or loser in market competition. Kim Ki-duk’s film *Shi gan* [*Time*] (2006) is an excellent example of questioning this neoliberalist conformity through plastic surgery, which remains so prevalent throughout South Korea. A brilliant assessment of this film is developed by Lee Meera (2012). I also explore this film in more depth in Chapter 5.

Korean birth rates are down as well as there is a decline in the preferences for sons (Chung and Gupta 2007). The sex/gender identities that are promoted traditionally place the division of genders wherein males are equated with Confucianist values of strength, agility, and leadership, while female femininity is equated with forms of shamanism. Women are feared for their chthonic power. They represent the moral fiber of the country and idealize its cultural values. This appears to be the ‘traditionalism’ that is so often evoked. The founding Korean myth features a ‘she-bear’ who outlasts a male tiger in a contest of endurance to become human (Hoffman 1995). The figure of Queen Min (1851–1895), *The Last Empress* (as opera, TV series and video), has been effectively used to unify the country within the discourse of *seggyehwa* or ‘globalization policy’ that was officially adopted in 1993 (Lee Hyunjung 2008). While the Tao of the national flag presents them in paradoxical harmony that can never ultimately be achieved in reality, these forms of traditionalism

where the woman remains idealized within Confucianist patriarchy never entirely goes away. The affective force of this foundational myth is effectively put to use when the nation seems to be losing its core ‘Koreanness’ as the world continually shrinks.

GLOBALIZATION/NATIONAL IDENTITY: THE FILM INDUSTRY

The centralized government of Kim Young-sam (1992–1997) initiated the *segyehwa* (globalization) project under the banner of national competitiveness (*gukga gyeongjaengnyeok*). Through individual competitiveness (*gaein-ui gyeongjaengnyeok*), the country shifted from centralization to more and more decentralization. The result was the economic growth of ‘turbo’ capitalism in an information age, which ended with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) crisis in 1996–1997. It was declared officially over in 2001 under the presidential leadership of Kim Dae-jung (Shin 2000). This was also the beginning of the Korean Wave (*Hallyu* or *Hanryu*) ca. 1998–1999. The anthropologist and youth advocate, Cho Hae-Joang (2000) wrote a long reflective lament on the IMF crisis in the year 2000. She reflected on the way the speed of (designer) capitalism was destroying the ability to sit back and reflect, rather than being consumed by commerce. Her diagnosis was that the country was divided between *kukmin* (a term made up of two Chinese characters meaning “nation” and “people,” sometimes translated as “citizen” or “people” [272]) and *non-kukmin*. The former group believed that the IMF would be driven out in the next three years (they were right), whereas the *non-kukmin* were despondent and had no plan. Cho had no use for what Westerners refer to “crony capitalism,” or “food chains” as she put it. These connections that took place in back room deals between politicians and businessmen, made possible by familial, regional, and alumni networks, the secretive networks of “private profit associations,” and the gangs of men that were satirized, yet “accepted” in films like *Attack the Gas Station!* (*Juyuso seubgyuksageun*, 1999). If you had no connection you became marginalized. *Kukmin* were patriotic nationalists and *gajok* families, the *chaebol* (conglomerates like Samsung, Hyundai, Daewoo, Kia, also CJ, Dongyang); Cho (2000) argued, they were responsible for the success of “turbo capitalism,” but this also eliminated any space for civil society, which was why the question of democracy remained ‘on the table.’ The official rhetoric was that the nation, the state, and the people were one and the same; the majority consisted of middle-class,

middle-aged male members of society. It was the manufacture of essentialized Koreanness that achieved such “compressed” economic growth, a “bubble” economy that then burst. As Cho (2000) wrote at the turn of the century, it became dangerous for an individual to think or act from a different subject position other than that of one’s national or familial identity.

With the outbreak of the IMF crisis, Cho (2000) addressed the way the notion of the eternal family was to be saved, which meant the patriarchs of the family, not the women, who then made up 40% of the labor force. This background informs Kim Kyung Hyun’s book, *The Remasculinization of Korean Cinema* (2004) written during this time, which reaffirmed conservative gender roles when so many men lost their jobs or became bankrupt. His psychoanalytic reading of films produced during this time (especially *Peppermint Candy*) has been criticized by Paik (2018) as being inadequate. Jung Sun’s (2011) *Korean Masculinities and Transcultural Consumption* shows the transition to the new transcultural forms of Korean masculinity in the postmodern globalized economy. Jung Sun examines *Hallyu*’s influence in South East Asia by way of the significance of Bae Yong-Joon’s soft masculinity on middle-aged female Japanese fans; the South Korean singer and actor, Rain’s (Jung Ji-choon) hybridized-masculinity of being cute (*kawaii*) (in English a ‘bad boy,’ childish) on middle-class female Singaporean fans; the cool masculine character of Dae-Soo in Park Chan-wook’s film, *Old Boy* as an example of *mugukjeok*. *Mugukjeok*, to recall, is Jung’s term for the effort to make South Korean stars Asianized and/or globalized, and to play down their Korean specificity (Jung 2011: 163). This is a masculinity characterized by isolation (alienation) and psychic fragmentation as expressed through transgression and violence. Finally, there is the masculinity of K-Pop Idol Boy Bands that displays what Jung characterizes as “versatile masculinity.” This is designer capitalism’s “manufactured masculinity” that each boy idol must display as his character. Jung (2011) now uses the term *chogukjeok* (cross- or transnational[ity]) as a tendency to retain national specificity while deploying it as part of a transborder and multinational cultural configuration, which is why the question of hybridity mentioned earlier has been raised by cultural sociologists. As in all pop idol stars around the world, South Korean popular entertainment industry is driven by designer capitalism and the desire for globalization (see Kang 2015). I have discussed the North American counterpart to K Pop Idol Boys as “The New Castrati: Men II Boys”

(jagodzinski 2005: 151–167). While Boys Bands have received so much attention, it should be made clear that K-pop Female idols as a cultural genre of patriarchal neoliberalism are just as well established in *Hallyu*. Gooyong Kim (2018) maps out this phenomenon and its close ties to Detroit’s Motown Record’s successful strategies for marketing girl groups. She writes: “K-pop female idols today are an episteme of neoliberalism that endeavors to transform the entire society into a grand Marketplace” (188). Together, the force of these Boy and Girl Bands is able to constantly innovate Korean popular culture and market it globally.

Two films, especially *Calla* (Song Hae-sung, 1999) and *Ditto* (Lim, 2000), were based on international hits and labeled as *True Love* and *Time-Travel Romance Films* by Anthony Leong (2002). They introduced romantic narratives that suggested immanent national rejuvenation was possible by reaffirming particular conservative politics that had developed under a compressed modernity (turbo capitalism) (Kendall 2002; Martin-Jones 2007). *Calla*, a film set in 1998, presents multiple perspectives on Korea’s past as experienced by the character Kim Sun-woo (actor: Song Seung-heon). Based on a romantic love story, each time Seon-woo is sent into the past, he experiences a misrecognition that enables him eventually to come to grips with the present. This is a good illustration of the ‘virtuality’ of Korean cinema as discussed by Kim Hyun Kim’s Deleuzian exploration of *Virtual Hallyu* (2011). Korean cinema has the capacity to create representations of the historical past, once more bridging tradition and contemporary capitalism.

Ditto also works with a historical revisionism where a conversation between eras occurs between two young people in their early to late twenties. They communicate between 1979 and 2000 through the magic of a ham radio. The film contrasts the level of political engagement that exists between the most recent generation and that of the politicized Minjung Movements of the 1970s and 1980s. The suggestion is that the 1990s youth have been depoliticized. However, there is also a gender politics being recuperated in such films, where the social and domestic spheres are once more normalized as male and female demands (Lee 2002). *Calla* and *Ditto* present time travel narratives that enable a historical past to be revisited and re-invested and re-imagined with national pride as a triumphant return of South Korean identity. Although the past could not be changed, the nation could learn from it. By re-living the past imaginarily, these films offer a self-reflexion, a pause

or a type of ‘decompression’ so that the trauma to the national psyche can be restored (see also Lee Sin Cheol 2003). This was precisely what the anthropologist Cho Hae-Joang (2000) was calling for: a self-reflexive moment to re-assess the advent of ‘turbo’ modernization.

HALLYU/CINEMA

Overcoming the IMF crisis became possible on two levels, which continue to impact the question of visual culture and media as to how educators are to decipher the Korean context. The first is the unprecedented centralist intervention by the Kim Dae-jung’s government (1998–2003) to promote the Korean cinema industry that built on the legacy began by Kim Young-sam government (1993–1998). It had already asked the *chaebols* to invest in the global cultural market. Most important was the protectionist policy of the screen quota system, which assured that Korean content was to be shown in local theaters (Dal 2008). The marshalling of *chaebol* investment into the film industry (Samsung, Hyundai, Daewoo—and later CJ, Dongyang) and the unprecedented mobilization of so-called netizen fund in 1999, where Koreans could invest in film projects through the Internet and receive a return of profit depending on how well the film did, were two key factors that led to the Korean Wave (*Hallyu*). Most of these ‘investors’ were people in their 20s (Dal 2006). They saw the return for their investment as well as contributing to the nation’s rebuilding. The government’s cultural policy was able to integrate both domestic capital and *chaebol* capital into the domestic film industries. Of course, this changed after the IMF crisis. The ‘old’ *chaebols* pulled out and the new *chaebols* (CJ and Dongyang) came in restructuring the distribution and marketing of film, building multiplex theaters to make film spectatorship a holistic leisure experience at the shopping mall. Kim Byeongcheol’s (2006) sobering appraisal of the Korean film industry, became packaged and centered on a romantic genre based primarily on market surveys and target audiences. In this process, cinema follows product design to conform to the desire of consumers, rather than being written with creative inspiration by an artist. The difference between this packaged cinema in the early 1990s and the blockbuster hits that followed was a result of the amount of money invested. Moon Jae-cheol (2006) perhaps offers even a glummer picture, arguing that contemporary Korean film no longer deals with social contradictions. “[T]he new generation of directors conceive of reality through film, or endow film with

more importance than reality” (39). Moon’s assessment of the way he reads film, calling on Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Lacan, is the closest I have read (in English) by a Korean scholar (not an American-Korean film scholar like Kim Kyung Hyun (2004, 2006, 2011) who resonates with my own stance as developed in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, I discuss the filmography of Kim Ki-duk who presents an exception to such an assessment.

The second level of overcoming the crisis of IMF has to do with the harnessing of the national psyche: namely, Cho Hae-Joang’s ambivalent indictment concerning *kukmin*, which she apologizes for in her despondent mood at the end of her summation of the country’s psyche that led up to the IMF crisis. National sentiment was a mobilization of the shared *han* of the Korean nation through the melodramatic forms of many television series and films—most famously perhaps through *Peppermint Candy*, which has brought feminist criticism from Kim Soyung (2006, 2010). The IMF-directed economic restructuring was often referred to as a “national humiliation” (Shim 2006: 31). More colloquially in English as: “I am F ‘d” (fired) or (fucked). *Han*, which shapes so much of the melodramas, refers to the historical suffering that Koreans have experienced (the invasions from other countries, the tyranny of rulers, the strict rules of Confucianism that discriminate against women, and the subjection to slavery in their distant past, see Lee Meera 2018). The counterpart of *han* is *chông*, which refers to ‘tender feelings,’ ‘emotion,’ or ‘affection.’ *Chông* emotionally binds people who are suffering from the same *han*. *Han* and *chông* are inextricably bound together (Standish 1992). This comes through television melodramas like *Friends* and the buddy/gangster films such as *Attack the Gas Station!* The media is able to harness the Korean psyche through the tensions of *han* and *chông* to achieve a melodramatic form that can deal with the Confucianist tensions between men and women.

Kim Soyung’s critique of *Peppermint Candy* drew on the *Minjung Movement* (as the film *Ditto* indicates) where the meaning of *minjung* takes on political connotations; it is a ‘people’ that are being oppressed politically and exploited economically, kept in a state of ignorance when it comes to cultural and intellectual matters. The political implications of *Minjung* become centered on a growing self-respect that Koreans have concerning their recovery from Japanese colonial occupation, the destructive division of their country into North and South with the longing for re-unification that continues to be so painfully evident, and the

need to remain independent given the absolute dependence they had on America and its allies following the war. Under Roh Moo-hyun Blue House 'progressive' administration (2003–2008), who sadly committed suicide over his corruption involving a Pusan shoemaker, Park Yeon-cha, a restructuring took place. I rely on Kang (2007) and Lee Sook-Jong (2005) for this assessment as a move toward further government decentralization that had already begun with Kim Young-sam's administration (1992–1997). As Kang succinctly put it, the reform policy of the Kim Dae-jung administration (1998–2002) was based on 'horizontal' state restructuring to realign state-market relations, while that of Roh administration was based on 'vertical' restructuring to realign central-local government relations. Roh's policies were 'post-Fordist.' Kang continues to paint the picture that this opened up the door to more foreign capital and a dismantling of 'fortress' Korea. The relationship between central government and regional (local) municipalities, while improved, remained highly problematic. Regional (local) governments remained in competition with one other, under the leadership of so-called CEO style mayors or governors, who invited foreign capital to make direct investments and deregulated bureaucratic red tape for local economic growth. Local politics became undemocratic and bureaucratic with mayors accumulating local power. The consequence of this situation was the emergence of a politics of consumption instead of a politics of production. Rhetorically, more and more deregulations were called for to increase consummatory spending.

The national cultural policy initiated by the two Kims was primarily an economic matter. The government developed the domestic film industry because of commercial imperatives. They began to see how lucrative it was to export 'culture.' The Culture Industry Bureau in the Ministry of Culture was established in 1994, and the Culture Industry Promotion Act was enacted in 1999 (Yang 2007). Ideological and cultural issues became secondary. The success came with blockbuster hits (outdoing Hollywood, so to speak). Their success was based on excessive violence and sexuality, as well as technological innovations. Samsung's support for *Shiri* (Kang Je-gyue, 1999), its first blockbuster hit, landed them huge profits, but the *chaebols* support began to pull out once profits were being lost. Roh Moo-Hyun's government reduced the screen quota to 73 days in 2006 (Dal 2008), not only because of the constant pressure by the United States, as backed by Hollywood, but also by Hyundai, KIA, and Samsung demand for more open markets as emphasized by the

WTO-driven free economy. While my grasp of Lee Myung-bak's government is limited, it seems the former mayor of Seoul and former CEO of Hyundai Engineering and Construction continued the decentralization of Korea as an open free market as outlined by his "Mbnomics" (arrived from the initials of his first name+economics). His intentions were to 'manage' or 'control' Korean globalization.

Koreans, it seems, are no better off than the rest of the capitalist designer world. Consumer debt is rampant. In 2003, the Korean Federation of Banks (KFB) reported that one out of every five Korean adults faced bankruptcy due to overdue credit. The 2008 'crisis' of capitalism made it worse. Lee Myung-bak was pro-United States. He had an education policy that gave greater autonomy to those who could afford schooling; the teaching of English was stressed and he had a tough stance against North Korea. No sunshine policy for him! The country swung even more to the Right. At that time, the provocation of North Korea's attack on the territorial dispute over Yeonpyeong Island underscored the tension between the two governmental regimes that became even more divided than before. It is a wonder then, what has happened since, with the ousting of Park Geun-hye on corruption charges via the Korean candlelight protests, a sign of increased political awareness and democracy, and then the election of Moon Jae-in in 2017, a human right's lawyer and former chief-of-staff to Rho Moo-hyun. Moon has gone out of his way to make contact and make peace and economic ties with North Korean 'Supreme leader' Kim Jong-un despite the tensions and mixed messaging by US President Trump and his administration in relation to North Korea. Generally speaking, Moon is bringing in more democratic reforms to South Korea, placing a check on the *Chaebols* by appointing Kim Sang-jo as his Chief Presidential Secretary for Policy, who was formerly the first chairperson of the Fair Trade Commission (KFTC). Perhaps the more significant reform has been the reduction of working hours from 68 hours to 52 hours. The workweek now consists of 40 hours with only 12 hours allotted for overtime. Employers who transgress this law now face a two-year prison sentence, or up to 20 million won in fines. This will help the well-being of the populace whose suicide rate per 100,000 is higher than Japan, China, India, and any OECD country!

It is well known that there is a generational divide when it comes to the political scene between the young and old generations (Lee 2004, 2005, 2006). Their political activism with 'candle light' anti-US

demonstrations and their Internet savvy of ‘cyber-electioneering’ helped Roh Moon-hyun win the 2002 election (see Kim et al. 2004). And, while the three daily newspapers (*Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, and *JoongAng Daily*) were critical of Roh, while the broadcast media supported him, it is well known that two of the three broadcasting institutions were publicly state run (Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)). This shapes political thought. However, the Internet can circumvent public information (Lee 2005). It is no accident why Rho picked his key officials from a younger generation of intellectuals and activists in their thirties and forties. In general, the young(er) generation call for regional reform, a foreign policy that is independent of the United States (the United States is held in ambivalent status) and has much more sympathy for North Korea. In this regard, the election of Lee Myung-bak was a huge blow to what was perceived as progressive policies by the Rho administration. It seems now, however, with the ousting of Park Geun-hye behind them, Moon Jae-in has brought in a new dawn to Korea with at least the easing of tensions with North Korea. Moon obviously has a next to impossible task balancing South Korean policies with the United States in its troubled relation with North Korea’s Kim Jong-un. It is a never-ending saga with never-ending tensions.

KOREAN FILM: TOWARD DELEUZIAN INFLEXIONS

When it comes to film, it is the films of the IMF post-crisis period that are of most interest to educators and to a younger generation. Auteur films of the New Korean Cinema of the 1980s created an auteur-realism (Moon 2006). Park Kwang-su, Jang Sun-woo, and Lee Myung-se (an exception) were critical of social reality and demythologized the masculinity of Korean cinema according to Kim Kyung Hyun (2004). This period, stretching from the military dictatorship of Chun Doo-hwan to the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s is explored by Lee Chang-dong’s acclaimed *Peppermint Candy* (1999) through the figure of its protagonist Yong-ho. The film spoke to more than just an older generation. *Peppermint Candy* especially lends itself to brilliant psychoanalytic interpretations regarding the trauma the Korean psyche has experienced. It gives special insights into the ambivalences that surround the feelings of *han*. Some, like Paik (2018), are not convinced of this, maintaining that Yong-ho’s suicide is attributable to betraying his desire, as “penitence for having caused the death of a teenage girl during the

Gwangju Uprising” (123). Nothing to do with a psychoanalytic reading like that of Kim Kyung Hyun. Yet, Todd McGowan’s (2007) Lacanian reading of this film interrogates the film’s reverse chronology that serves to undermine, rather than confirm a teleology that leads to Korean national identity. The repetition of the nation’s trauma is read as the folly for the recovery of a ‘lost object’ (in Lacanian terms the *objet petit a*) that cannot be found and was never had. Yong-Ho’s ‘going back’ does not involve changing the past or returning to it, as much as rejecting the nation and its ideal of progress. Magnan-Park Aaron Han Jun (2005) also argues that Yong-ho must address the mimetic traces that haunt him. Without that there is no future. However, there is also Kim Soyung’s (2006, 2010) remarkable rereading of *Peppermint Candy* along feminist lines. While McGowan argues that it is precisely not finding the lost object of unity, which Korea never had in the first place, Kim Soyung argues that the ‘origins’ of this object points to a time of innocence. Kim claims *Peppermint Candy* to be a male-gendered trauma. Perhaps this is too easy of an interpretation. *Peppermint Candy*, which appeared shortly after the IMF crisis, is more *noir* and relates closer to an older generation that can identify with Korea’s failed history of economic growth. Whereas Kim Sang-Jin’s film, *Attack the Gas Station!*, also produced in 1999, spoke to youth frustration and boredom (‘just because’ or ‘it’s just a joke’—*kunyang*), which was part of the social upheaval just after IMF crisis. Its narrative attempts to bring the delinquent youth back into the social fold; the last scene is the playing of the Korean national anthem-rock-style. The boys’ anarchy is once more contained within the symbolic order of nationalism.

Blockbuster films like *Shiri* (1999) can also be read psychoanalytically as a desire for unification; the Shiri fish can only exist in rare conditions in a select environment in Korea. It becomes the *objet a* of desire around which the will swells to satisfy its need. Yet, again like *Peppermint Candy*, it is cast in a melodramatic form (see also Furuhata 2004). Seo Bo-Myung (2006) maintains that these ‘unification’ films show that Korean identity at this time remains confusing and impossible to establish, giving rise to anti-US sentiment for the first time. The post-crisis films of popular culture speak to a much younger crowd. It moves toward a sensibility that many adults cannot grasp, a sensibility that remains socially political and critical, but must do so in a climate of designer capitalism that demands its pint of blood in profit returns.

Serious art and popular form implode to keep the potential of transformative change alive. It requires a different psychoanalytic lens than

the one Jacques Lacan offers, which is more adequate to grasp unconscious desire in such films as *Peppermint Candy*, *Shiri*, *Ditto*, and *Calla*. Lacan's theories (as offered via Slavoj Žižek's [1989]) may be less adequate to grasp the new sensibility of these post-crisis films. In this sense, Kim Kyung Hyun's (2011) shift into the cinematic theories of Gilles Deleuze (1986, 1989) after his own engagement with Lacanian psychoanalysis follows my own shift after a long bout with Lacanian psychoanalysis concerning culture critique. I too have turned to the body of work by Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987). It is the crime comedy that appeals to the urban cosmopolitan sensibility of Koreans, yet retains the residual comic humor that addresses the working classes—the comedy and satire that permeate the television reality-variety shows and the melodramas. Here of course are the films of Park Chan-wook, whose trilogy of films: *Old Boy*, a version of Kafka's *The Castle* where K (the figure of Dae-Soo) seeks revenge! *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance* and *Lady Vengeance* were perhaps the inspiration for Quentin Tarantino's own two-part *Kill Bill* postfeminist vengeance story. These films are loosely adapted from the manga (*manhwa*) mystery novels where the live-action characters are presented to the point of animation. These films take us outside the symbolic order into what I take, following Deleuze and Guattari's work, to be a schizophrenic world, a fantasy world where questions can still be raised, but they fall outside the banality of the Law, which simply moralizes and categorizes. The Law is completely erased enabling a mythical, transhistorical fantasy world to open up where the unknowable can take place. If Park Chan-wook is the Korean master of the movement-image (Deleuze 1986) that is able to open up this unknowable or uncanny dimension, Kim Ki-duk is the master of the time-image (Deleuze 1989), accomplishing the same filmic moves as to what is the unthought in Korean society. Kim works with an open script and little money compared to the blockbusters of designer capitalism. I explore his cinematography in Chapter 5. Park Chan-wook opens up the dimension of unknowability by confounding our coordinates of place. Police are useless in his narratives, as is the Law. It presents an uncomfortable world of lawlessness. His vengeance narratives, as a form of Nietzschean *ressentiment*, suspend the viewer between good and evil; evil sometimes becomes good, at other times good becomes evil, spinning moralism into disarray. Vengeance remains restricted to the personal realm; it does not cross into the public domain, nor does it directly attack state institutions.

The pervasive *materiality of the body* is what characterizes these films. For clowns, it is the tears of laughter that have replaced the tears of sorrows to laugh at the absurdity of neoliberal democracy where all the affective flows of energy have been captured, harnessed, and categorized to be sold through advertised aestheticized images. With the crime movies of Park Chan-wook, the body comes in visceral parts. Horrific, as well as for sale, capitalism will buy anything on the market. The body always has a price, be it for prostitution or as a body part. In these crime comedies, the very materiality of the body becomes a way to allegorize the ‘abstract’ unknowable crime of designer capitalism, itself the virtual, ephemeral, and fictitious world of xenomoney that is exploited. Kim Kyung Hyun (2006) points to the way spaces in Park’s movies have lost their specificity. One could say, after Deleuze, they offer a space that is “any place whatsoever.” There is an erasure of regional identity by being deliberately elliptical, anonymous, and atmospheric. The specific taste of *Gun mandu* (*gyoza*), the dumpling Dae-Soo eats for 15 years of captivity (the missing time between 1988 and 2003 when the country goes through its worst trauma to emerge as one of the most successful economic and technological advanced democratic in the world), becomes the *objet a* of remembered desire that enables him to trace its location to the Magic Blue Dragon, and find exactly who had imprisoned him. Only because of the excessive use of *buchu* (thin spring onions, Asian chives) does this become possible. Such specificity of a provincial taste is simply lost in the anonymity of city life. It’s as if he was searching for a particular McBurger in all those 1000s of McDonalds scattered throughout a city. As Kim Kyung Hyun (2006) points out, Dae-Soo’s voice becomes the *objet a* in *Old Boy*. It becomes an ‘uncanny’ Thing. It is not of this earth, outside the law, somehow transcendent. When he speaks, he speaks what would normally remain ‘unspeakable’ and ‘unutterable.’ This is what I would call an ethics of the Real in his discourse. For Deleuze, this is a virtual dimension. For Lacan, it belongs to the Real, a psychic register beyond the symbolic and imaginary. Yet, this ethical position loses its ground when he realizes he has committed incest without knowing it. Dae-Soo proceeds to cut off his tongue reinstating the ethics of the Real by becoming dumb. This is the right place to stop and play dumb, for what I have tried to do as an ‘outsider’ may not have been ethical? I cannot judge.

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CHAPTER 4

Exploring Korean Visual and Popular Culture

IMAGE CULTURE: THE KOREAN DILEMMA

Designer capitalism—in the forms of decentralization, globalization, and neoliberalization—has begun to erode the grand narrative of the collective national Korean subject. The student activism against the dictatorship of the state (Minjung Movement), the counter-hegemony to colonization (Japan) and the anti-Communist discourse (fueled by the United States) provide for a cohesive essentialist (patriarchal) identity, an identity that was mobilized to pull itself out of the IMF crisis in 1997. By-and-large it was an older generation who accomplished this, whereas its youth created a popular cultural movement that is now unraveling this essentialized identity. On the one hand, pop culture ‘deterritorializes’ conservative patriotic official nationalism and traditionalism—the lines of Confucian legacy and its homogenizing ideals. On the other hand, it gives no solace to the Left where the ‘culture’ of the people has been used for political gains. ‘Popular culture’ has quite a different meaning for the Left. Traditional folk and minjung cultural forms such as folk

All Korean names have been rendered with the family name first as is custom, except where the author’s name is published with given name first. A version of this chapter was published in *Journal of Research in Art Education* 14(3), 2013.12, published by Korean Society for Education through Art.

music, dance, and drama were deemed as the culture of the working class and peasants. They were used against the sanctioned discourses of nationalism. Such culture was claimed to be more authentic and healthier, drawing on traditional wisdom (Kee-Hyeung Lee 2000). There is a wonderful historical reflection, first written in 1994 well before the IMF crash, predicting its rise by Chung-Moo Choi (1995). She ends her remarkable ‘storied’ reflection on *Madang-guk*, as underground theater produced not only by the minjung activists to mobilize the masses, but also by the workers and farmers as a means of collective resistance (see also Kwang-Ok Kim 1997). *Madang* (literally means ‘yard’) refers to an idealized prelapsarian space where members of the agricultural communities collectively produced and shared goods prior to the advent of a capitalist market economy. *Guk* simply means ‘theatre.’ Imbued with romantic anticapitalism, *madang-guk* signifies a form of resistance to the capitalist mode of production that is governed by International Markets, and by the symbolic struggle of the people against the dehumanizing capitalistic forces (Chung-Moo Choi 1995: 253, 254). So, it seems neither the far conservative Right nor the far Left are entirely happy with what is going on!

Dator and Seo (2004) make the useful demographic division between six-cohorts within Korea: Colonial, Veteran, Democracy, Baby Boomer, Silent, and Network. Such cohorts address the tensions that are at play historically, as mentioned in the previous chapter. They also provide some sense of the psyche of each group. The Colonial Cohort (born between 1900 and 1920) is dying out. They remain revered as the generation who envisioned to build an independent Korea after the Japanese defeat in World War II, only to see the country divided as a consequence of the Korean War. The Veteran Cohort (1921–1933) were under colonial rule, educated in the Japanese language, and fought in the Korean War, hence they hold strong anti-communist feelings. Intense suffering and struggle characterized their lives, but they were victorious. Both these groups have no impact on current Korean pop culture. The significant cohort that is engaged in popular culture is composed of four distinct groups: The Democracy Cohort (born between 1934 and 1953), the Baby Boomers (1954–1971), Silent (1971–1981), and the Network (1982–). The older members of the Democracy Cohort (1934–1953) experienced Japanese colonial rule, while its younger members were influenced by American culture. Feeling ‘second best’ drove them to generate Korea’s economic growth, and hence the Korean wave (*Hallyu*)

is perceived as a point of national pride as the fulfillment of their desire to see Korea on the global stage, no longer on the periphery and no longer in the shadow of Japan or the United States. The Baby Boomers (1954–1971) are on the boundary in terms of their attitudes toward popular culture, torn as it were between the older Democracy Cohort and the much younger Silent and Network Cohort.

Baby Boomers dominate the economic and political scene, as they do in most postindustrial countries. They witnessed the democratization of Korea and were instrumental in beginning the technological revolution. *Hallyu* for them is also a sense of pride; they too spent their teenage years enjoying American and Japanese culture, although the latter was prohibited. Many from this cohort are film directors, music producers, and developers, as well as TV drama directors, part of the Korean Wave. My sense is that the older university education professors, including those who teach art, are still immersed by a ‘core’ Korean identity. They fit here as well. The Silent Cohort (1972–1981) and the Network Cohort (1982–) share similar attitudes to the *Hallyu*. Dator and Seo identify the Silent Cohort as the first ‘otaku’ generation in Korea. *Otaku* is the Japanese word that means ‘(your) home.’ It refers to many young men who spend all the time playing electronic games lost in the fantasies of cyberspace. They are perceived as growing up in relatively well-off material conditions and are not particularly into politics.

The cyberworld is of more interest to them. Media savvy, they are more into defining their own unique self-identities, products of neoliberal subjectivity. They are more cynical about national perspectives of the older cohorts regarding popular culture and *Hallyu*. The Network Cohort enjoys the music of its own country and language, not necessarily looking up to the United States. New Korean Wave stars belong to this cohort. Nationality and the origin of a cultural product are not so important as long as they are satisfied. There is no center/periphery divide for them. It is all a series of flows, flows that are managed by political as well as capitalist interests. Liquid capitalism, as described by Zygmunt Bauman (2000) applies here, as the key is to know how to sell the next wave of entertainers, and to promote them digitally.

So, when it comes to visual culture, there is no doubt that the address is to the younger generation—a generation that in Korea is “leading the broadband world with the highest penetration rate of over 73% of the total population” (Jza Hee-Jeong Choi 2006: 173, 180)—the so-called new media generation (Network Generation). For visual art and media

educators, it becomes necessary to grasp the changed psyche that has emerged and why popular culture is a response to the social and historical conditions that form Korea's history—what I have labored to understand in the previous chapter. In other words, in what way is popular culture the 'solution' for young people to respond to the social order that has arisen since 1997 within the designer neoliberalist culture of Korea?

CYBERWORLD: THE DRIVE (TRIEB), AND THE NEED TO BE SEEN

I begin with the cyberworld. Since in 2003, almost half (45.7%) of Korea's export was the video game industry. It has the highest export rate of all the culture industries (publishing, broadcasting, animation, cinema) (Jong-Hoe Yang 2007). Choi Jza Hee-Jeong (2006) describes the blog cite *Cyworld* (there are others like Weblog, Yahoo Blog, Daum Planet) where 90% of its Internet users are in their 20s. Each user, upon acquiring membership, is given free unlimited access to their own ready-made online space called 'Mini-hoppy,' or 'Hompy' as they are called. Choi makes a 'big-to-do' regarding the term "*chon* [cheong]" as it relates to blood-relations and the Internet (177). (It is not clear to me whether *chon* is equivalent to *chôn* as related to *han* in the previous chapter; that particular spelling is offered by Isolde Standish in 1992, and it does seem to be the case). Between legally united couples there is no *chon* (or *0-chon*). Parents and children have a *1-chon* relation. Hence *chon-relations* are established in a hierarchal manner—a *2-chon* relation is established between grandparents and their grandchildren. Aunt/uncle/niece/nephew are *3-chon*, with cousins it is *4-chons*. *Cyworld* enables a *1-chon* relationship on an 'accept' or 'reject' basis. But as a virtual *1-chon* relationship, it has nowhere near the equivalency of a lived relationship. Virtual *1-chon* relationships come and go with the flow. Yoon Kyong-Won (2007) seems to confirm this picture of the cyberworld. She notes that 'Koreanness' relates closely to the quality of "cheong" (242). Cheong [*chon*] refers to a "peculiar feeling that represents the state of affection and intimacy in close relationships" (Lee Soo-won 1994: 99). 'Cheong space' is therefore that intimate space of authenticity, which is a face-to-face relationship that cannot be equated with 'virtual' cyberspace relationships. As in all postindustrialized countries where technology has invaded the private/public divide, 'reality television' shows and 'variety' shows have become the counterpart to the anonymous cyberworld. Yet, the irony is that producers just as equally manipulate these reality and

variety television shows to construct a fabricated image like those found in cyberspace—perhaps more so. What I see happening here is an amazing leveling of social structure and authority taking place. The honorific system of Korean language is often ignored on the Web/Internet. The result has been greater communication between generations on a more equal basis, not to mention the greater political activism among the youth tuned into the Internet. Yet, this also means the break with tradition and authority. But there is also a certain loss of material ‘reality,’ which, as I argue below, has profound consequences for the kinds of images that are being produced. Gift-exchange is possible in *Cyworld* where Korean Won have to be exchanged into *Cyworld* currency, which are ‘acorns.’ I find this particularly interesting since the ‘transubstantiation’ of currency into a fantasy space of the *Cyworld* enables a form of disavowal to take to place as to the ‘true’ value of money. It becomes what is referred to as ‘xenomoney,’ fictitious in terms of what’s its buying power is and, once again, is one of the causes of the current crisis of capitalism—the over-inflation of value. This happens in video games such as *Second Life* as well.

Since 2001 there has been the advent of an ‘Internet novel syndrome,’ eccentric romance stories targeted at the schoolgirl teen market—the *Guiyeoni* stories [Cute One, He Was Cool, Romance of Their Own], the pen name for the Internet novelist Lee Yoon-sae. (The film hit, *My Sassy Girl*, comes from an Internet novel). Internet novels challenge the traditional language structure as well through informal and colloquial languages, Internet idioms, foul expressions, and ‘emoticons’ (Park Soo-Mee 2008). Within networks themselves teens create their own words and idioms called *Oegyeeo* (Alien Words), a language of their own and a fantasy space of their own. *Aegyo* is a good example. It refers to a cute display of affection, usually through a cute baby-like voice, facial expressions, and gestures. It means behaving in a flirtatious and coquette-like manner that is expected of both male and female K-pop idols. This challenges the established notions of what is to be ‘woman’ in the legacy of Confucianist patriarchy (in the West, the *Buffy* TV series did much the same thing.). It also mocks patriarchy through such postfeminist expressions. As Larissa Hjorth (2006) points out, gaming and ‘technocute culture’, like *Hello Kitty* and *Pokemon* in South Korea is quite deceiving for Westerners. The role of the ‘cute’ (*kawaii*) helps to convey mood and emotions of the user, and its Japanese roots suggests elements of juvenility and childishness (different from the English meaning of ‘cute,’ and much more sophisticated than the array of emoticons that have now flooded the English language). Cute avatars help facilitate forms of intimacy.

In my view, the Internet (and platform capitalist platforms like Google) is either creating more standardization or more diversification, or both at the same time. Given Google's position as developed in the introduction, it seems more like a complete conglomerate takeover. Surveillance and neuro-advertising are rampant in many countries, especially in India and China where their respective governments are instituting facial recognition technology to keep a check on its citizenry. Thus far Korea has not announced if they will follow suit in such an insidious policy. Internet technology is as significant as the invention of writing. So-called UV+CC (User Created Contents) where it becomes possible to share video contents in online spaces has become popular in Korea, further decentralizing media distribution (see *Futures of Learning (in Korea)*, 2009). The decorative items in the Mini-hompies are conventionally alike, yet the effort is made to self-expressively personalize the space. Besides this social motivation to meet 'friends' in a network situation—to have a close cadre of 'tribal' support, there is also the motivation to be 'seen,' the performativity of profiling oneself that is tied to the spectacular neoliberalism through forms of self-expression. The idea of 'selfies' has become a ubiquitous phenomenon that bring with it all its accompanying psychological issues of how one is viewed by friends and 'beyond.' You have to become noticed. Digital camera uploads have become common on all 'hompies.' Digital imaging technologies in cameras, camcorders, and camera phones are ubiquitous these days. Hence, perhaps it's no surprise that uploaded self-photos have become a "gateway towards stardom" (Choi Jza Hee-jeong 2006: 180). The phenomenon, called the *jjang* (best) syndrome directly addresses the entertainment business where different categories of *jjangs* are open to the netizen vote—*uljjan* (best face), *momjjang* (best physique).

This plays into what I call the *synoptic society* of designer capitalism (jagodzinski 2010), where only a few are watched (the celebrities, idols, and stars around which fandoms are created) while the rest, who are striving to be seen, are watching (over) each other. It is a surveillance society via ubiquitous interactive media that enable viewers and senders to be caught in a loop of voyeurism and exhibitionism. More insidiously, the synoptic society feeds platform capitalism in its pursuit to gather Big Data to steer the system as outlined in the introduction (Zuboff 2019). It is a logic of a "libidinal drive" (*Trieb*) (following Jacques Lacan 1998: 195) that enacts—not a desire to see and control—but a drive to 'make oneself [be] seen' in an idealized particular way. The digital camera as

part of a mobile phone, for instance, enables pictures to be sent and a network of social friends informed (much like Facebook to some degree). But its digitalized capacity means that pictures can be taken at random so as to capture the most goofy and awkward moments. It plays more with a ‘scan aesthetic.’ The perception of how one presents oneself is both controlled and yet ‘out of control’ (see also Hjorth 2007). Similarly, the mobile phone, according to Lee Dong-Hoo (2006), while it has not directly subverted the existing gendered system, it has given women a way to circulate their own expressions, as well as becoming more receptive to new media technology. Women have become more-so cultural producers because of the camera phone. This, of course, is a double edge sword, as self-surveillance and selling cosmetic products for companies online has become a clever and ubiquitous way for young people (generation Z, 14–24 yrs. of age) to make substantial money. Companies pay online sellers (e.g., in the West it’s Shopify, auction apps like Depop, Grailed, eBay, even Japanese anime resells well) on the number of ‘hits’ (visits) they are receiving as they demo products. Instagram following is a key indicator as to how well a seller is doing as links are then found to the sites where they have items for sale. Hype is created on Instagram by millennials modeling the clothes they wish to resell.

It is well known that the stars are staged and managed for public consumption—we have all become savvy to the artifice that is being created. Public images are now performative and stage-managed so as to manufacture a ‘personal’ identity. Popular culture teaches us that everything is contrived and so skepticism as well as cynicism is always in order. *Authenticity* or ‘soul seeing’ becomes a concern to ‘see through’ the deceptions that are possible. In this sense, the Internet is always dangerous, open to the allure of one’s desire. In the opening scene of Kim Ki-duk’s brilliant movie, *Samaria* (2004), the would be (non)prostitute, Jae-Young and her girlfriend, Yeo-jin are working the Internet, speaking to potential sex customers. Such activity is perceived as very non-Korean since it is strangers that are being summoned in virtual cyspace. In the next chapter, I explore the way Kim Ki-duk provides light on the more dark and insidious sides of Korean culture that comes across as so cool and hip. Korean television is full of these shows where young men and women try to discover what their potential date chosen is like. Their so-called reality shows are based on the culture of the ‘idol.’ There seems to be no end to the many dating shows where relationships are tested for potential deceit and faithfulness in the search for Mr. Right

(like *I am Your Pet*). Authenticity is of the highest priority, and that has emerged because of the very possibility of ‘inauthenticity’ all around via the Internet and cell phone image use. The Internet directly challenges the affective bonding of cheong [*chong*] that is said to be part of ‘Koreanness.’ The ‘virtual’ and the ‘actual’ are just the two sides of the same coin, each side is equally manipulated through designer capitalist means. Where then is the openness to the future?

PC BANGS AND THE GAMING INDUSTRY

My understanding of why there are not many dating reality television shows comes from grasping the relationship between Korean family structures and the gaming industry, a rather odd connection at first glance. I rely primarily on the fieldwork conducted by Florence Chee (2005, 2006) and others (Chee and Jin 2008, 2009; Hjorth 2006; Huhh 2008). The phenomenal growth of game parlors known as PC bangs (PC rooms) has come into existence as liminal spaces within the symbolic order, between work and home. They provide the psychic support needed for young people to survive the anxieties of everyday living. The earliest age one can typically start working in Korea is at 18 years of age. Low paying jobs (*arubait*)—called McJobs in the West—force youth to sell online game items, which nets them way more money than they can earn in the service industry. Since it is also highly irregular to move out of the family home until marriage, these PC Bangs as ‘third spaces’ have become important places to entertain friends, which is normally not done at home, nor (as a rule) does one bring his or her date home. Living with parents as a student simply delays time for ‘growing up.’

In Korea, like the West, ‘youth’ has become a signifier that staves off the onset of the responsibility of adulthood until one is 30 years of age. At the same time, the ‘Babyboom’ cohort tries to stay ‘youthful.’ Cosmetic surgery for the wealthy middle-class women, as discussed earlier in Chapter 3, is readily available. Kim Ki-duk explores this theme of cosmetic surgery in his film, *Shi gan* (2006). In many respects, this repeats itself in North America. The Baby Boomer generation does not want to ‘lose’ the sound of their music; they wish to remain ‘forever young’ (jagodzinski 2005). The PC bang becomes a place to entertain friends, meet with like-minded people, choose from online gaming, e-mailing, online chatting, Web surfing, visiting the matchmaking sites, watching people, eating, smoking, or simply being together with one’s

date or friend. It is a space territorialized by Korean youth. The opening scenes of Song Hae-Seong's film, *Pairan* (2002) capture the atmosphere of a PC Bang perfectly. Kang-jae is a small-time hoodlum based in Incheon. He stumbles around in a PC bang, forcing a sleeping patron to take his place. As in all designer capitalist countries addiction to video games is prevalent (a topic I have explored at great length elsewhere [Jagodzinski 2005]). Even video game deaths have occurred from exhaustion, and this is true in Korea as well. In June 2005, a 30-year-old player of a multiplayer online game murdered a 15-year-old player when he mistakenly thought he had killed his game avatar. Such incidents are sensationalized and politicized for conservative ends.

If truth be known, gamers are treated like 'rock stars' in Korea as they compete on the world stage of gaming. There are two aspects to the gaming industry (recall that exports of games are as high as 50%) that help us understand its lure. In the world of professional televised gaming, the winners are regarded as celebrities. They are pop idols, part of the Korean Wave, stars who are sponsored by *chaebols*. They have a huge teenage girl fan base. It is a way to harness young talent into the technology of the software industry—especially designing video games. This happens everywhere in the postindustrialized world, not only in Korea. The most famous spectacles of gaming—that can be said to rival professional wrestling matches in the West—are all confined to the consoles and headsets of StarCraft Tournaments. This seems to be a primary game. Being a 'nerd' or 'geek' (*pye-in*) can be cool, and it is a form of masculinity that can thrive in Korea. However, there are nuances here: *geim pye-in* refers to a gamer who is entirely consumed by video games, an extreme player who doesn't eat, sleep, and play all night long. A more 'normative' self-deprecating term is *geim maeniak* (transliterally 'game' and 'maniac' in English) (Rea 2017: 80). To be ranked in the gaming industry is of utmost importance as it's a way of defeating your rival at a game of skill. The institutionalization of eSports where world tournaments (World of Warcraft, Dota, League of Legends, Counter-Strike) are held yearly, which include high stakes prize money of six figures, has made this side of designer platform capitalism that much more lucrative.

This brings me to Chee's (2006) disturbing discovery of the "*Wang-ta* effect." The term describes isolating and bullying the worst game player out of the peer-group. Being 'different' is discouraged. Playing the game well enables one to achieve social acceptance. 'Friends'—be it in gangs or otherwise, a male-dominated phenomenon—has deep social roots.

The two-year military duty, I am speculating, does something to the body in its disciplinary regimentation. Kim Sang-Jin's film *Juyuso seubgyuksa-geun* [Attack the Gas Station! 1999] where one of the characters, Mu Da-po (a.k.a. Bulldozer)—the tall youth who always carries a staff marked 'Korean' (*taehan'gukin*) in red ink (see Abelmann and Choi 2005)—is always commanding his hostages to put their heads down, and then stand on them. This is a direct reference to military punishment. The military service bonds men together, and it also shapes their body and movements in a particular way. Song Seung-Heon, the television actor, had to abandon the shooting of a drama series when it became public that he had 'cheated' conscription by faking his medical record (Haut 2006) (something in the order of what George W. Bush did by avoiding military service! Or, Donald Trump who made up an injury to dodge Vietnam service). It seems here that masculinity is open for more exploration and questioning.

In closing this section on gaming, Hjorth (2006) explores the game *Kart Rider*. It is a primary example of cute-techno, which challenges such celebrity games like *StarCraft*. *Kart Rider* is retro in its look (like *Mario Brothers*) and has become a game where more and more women have begun to play. There is a distinctive Asian sensibility when it comes to technocute games. Companies such as NCSOFT have been active in hiring more and more female designers, playing into the postfeminism Korean style.

THE PLACE OF MELODRAMAS IN THE KOREAN PSYCHE

Postfeminism is alive and well on Korean reality/survival shows in terms of 'gender equity,' the power of femininity to seduce men, although it appears that the men are 'in charge.' Here the figure of the *femme fatale* is forwarded, but in its 'post' forms where desire can be openly exhibited. The postmodern-femme fatale has been set free from her traditional role as mother (the shadow figure of Confucianism that is played out by the consort in *The King and the Clown*, who in this film is punished). The best example I found in this regard was *tvNGELS*—battle of the sexiest women who do slow strips and sexy dances, teenage soft-soft porn. Girls are shown wrestling with each other; they are shown to be just as spirited as the boys. In the television show *SHINee Subs*, boys do basketball and other sports while Korean floor gymnastic champs show them that there are other talents that are just as important. There's even

a show called *Chatting with Beautiful Women*. Bong Joon Ho's film *Madeo* [Mother] (2009), seems to confirm that the role of 'mother' is certainly being questioned in contemporary Korean society, while Kim You-Na's (2005) *Women, Television and Everyday Life* confirms the way Korean women are working with patriarchal contradictions through television, which is the topic I turn to next.

A word now needs to be said about television melodramas in the context of the genres a visual cultural approach in education must consider. Melodramatic consciousness persists throughout the Korean psyche. Many melodramas are produced that target various cohorts with different structures of feelings and bodily affects. The divide seems to be between a postmodern sensibility of cynicism and irony as forms of psychic resistance by young people vs. addressing the question of national identity on more ideological grounds for an older crowd where the residuals of traditionalism continue to be felt. An exemplar here would be between a series like *Palace* (MBC Miniseries that aired in 2006) and *The Gold Bride* (2007). The storyline of *Palace* is that of a happy-go-lucky high school student who finds out one day that her commoner grandfather and the King of the country had made a pact that she would marry the Crown Prince. This is Chae-Kyung's predicament as she is quickly thrust into a royal marriage to a complete stranger. A spin on the Cinderella story, it is presented ironically and with great satire. Korea, as everyone knows, does not have a monarchy like England, so the fantasy space is played for laughs to work out masculine/feminine relationships, as well as class differences. Her Prince, named Shin, turns out to be mean and selfish with little intent of breaking up with his previous girlfriend, and with every intention of divorcing her in a couple years. What is so funny is the satire around the fine arts that Chae-Kyung is studying, as well as the social reversal between husband and wife in the home (man cook/housecleaner—woman/boss), which happened due to the 1997 IMF crisis when so many men lost their jobs and women went to work.

In contrast to the satire and cynicism that plays with the Cinderella story in *Palace*, *Gold Bride* (or *Bride from Vietnam*) presents quite a different approach to the Cinderella fantasy. The IMF crisis facilitated a cinematic reimagining of the national past in line with the 'new conservatism' and the rise of an essentialized nationalism. This legacy has serious consequences for the entire question of multiculturalism in Korea as Kim Myoung-Hye (2008) shows when reading the Korean television drama, *Gold Bride*, which began its broadcast in June 23, 2007

and ended Feb. 3, 2008. The story featured a ‘Lai Dai Han’—Jin-ju as the main character. A ‘Lai Dai Han’ is a racially mixed person born to a Korean father and a Vietnamese mother during the Vietnam War. ‘Lai’ means ‘mixed blood’ and ‘Daihan’ is the Vietnamese pronunciation for Korea. So, literally a ‘Korean of mixed blood.’ The ‘gold bride’ is a metaphor for Vietnamese women who are stereotyped as being good mothers, self-sacrificing, obedient, lifelong commitment to marriage and most of all innocent and pure, coded as ‘virgin.’ Jin-Ju is a Cinderella bride—low social class, good-natured, with unfortunate family circumstances and always awaiting and appreciating male help. Her reward is that she is accepted as a Korean. Within the narrative Jin-Ju is represented as the ideal wife, happy to be pregnant as opposed to Ji-Young who left Joon Woo for a rich businessman. In other words, Ji-Young represents self-independent and selfish Korean women, the *femme-fatales* who are simply after their career, self-achievement, and the good life. Jin Ju seems to have no desire of her own. Her Vietnamese culture and language is absent and her feelings are by-and-large silenced, simply her anxiety of being Jun Woo’s wife comes through. She remains isolated, alone and alienated. Kim Myoung-Hye (2008) argues that multiculturalism as presented in this series shows that it is more an assimilationist policy and gendered along female lines. Vietnamese women are the safest group of incoming foreigners since they are subsumed by Korean patriarchal system. Male foreigners on the other hand are considered a threat. Kim Myoung-Hye further claims that ultimately Koreans see Vietnam as an inferior culture to their own. Jin Ju’s ‘transnational’ identity doesn’t exist in the symbolic order.

Lin (2002) compares two melodramas: *Autumn in My Heart* (aka. *Endless Love 1*) and *Friends*, to show how the first melodramatic series tries to reestablish Confucianist ethics and values of the family, ending tragically (both hero and heroine die), while the second melodrama, *Friends*, the hero and heroine have a happier ending since the location of the drama takes place in a ‘third space’ (Hong Kong), where it may be possible to negotiate frowned upon relationship (here it is between a Korean boy and a Japanese girl). These two melodramas chart the distance traveled toward the questioning of Confucianist family values since the classic study of Korean women watching soap operas like *The Sand Castle* in the United States in the seasonal year 1988, which raised similar questions concerning family values (Lee and Cho 1990).

When it comes to targeting cohorts, perhaps there is not a better example than the drama *SKY Castle* (JTBC TV, 2018–2019), the name refers to a fictional rich suburb of Seoul. These are the stories of four very rich families, especially the housewives, who spend exorbitant amounts of money, time and energy to make sure that their children attend Seoul’s top-ranking universities: Seoul National, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) and Yonsei University. These top three institutions form the acronym: SKY. Its satirical stance plays on a well-known saying that if your children are to be successful, then four things are required: a mother who is skillful at manipulating the system, she knows how to get her children into the best schools and have them hired; a wealthy grandfather who will fund their schooling and higher education; a nanny who will nurse, care, and love the children, and finally a father who has no time nor interest in such affairs as he is too busy at work, or perhaps involved with a mistress. The popularity of this drama series in China (where Korean films and television are forbidden) speaks to the same concerns of parents wishing their children to succeed as the competition is just as intense with its own form of ‘shadow education.’ The Haidian Huangzhuang district of Beijing, where the universities are centered, has certain parallels to this fictional Korean suburb. Bong Joon Ho’s 2019 acclaimed movie *Parasite*, presents, again satirically, the concerns of the wealthy for their children’s education, the housewife naively believing anything ‘sold’ to her about their abilities and creativity.

The tensions within the postfeminist discourse in Korea revolve around the suppression of sexual desire and the lingering tensions of tradition that revolve around matched or arranged marriages (*chungmae kyorhon*) and love marriages (*yonaе kyorhon*), and the whole idea of gift giving. For Korean girls, romance is the major concern rather than sex (Kong 2003). It is romance that becomes linked to sexuality and its development. Yet, the social regulation of girls’ sexuality—the fear that they are being labeled promiscuous—takes away the opportunity to tell their story and express their desires. Rather, the libidinal desire is placed on the emphasis on emotions and relationships, which then obscure the recognition of sexual feelings. While a girl’s sex drive is considered as intense as a boy’s, she is taught to repress her desires. In popular culture, the floodgates of desire have been opened. Television series like *tvNGELS*—which would be viewed as immoral by many older adults—become a means of self-expression of sexual desire. Sexual abuse,

a repressed discourse in Korean society, is always in the shadows—as is prostitution. The conflict between girls’ sexual feelings and actual sexual behavior within the social and relational contexts of everyday life are worked out through the ironical melodramas like *Palace*. This is why, Kim Ki-duk’s amazing film, *Samarina* (see Chapter 5), which deconstructs the prostitute/friend relationship and the daughter/father relationship proves so disturbing to the Korean psyche. It exposes the impossible contradictions that are being worked out between consumer society and tradition. Kim Eun-Shil’s (2003) analysis of teenage prostitutes seems to confirm Kim Ki-duk’s insights. In Korea, where the labor market excludes teenagers, the only way a teenage girl can access money is from her parents or by having a side job. “Prostitution is considered to be a type of side-job that is the easiest and pays the most” (Kim 2003: 349). It raises money for consumer goods. In *Samarina*, the two girls were saving money to go to Europe, a fantasy that was put inside the head of Yeo-Jin by her father who drove her to school each day. In pop culture (like *Palace*), it is easier to ridicule old authoritarian rules and traditional values without a fear of censorship.

Melodramas pull at the heart strings, and have, of course, received a great deal of attention by feminists in the Western context since the 1980s (Kaplan 1983). These narratives rely on what Deleuze (1986, 1989; Kim Kyung Hyun 2011) called the ‘affection-image.’ This image is that of a close-up—*faciality* is what sells in designer capitalism. The closer one is brought up to the K-pop idol’s face, the closer that one recognizes the brand, the closer that one can see ‘real’ tears and emotions, the more potential increase for a sale and ‘authenticity,’ which is continually allusive and impossible to identify. This form of representation is continually deconstructed by film auteurs such as Kim Ki-duk (Chapter 5) and Joon Hwan Jang’s *Jigureul jikyeoral* [Save the Green Planet!] (2003). Both directors challenge the melodramatic form for its easy sentimental sell through an extraordinary sense of irony as well as tragedy. In contrast, Bong Joon Ho’s *Gwoemul* [The Host] (2006) and *Madeo* [Mother] (2009) seem, at first hand, to be much like spectacular Hollywood blockbusters. Yet, on a closer look, Bong Joon Ho’s cinematography works on many subtle levels when raising questions about Korean society. Lee Meera (2018) points out that the city of Seoul and the Han river, from which the ‘monster’ emerges (the ‘host’) due to effluent waste of an American laboratory experiment gone wrong, has undergone multiple historical and social ordering of time and space.

The changes of the city's name from *Hanyang*, then *Hansungbu*, and finally, *Kyungsungbu* mark its historical transformations to contemporary times with the introduction of democracy and US militarism. *The Host* highlights the postmodern features of Seoul that inhabit the national *unconscious*, the film illustrating the epitome of “the spectacular and highly visualized urban space through a series of panoramic shots of imposing postmodern bridges and skyscrapers” (n9, 745). Bong's films like *Snowpiercer* (2013) and *Parasite* (2019) have brought him much worldwide acclaim, including a Hollywood nomination for the best director. Melodrama, however, has been ‘the’ genre to manage globalized desire brought on by capitalism. Most often it offers black and white moralism with strong sense of emotions. Korean melodramas speak to the *han* of the country, and to the turmoil of transition, especially at the level of family relationships.

THE KOREAN MUSIC SCENE: TRANSHYBRIDITY

It is not easy to say much about music, primarily because it changes so quickly and it takes much time to get into the music ‘scene.’ In my own study of Western pop music (jagodzinski 2005), there is no question that fandom forms another ‘secret’ space that keeps the adult world out, and where body movement, spectacularized lighting effects turn the concert into a participatory event of neo-tribalism. Fans are held together by a common affective structure. The arrival of rap with Seo Tai-Ji and the Boys in 1992 is seen as the watershed event for Korean New Wave music (Howard 2002). They are said to have addressed the thoughts and emotions of adolescence in their songs: the anxieties of education, parodying adults for their elitism, and expressed a desire for North-South unification. All values that still engage contemporary Korean youth. Perhaps their Western *antithetical* counterpart was the anarchism of Kurt Cobain of Nirvana, who ushered in ‘grunge rock’ and died of suicide in 1994? The Korean scholar Stephen Epstein (2000) has written a carefully documented essay on the adoption of punk rock in Korea. This sense of anarchy should be somewhat surprising since it comes to Korea in 1994. The nation in 1994–1996 was not in an economic decline: “the country was enjoying its highest-ever levels of per capita income” (8). It was prosperity rather than the economic depression that followed with the IMF crisis of 1997 that went hand in hand with punk. Epstein attempts to offer several factors as to how the beginnings of globalization (*segyejwa*), the Internet and increased travel abroad by Koreans began to open new possibilities.

Punk was contra to the affluence of the *Apgu-jung* culture as well as Sao Tai-Ji and the Boys. It tried to create a distinctive Korean punk, more nationalistic than hybridic. However, it was this latter movement that ‘won out’ as to the direction that music took in Korea (see Hee-Eun Lee 2006). Seo Tai Ji and the Boys became more and more independent of the television network’s control over them. They could choose their own times to appear before the cameras, for instance. But, such autonomy in the climate of globalization would not last. The manufacture of media and K-pop fell into the hands of JYPE (JYP Entertainment). In 2018, it became JYP 2.0, revamping and expanding its industry, emerging as the dominant company, surpassing SM Entertainment, its rival. JYP ‘trains’ the emerging pop bands to sing and dance so as to fit into what Jung Sun (2011) has called the notion of *chogukjeok* (cross-or transnationality). For example, their policy of ‘globalization by localization’ meant that foreign talent and non-Korean talent were pulled into the K-pop scene. Well-known examples include Nichkhun 2PM, a singer and actor who is a Thai-American; Jia and Fei from *Miss A*; and Saba, Moma, Mina and Tzuyu from *Twice*. Chinese talent is also brought in like *Boy Story* (average age is 13). This describes the transcultural production and consumption of hybridized Korean popular culture signified by the ‘idol boy bands.’ JYP turned to the West to renovate the managerial style of the K-pop groups he produced. “Creativity comes from happiness” is a slogan borrowed directly from platform capitalism where well-being and leisure time blurs work and play. Like Steve Jobs, the former CEO of Apple, or Sir Richard Branson of the Virgin Group, JYP (J.Y. Park) is the face of the K-pop industry. *Twice*, a K-pop girl’s band of nine girls under the JYP company, for example, have learned that selling albums (CDs) leads directly to more concert attendance and fan club adulation. Anyone watching their videos is immediately struck by the quality of the setting, the choreography, the outfits, and the blend of Korean and English.

The previous generation of boy bands: H.O.T., Sechs Keis, Uptown and Shinhwa, according to Doo-Bo Shin (2006), were managed and shaped to dance and sing by Lee Su-Man, founder of SM Entertainment along the usual route of finding the best talent and putting them together as a package. They seem to be fashioned along the same lines as the Boy Bands that were popular in North America (*Backstreet Boys*, *N Sync*, *New Kids on the Block*), as well as girl bands too: *BoA*, *Wonder Girls*, *SNSD*, *Brown Eye Girls*, *Kara*, *See Ya*, and so on. Yet, I listened

to a number of songs by H.O.T, especially “We are the Future” and the accompanying video. I was astounded that this band addressed the same adolescent concerns as Seo Tai Ji. In the music video to this song, a girl who is about to commit suicide, is suspended in the air as the group refers to all the worries she and youth face: gang bullying, school abuse, physical punishment, stealing and revenge. The song implies that if these negatives are stopped the teen suicide rate would drop. I would also say their dancing was just way above what Michael Jackson could do (before his tragic death). The affective body at work through Korean content and a distinct Korean sound has an extraordinary appeal. Rather than any ‘nationalist’ message, it seems personalized to the everyday lives youth lead. The new crop of idol K-pop boy bands: Super Junior, SHINee, 2PM, 2AM, B2AST, MBLAQ, as managed by JYPE, are designer capitalist driven. As Jung Sun (2011) maintains, a group like 2PM must practice ‘versatile masculinity.’ By this, he means that each individual band member (there were seven of them, now reduced to six with the departure of the American-Korean Jae-Beom for posting some ‘hateful’ comments about Koreans) must perform a particular gendered ‘masculinity’: ‘cute’ (*kawaii*), or ‘beasty’ (to be a *jimseungdol*). They appear in reality and variety shows as well as melodramas to show their ‘authentic’ manufactured sides to enhance their fan base.

In sum, when it comes to film, the audience is much more transgenerational. It seems to be a transitional art form between adults and young people. However, there is no question that K-pop idol culture is a space and time that is always actively being created and recreated in distinction to any adult invasion. In many respects, popular culture is tribal, which causes anxiety for those who do not fit in. It is not a space of resistance, as is so often theorized. It is a place of coping with the anxiety of everyday life—teenage concerns over the other sex, school life, finding a job and so on by pushing back traditions that weigh on their backs. The transcultural hybridity of K-pop is making ‘tradition’ into a simulacrum, a pastiche style that pervades throughout global capitalist designer culture in general.

TELEVISION ‘REAL-VARIETY’ SHOWS

I follow ‘some’ of the analysis made by Moon (2006) and Li (2009), disagreeing in part with both their analysis, but certainly accepting the premise that there is a divide between the ‘older’ Korean Wave film

directors and the more contemporary ones—what are referred to most often as the 386 generation (the name of a popular Intel CPU chip), the younger baby boomers (younger than most parts of the world because of the Korean War). Their sensibility moves away from the more overt social realism, which is why they are so-easily dismissed by the more critical social leaning Left, who remain distanced from popular culture as such, writing it off as either American infiltrated imperialism, or totally swallowed up by what I am referring to as designer capitalism. But this is deceptive. The collapse of so-called art films with popular genres, along with the technologies of digitalization has led to new possibilities.

If the ironic melodramas are the girl's narratives that deal with their patriarchal tradition, Korean film has largely been male territory. In the Korean context, the characters that perform the social and political commentary come in two forms that are often, but not necessarily combined together—clowns, fools, and criminals through the crime-comedy genre (Li 2009). To be bold, I would say that the clown/fool figure addresses the collective working-class people (it is on Korean television networks as well—the key example here is *Muhan Dojeon* [Infinite Challenge] where the Korean character 'reckless' has been left out of the show's title (무한도전) to convey the idea of 'impossible or unreasonable' (personal communication with Kim Hye Kyung). As a 'real-variety' show, all the challenges are silly, absurd or impossible to achieve. There are at least five levels of running commentary from the producers, the participants, and sometimes other sayings and symbols appear on the screen. These 'voiceovers' thicken the otherwise thin flat image that is presented where 'nothing' really is happening of any dramatic significance. Image and sound are in continuous flux in a disjunctive mix. The hype of carnival is needed so that everything seems upside down, moving, and off balance. If there is no action, there is no spectatorship. Lin (2002) maintains that it is precisely Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of carnival, which characterizes certain films in this globalized era.

The satirical and clownish nature of *Muhan Dojeon* points to the changed psyche of the nation that also comes through in the post-crisis films. The foolish clown figure's sensibility—that of laughter, confusion, inadequacy, and so on, is in the opposite direction to the tragedy and trauma of Korean history. The parodic laughter of the clown turns to the body—the affective response of the body is what is crucial here. The clown/fool re-establishes the link between the individual and the collective, between the public and the private. It enables, once more, a safe way

to laugh at authority by playing ‘stupid’ and being naïve. Clowns and fools are granted the right not to understand the political games, but to tease, confuse and to hyperbolize life, and the authority that is said to be in ‘control.’ Clowns and fools seem to be no threat to the political affairs as such. They are given the right to parody others, but as ‘persons,’ they are quite apart from who they ‘literally’ are. It is a ‘masquerade’ rather than a mask. There is no other way of grasping why *Wang-ui namja* (Lee Jun-ik 2005) [The King and Clown] was for many years Korea’s highest grossing film. Only in recent history did Bong Joon-ho’s *Gwoemul* (2006) [The Host], Korea’s ‘Godzilla’ film, overtake it in box-office sales. Some fan(addicts) saw *The King and Clown* 45 times, chained to its fantasy and the joy of its laughter. Set in the Chosun Dynasty, the last kingdom in Korea, which maintained a policy of closure to foreigners, especially Western influences, the story appeals to Korean traditions with its amazing costumes, magic, and high wire balancing acts. It is the body in precarious balance—on the ‘tightrope’ as the clown risks death for a ‘laugh’ that makes this a political satire, an allegory of what is happening in contemporary Korea. No wonder the film captured a regional audience as well. It pokes fun at authority—the childlike behavior of King Yeonsan, who wavers between madness and rage, to being caught by homoerotic, if not homosexual desire for a clown, Gong-gil. It’s as if the movie spoke to the folly of Korea remaining a ‘hermit kingdom’ for now it has opened its doors to venture capital. Read another way—it laughs at traditional history, yet respects its presence. This is a marked departure from Kwon Taek Im’s 1993 masterpiece, *Seopyeonje*, which also captured the tradition of the pansori singers—but it is a tale of suffering. Here, we are into belly laughter.

SAVE THE GREEN PLANET! CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Jang Joo-hwan’s *Jigureul Jikyeora!* (2003) [Save the Green Planet!] best exemplifies a political allegorical dimension of Korean film, which characterizes the schizoanalysis of capitalism as theorized by Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987) as briefly mentioned in Chapter 3. This is cinema of delirium where the full flight of its madness reveals the true nature of desire—a battle against the abstract materialization of capitalism that manages the flows of libidinal energy that is colonizing the global unconscious. What has been made virtually ephemeral by designer capitalism comes back through the body as ‘bloody humor’ and ‘bodily horror,’ entering the screen as a visceral force that penetrates the nerves of the spectator,

evoking a sort of ‘nervous laughter,’ disturbing the comfortable aestheticized life that is being sold on television. Television, both in Park Chan Wook’s criminal trilogy (*Old Boy*, *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance* and *Lady Vengeance*) and in Jang Joo-hwan’s film, is a reminder of its effects. Dae-Soo, Park’s key character, watches TV throughout his 15 years of imprisonment: it acts as his teacher, time-keeper, calendar, home, church, and a ‘friend’ to a lover. In *Save the Green Planet!* the television acts as a distancing machine of surveillance. As spectators, we see the tortured face of the CEO of a chemical company (the character of Man Shik Kang), who is believed to be an ‘alien,’ but there *is no feeling for his pain*. It is just like those thousands of images of news violence we see every night on our televisions, and the non-caring attitude of *Chaebols* for their workers. In the closing credits, the television is shown floating in space with a crack in it.

I shall close this chapter with a few remarks as to why *Save the Green Planet!* should be considered as the exemplary film that demonstrates what I have been articulating regarding Korean popular culture, and then conclude with what I am personally trying to do in visual culture in my own theorizing. *Save the Green Planet!* is a response to the fight for a world we can still believe in by a ‘people-yet-to-come,’ as Gilles Deleuze (1995) would say. In my view, Lee Byeong-gu, the main protagonist, embodies the critical sensibility of popular culture (the horror comic books and sci-fi comics that are found in his home), which are contra to the ‘popular’ culture of designer capitalism (like K-pop, *Hallyu*). Jang’s film is politically astute from an anamorphic point of view. Byeong-gu comes to his conclusions about the condition of the ‘planet’ from a sideways view, a view that is askew from the ‘normal’ direct head-on approach of looking. If there is agency, it is not a collectivist one, but a very personal one (like that of the director Jang Joo-hwan himself). Byeong-gu is a nomad (he lives in a remote house up in the mountains, on the periphery). He doesn’t seem to exist in society—he is an ‘organ without a body.’ He is a schizo, in Deleuze and Guattarian terms. The Fool is also by his side—the childlike circus-performer girlfriend, Su-ni, whose unusually heavy body can do amazing acrobatic stunts on a tightrope; it is the tightrope that is the metaphor for the precarious balance of life. Together they kidnap a corporate CEO (Kang Man-Shik) who Byeong-gu believes is an alien. Seemingly insane, Byeong-gu begins to torture Man-Shik, believing he has extra powers and extra strength. His view of this alien invasion is informed by a stack load of books and movies—science fiction, TV series, comic strips, B-movies, and so on. All of this informs the

backdrop of his (il)logic, complete with his own ‘scientific explanations’ and drawings. His schizo-fantasy is completely nurtured and fueled by popular culture. A flashback to his childhood (prompted by the CEO reading his blood-soaked notebooks) shows him wearing a Superman T-shirt and hiding E. T. toys. The memory harks back to the sensibilities of the 386-generation filmmakers and the shared collective sensibilities of the working class (Li 2009).

Byeong-gu’s working-class subjectivity and the history of labor unrest in Korea are addressed throughout the film. With the music ‘Over the Rainbow’ playing, the flashbacks detail the personal history of Byeong-gu: his coal mine-working father is crippled, losing an arm in an accident; his factory-working mother is poisoned by a chemical leak; his girlfriend is beaten to death in a labor strike, and as a powerless youth, he suffers from constant abuse by a bully, beaten in school, abused in prison and in the factory. He becomes insane with revenge, leaving a trail of psychopathic killings. Body parts from those that hurt him are neatly stacked in jars. The alien CEO, who always maintains a dominant position, continually questions Byeong-gu’s sanity. But his revenge speaks to the repressed anger many feel in Korea since the 1997 IMF crisis.

The cartoonish idiocy of the two souls that are trying to save the ‘planet’ ends in a surprise. In the next to last scene, the executive admits to being an alien and then proceeds to spin an impossible cartoonish tale as to how his race was trying to ‘save’ the earth. All the clichés from Stanley Kubric’s film 2001 are employed. It is utterly hilarious. Byeong-gu is told that his mother was simply part of a genetic alien experiment to rid humanity of a ‘violence’ gene. The CEO agrees to contact the alien Prince at the executive’s company factory. It was a meeting Byeong-gu had always demanded. In the factory, CEO Kang overpowers Byeong-gu and renders him unconscious. We then discover that Kang was an alien after all; he is beamed up into his spaceship! It turns out that he is the Prince, who then orders that the planet earth to be destroyed as a failed experiment. *Save the Green Planet!* is an allegory for the fear, anger, and confusion that Korean working-class suffered in a capitalist conflict they new nothing about. ‘Aliens’ have indeed destroyed their planet (Korea).

It is the philosophical work of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987), which addresses the schizophrenia of designer capitalism, and the way affective desire is continually being appropriated for profit via Big Data through prosumerism, as developed in the introduction. Not all films

speak to this appropriation like *Save the Green Planet!*—apolitically and non-directly so to speak, through an allegorical form. Much of popular culture is simply designer-driven. What is an art and media teacher to do if he or she does not want to buy into the capitalist game? In my own work (jagodzinski 2010), I theorize that, if you want to ‘save the Earth,’ in a time when darkness seems to be settling on it through our own making, what is commonly now called the Anthropocene, it becomes necessary to identify an ‘avant-garde without authority.’ To identify those artists, like Jang Joo-hwan, who are providing insights into the slow destruction of life via capitalist hubris and growing separation between the rich and poor. Whether these insights can come from popular culture or the world of art, we can take the lessons of these artists into our own education and into the classroom, so that we too undergo a curriculum change. In these past two chapters, I have tried to grasp the Korean situation as an outsider to that culture. In some sense, I feel I can comprehend the enormous tensions that are prevalent between the various societal factions that have generated a unique singularity of expression through art, television, K-pop (*Hallyu*), and cinema. The next chapter I look in depth at the bad-boy director of Korean cinema Kim Ki-duk to further grasp its cultural paradoxes.

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Kim Ki-duk's Cinema of Imperceptibility: The Flaying of the Senses

CONTEXTUALIZATION

In Chapter 2, I tried to show the many parallels between Tao and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy. In the next two chapters, I did my level best to gain some insights into the history and popular culture of Korean society. What emerged from this extensive exercise was a confirmation of the impact of the Korean Wave (*Hallyu*), or more factitiously Planet *Hallyu*wood; that is, the ability to export its popular culture throughout East Asia and further abroad, what might be thought as an equivalence with Hollywood's dominance in spreading American culture. One significant difference between the two mega-industries has been the way its cultural expressions have come to terms with its national symptom, the reprise of its traditional sentiment of *han*. As the Korean poet Ko Eun writes, "We Koreans were born from the womb of *han*, and brought up in the womb of *han*" (Paquet 2009: 32). Suh Nam-dong, a *minjung* theologian, describes *han* as a "feeling of unresolved resentment against injustices suffered, a sense of helplessness because of the overwhelming odds against one, a feeling of acute pain in one's guts and bowels, making the whole-body writhe and squirm, and an obstinate urge to take revenge and to right the wrong—all these combined" (Yoo 1988: 221).

Lee Meera (2018) provides an accounting for *han* as a trans-generational symptom, passed on from one generation to the next

unconsciously. The crucial importance of *han* in shaping the national Korean psyche seems to be a key to grasping the underlying will to power when it comes to their cinematic productions that have, since the late 1990s, become domestically popular, reaching almost 60% of the market share (only India and the United States can offer a similar boast) due to the appeal they have in addressing this national sentiment: namely Korea's national identity as shaped by the colonization of China and Japan, as well as its neocolonialization via US influences along with its continued military presence in the region. To this extraordinary history can be added Korea's military dictatorships and the Korean War, which resulted in a divided nation, bringing with it a Cold war, as well as dreams of future reunification that are continually frustrated as the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island on November 23, 2010 by North Korea confirmed. If this is not enough, its rapid Westernization and the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 shook masculine identity (men found themselves at home while the women worked), and once again the complexity of its cinematic productions changed as melodramas addressed the nation's many anxieties (see Jeong 2011).

The Korean sense of *han* however does not result so much from any of the country's 'physical disabilities.' On the contrary, the last 60 years of industrialization has resulted in unprecedented expansion—Seoul remains a powerhouse of economic activity and a leader in technology and design. Its inferiority complex stems from the residual history described above, which 'drives' *Hallyu*. Korean inferiority complex swings from passionate emotional outbursts of outright delusion to megalomaniac self-inflation of being the best, so oblivious to the Other that Korea often verges on a superiority complex. In this sense, Korean identity as shaped by the 'open wound' of *han* is, in every sense, a schizophrenic phenomenon, which is continually being Oedipalized and covered over through the fantasy formations of their national cinema. Lee Meera (2018) points out that historically and genealogically *han* is paradoxically ambiguous. There is a *dark han* marked by negative affective feelings of sorrow, grief and anger, as well as a *bright han*, marked by positive feelings of compassion, affection, and attachment (106). The unraveling of *han's* paradox, for Lee, rests with its unspeakability and untranslatability that is passed on transgenerationally as the weight of the nation's trauma. From a Lacanian perspective, Kim Kung Hyun's *The Remasculinization of Korean Cinema* (2004) charts this process as the crisis of male gender. The book's cover features a still

of Yong-Ho running down a railway track about to commit suicide in the final sequence from the well-known and much-analyzed film, Lee Chang-Dong's *Peppermint Candy*, perhaps the iconic statement concerning, what shall we say here? The failure of national progress and the impossibility to recover a 'lost object,' which includes its other missing half—North Korea. This is but one interpretative reading.

The repetition of the nation's transgenerational trauma is eventually overcome through capitalist modernization as embodied in *Hallyu*—the Korean Wave—as a search to restore (or perhaps affirm?) a 'lost object'—its national pride and worth, played out in sporting events like the 2002 FIFA World Cup hosted by both Japan and Korea, wherein Korea was the first Asian country ever to make it to the semifinals. In this way, the nation enjoys! The theft or loss of 'enjoyment' (*jouissance*) feeds its domestic cinema through blockbuster films that long for unification like *Shiri*, *Joint Security Area* and *Brotherhood*, or address the restoration of its traditions and dynastic standing like *King and the Clown*. Most recently *The Host* (2006), which surpassed *Shiri* in domestic sales, is a sci-fi satire that blames the United States for initially polluting the Han river, producing a mutant fish-monster that terrorizes its citizens—Korea's version of Godzilla (Hsu 2015). The narrative addresses the ambivalent relationship the nation has with the United States. South Korea's scar is constantly being opened and healed in these cinematic scenarios with the promise that the 'lack' at the center of *han* will eventually be filled and satisfied. It is Korea's strength as well as its weakness as a nation—its repetitive symptom.

The underside of the trauma inherent to *han* explores the schizophrenia that cannot be contained through neoliberal forms of capitalist exploitation where lack is continually fueled through forms of resentment. The de-Oedipalization of schizophrenic desire—the delirium of a particular form of film as Ian Buchanan (2006, 2008) fingers it, is perhaps iconically illustrated through Jun-hwan's Jang *Save the Green Planet!* (2003) that ended the previous chapter. It is a clear illustration of the second form of subjective delusional formation, a "passional, post-signifying" assemblage of signs as articulated by Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 132–143) where schizophrenic working-class actions are confined to local initiatives that have little to no impact on the overall social structure. The film's main character, Lee Byeong-gu, believes that aliens are about to attack Earth, and that he is the only one who can prevent them. He is the prophet of the doom as to what is about to happen to

the Planet. Along with his childlike circus-performer girlfriend, Sun-ni, he kidnaps a powerful CEO, Kang Man-shik, whom he believes to be a top-ranking extraterrestrial being. Kang will contact the prince of these aliens during an upcoming eclipse and destroy the Planet. Byeong-gu believes that this despotic alien ‘god’ can be stopped. After imprisoning Kang in his basement workshop, he proceeds to torture the executive so that his true intentions are revealed and his disguise lifted. Viewers find out that Kang Man-shik’s company caused his mother’s illness in an experimental test, while corporate gangsters murdered his former girlfriend during a worker’s strike. To spoil the ending, it turns out that Kang *is* the highest-ranking alien, and unlike any delirium-formation of actually saving the Earth, which characterizes Deleuze and Guattari’s first signifying ideational scheme like that of Judge Schreber made famous by Freud, the last scene is the earth exploding as Kang’s space ship zaps it with a death ray! All the redemption happens during the rolling of the credits, ‘after the end,’ so to speak.

KIM KI-DUK AS SYMPTOMOLOGIST OF KOREAN SOCIETY

Jang Jun-hwan’s *Save the Green Planet!* shows the symptomology of Korean society as Nietzsche would have it. The artist is ‘the doctor of civilization’ who diagnoses the pathologies of civilization. However, it is the sizable filmic body of Kim Ki-duk that offer a schizo-cinema that seriously intervenes into the Oedipalized structure of Korean capitalism as structured by its family-controlled multinational business conglomerates—the *Chaebol* [*Jaebol*] like Hyundai, Samsung, LG, and Daewoo, and so many others that shape its present economic drive of *Hallyu*. It should be no surprise that the domestic reception of his work has been lukewarm to dismissive leading to an outright refusal by him to screen his films in Korea. Here the people *are* literally ‘missing.’ He has no audience, but neither does he cater to populism. Rather, Kim Ki-duk calls for a *virtual audience*, an audience that is to be created (or fabricated) *through* his films in the future.

Kim has had to apologize to the production crew for his remarks he made in 2006 over their megablockbuster *The Host* [*Koemul*], which was Korea’s highest-grossing film then to date, as well as to the national audience for suggesting that he might stop ‘exporting’ his films to South Korea because of their low reception. In short, he was accusing the public of falling for the fantasies of the Korean

'*Hallynwood*' industry as controlled by the oligopoly of the 'Big Three' investor-distributor-exhibitors: CJ-CGV, Showbox-Megabox, and Lotte Entertainment-Cinema. It seems neither desire nor pleasure can be invested in Kim Ki-duk's cinematic body. The object is just too close and repulsive. Here is his apology, which is rather amusing.

My movies are lamentable for uncovering the genitals that everyone wants to hide; I am guilty for contributing only incredulity to an unstable future and society; and I feel shame and regret for having wasted time making movies without understanding the feelings of those who wish to avoid excrement ... I apologize for making the public watch my films under the pretext of the difficult situation of independent cinema, and I apologize for exaggerating hideous and dark aspects of Korean society and insulting excellent Korean filmmakers with my works that ape art-house cinema but are, in fact, self-tortured pieces of masturbation, or maybe they're just garbage. Now I realize I am seriously mentally-challenged and inadequate for life in Korea. (Kim Ki-duk, cited in Hye Seung Chung 2010: 106-107)

Kim Ki-duk is an ambivalent figure: The Western cinematic avant-garde fringe elite praise his work. He has won prizes at Cannes, Berlin, and Venice film festivals. Yet, in the wake of the #MeToo movement, where movie moguls like Harvey Weinstein have been accused of rape and placed on trial, it seems Kim Ki-duk (and his regular actor Cho Je-hyeon) are not much different. He has been accused of sexual assault (slapping actresses), and allegations of rape have emerged in 2018. A difficult figure indeed. The question whether it is possible to separate the artist's behavior from the work has always been contested territory, defending toxic masculinity, rather than siding with feminist scholarship concerning the art and the 'man.' The most obvious examples are Bill Cosby, Roman Polanski, Pablo Picasso and his muses, the sculptor Carl Andre, who allegedly pushed his wife and fellow artist out the window to her death in 1985. The list continues on and on (e.g., comedian Louie C.K. masturbatory sexual assaults in front of women). There is no question that Kim Ki-duk's visionary images are quite disturbing, dark, and (at times) almost impossible to watch; yet, there is no direct link that can be made in media theory which maintains that playing violent video games or watching violent movies, for instance, leads to committing violence on others. There are exceptional pathological cases, like the Columbine shooting in the United States, but in general, no direct causes can be claimed. The gap that exists between an artist and the

work is highly complex, and impossible to fill in completely. The gap, in Lacanian and Deleuzian terms, belongs to the Real, a realm beyond language and images. As such, it denies interpretation and meaning. But of course, this does not escape or excuse ethical judgment when it comes to art. In the following explorations of Kim's films, I make no moral judgment as to the relationships between his autobiography and the filmography he has produced. Rather, I am more interested in their force: what they 'do.' How they perform their affective force.

The thesis of this chapter I would like to present is that Kim Ki-duk offers a 'minoritarian film' experience (Deleuze and Guattari 1986), a revolutionary cinema wherein a new Body without Organs is being fabulated through what I call 'flying the senses.' The masochism of bodily pain that characterize his imagery does two things: first, these images confront and position the audience into a subject position (should they take it) in a thought experiment that confronts ethical sensibilities by arresting signification via the *impulse image*¹; a piercing stillness is achieved. And, second, Kim Ki-duk ushers in the play of a new magical regime of images that I call fabulated signs.² These created signs attempt to bring in a new joy and health into Korean way of life by subtly introducing the non-capitalist notion of the gift, as first developed by such theorists as George Bataille's notion of 'excessive expenditure.'³ Such fabulated signs recall the country's wisdom traditions whose return comes with a difference. The philosophy of Tao runs throughout his films.

Kim ki-duk continually strips or plays with these traditions institutionalized by Confucianist patriarchy so as to release them into free flight through *Taoist philosophy and imagery*. They are fabulated anew through this new magical regime of images. They also lead to, what I hope to show, 'becoming imperceptible,' the final impossible point of a fabulated new BwO of expressive flows through a particular 'flying of the senses' through the 'impulse image'—a turning of the inner body inside out, so to speak. This, I maintain to be his expressive method of 'deterritorialization' (cf. Deleuze), and his spiritual reterritorialization to form a new Imaginary for a "people yet-to-come," for a future people that have yet to be produced (Deleuze 1989: 223). Such a fabulated imaginary finds no solace in the existing Korean symbolic order for it exists no-where. It is *not* utopian, but *atopian*, existing in a "non-place" or being "without place" (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 99–100). Only its virtual potential can be felt. While this spiritual reterritorialization could be accused of

being archetypal, that is iconic, Kim Ki-duk's becoming-animal, becoming-insect and in at least once case, becoming-object⁴ throughout his films mitigates, or at least tempers such an accusation as he explores the various paths of escape, as well as blockages that confront his de-psychologized characters, mostly a *Lumpenproletariat*, the non-persons or subaltern who are confined to an "any-place-what-so-ever" (*espace quelconque*), as a virtual space of *pure potential*. They are the forgotten and the overlooked of Korean society.

In this regard, Kim Ki-duk follows the trajectory already paved by Kafka and Joyce wherein everything in his films becomes politicized as the family triangle becomes connected to commercial, economic, bureaucratic, and judicial triangles that determine their value. Kafka defines the impasse which bars Prague's Jews from writing, making their literature an impossibility, as succinctly articulated in Deleuze and Guattari's (1986) chapter, "An Exaggerated Oedipus"; Joyce's linguistic political problematic was the imposition of the English language on his personal malaise in his own Irish civilization. Kim Ki-duk explores similar impasses that he experienced through the events of his own autobiography: He was a school dropout, bullied by kids; he became an uneducated factory worker; he then served in the military service where he was constantly disciplined; leaving the military he became a priest in training while working two years in a school for the blind; he then flew to Paris on what money he had, surviving as an itinerant street artist; eventually he returned to Korea to become an independent DIY cinematographer relying on the sparse training he had received in a Parisian film school. Such a nomadic existence enables Kim to deconstruct the power of South Korean's desiring-machine through the body of his films. This seems to be their effect.

In this sense, I see Kim Ki-duk doing what it means to produce a "counter-actualization" as Deleuze (1990: 161) would have it for his own psychic health, and that of the nation by grappling with the 'wound events' in his life as they are manifested throughout his filmic body. His most autobiographical documentary film is perhaps *Arirang* (2011). But this is not an autobiographical undertaking, an exploration of his personal neurosis for instance. Rather, it is *impersonal* in its address. In this sense, his problematic evokes a "universal singularity"; by this, I mean (cf. Badiou 2006) not an order of being but a *new order* of a sudden emergence. He stubbornly presents a flight out of the *Hallyu* mentality.

I mention Kafka and Joyce in the same sentence to make note that Lacan, in his own way to answer Deleuze and Guattari's challenge of schizoanalysis, began his own line of flight out of the myth of Oedipalization beginning with Seminar 18 (*The Otherside of Psychoanalysis*) written in 1968, and moving eventually to his development of the *sinthome* in Seminars 19 through 23, which is a schizophrenic development, yet another synonym for delirium that speaks to the self-actualizations of events as the desire of the Other falls away. It is no longer the Name-of-the-Father but *a naming* of the Father that also is confirmed in the book chapter on Kafka mentioned earlier. What is a remaking of a BwO, if not precisely such an artistic experiment? If this were not the case, Joyce, Kafka, and Kim Ki-duk would be psychotic rather than schizophrenic—killers instead of seers.

It becomes a question whether *resentment* emerges from the *events* all three experienced, rather than being productively lived as *amor fati*, to creatively fill out what is within oneself, the full implications of one's *sinthome*.⁵ Significant artists are all 'mad' in this sense, out of their minds and into their brains, so to speak. They are delirious. Which is why Nietzsche remains such a primary figure in such a discussion. Criticizing Kant for his emphasis on the spectator for the beautiful as "pleasure without interest," Nietzsche (*On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967: 104–105) turned the tables to consider art from the point of view of its creator. The experience of art was no longer a question of *reception* aesthetics, but the creative experience of the artist who, following Stendhal, sees in his or her work only *une promesse de bonheur*. Let us then work through Kim's remarkable cinematographic achievements.

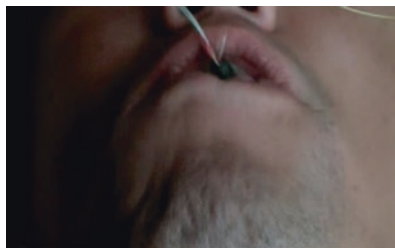
COSMIC SILENCE

Kim Ki-duk, in some sense surpasses both Kafka and Joyce as he dissolves the residual of any traces of the letter's signification that the 'stutter' of Kafka and Joyce still have. The idea of 'stuttering,' as developed by Deleuze (1997: 107–114) is to push a language to its limit so that thought is freed up to create something new. Kim introduces *silence*, a stilling of place and an emptying of the self. As it is so obvious throughout so many of his films, his characters remain silent, sometimes uttering only a few sentences. Dialogue throughout his films remains sparse. To draw on Patricia MacCormack (2008): "When we refuse to speak we are the nothing that is before and beyond anything. [...] Speak and you can



Screen image 5.1 *Address Unknown*

Screen image 5.2 *Address Unknown*



be named a pervert or normal [...] Remain silent and you are no longer a subject but a molecular dissipative desiring affectivity and potentiality” (20–21). It is the body that ‘speaks’, or rather the individual demarcated deterritorialized organs of the body that ‘show’ rather than speak through the frame of his camera like the blinded ‘eye’ (Screen image 5.1) of Eunok (Min-jung Ban) in *Address Unknown* [*Suchwlin Bulmyeong*]⁶ or Hyun-Shik’s ‘throat’ (Screen image 5.2) choking on swallowed fish hooks and Hee-Jin’s ‘vagina’ (Screen image 5.3) torn apart by fish hooks in *The Isle* [*Seom*].⁷ These become isolated organs of deterritorialization, reorganizing the body’s energies into new states of affect, reorienting social relationships viscerally. The viewer cannot bear to watch such self-mutilation as the *dividual*⁸ is brought to the brink of desperation—there is no escape possible from the encased situation.

In this way, Kim demonstrates the asemiotics of the body through his camera in the best possible sense. This raises, of course, the question

Screen image 5.3 *Address*
Unknown



as to what degree he has been able to further the “free indirect style,” speaking the middle-voice through his camera as the gap between his characters and the Outside. By Outside, I am here referring more to the specific socio-political context of Korean society as shaped by the ‘lack’ (*manque*) inherent to *han*, as an alienating alterity outside *rather than the nothingness within the self*, what Lacanians like Slavoj Žižek identify as the Real, so as to contextualize my argument politically as minoritarian film. This Outside, in Deleuzian terms, can be considered a *materiality* that is not simply ‘nothing,’ but the forces of the ‘world’; that is to say, *cosmic forces*—nonhuman and inhuman forces that affect us as we affect this ‘world’ reciprocally and symbiotically.⁹

The question is how this enfolded space of outside|inside mediates the characters Kim introduces as they grapple with their blockages of desire shaped by the Korean social order. One way he pries apart this enfolded space is by manipulating both sound and image, which he disconnects through silence. Diegetic sound (or actual sound) as the stir of the cosmology of the world often dominates his films by the sounds of the wind, insects and especially water and his long takes of vistas where sky and land, land and water disappear into each other (Screen image 5.4 from *The Isle*), or often the actual becomes unrecognizable speech heard in the background, and sometimes whispered so that spectators cannot hear but must guess the meaning themselves. As Deleuze and Guattari write, the BwO “utters only gasps and cries that are sheer unarticulated blocks of sound” (2004: 10). For most of the film, *Bad Guy*, [*Nabbeun namja*] the main figure, Han-ki, is a ‘probe body’ rather than a ‘probe head.’¹⁰ Most starkly perhaps is a scene near the film’s end, where this hardened pimp, who carries an obvious knife scar on his neck, and has not spoken through the entire film, speaks for the first time in a falsetto voice (Screen image 5.5), which not only queers him, but directly

Screen image 5.4 *The Isle*Screen image 5.5 *Bad Guy*

addresses the question of love. Love is a phenomenon that Han-ki has never experienced. After beating up one of his own gang members for having proposed to Sun-hwa, the one prostitute whom he kidnapped and enslaved to the sex trade to get ‘even’ for being ignored and ridiculed by her as worthless ‘riffraff,’ Han-ki comes to the realization that he loves her. She has penetrated his impervious skin, which knives and glass shards could only cut. He now knows he must let her go. The next to the last scene repeats an earlier scene at the narrative’s beginning: Han-ki is sitting on a park bench side by side with Sun-hwa, only this time the barrier of class has vanished as she now grasps and has insight into his ‘world’ and his hers. Prostitute and pimp have become One, not a transcendental One, but a transcendental univocal ‘one’ where each has given the other gifts that are incalculable. This is the Tao of Yin and Yang realized. In the end, she freely joins him as a prostitute in partnership, which is shocking. Involuntary enslavement has turned into a strange partnership that seems inconceivable as upper and lower Korean society blend into a heteronomous couple that is truly *anomalous*. The usual axis of grasping contemporary Korean class divisions has been overturned.

DREAM: THE TOPSY-TURVY OF THE VIRTUAL|ACTUAL

Kim Ki-duk's finest film that explores the question of love thus far is, *Dream* (2008) [*Bi-mong*] where fiction and reality become an 'acentered' plane of composition. Kim Ki-duk takes Lacan's interpretation in Seminar XI of Taoist Choang-tsu's parable that poses the question: how, after awakening from a dream of being a butterfly the monk can tell whether he is Choang-tsu, who has woken from the dream of being a butterfly, or whether he is the butterfly now dreaming that he is Choang-tsu? Kim Ki-duk explores this paradox and raises it to an entirely new schizo-level. Man 'becoming-woman' and woman 'becoming butterfly' proceeds as a thought experiment when it is discovered that Jin and Ran are intimately bound by each other's dreams. When Jin dreams, Ran ends up sleepwalking committing acts against her will and vice versa. The will is suspended in the dream-walking states as the unconscious drive (*Trieb*) takes over. Ran is drawn to her former lover, whom she despises, but is unable to let go of him in her sleepwalking state, while Jin cannot let go of his lost love when he dreams. A psychiatrist-seer whom they visit, another fabulated image that is an allusion to ancient wisdom cultures, tells them that as colors, who are black and white, they are One (Screen image 5.6), essentially the Tao symbol in its entanglement of the masculine and feminine forces. Only if they fall in love with each other will this schizophrenic delirium stop. Jin and Ran however are not able to free themselves from their former loves and continue to repeat old patterns. They begin to do all sorts of



Screen image 5.6 *Dream*

masochistic body mutilations to keep awake, but to no avail. Eventually, Ran goes mad being accused of murdering her ex-boyfriend when it was Jin who did the deed in his dream. (If this is getting difficult to follow, the film's virtual/actual flips are like möbius loops of a continuous roller coaster ride.)

Ran ends up in a psychiatric cell where Jin's ex-girlfriend already awaits her (she is obviously mad as well). Jin commits suicide by jumping off one of Seoul's many bridges, a symbol which Kim so effectively uses as a breaking point of desperation where two disparate bodies can no longer hold—that is, 'becoming bridged.' It is at that very moment that Ran also commits suicide in her cell by hanging herself with the help of Jin's mad ex-girlfriend, 'becoming imperceptible' as she metamorphoses into a butterfly and escapes through the cell's window flying in the falling snow. Significantly, it is winter. The butterfly is magically enhanced through computer-assisted imagery (CAI). The butterfly lands first on the forehead of Ran's dead body. It almost appears that he has survived the suicide jump as if he was receiving the gift of life. And then the butterfly lands on his hand. The last fabulated shot is that of Ran holding the hand of Jin (Screen image 5.7).

In the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, there can be "no sexual relation" in the capitalist patriarchal system; an impossible gap presents itself between the masculine and the feminine. For Kim Ki-duk however, there *is* a sexual relation when *man becomes woman*. The closing shot illustrates that black and white are one (Screen image 5.7); that there is only one sexuality, the sexuality of n-1, the polymorphous



Screen image 5.7 *Dream*

sexuality of the body with its libidinal flows. Jin and Ran have been drained of all their desire as lack—but have affirmed their desire only *after death*. Both have become imperceptible in their suicides, a moment of true love, a fabulation that seems to have no place in the symbolic order as it so stands.

Death here is not physical but that of a rebirth, a second death, wrapped in love, a virtual spiritual space, *espace quelconque*, black becomes white and vice versa as the potential of a newly constructed world is left for us to wonder. Is this then a slippage into transcendentalism and a Hegelian *Aufhebung*? Perhaps not. As Deleuze maintains: “Space is no longer determined, it has become the *espace quelconque* identical with the power [puissance] of the spirit, with the always renewed spiritual decision... [as he goes on] Darkness and the struggle of the spirit, white and the alternative of the spirit are the first two procedures by which space becomes any-space-whatever and is raised to the spiritual power of the luminous” (Deleuze 1986: 117, original emphasis). This is what I claim is happening in this, the last scene of *Dream*. The ‘dream,’ like Deleuze’s ‘the people are missing,’ is yet to come for Korean society. Such a ‘people’ have to be created, which is what the minoritarian films of Kim are doing: creating a ‘new people.’

For Lacan (and Žižek), Choang-tsu’s parable maintains that fantasy is not reducible to dream states. We fantasize when awake as the unconscious continues to pulsate. Choang-tsu fantasized as the representation of a butterfly, and Choang-tsu taken as a social representation (as monk), points toward the split in the subject; the subject is the *aphanistic point* of its own departure—nothing but its own division between conscious signifiers (as the *moi*) and the unconscious *Je*, riven by the Other (of language). In an earlier formulation that is found in Lacan’s Seminar XI, this subjective fantasy embodies a relation to some Thing or image that functions as *objet petit a*, masking the site of the lack in the symbolic order, which protects the subject from the (im)possibility of the traumatic encounter with the Real.

Kim Ki-duk seems to be doing entirely the opposite, closer in theory to the development of Bracha Ettinger’s (2006) notion of “matrixial transsubjectivity.” There is no lack, only connectivity, no anxious Thing in this case that must be shrouded to keep fantasy intact. To say that woman is the *sinthome* of Man, a much latter formulation by Lacan, has affinities with “the becoming-woman of man” as formulated by Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 306) and fabulated visually by Kim Ki-duk in

Dream. Unlike the misreading that Lacanian psychoanalysis emphasizes being *only* as gender, it is the *very failure of language when it comes to sex*, as Lacan insisted in his late phase (Copjec 1994), that queers desire in its most open sense. Only *if* the meaning of sex is not naively recuperated under some form of signification but remains in free flow with desire. And, is not traversing one's fantasy ultimately to 'become imperceptible' in Deleuze and Guattari's (2004) terms, as made available by Kim's fabulated imaginary? Kim Ki-duk's point is that such lack without the virtual dream of a (queered) sexual relationship makes us the monstrous probe-heads in the waking state, dramatically illustrated by Jin and Ran's distorted faces (Screen images 5.8 and 5.9). Such probe-heads, which show the fluxes of forces on the face, not unlike the portraits of Francis Bacon that Deleuze (2003) explored, are fluid and moving, constantly in flux. These are signature shots in many of his films as I show latter. But Kim Ki-duk pushes these distortions even further. Not only are they probe-heads, they are 'probe-bodies' as well—zombies whose life has been drained away.

Screen image 5.8 *Dream*



Screen image 5.9 *Dream*



IMPULSE IMAGE

Kim Ki-duk's films, if you will forgive the pun, are *driven* by the impulse image (*l'image-pulsion*), that image found between the affect-image (the virtual *espaces quelconques* of affects) and the action-image (Deleuze 1986). The *originary* world—that is, the world of the drives¹¹ [*Trieb*, *pulsions de mort*] for Kim moves toward various transcendental potentialities as well as blockages. At the end of his first film, *Crocodile* [Ag-o] we view an underwater scene where the suicidal bodies of both the protagonist, Crocodile and the woman appear floating in an emptied [*vidés*] *espaces quelconque*, their act committed after having found a moment of love with one another (much like in *Bad Guy*) (Screen image 5.10). In his second film, *Wild Animals* [Yasaeng Dongmul Bohoguyeong] both Cheong-hae, a south Korean and Hong-san, a North Korean, who appear to be bonded brothers at the end of the narrative having escaped a certain death, end up being both shot by a Korean-French adopted girl, suggesting that North|South Koreans have only unity when their blood flows together, or if they do kill each other off, globalized hybrid Koreans will be traumatized as any link to homeland will vanish (Screen image 5.11).

These 'second deaths' throughout Kim's filmography make me wonder about Žižek's (1989: 135) appropriation of the 'act' as being very much a Deleuzian move as I have argued elsewhere (jagodzinski 2010b). The symbolic order changes as the fabulated potential of any-space-what-so-ever exposes itself, but it seems to happen when physical death and symbolic death collapse into one another, suggesting a nihilistic scenario

Screen image 5.10 *Crocodile*



Screen image 5.11 *Wild Animals*



(see Brassier 2007). But a way out of this pitfall of nihilism, and much closer to what Kim Ki-duk is after is his staging the *beauty of death* at the end of a number of his films. Such a presentation of death holds a promise best revealed by the Japanese artist Kenji Yoshida who passed away in 2009 at the healthy age of 84. His painting, *La Vie* (1995), appears as the new cover image, of the re-launch of the *Journal Body & Society* in December 2010 with a special issue on affect. In a series of paintings under the collective title *C'est La Vie*, Yoshida, contemplated the singularity of his life in his training as a Kamikaze pilot, despite his enduring commitment to pacifism during the war. He also turned to the wisdom traditions of the Mayas and Japanese Buddhist philosophy. It is Yoshida becoming-black in these painting where the vibrancy of life is to be found, for the black is set amidst gold and silver leaf, vibrating with reds, blues, and yellows; yet it is the black that carries the force of *C'est La Vie*. (Copyright prevents me from showing these images here, but an Internet search for Kenji Yoshida will display his gold and black paintings.)

Black, for Yoshida was the substance of life; it was the suicidal impulse of his own *sinthome*, his own singularity that sought peace through his life and Xpression¹² of his work. And, this is Kim Ki-duk as well: the continuity between life and death that characterizes *a* life is elegantly retold—white and black are One—the univocity of Being as Tao; the ethical demand is to overcome the nightmare of your daily *wa(l)king* dream. It is addressed to his Korean brothers and sisters—to the suicidal madness of, “I’m going to the *Han*,” a euphemism for Jin’s leap to his death, addressing the truth that drives the nation’s sense of loss, the national identity as defined by its unending suffering and struggle to free itself from American, Japanese, Chinese haunts (see Derridean ‘hauntology,’ Derrida 1994; Fischer 2012).

Against this original world of *puissance*, Kim Ki-duk always seems to include an affection-image of facial portraits that are unifying (“a surface of facefication” [*visagéification*] (Deleuze 1986: 88), a reflective face expressing an affective quality rather than power of an intensive face. These are portraits that are done by the various dividuals throughout the films. Already in Kim’s first film *Crocodile* [Ag-O], the nameless suicide victim he rescues is able to draw a realistic likeness of Ag-O (Screen image 5.12). Rendering realistic portraits by way of the artistic hand appears again and again, in one form or another throughout his films, especially in *Real Fiction* (2000), one long continuous experimental shot without cuts that is semi-autobiographical of Kim working as an itinerant portrait artist in the parks and boulevards of Paris. In contrast, the affect-image as a face of desire—as the intensive face of schizo-power—seems to appear at the end of his films, almost as signature shots. In *Dream*, they are embedded as distorted faces of Jin and Ran without sleep (Screen images 5.8 and 5.9). In *Crocodile*, it is the close-up faces of Crocodile and his nameless love, sitting underwater on a bench, both drowned (Screen image 5.10). These faces are not unlike the faces of Jin-a, a prostitute and Hye-mi, the daughter of the family from which she rents a room, at the very end of *Birdcage Inn* [Paran daemun]. This time the faces are shot through the water (Screen image 5.13). Prostitute and virgin daughter, seeming unbridgeable signifiers implode as One—the univocity of schizo-flows of difference where the morality that surrounds good/bad vanishes, and the question of ethics restated for an audience ‘to come.’

Screen image 5.12 *Crocodile*



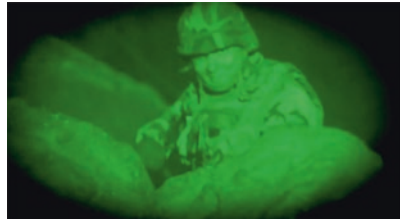
Screen image 5.13 *Birdcage Inn*



BECOMING IMPERCEPTIBLE

'Becoming imperceptible' is a theme that is continually visited throughout Kim Ki-duk's filmography: a concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in *A Thousand Plateaus*. In the closing shots of *The Isle* [Seom] when Hyun-shik (the escaping murderer) and Hee-Jin (the boat-woman) become oedipally blocked (symbolized by the domestic painting of the house raft), the only line of flight is to transform the situation by them 'becoming-fish.' Hee-Jin attaches a motor to the house-raft and steers it into the bushes. The closing shots show Hyun-Shik disappearing into turf of grass shaped like an island. The camera pulls back and we have this turf of grass superimposed on the pubic hair of Hee-Jin who is lying in a submerged boat (Screen image 5.14). The lake now becomes a boat and the turf of grass an island, while Hyun-shik has become imperceptible, disappearing in Hee-jin's vagina, to be reborn.

In *The Coast Guard* [Haeanseon], the accidental killing of a local fisherman while making love to his girlfriend by a trigger happy soldier, who thought he was killing a North Korean spy, ends up going insane, just like his girlfriend. After being discharged, he comes back to the military camp in the pitch of the night like a ghost and starts killing soldiers. At first, it is his point of view the audience sees by the green-vision of his night goggles (Screen image 5.15). But soon, every soldier is wearing night-vision goggles; the green vision dissipates the presence of the insane soldier, and in the end neither the audience nor the soldier can tell just whose who—the killer has become indiscernible. The insane and sane become One—univocity once more, locked in Taoist entanglement.

Screen image 5.14 *The Isle*Screen image 5.15 *The Coast Guard*

As dawn breaks, the soldiers approach a body that has hands and legs, but as they come closer, the head is missing. The mad cry of the girlfriend is heard in the background (Screen image 5.16).

In *The Bow* [Hwal], the moment of imperceptibility happens when the Old Man, an anomalous outcast who lives on a boat, recognizes that he has to give up his fantasy of marrying his captive young woman, Han Yeo-reum, whom he adopted at the age of 10, and has been sheltering her from the ‘real’ world on his fishing boat, anchored far off the coast in an *any-place-what-so-ever*, this nowhere space and place being an atopia far away from the Korean symbolic order. The ethics of the tale addresses Korean businessmen, who practice a variation of this relationship with mistresses and use young prostitutes. In *The Bow*, this ethical dilemma of such relationships is cast once again through the fabulation of tradition. The bow, as weapon, is both a *pharmacological* virtuous instrument of fate, able to wound and kill, as well as be played as a musical instrument to sooth the passions and center one’s home—it is both poison and cure. Toward the end of the narrative, when the Old Man has realized the

Screen image 5.16 *The Coast Guard*



evilness of his sexual greed, he launches a boat with the young woman, Han Yeo-reum, in it. He dresses her in a traditional wedding dress as if going through a traditional wedding ceremony. It appears as if he will consummate the marriage after all. Instead, he begins to play the bow. She listens to the familiar music of home, closes her eyes, and becomes sleepy.

When she is asleep, the Old Man comes forward to the 'bow' of the boat (here the English seems to work as a signifier) and draws an arrow. It appears that he is about to kill her, not unlike those moments throughout the narrative where he shoots arrows at her while she swings back and forth on a swing to tell the fortune of those who are willing to pay as to where the arrows land on what appears to be an image of a sitting Buddha surrounded by symbols of Dao (or Tao) that also appear on the South Korean flag. The Old Man raises the bow and shoots an arrow into the sky, both relinquishing and, at the same time, releasing his phallic power. He then dives into the sea, his moment of imperceptibility. The boat with Han Yeo-reum lying in a white dress, virginal, ready to be penetrated, seems to aimlessly drift about in the sea—and yet it magically drifts home returning to the Old Man's fishing boat. A young man, whom the Old Man tried to prevent from showing Han Yeo-reum the 'outside' world, is waiting on the Old Man's boat, arriving too late to 'rescue' her. He now sees the boat approaching and Yeo-reum lying there. She clearly begins to have an orgasmic dream, spreading her legs apart, breathing heavily, and virtually experiencing intercourse. A fabulated moment arrives when the arrow returns magically from the sky and lands inches from her vagina (Screen image 5.17). She is at first startled, as is the young boy, but then continues her orgasm—virtual|actual flip. Her virginity has been magically broken, released from the Old Man's lecherous desire.



Screen image 5.17 *The Bow*

The boy comes over into the boat and holds her as she continues to shutter in orgasm—the moment is shown as a series of sparkling white and shades of gray dots—an ‘op image’ in Deleuze’s cinematic vocabulary—made possible by an extreme close-up of the sun reflecting on the waves of the sea. The young man doesn’t know what’s going on. He stands up and looks at her in wonder as we see the arrow now penetrating a pool of blood. She has lost her virginity. How can one understand the ethics of this? The closing scenes follow the young man taking the girl to shore, when another fabulated moment takes place. The home ship magically starts up; the ghost of the Old Man is present. The boat sinks as Han Yeo-reum waves goodbye, the sound of the bow music is heard. We are left with the expansiveness of the sea as Han Yeo-reum listens to it through the drum that was inserted into the bow to turn it into a musical instrument. The music now takes on a cosmological significance as it pervades all life. The virgin now turned woman has been penetrated by both strength and music: this seems to be the ethical approach by Man. The boy has to learn this as he now heads to shore with her sitting on the ‘bow.’ The last shot is the blue sea over which is written: “Strength and a beautiful sound like in the tautness of a bow. I want to live like this until the day I die.” The joyfulness of life is celebrated. The Tao of music evoked. Han Yeo-reum has been sent on her own journey. Her father-captor has let her go, perhaps a strong rebuke of the patriarchal side of Confucianism?

In *Breath* [Soom], it is the passage of life itself, as air, which is imperceptible. In this case, it is Woman who holds its *force* that exerts itself

beyond the patriarchal household. Yeon is a sculptress whose winged ceramic sculptures are no longer free to beat their wings and fly. She destroys the last work despite what appears to be a successful firing. When her husband's white shirt falls to the ground from their luxurious upper-middle-class apartment in Seoul, she picks it up, looks at it and throws it in the trash can, a symbol that their marriage is soiled. The 'dirty laundry' remains unspoken and repressed. For what 'reason' we have no idea, except that she is distraught and unhappy at home despite having everything, and by all appearances a perfect Oedipal household—a daughter and a husband. Only the pet is missing. Seemingly, for no explainable reason to the spectators or to her husband, Yeon begins to visit a psychopathic killer on death row, Jang Jin, who has killed his entire family, symbolic of what modernism has wrought. Jang Jin's attempted suicides in jail in most circumstances would be an insignificant news item. In this case, it makes televised headlines, which Yeon is strangely drawn to and mesmerized by. This infuriates her husband, who, significantly has no name throughout the narrative. He is a dividual. Kim Ki-duk is illustrating how perception is always framing what might be insignificant occurrences to others become extremely important to the perceiver as points of fixation are returned to again and again. We can surmise that it is Jang Jin's attempted suicides, and his slaying of his family that intrigues Yeon. We eventually find out that her composer husband is having an affair.

Through a number of visits on the pretense of being Jang Jin's girlfriend, Yeon seduces the psychopathic killer, Jan Jing, through four visits to jail. A window separates their first visit, but with the next four visitations that follow, they take place within the confines of a windowless visiting room. Each visit is presented as a seasonal haecceity where Yeon wallpaper the bleak environment, transforming it into an imaginary seasonal space particularized through her own memory of it as told by a story, performing a 'song and dance routine' just for his benefit, each time seducing him close and closer to her. The warden, whose face is barely made visible, appears as a ghostly reflection on a video screen, reminiscent of Francis Bacon's painting of *Pope Innocent X*. In this case, the apparition is a lustful military figure of power and terror, a cross between a dictator general and some fat greedy businessman smoking a cigar as in the illustrated drawings of German businessmen of World War II by George Grosz.

The warden is presented as a voyeur-porn director who ‘gets off’ watching her perform for the death row psychopathic inmate via a closed-circuit video camera as if he were making a pornographic movie. He has the power to intervene in their sexual relationship at any time simply by calling the guard who dutifully attempts to enforce the rules of prisoner/visitor conduct only to be thwarted by the warden who wants to let the sexual relationship develop. This perverse pleasure is later supported by her husband, who feels, one would guess, that his own perversity is now on equal grounds with that of his wife. Each time when things have gone just far enough for the warden, he tells the guard to break them apart. Yeon gives Jang Jin a note to sustain their separation, and to further his desire; to think of her when he is led back to his jail cell.

When Jang Jin returns to his cell from his first visit, he has plucked out one of Yeon’s hairs, metonymic of the desire for her body. A gay inmate who loves him and becomes jealous of his ‘visitor’ begins to deny him such libidinal satisfaction. He steals the ‘hair’ away, beginning the first of many struggles to ruin his desire. Eventually, this denial of satisfaction pervades the entire cell of the three inmates. They steal his love letters away, including finally a semi-nude photograph Yeon gave him in their ‘fall’ meeting, as it turns out, their penultimate visit. Significantly, one of the inmates carves a picture of the photo on the cell wall so that all the inmates can now share in the sexual fantasy of this Woman.

In her very last visit, winter, there is no decoration. Yeon has been absent for a long time, not visiting: her husband had promised to repent. In the meantime, Jang Jin has once again tried to commit suicide, his desire continually deprived by his three cellmates. As things begin to develop in this last visit as the warden lets them engage in coitus in the cell. After Yeon has an orgasm, with an open mouth she begins to kiss Jin and pinch his nose so that he eventually cannot breathe. Such an act, at first increases his sexual pleasure, but then a struggle ensues as Jang Jin tries to free himself, difficult since his hands are handcuffed. This scene goes on for some time before what seems like making love for the warden is really a chokehold by Yeon. Yet, it could also easily be interpreted as kinky sex that enhances the pleasure of male ejaculation. The warden realizes that something is wrong and phones in the alarm. Jang Jin is returned to his cell where his gay inmate eventually kills him, significantly by choking him as well. The last shot is Jang Jin lying dead, his gay lover-killer still holding his body, while his fellow cellmates have

rolled away from his cold body in their sleep. Significantly, his gay lover sings a song as the screen fades to white.

Kim Ki-duk shows us that the hetero/homo divide is no solution. But the question of the Oedipal family is also suspended, despite her husband's vow not to take on another mistress. Yeon walks out of the prison where the kids and the father, who has now given up his illicit love affair, are playing outside in the snow. The joyful moment of the family having some winter fun, throwing snowballs at one another seems to be a typical Hollywood ending of restoration. But the closing shots of the family place such an easy reading quickly into doubt. Kim films the family driving home on the highway from outside the car; there is only one interior shot to show that it is (significantly) foggy—an atmospheric shot (Screen image 5.18). They are both singing a song, which haunts the frame for one is uncertain if it is truly them singing, or if the song is extra-diegetic since it also pervades the cell as Jang Jin's lover is choking him. The song, sung alone at times by Yeon, sometimes by the husband, but also together during the refrain is about departure in the last season, that of winter. There is no unification of the family. Just as the dissolve to white occurs between the homoerotic relationship in the jail cell, a dissolve to black ends the family sequence. Once more, white and black are One,



Screen image 5.18 *Breath*

but where nothing is completely solved. All remains open. “Love can take your breath away” has found a new meaning. Kim shows us the force of life as the imperceptibility of breath, and that woman is the *sinthome* of man, or in Deleuze’s terms: man must ‘become woman.’ Homosexual/heterosexual desire fails in the problematic of sexuality.

Kim Ki-duk’s masterpiece when it comes to becoming imperceptible has to be *Bin-jip* or *Empty Houses*, released as *Three Iron* in the English-speaking context in 2004. This itself is interesting for golf is the game of rich businessmen, and the three-iron is one of the least used clubs because it is the most difficult to master. It can be read as one of the two signs of the originary impulse image—fetish and symptom. While the symptom “designates qualities or powers related to an originary world (defined by impulses),” the fetish is a “fragment wrested by the impulse from a real milieu and corresponding to an originary world” (Deleuze 1986: 218). The three iron, capable of drive-power (*puissance*) as a fetish object of the corporate world, appears to be phallic object over which the young man in the film wields both mastery as well as failure (the Phallus being a ‘fraud’ as Lacan would say). He accidentally kills a passerby when his golf ball, attached to a string so that he can strike it over and over again, becomes detached. In another instant, it is the CEO who pelts him with golf balls in revenge for having his wife fall in love with him and seducing her into a nomadic lifestyle.

Bin-jip is about a solitary nomadic young man who spends his days riding his motorcycle around Seoul searching for houses that are left empty by owners who are away on holidays so that he can spend the night. He lives in a space|time that exists in a parallel universe to normal life—a w(hol(e))ly space¹³; it is a virtual existence with a *multi-universe* to the normal business hustle of the city, a molecularity within the molarity of waking life. He not only borrows their homes, but also the ‘life’ of its momentarily absent dwellers, cleaning and tidying, fixing broken appliances and domestic objects, and always taking his own picture against the family pictures as a record of his own ghostly intervention into their lives and making himself ‘at home.’ He always puts on his own CD, always the same one, which is the music of his *own* home, and the soundtrack of his *own* rhythm. This use of music—as Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 330–334) remind us—usually has three basic functions: the way home, the creation of home, and the home in our hearts. Given his nomadic existence, the place of music doesn’t appear to fit entirely comfortably with any of these centering roles. It might be said that he creates a

home, the second function, but there is no larger public to suggest some sort of consolidation of affect. Its function seems to fall between a song in his heart and the creation of home. But, the CD's music can also be recognized as *chaosmological*: cosmic music that is not heard, which pervades the virtual nomadic realm of multiplicity. He lives in a space|time that exists in these multiple universes as opposed to the *monadic* life of a singular limited perspective that appears, in Leibniz's terms, as the entire universe; it is a virtual existence—a minor-becoming as his flight of escape is nomadic; that is, taking place in “any-space-what-so-ever” (*espace quelconque*). Time in this space is simply suspended.

Through these sets of repetitive actions, the young man, Tae-suk, yet another *anomalous* character who does not speak throughout the film, deterritorializes the symbolic universe of the Oedipal home that he has entered, not by invasion nor penetration, but by a certain cleverness and skillful appropriation of what is not used: the ‘other’ space of the house, the space of emptiness, transforming it into something caring and very much lived. This is his gift outside the capitalist economy. The violence that surrounds the Oedipalized house, which continually confronts us throughout the film, is in the service of being restored and mended to health by this young man, who is later joined by a woman fleeing from an abusive relationship. The culminating activity of such caring and restorative work is the traditional burial of an old man, found dead in one of the empty houses. Tae-suk is eventually arrested and put in jail, and accused of murder.

In Lacan's *Ethics of Psychoanalysis* (Seminar 7, 1959–1960), we have the notion of the ‘second death’: simply put, there is no necessary place within the symbolic order that confirms or can confirm one's identity in any permanent way. After our biological death, we all are soon forgotten. The question of a ‘second death’ revolves around an ethical complaint. Something remains unsaid, unspoken after the biological death. A haunt, a ghost, a spirit, a restless soul persists that wishes to fulfill its symbolic destiny. Deleuze also has the notion of the two faces of death, and I take becoming-imperceptible to be a similar development. The death-drive|instinct as developed in *Difference and Repetition* affirms that the second order of symbolic death is not immortal. Deleuze, following Henri Bergson, maintains that the present is assured only by the total survival of the past. Difference asserts itself as repetition so as to confirm symbolic life. The haunt or insistence of the virtual past is necessary for memory to persist.

Becoming imperceptible within *Bin-jip* (*3-Iron*) is accomplished in the very last scenes when Tae-suk reaches full invisibility, something he almost achieves in the prison-cell when he draws an eye on his hand, in an attempt to be seen only by a symbolic internalized eye (Screen image 5.19), not by the symbolic external yet ephemeral gaze as theorized by Lacan. I take this to be Tae-suk's second death, or in Deleuzian terms, an internal and intensive death, the creation of a virtual self as "the state of the individual differences when they are no longer subjected to the form imposed upon them by the I or self and when they develop in a figure which excludes my own coherence along with that of any identity whatsoever" (1994: 113). In the end, the young man's presence is only sensed, but sensed as a wind, or more like the dance of the wind—just a schizo-flow. The woman he was with, Sun-hwa is back with her businessman CEO husband, but they are getting along much better, her knowing that the presence of Tae-suk is still there in the house. He appears whenever she wants him to appear. Like the epitaph that ends the film: "It's hard to tell the world we live in is either a reality or a dream."

Of course, one can read the entire film psychoanalytically and maintain that the fantasy of becoming invisible merely confirms an impotency to communicate with the outside world, a castration anxiety and thus to create an omnipotent fantasy that one possesses everything one needs by creating an inner reality via the eye drawn in the palm of his hand. The one object that he does possess is the phallic golf club and



Screen image 5.19 *Bin-jip* (*3-Iron*)

ball, which enable him to compete against wealthy and powerful, but in the last instant, this fails him. It is a blockage to finding his line of flight. Such a reading, however, fails to recognize that the ethics of becoming imperceptible speak to the necessity of doing away with the desire of the Other. Perhaps still too phallically in Lacan's (1990: 16) terms of becoming a *saint*. But the saint, like the mystic empties the self. By drawing an eye in/on his hand, the young man enters a schizophrenic delirium, a going through the Oedipal fantasy of being the only creator of his own prison, the only eye through which one is to look through. But this is not a psychotic position; it is a position that names an entirely new world that can open up the Oedipalized House. In the end, he becomes visible *only* to those he wants to be seen by. In the art-world perhaps the only performance artist that has achieved this is the Vietnamese American artist, Tehching Hsieh whose year-long performances address the imperceptibility of time, becoming imperceptible in these performances (jagodzinski 2019). *Bin-jip* is perhaps Kim Ki-duk's most self-autobiographical film, apart from a documentary he made in 2011 called *Arirang*. Those who take out the time to view his work would see how the virtual (dreams, past memories, hopes) becomes actualized throughout his films.

ABSTRACT MACHINES: CREATING A NEW BWO

It is in silence and with the creation of a new regime of fabricated signs that the senses are flayed. All of the assemblages Kim Ki-duk employs in his films begin to defamiliarize the usual signifiers of representation—the usual grouping of sex, race, and class by developing a different abstract machine of desire to upset the stratification along organization, subjectivity, and signification that Deleuze and Guattari articulate as the three key forms of stratification. To make a 'new' Body without Organs, the specificity of phenomenological experience of each stratum must be detached. This means that the stratum of bodily organs has to be 're-figural-ized' (if I can employ that word here). Signification, as the stratum of the unconscious that encodes the content of expressive desire in a restrictive manner has to be released from its Oedipal moorings. Lastly, the stratum of subjectification is that of consciousness, the abstract modes and forms of expression that are restrained. When it comes to bodily organization, Kim Ki-duk's de-psychologized characters—as anomalous characters—are already damaged and

out-of-joint, the flows of their bodies changed by alcohol (mostly by rice wine—Soju) and beatings. The body is never intact, but always beaten or being beaten and especially mutilated, a body that is always in pain, or self-mutilating, at the verge of losing control. It is an exposed body of the sensate drives. The body is constantly being ‘flayed’ in his films, ‘reconfiguralized.’

Violence happens when these bodies collide. This is evident with his very first feature, *Ag-O* (1996), which translates as Crocodile, the name of the homeless man who waits for his prey to drop into the water, the Han river—the suicide victims whose bodies he recovers and hides to fetch a price from relatives for their delivery once the police have given up their search. Becoming-crocodile enables him to survive and relish the polluted waters of the Han where he sets up his underwater living room. He is even able to fill up balloons with air while underwater, a trick he performs now and again. It is water that he breathes. To launch a pun, *Ag-O* is metaphorically at ‘home’ in the psyche of the ‘han;’ at home with death and suicide. He is leather-skinned, seemingly able to survive bites to his body, fist beatings and kicking by gangs and even a castration attempt. His damaged penis is sewn back together with needle and threads by another homeless man, who is part of his unlikely assemblage, a deed comparable to some back-alley abortion done with



Screen image 5.20 *Crocodile*

a clothes hanger. It is the pain he thrives on to know that he is alive. In Lacanian terms, this is his *jouissance*. Under one of Seoul's bridges, Kim Ki-duk assembles a de-Oedipalized family never seen before. Along with Crocodile there is another homeless man who could be a grandfather, an orphaned boy 6 or 7 years of age, to which is added a traumatized woman who Ag-O saves from a suicide (Screen image 5.20). Crocodile, the grandfather and the orphan could well be all the same person in different stages of becoming.

BECOMING-OTHER: THE GIFTS

Sex with prostitutes or by prostitutes, or rapes by men throughout Kim's films is presented mostly as a bodily physical need, like urinating or defecating. There is no pretense to love, which he reserves, it seems only as an affection image at the ends of his films, almost always in association with a second death, as explained earlier. "Signification clings to the soul just as the organism clings to the body," so write Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 177). The intertwining or comingling of souls results in, like the famous orchid|wasp symbiotic exchange that Deleuze and Guattari describe in *A Thousand Plateaus*, a transformation of change, however slight and however blocked it may ultimately be. When these unusual assemblages come together a 'becoming other' takes place as affects and sensations with the other party take place and are exchanged.

The changes in the signification of desire and subjectivity become particularly evident when such assemblages appear to be non-personal; that is, we know precious little of a character's biography. They are all de-personalized characters, *anomalous beings* who enact a master/slave dialectic—the pimp and the school girl turned prostitute through his manipulation in *Bad Guy*; the virgin and the prostitute who are locked together into an unusual Oedipal situation within a family-run brothel in *The Birdcage Inn*; the fleeing murderer and the boat-woman in *The Isle*; the old man and his captivated adopted teenage daughter cum wife in *The Bow*; the monk and his acolyte in *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring* and the two teenage girls, one a teen prostitute and the other her girlfriend who sets up the appointments via computer, although not locked into a master/slave relationship, is explored as a *doppelgänger* effect in *Samaritan Girl* [Samaria], and archetypically, Man|Woman as explored especially in *Breath* and *Dream*. These are all Taoist paradoxes.

All these paired relationships undergo change through *contagion* where the BwO significance is redeployed through a series of events; the *event* in Deleuzian (1990) terms being an incorporeal entity, an aleatory point in a character's life which forces a change in becoming. The significance of these events—judgmentally neither being good nor bad, but ethically problematic—I take throughout his films as the 'logic of sense' (emotional significance as Xpression), as variations of intensity that take place and surround the unsolicited gifts between the various characters within an assemblage, opening up the free flows of energy as a result. This is where a *change* in the series of repetitions between the social relationships takes place. In *Bad Guy*, Han-ki gives Sun-hwa a book of Egon Schiele paintings that he knew she admired. In *Birdcage Inn*, Jin-a gives Hye-mi a photograph of her, which she then proceeds to crumple. In *Wild Animals* [Yasaeng dongmul bohogyueong] the North-Korean Hong-san leaves a little animal figure for a Korean stripper, the adopted Korean woman Laura. These same little figurines appear again in *The Isle*, made by the fugitive Hyun-Shik, while in *The Bow*, the Old Man gives Han Yeo-reum elaborate shoes and dress as her wedding attire. In *Bin-jip*, Tae-suk lovingly repairs broken toys in the homes he occupies.

Becoming-other means exchanging affects and sensations with the other party, and once this exchange is established, they both undergo virtual *changes*—they are not physical changes, nevertheless they are 'real.' They become hybrid or inter-kingdom entities through these non-human gifts that are partial objects that take on intensities of scale and potential that far exceed their size. Kim Ki-duk is obviously exploring the traditional exchange of gift giving in Asian culture, but he is doing so much more, by reminding that this exchange always speaks to the excess of production when the psyche is affected. As Deleuze and Guattari again write, "You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of significance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it" (2004: 178).

Rightly or wrongly, these de-psychologized anomalous persons in his films undergo a profound *change* of subjectivity. Deleuze|Guattari ask, "How can we unhook ourselves from the points of subjectification that secure us, nail us down to a dominant rebellion?" They answer by "tearing the conscious away from the subject in order to make it a means of exploration" (2004: 177). Nowhere in Kim's filmography is this so starkly explored as in *Bad Guy* [Nabbeun namja, 2001], which begins

with Han-ki (the bad guy) forcing a kiss on a young university student (Sun-hwa) evoked because she did not want to sit next to such riff-raff on a public bench. Han-ki, to get even, forces Sun-hwa into a life of prostitution that flips her subjectification. Kim Ki-duk then stages the same scene as in the beginning of the film with the both of them sitting on the bench—this time it is Han-ki who walks away and leaves Sun-hwa without any resources as to how to survive, aside from prostitution—just as he cannot survive in the beginning of the film apart from being a pimp.

BECOMING-ANIMAL: BECOMING DOG

Becoming-animal is staged pretty much in every film (except perhaps for *Real Fiction* [Shilje sanghwang] which is a Kim Ki-duk's remake of *American Psycho* in one thirty-hour take with 10 movie cameras and 2 video cameras). The speeds and intensities of the animals differ throughout the seasons as the monk ages while his accolade grows older in his most domestically successful film, *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring*. A dog for Spring, a rooster for Summer, a cat for Fall, a snake for Winter, and a turtle for another Spring. These are not symbolic nor Zodiac signs, nor do they have an intrinsic connection to each season. Kim Ki-duk picks these animals because they have different registers of speed and have the capacity of affecting and being affected by characters who relate to them symbiotically. This goes for the other set of animals that the young monk ties a stone to in jest: a fish, frog, and a snake. When he is given the burden to carry a similar stone on his back, the monk says, "You will carry the stone in your heart for the rest of your life." It is an *event* that will always stay with him, an event that defines his *sinthome*. This, however, is not a feeling of pity or identification with these animals this monk has unknowingly tortured; rather his movement is the affect those animals had on him, resembling them only in terms of their movement and rest, their speed and they slowness, but not by imitating them. In the last segment, after the neophyte boy monk has slipped into the Oedipal world, which results in him becoming a criminal by killing a woman, the boy monk now grown old, once again carries a stone (a statue of Buddha) up the mountain, on top of which he becomes imperceptible—there is a change in his perceived image of thought in the way he judges the order of life, seeing with a greater openness the differences, intensities, and singularities that traverse his life; it's as if his knowledge of the coming Spring as a compound of forces is very much part of his nonhuman becoming. A transformation has taken place.

Perhaps of all the becoming-animal explorations in his films, unquestionably *Address Unknown* [Suchwiin bulmyeong] is the starkest and the most powerful in its exploration of spectatorial ethics where the spectator's eye is relentlessly accosted. In this film, Kim Ki-duk explores the postwar dilapidation and poverty of a small-town community situated near a US military base in Pyongtaek (70 kilometers from Seoul) during the time of Park Chung-hee's military rule. Here, everything operates as a master/slave dialectic, literally a dog-eat-dog world. It is the dog-(non) human relation that plays throughout the narrative. The young man, Chang-guk, a hybrid American-Korean, born out of wedlock to an American father he does not know, who has abandoned his prostitute mother and him, is hated within his community. Chang-guk collides with Dog-eye, the local dog dealer who buys domestic dogs from neighbors who are in need of money. He savagely kills them with a baseball bat, and then sells their meat to the local butcher and meat shops.¹⁴

Dog-eye tells Chang-guk: to be a good dog dealer requires giving them the 'eye' (Screen image 5.21). He is able to stare down any dog, and tell them who's the boss. Yet, Dog-eye is unable to 'stare down' Chang-guk once he accuses him of being an 'American dog' because he had to learn the language, making him essentially a Yankee slave. Once Chang-guk hears that Dog-eye was his mother's boyfriend before American colonialism in postwar Korea, a memory stirs in his brain. He has an Idea in the Deleuzian sense. He is able to virtually project a time in Korea's past *before* American colonialization, a time of lost spiritualization. It is a realization that Dog-eye is *also* a slave to the military presence. Chang-guk is able to *look back* and stare him in his eye with an intensity that sees right through him. He is now able to say: "You too are a Yankee slave-dog" with conviction. "Stop looking at me. My eyes are about to explode," is Dog-eye's response. This shows just how quickly the face-to-face encounter can turn things around. Bodily affects become exchanged at the unconscious level, only then is there a response. This exchange, filmed in the tradition of shot-reverse-shot to maintain dialogue, shows how the slave can become master, the power relationship of master-slave dialectic changed by a repositioning of perception due to the virtual recollection of an Idea—a time of Korea's idyllic past and Dog-eye a Yankee slave despite his bravado of being a tough dog-slayer.

The postwar situation of utter misery and hopelessness places all relationships into master-slave dialectic where the only response is violence.



Screen image 5.21 *Address Unknown*

Chang-guk beats up his mother and cuts out a tattoo on his mother's breast. In his eyes, her body was *branded* by an American father rather than being a sign of love; his mother in turn is spiteful to the local grocery owner, and just about anyone that is in her way. Two Korean bullies continually harass and beat Ji-hum to get money. They are in turn beaten by Chang-guk. At the film's end, Ji-hum gets even by committing fatal acts of violence against these two bullies: One a policeman, and the other, James, an American soldier who has taken Ji-hum's love interest away, has also become unstable. No one is spared. It appears that dialogue across *all* bodies is impossible. There is no seeing the Other. All the faces give us affective images of power and resentment. There seem to be no affective images that are unifying and reflective that would indicate an inner shinning of some reconciliation. 'Becoming-dog' in this Hegelian dialectic is always the position taken by Korean bodies. It is they who urinate like dogs, American's don't; it is they who eat dog-meat and dog stew (*bosintang*), thus absorbing the domesticated Other (dog) into the same, just short of cannibalism; it is they who are caged in by fences in their own country, unable to roam free, for the American military sets up the boundaries; it is they who sell their pets for money, and it is even they who have sex with their dogs. The young woman Eun-ok has a little 'lap dog' she uses to masturbate her.

By way of spectatorship, as theorized by Patricia MacCormack (2008), such imagery places an ethical demand on those who watch the film in terms of its masochism in the way that Kim's films *look back* through

their impulse images where the moral differences between good and evil, human, and animal no longer hold. The impulse of repetition without difference, a *Wiederholung*, occurs again and again.¹⁵ One circuit revolves around the eye: Eun-ok has a damaged eye due to a playing accident with her brother, who shoot her in the eye with a bow; Chang-guk has his eye almost gouged as he tries to peep at Eun-ok undressing through a hole in her bedroom wall; Ji-hum also sustains an eye injury. The second repetitive circuit is the letter sent by Chang-guk's mother, which never arrives at its destination. Both of these circuits are interrupted by a *Wiederkehr* incident. Eun-ok, after receiving the gift of restored sight by Jake via the American hospital facilities, evens her obligation to him by poking out her own eye. In the end, the Chang-guk's mother's letter is returned. But it arrives *too late*, simply blown away by the wind and found by an American soldier on a military exercise.

What this sets up, as again Patricia MacCormack (2008) explicates so well, is a face-to-face encounter: the face on the screen with the face of the viewer. Such an encounter, should the spectator take it as that, happens before all the usual binaries come into play in the master/slave dialectic. It presents an encounter that registers affectively. The two *Wiederkehr* positions identify moments when the eye 'answers back,' and the letter still arrives at its destination, *but the subject in question has already left*. The violence of the film, the dog-eat-dog world stares at the spectator, asking to be looked at 'in the eye,' if one can. The senses are flayed once more. Here the "painfully real" as a *Wiederholung* of one's symptom of the dialectic meets "hopefully imaginative change" as the *Wiederkehr* of difference—that moment is precisely the space-time where ethical questions are found, a chronological suspension of time, a time of Aion (cf. Deleuze), of the event, of becoming, of encounter.

A CLOSING ETHIC

In the film *Time* [Shi gan], the question of facefication [*visagéification*] is once more explored.¹⁶ This time it is a girl who has grown tired of her face, believing that her boyfriend can no longer 'see' her despite his continual assurances that this is not the case. The girl does not believe him and undergoes plastic surgery, a 'beauty operation' to completely change her face, to see if he would then 'still' love her, to reassure herself that it is that something inside her is what he 'truly' loves. To close a complicated story quickly, it turns out the young man is able to recognize her

'new' face and fall in love with her yet again—a repetition that confirms his love. But, this is still not enough to convince her of his love. So, he makes the ultimate *sacrifice*. He too will go under the knife and change his face. They will then meet as strangers to see once again if love will bloom. But this time, it is she who must find him. The narrative once again raises the gift of radical alterity: what is in the person more than he or she knows, a gift that is exchanged freely, as an excess of production, which binds lovers together outside of any economics. When she thinks she has found him, her ex-boyfriend with a new face, she begins to chase him, but he tries to get away. After a long pursuit, the boy disappears around a corner. Tires screeching are heard and a crunching sound. As the young woman comes around the corner through a subjective point of view shot we see his body, just mangled flesh with no face, a probe-head, raising the question—does she still love him now should he survive as a living monster, scarred for the rest of his life? (Screen image 5.22)

It seems Kim Ki-duk is relentless in raising these difficult ethical questions throughout his body of work. In *Pietà* (2012) (his 18th film) a loan shark, Lee Kang-do, a cross between a collecting agent and hitman is forced to rethink his violent lifestyle of crippling debtors, breaking the spirits of working families in a blue-collar factory town. In Korea, claims Kim Ki-duk, “countless people suffer from illegal private loan practices,” which end in suicide in many cases. A ‘mysterious’ woman, Mi-sun, arrives in his life claiming to be his mother, which he thought he never had.



Screen image 5.22 *Time*

Both undergo a journey, where, once more they arrive at the Tao of One. Kang-do starts by beating her, then he rapes her. She becomes a mother, caretaker, companion, a manipulator as well as his enemy. The multiplicity of relationship continues to unfold, as Kang-do just does not know how to vanquish or control her. He begins to change. This is reminiscent of performance artist Tehching Hsieh (mentioned earlier) ‘rope’ performance, where he is attached via a 6-foot rope to another performing artist, Linda Montano for an entire year, whom he had never met. They are in constant dialogue with one another; as each undoubtedly changes the other through the proximity of just ‘living’ together. “If it is true that it is of the essence of a map or rhizome to have multiple entryways, then it is plausible that one could even enter them through *tracings or the root-tree*, assuming the necessary precautions are taken [...] For example, one will often be forced to take dead ends, to work with signifying powers and subjective affections, to find a foothold, in spite of itself” (Deleuze 2004: 14–15, emphasis added). Kim Ki-duk’s entryway into the rhizome of *han* is through the root-tree—the Korean traditions that underpin his films. He burrows his way into the core beliefs that shape its psyche. He does so with strength and the beauty of traditions, calling on the Tao of wisdom. It is his fabulated signs that lead to characters ‘becoming imperceptible’ in the hope that the health of the country will improve. It is an amazing filmography that opens up a future yet to be lived by a “people yet to come.”

NOTES

1. Patricia’s MacCormack’s (2008) work on cinemasochism is crucial here. The impulse image, as Kim Ki-duk uses it throughout his filmography impacts the body. Just how the impulse image does this is explained further into the text.
2. The notion of *fabulation* is developed by Deleuze (1995: 125–126, 174). For a full account see Mengue (2008) and Bogue (2010).
3. Throughout his films, his characters are often nobodies in the symbolic order nevertheless create small artistic ‘gifts’ that they bestow on others, or unexpectedly give gifts to others. The gift, as Bataille (1988) developed it, is a manifestation of the demand to escape a structural determinism. By giving something away, of parting with something created, there is a return of the subject to freedom as the economic utilitarianism is suspended where time becomes ‘out of joint’ for that moment.

4. The notion of 'becoming woman, animal, insect, child and imperceptible' is developed by Deleuze and Guattari in their *Thousand Plateaus* (2004).
5. This was why Žižek may well be a disguised Deleuzian (see jagodzinski 2010b).
6. After having received the 'gift' of sight from her American boyfriend (played by Mitch Malem) through a restorative operation, Eunok self-mutilates her restored eye to 'free' herself from this 'gift' that has become a debt in what has become an abusive relationship.
7. The scenes of Hyun-Shik swallowing fishhooks and then pulling on them to destroy his voice and Hee-Jin doing the same to her vagina are unbearable to watch. This "flaying of the senses" to the point of loss of meaning (non-sense) illustrates Kim Ki-duk's mobilization of the 'impulse image' as occupying that third in-between space of the camera.
8. The notion of 'dividual' rather than 'individual' is Deleuze's (1992) way to indicate that in control societies 'dividuals' are simply statistical information used in 'big data' to manipulate capitalist desire for consumer ends.
9. In my past work I have called this the 'virtual Real' to avoid the Lacanian Real, as popularized by Žižek, to be an *inert* unknowable kernel of 'reality.' In contrast a 'virtual' Real, following Deleuze and Guattari, recognizes the affective *active* impact of its forces on all bodies. It gestures to a speculative realism where all matter has agency, thereby avoiding an anthropocentric view. This is especially important to Kim Ki-duk's films as he gestures to the agential forces of Nature through his fabricated signs that appear magical at times. Another way of saying this would be to recognize the Tao of Nature as being cosmic.
10. Probe-head as developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004) refers to facial features that are outside the normative distribution, which is then referred to as racially and ideologically 'human.' I am using the term 'probe-body' as an extension of this basic concept.
11. Whether the drives (*Trieb*) can be equated with the sensations of affect is still debated. This would bring Deleuze and Guattari closer to Lacan. But such touchstones are present throughout their writings given that Guattari never left Lacanian psychoanalytic practice, but certainly modified it along his own lines.
12. The grapheme that marks the X in Xpression refers to the vocabulary developed in *Visual Art and Education in an Era of Designer Capitalism* (jagodzinski 2010a). The attempt is to refer to the asignifying realm of schizo-flows of the intensities of expression.
13. The portmanteau word is a play on whole, hole, and holy.
14. Interestingly enough, Moon Jae-in's government has tried to move away from the dog meat industry, passing a bill that excludes dogs from

the livestock category so they cannot be raised as meat. In the city of Seongnam, a satellite city of Seoul, the country's largest dog slaughterhouse, Taepyeong, has been shut down. Hundreds of thousands of dogs were electrocuted each year. Moon has also adopted a dog, which was one of his election promises.

15. A difference with a repetition would be a *Wiederkehr* where a change is introduced (*Kebr* means corner, to turn a corner). The distinction is taken from Lacan's SXI, *The Four Fundamentals of Psycho-analysis* (1977).
16. For a brilliant analysis of Kim Ki-duk's play with time in his film *Time* produced in 2006, I refer you to Lee Meera (2012).

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PART II

Aesthetics of Designer Capitalism



CHAPTER 6

Aesthetic Wars: Between the Creative Industries and Nomadology

INTRODUCTION

Writing about creativity and art and its education is a very difficult undertaking since so much has been written on the subject. I hope to bring something new to the table concerning creativity by drawing on the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, who trouble philosophical positions that have been taken up by educators and artists in the past including phenomenology, hermeneutics, cognitive theories, and critical theory, each of which has a rich tradition of thought. All these positions continue to define the practices of the arts, education, as well as gallery and museum education. Deleuze and Guattari build upon and further both Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, a position that I have supported for many years. I try to show the significance of their philosophy within a digital age of the image that changes the way art and its education has carried on its foundational principles based on representational and cognitive thought.

In 2012 Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism declared the twenty-first century to be focused of ‘creativity.’ Under the label ‘Concept Korea,’ Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism

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(MCST)/Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) with support from Samsung Fashion and Design Funds (SFDF), formed a two-year partnership to help American and Korean designers build competitive businesses at home and abroad. Such initiatives should come as no surprise for they speak directly to what is expected in all post-industrialized societies to put the arts to work as tied to the global market economy. Recall Chung Kyung-Won's initiative called 'designomics' mentioned in Chapter 3. The globalization of the information economy and the internationalization of cyberspace have made culture and creativity a top priority when competing on the global stage. Neoliberal capitalist forces, it seems, have captured creativity to continue a consumerist economy through what have become known by the general term the 'creative industries.'

The new capitalist economy of these 'creative industries' (Florida 2002, 2010; Hartley 2005) brings together the mass scale of the cultural-entertainment industries with the individual talent of the creative arts to provide national and global distribution of culture as well as niche market designer products. The oxymoron 'mass customization' has now become a possibility. The context for this convergence takes place within the new media technologies (screen digitalized cultures) that are part of the larger 'knowledge' economy for the use of what is said to be 'interactive' citizen-consumers or 'prosumers' who are democratically 'free' to choose what it is they wish to consume, and who they wish to be represented by—such is the pluralist democracy of neoliberal political thought as supported by a capitalist world economy.

As my introduction to this book developed, we have now, in the neologism of Gregory Ulmer (2002), a literacy that he calls 'electracy,' a portmanteau word that combines electricity with literacy. In a nutshell, we are living through a third stage of communication. Just as orality was displaced by print literacy, print literacy is being displaced by electracy. Electracy is to digital media what literacy is to alphabetic or ideographic writing. Jan Rune Holmevik (2012) maps out how electracy apparatus can be put to use when rethinking the intersections between rhetoric and game theory, via the signifier 'ludology.' The creative industries are all about electracy, a shift to the way the affective body and image structure performance. What is it that images can 'do,' is the order of the day. Entertainment is the primary institution of electracy. It is the way entertainment is used to manipulate and steer desire that has

become the overarching game of politics. Trump is the prime example. Twitter use and the spectacularization of his own impeachment, hiring so-called tv lawyers that appear on Fox Television, assured him that the populace watching will be swayed by the cover-up that was taking place right in front of their eyes, and under their noses, a ‘beautiful display’ of scam politics. Alain Badiou (2019) calls it ‘fascist democracy.’

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The creative industries collapse work into play and producer into consumer. In terms of the three communication shifts in behavior historically, play supplants worship (the orality of religions) and experiment (the explorations of science). Play works with entertainment, which supplants both religion and science. It is no longer a question of right/wrong (the moralism of religions), nor the true/false dichotomy of science. These have been supplanted by joy/sadness (usually drawn from Spinozian ethics), or in Lacanian psychoanalytic terms, *jouissance*; that is, the ambiguity of pleasure/pain. Julian Dibble (2007) has called this ‘ludocapitalism.’ Intelligence, knowledge, and creativity define four types of producer-consumers in what is a continuous dynamic spiral of production. First are the creators who form a series of new productive sectors such as advertising and all the different professionals involved (concept creators, photographers, graphic designers, audiovisual technicians, and so on). Second are the consulting professionals such as the business and marketing experts, headhunters, personnel managers, and the like. These two levels of the creative industries create ‘image worlds’ or ‘life-styles’ and ways to generate desire and seduction as a lack, as to what is missing in your life to make it complete. Competition among corporations becomes a form of creative play. The ecology for such creativity is all about relaxing, well-being, free space, open areas, and just the right amount of anxiety to create an atmosphere of expectation to design the next level of commodity (car, watch, computer, chip, television, and so on). Gambling and profit maximization replace safe investing and employment creation. The third level of producers consists of consumers who actualize these image worlds that are offered enabling the fourth level of producers to emerge—those who are the personal image makers: personal trainers, personal stylists, clothing stylists, fashion consultants, real estate agents, dermatologists, plastic surgeons, estheticians, designers, interior-architects, self-help professions, and so on.

Their job is to sell their services to consumers who believe that they can help them get ahead and achieve as new kind of flexible subjectivity needed to survive in such an economy.

Artists, to survive in this economic climate must learn to be self-promoting entrepreneurs who hire agents to ‘push’ their wares in galleries and museums. In the ‘creative industries’ they work in transdisciplinary teams in a complete ‘ecosystem’ (chip designers, artists, audience research, advertising agencies, finance, and business experts), much like the entrepreneurial teams found in business, and within interdisciplinary networks to develop R&D opportunities for business. Artists are given ‘free’ time as long as they produce (much like professors who are researchers). Art has now ‘dedifferentiated’ itself (lost specialization in form and function); that is, there is no longer artistic genres (painting, photography, sculpture, and so on). It has also ‘dedifferentiated’ itself from advertising and cooking. It becomes difficult to distinguish the two as in Nan Goldin’s publicity campaign for SNCF—the French National Railway Company, for example, and Rirkrit Tiravanija’s exercise in ‘relational aesthetics’—cooking and serving noodles in galleries for art collectors and visitors. Relationality itself becomes aestheticized. It’s not what you do, but also ‘how’ you do it. In the third communicative wave of electracy, style has replaced method (associated with literacy) and ritual (the orality of religion). Style now becomes an overriding factor when it comes to presentation, dependent of the ‘problem’ that is at hand. With truth/falsity replaced with joy/sadness, the question is how to affect the body in a way which increases one to ‘feel good’ or ‘be happy’. A great example of this emergence of style has been *On Becoming a God in Central Florida* (2019), a television series starring Kirsten Dunst that satirizes the selling of products like *Amway* and *Mary Kay* in the 1990s.

LIQUID ARTS

Such displays of ‘relational aesthetics’ (Bourriaud 1998) have now become part of the service industry. Relational aesthetics, especially as developed by Nicolas Bourriaud, was targeted to the claims that art via micro-situations in art galleries was able to generate the emotional contact that had been lost due to the distancing effects of digitalized forms of communication, a questionable claim. Altermodernity was his way of riffing off Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of the rhizome by

introducing his own plant metaphor, the ‘radicant’ (Jagodzinski 2014). Art now abandons its prior (industrial) object and shifts to the immaterial form of services. Art practices become a gas or liquid that enters like an aesthetic vapor into all facets of lived-life: fashion, design, politics, entrepreneurship, humanitarianism, and the environment (Michaud 2007). Aesthetics is primary in electracy, overcoming its expressions as mythology (in oral cultures) and epistemology (in the cultures of literacy, book cultures). Aesthetics of designer capitalism override all aspects of life; the Earth is for sale as it becomes completely aestheticized by way of a series of communication satellites launched by SkySat now owned by Google. The surveillance of the Earth is now a reality.

Zygmunt Bauman (2007), a former teacher of mine, points to the ‘liquidity’ of contemporary art. On his visit to Paris in 2006, he cites three artists who were given prominence in galleries all around Paris: Jacques Villeglé goes around Paris with a camera and takes pictures of billboards or empty walls that have already been filled in with information. Gallery walls now become the city walls. Manolo Valdés paints or rather collages one thing: a face, always the same face on canvases made of jute or hemp. You cannot tell if these works are being created or in a state of decomposition (destruction). Lastly, Herman Braun-Vega paints impossible encounters; that is fragments are taken from historical eras and put together in a comfortable habitation. In all three cases, life and death lose their meaning-bestowing distinctions. For Bauman, these are representative arts of liquid capitalism. They are temporal, mark constant change with no particular direction, with a final disposition of the object already built in. The opposition between the creative and destructive arts, between learning and forgetting, forwards and backwards seems to no longer hold. Some have called such a direction, after Nicolas Bourriaud, *Altermodernism*, a global phenomenon where ‘information’ is constantly reworked through artistic formats. Information becomes the ‘new AI materiality’ for many artists working with the digital.

From a Deleuzian perspective, Kane Faucher (2013) tries to make sense of this changed AI reality by maintaining that information for Deleuze is the Idea and its actualizations; it is a quasi-organizational principle. The Idea (as introduced in Chapter 2) becomes an information problematic at the virtual level where solutions are never fully exhausted. Each solution, as part of a multiplicity, enables a repeated return to the source Idea. The unfolding of actualizations gives sense to the event of

art. This makes for a problem-solution nexus, not unlike the Nietzschean destruction-creation nexus where a meta-state persists, ready for the next actualization. As Faucher concludes, “The virtual is a black box filled with white noise, but it is the specific type of noise that is infinitely generative (even if it is governed by rules as much as it imposes a rule set on the process of unfolding)” (90). The kernel to creativity in Deleuze’s case, following Faucher, is that information and noise (as Idea, as problematic) are not to be differentiated. “Noise may ‘disorganize’ a system, but it also introduces something new to that system that permits a constant reorganization -if not a reterritorialization that begets new relations that form and break according to a pattern of singularities where *what differs repeats, and what repeats must differ*” (ibid., emphasis added).

In the context of Altermodernism, the artist becomes nomadic as a collapse occurs between the specific (local) and the global (universal). Cultural landscapes are traversed, blurring artistic identity regardless where they find themselves geographically located. Mobility, travel, and trespassing, while all pertinent to these global trotting artists, it is confined to a very small elite. It is also the case that any location is imploded by global communication via the Internet. This pertains to both East/West exchanges happening in major urban areas via signature galleries in Seoul, Hong Kong, Berlin, New York, and so on. It could be said that globalization can provide for a great leveling effect. However, nationalistic pressure to represent one’s country, most famously at sites like the Venice Biennale or Kassel’s documenta festival, presents the paradox of the very Idea of Altermodernity.

Exhibitions, live performance events, screen technologies, and learning workshops characterize the spectacularization of contemporary culture. The interface is between artistic practices, communities, education, and industry. What must be added to this is the educational imperative of ‘learning to learn,’ a tautology which means being a perpetual student needing to ‘upgrade.’ Postdoctoral research has become the new ‘standing reserve’ (*Bestand*) to use Heidegger’s term for this ‘creative class.’ Art and its education are asked to abet this capitalist economy, which has become an aesthetic (libidinal) economy. Art schools are redesigning their curriculums to meet this demand, and public schools are under pressure to produce this ‘flexible subject.’ Parents, especially middle-class parents who want their children to succeed are held hostage to this demand by capital. In Korea, this entails going to the best

schools and universities possible and engaging in ‘shadow education’ and private after-school education. Private after-school sector has emerged as the vanguard of unchecked privatization and marketization of education that magnify inequalities. In the United States and Canada, this situation is being changed through the privatization of schooling and the greater pressure to establish charter schools so that a specialized curriculum can be developed that is more congenial to these economic necessities. The Obama administration was heavily influenced in this direction by Bill Gates and Eli Broad, two key players as venture philanthropists and billionaires, who have heavily influenced education via the Broad Grant program and the Gates Foundation. Under the Trump administration, the billionaire appointee Betty DeVos, as his education secretary, is slowly devastating public education through privatization, for-profit universities, totally dismantling any progressive changes the Obama administration may have done. In Canada, education follows a similar trajectory. The OECD seems to run the agenda as to what is expected of education for the future of globalized capitalism (jagodzinski 2015).

THE DIGITALIZED IMAGE: MACHINIC VISION

While much more can be said concerning the ‘creative industries,’ the rest of this chapter is to present a ‘line of flight’ that tries to escape the clutches of neoliberal capitalism and its vampirist thirst for creative blood, a way of thinking of an ethico-political approach to art and its education that tries to escape the ‘overcode’ of ‘designer capitalism’ toward a new life economy (Holmes 2009). Perhaps the most important consideration is to recognize that art|education must now come to terms with ‘new media’ of these creative industries—here I am referring to video, performance, audiovisual, installation and multi-media art forms and the various software programs and interfaces that enable such a contemporary *Kunstwollen* [the will to art] to emerge. The result is a significant paradigmatic change of orientation for the way we have thought about art in general given that (as a commodity) it can now be endlessly reproduced, manipulated, and destroyed, as these ‘immaterial’ object relations of spectatorship and participation undergo change.

The first concern for art|education is that our understanding of the image has to undergo a change from a persistent visual essentialism that defines our field governed by representation and interpretation of

images to a recognition that digitalization as information, as a mathematical process, confronts us with a ‘frameless’ image that is no longer analogical but also inhuman—that is to say, digital. It is machinic vision as already theorized by soviet cinematographer Dizga Vertov in 1929; a disembodied ‘kino eye’ that technologically (as soft, hard, and wetware) extends human vision and redistributes the senses, much as ‘print’ did for Enlightened modernism. In terms of electracy fantasy now supplants the ‘faith’ that governs oral cultures and the knowledge that is the overriding factor in literal print cultures where science is the dominating institution. In contrast to this, art|education in the twentieth century has been sheltered by a humanism, which paid less attention to the techné of art, celebrating and attributing creativity to self-expression and the skill of the ‘human’ hand.

We have now, however, reached a point where the technological mediation of ‘making’ art can no longer be ignored. The engineering aspects of art have become increasingly important causing copyright issues between artists and engineers over the produced installations. What is of particular importance then is the ‘staging’ of the artwork, especially when it comes to installation. The ‘staging’ of what the viewer/spectator/reader/listener/interactor/participant experiences by manipulating the environment as a particular assemblage. Screen cultures present a moving-image. The body in relation to the image has drastically changed. It becomes choreographed. Within the electracy configuration, the totem of orality and the categorizations of literacy become replaced by *chora*. Chora refers to the spaces created through a mood, atmosphere or a *Stimmung* in the German. The medium of video, installation art and the changed urban environment present art|education with the challenge of understanding space|time and body in different terms in relation to the changed technologies and the redistribution of the senses. A completely different understanding of the subject is required from the one that has dominated the West’s understanding of identity as the psychological cognitive and rational individual. The ‘creative industries’ of hypercapitalism are quite aware of the need for this shift in thinking as well, which is why there is an ‘aesthetic war’ (Venn 2010a) that opposes the cultivation of radical interventions and ‘monstrous identities’ to avoid capture. Deleuze and Guattari and those who further their theories are part of this opposition for another ethico-politics.

THE AFFECTIVE TURN

Let me outline in a very general way the paradigm shift that has taken place with digitalization and the ‘new’ media (or technological arts). Many have called this paradigm shift an ‘affective turn’ (Clough 2007; Featherstone 2010; Venn 2010b) where consumer culture targets the affective body as well as the body image. The affective body (what Deleuze|Guattari called Body without Organs [BwO] in the 1970s) is a moving body without image, which communicates through proprioceptive senses and intensities of affect. It can override the perception of the imagined body. The affective body is an intrinsic body, a body schema as opposed to an extrinsic body image, yet both bodies are intimately related to one another. Affect, in this understanding is an unconscious (non-conscious) phenomena that goes below the level of consciousness. Affect is ‘half-object and half-subject’ (Guattari 1995, p. 92). As such this body can be at odds with cognition thereby presenting the existential paradoxes, ambiguities, indecisions of everyday life and so on. There is something nonhuman about this affective body since we cannot control this aspect of ourselves as the realm of viruses, bacteria, cell growth, and the etiology of diseases testify. Many artists have now explored their ‘portraiture’ by growing the colonies of bacteria that inhabit each body in a unique way. (I explore bioart in chapter eleven.) Deleuze and Guattari called this level of reality a ‘plane of immanence’ at the molecular level—a vital clamor of life. They call it involution rather than evolution for this is where creativity proper happens, where accident, mutation, heterogeneous couplings, interkingdoms can take place producing something entirely new. On this molecular level, there is *Zoë*, energy as free life, which has not been captured as bios ... or biopower (as Foucault theorized it) where life is contained and constrained (civilized) by the social order and the laws of the state. Life in this state has been ‘molarized’ in their terms, but *Zoë* always leaks out of its confinement. Life remain excessive and not controllable by us humans. In the context of this book, I have been equating *Zoë* with Chi.

The intrinsic body thought this way is not yet organized, it is ‘schizophrenic’ in the sense that this is a level of sounds, abstractions, and rhythms—what Deleuze|Guattari called ‘multiplicity’ and Jacques Lacan called the Real. Affective resonances happen between bodies at this level so that something new may emerge. One is drawn in or repelled by another body depending on the molecular chemistry—love, hate, anxiety

as Lacan once said are the primary psychic states. Spinoza identified desire, joy, and sadness as the ‘primitive’ affects that constitute human behavior. Some would refer to this affective level as being ‘authentic’ because it can’t be faked since it is involuntary. In my writings, I have used the term Xpression rather than expression for affect; self-refleXion rather than self-reflexion to identify this bodily realm of intrinsic virtuality. Affects are not emotions. Affects are the intensities of feeling—vitality effects, tonalities of the voice and sound. Emotion is already processed feeling, an established generalized body pattern like being sad or happy. Affects are more abstract, not yet formulated. It is sensation itself, as *Zoë* or a ‘bare life’ force. Giorgio Agamben (1998) called it *vita nuda* (naked or bare life) over which control is exerted. It is this spirit life, what leaves the body when we die.

AISTHETICS/POEISIS

So why is this so important for art|education? We can begin by saying that affects are sensations that have their own particular logic, a ‘logic of sensation’ as Deleuze calls it, and this logic of sensation—as aesthetics—sets it apart from aesthetics of designer capitalism, which has been the usual playing field for representational art at the level of body image. Here we have a different understanding of the image facilitated by the inhuman apparati of digitalization as well as the nonhuman ‘biological’ body that has no image. It exists at degree zero. Deleuze draws on the philosopher Henri Bergson to comprehend this more processual body in distinction to the body of representational cognition, which explains images through discursive meanings that dominate art history and criticism. This processual body is most affected by threshold affects, a bodily experience that is not subject to chronological time but to a different sense of time—what Bergson called *durée* and Deleuze called *Aion*. Such time cannot be ‘measured’ but felt immediately by the intrinsic body’s nervous system. It is a phenomenon of the present, consciously registered as an experience that comes either too early or too late since it has already happened at a moment of presence when our bodies undergo such disruption, and we must reflect back on what happened. It becomes a memory of the past. Trauma and falling in love are ‘events’ of this sort, subject to a different ‘time’ than the measured time of capitalism. With trauma, we cannot remember since the schematic neural visceral body becomes overwhelmed with stimuli. Love on the other hand, the

moment of lovers meeting, the first kiss and so on is always repeatedly remembered. We can, however, never pinpoint when precisely this ‘love event’ happened. We can see that ‘creativity’ is subject to such an understanding of time. Creativity in this account always has happened and we discover it after the fact, even when we cry ‘eureka!’ (Archimedes) the event has already happened.

Henri Bergson offers Deleuze a way to understand the complexity of images that are no longer theorized by modernist concepts of representation, but enable us to understand the complexity of the image that is registered below the level of consciousness, in the nonconscious body before it becomes a form with a particular content. This means the pre-conscious image as it is affected by memory and non-chronological time. For Bergson the image is never the image of movement, rather the image is movement as such: image = movement. In contemporary screen cultures, the affective nonhuman body is activated directly by the inhuman digital images. This becomes especially evident with digital cameras that are used more to scan the environment to capture a series of moments of time rather than ‘stilling’ time. Just as ‘the image is movement’ opens up a new dimension of understanding, the understanding of space is also no longer representational as it is perceived ‘naturally’ through our conscious cognition; rather space becomes more disorientating (the experience of vertigo for example, or *déjà vu*). It has many possible topological virtual potentialities. Such space addresses the many nuances chora [*khora*] can take and the atmospheric change depending on the haecceities that emerge.

BECOMING

We come to one last theoretical concern, and that is to recognize that this ‘split’ of the two bodies: the conscious body image and the unconscious affective body are relationally informed by one another, however it is the split, chasm, gap or what Guattari called the ‘transversal’ where profound creativity or change occurs, where something new comes into existence. This is not a dialectical process where a ‘higher’ (*Aufhebung*) state of existence is created that overcomes the opposition or conflict of the ‘two bodies,’ but what Deleuze and Guattari call a ‘line of flight.’ This is a nomadic line, a line that draws one into new unknown territory breaking out from the structure that held it in place. Such a line is charged with *Zoë* (free creative life). This means that a threshold has

been overcome, something has been released, an escape toward the creation of something new. Deleuze and Guattari call this ‘becoming,’ emerging always in this interval between affect and cognition. We can see here that both aspects—the affective and the imagined body are in play relationally. Deleuze and Guattari called this the virtual|actual dimensions. Both are necessary for art|educators to engage in the capitalist ‘aesthetic wars’ of control. Currently, visual culture remains caught by representational thinking, a humanism which ignores the inhuman and the technological, or recognizes them in instrumental terms as productivity rather than post-productivity (here Nicolas Bourriaud (2006) has it right) where the release of ‘life’ is sought for.

This dimension of the affective body opens up the potential for creative experience for our own bodies to encounter with new intensities and affects through ‘new|old’ media. It expands what the body can ‘do’ and experience. Aesthetic experience is a ‘temporary event’—a time-image in some case and a movement-image in others depending what is being extracted. Deleuze (1986, 1989) wrote a two-volume book on cinema to show how to theorize the difference between the two forms of images. It is the dynamical interface between the body and the image as digitalized screened information that creates an affective response by the viewer|spectator|participant|interactor. Video, in particular, can be seen as opening up the pre-individual affect exposing the aesthetic dimensions of the sensible. As a medium, video recording has the ability to slow time down (slow-motion), freeze-frame time, repeat a circuit of time endlessly by looping tracks. Maurizio Lazzarato (2019) has examined this brilliantly through what he calls “videophilosophy.”

“Video technology is a machinic assemblage that establishes a relationship between asignifying flows (waves) and signifying flows (images). It is the first technical means of image production that corresponds to the generalized decoding of flows” (81–82). Perception is opened up through delay, acceleration, and contraction via our intrinsic sensorial embodiment. It requires a disjunction between cognition and affect; that is between body image of ‘normative’ perception and the proprioceptivity of the non-imaged body to bring about thinking. Thinking here is a creative experience—what I call self-refleXion to distinguish it from normative self-reflection only at the cognitive level. Lazzarato offers a “Cinema 3,” building on the work of Bergson, Deleuze (Cinemas 1 and 2), Walter Benjamin, and inspired by Nietzsche. He moves past the optical image to recognize the way time is “crystallized” by the machines

in electracy. The Vertrovian kino-eye is politicized as a ‘war machine.’ He uses the word “crystallization” to describe the Bergsonian contraction and relaxation of time-matter that produces images (to recall image=movement). All images—including human subjects—are these assembled contractions and relaxations of time-matter. Technologies of photography, cinema, video, and electronic media, like the human body as it couples into the various potential assemblages, present various images that are expressions of the power of time in post-Fordism (electracy). Lazarrato recognizes the “machinic enslavement” that capitalism manages by capturing the asemiotic dimension of affect to manipulate the neurological level; he searches for ways to subvert this capture through video artists like Bill Viola and Nam June Paik, to be discussed in Chapter 10 and below. His videophilosophy makes visible the onto-aesthetics of asignifying semiotics of electracy.

PASSIONS, DISSENSUS AND TRANSINDIVIDUATION

Let me offer an example of Bill Viola as a video artist who recognizes the primacy of affect in image reception, one of the go-to artists for Lazarrato. Viola tackles the changed media of electracy by claiming that the new forms of (synthetic) image production have to abandon the models of the eye and ear; they need to be redirected toward the models of the processes of thought; that is, the conceptual structures of the brain. He recognizes, like Warren Neidich (2003; www.artbrain.org), the realm of neuroaesthetics and its capitalist capture. *The Quintet of the Astonished* (2000) is part of a longer series of works called the *Passions* (2000–2002) (see Walsh 2003), an exploration of the primary emotions of joy, sorrow, anger, and fear. It is a well known and much-discussed work that illustrates brilliantly how the gap or interstice between imaginary body and the affective body can be opened up through the digitalized media of video. The art-piece shows five people undergoing intense emotional agony. The action unfolds in ultra-slow motion. The scene is shot on 35 mm high-speed film at the extraordinary speed of 384 frames per second (ordinary perception registers 24 frames per second). In chronological time, the action takes 30 seconds but here it is stretched to about 16 minutes, 32 times slower than normal speed.

Viola’s *The Quintet of the Astonished* demonstrate a disruption of time, an opening up of the interval between normative perception of cognition and the working of the bodily affects. ‘Stilled time’ that is found

in the portrait paintings of the Renaissance is the primary material for his ‘special-effects’ videos. The group portraits are displayed on screens at supra slow motion, which forces viewers to be ‘out-of-phase’ with themselves as they are caught by the animation of the picture moving in an almost indiscernible pace. Spectators become aware of their own motions in front of the screen, as they must become immobile to grasp the changing facial expressions as they appear microscopically on the screen. The affective flow between the video and the spectators begins to take place. However, the change is so slow, each serial shift confirms just how nonhuman the face truly is whether or not the spectator comes at the beginning, middle, or end of the looping video. A zone between the spectator and the screen now becomes a situation, an interactive exchange, which is more than simply a visual field. There is an exchange of energies. The aesthetic force of the situation that arrests the body makes the spectator|interactor realize what is going on behind the reach of the eye alone, beyond mere optical visibility.

Viola’s video productions are exceptional exemplars as to how it might be possible to think of ‘transindividual subjectivity’ as theorized by Gilbert Simondon (Scott 2014); that is, a ‘subject-group’ following Félix Guattari (Genosko 2002) in relation to the ‘disaster culture’ of the Anthropocene that we live in today. This is a thesis developed by Elena del Río (2019), which has compelling merit in relation to an eco-politics that goes beyond identity interests of all possible kinds. Transindividual subjectivity and subject-group are two concepts that go beyond individuality or a collective that is a homogenized seriality. Transindividual subjectivity happens when a fusion takes place, a common praxis that recognizes common action required by each member of a group caught up in an event. In Simondon’s view, transindividuality is pure relationality; it is metastable structure in its make-up, subject to change with an event. Such an event is contagious, arriving either too early or too late. Through the process of ‘transduction’ in Simondon’s terms, members are affected. Psychosomatic forces and energies circulate between the human and nonhuman in events. Transindividuality is therefore not social being. Rather, it is an existential mode of ‘transductive unity.’ It’s location dwells in a zone of pre-individual potential that is part of both the individual and the collective. The key here is to grasp *affective life* (or ‘A Life’ a Deleuze put it, pure immanence) that is quite apart from common intersubjective social symbolic functions. It is beyond identification, not caught up in the usual sociological signifiers (race, gender,

sex, and so on). Del Rio shows us through Viola's works *The Path*, *The Deluge*, and especially *The Raft* how the process of collective individuation that is triggered by disaster draws on the affective relations that are based on pre-individuals (as already discussed in this chapter) can be the basis for an eco-politics. It is her conviction that the perpetual crisis of the Anthropocene requires such a reorientation; an attunement to Nature, quite different from Object Orientated Ontology (OOO) of Tim Morton's (2013) hyperobjects, being perceptually theorized, are impossible to grasp. The pandemic of the COVID-19 virus is such a contemporary test today of collective individuation.

The final point I simply wish to make is that art|education must begin to grapple with this *Kunstwollen* [will to art] of a changed space and time. For art|education, this means a more complex understanding of image creation and the affects of art in a digital age. It is no longer a question what art means, or what it represents but what the arts *do*, what experiences they can open up in terms of 'lines of flight.' This is the position Elena de Rio takes up when she discusses the power of Bill Viola's *The Raft* as a microcosm of eco-politics. Such lines of flight release 'life.' We become more enriched by the world and attuned to it when this happens as opposed to capturing *Zoë* for capitalist ends—in terms of biopower (Foucault)—that the creative industries are involved in. The potential future is open in the former whereas the possible future is already closed in the latter. We create a debt society by throwing away things so that we can renew then with a 'better' model. We are told that consumerist societies offer freedom and choice. Consumerism is most often assumed as a greed for acquisition, the desire to accumulate more and more things. But this is only part of the symptom of hypercapitalism where everything becomes short-lived and disposable—waste outstrips production. Of course, much of this is changing with the realization of 'climate change' being the anthropogenic activity of Man (discussed at the end of this book).

It is uncertain what art 'is' or what 'it' should be in a global capitalist world where everything converges into a single act of destructive creation or creative destruction to keep the system going. For Deleuze at least, it means finding a way to still have 'belief' in this world despite its nihilism and capitalist necrophilia where bodies become dispensable either through layoffs, firing, cheap labor, or outright entertainment as on so many reality television shows. Art should be creative for affirmative ends: to open up life ... to let *Zoë* escape for new creative ends that are

ethically sound in relation to the crisis of ecology that we are in. This is where Jacques Rancière's (2010) writings speak to me in the role of critical art contributing to the efficacy of 'dissensus.' "Dissensus is a conflict between sensory perception [realm of *Zoë*] and the way of making sense of it [cognition]" (p. 139). Video art like Viola's does create a 'dissensus.' His videos remain ethico-political and eco-political to the extent that a nomadic line opens up to a 'becoming' other (the nonhuman in this case) so that we might be open to other dimensions that enhance life (*Zoë*) to make the imperceptible perceptible. Or, the very least, attune us to ourselves and the nonhuman event that is taking place, like the pandemic of COVID-19. I would see this as the task of art|education that embraces creativity in its most open potentiality, a creativity that is at odds with the creativity of the 'creative industries.' But this plea is certainly a 'minoritarian one'; to call on Deleuze and Guattari (1987, pp. 291–309) again, where 'minoritarian art' calls for deterritorizations of identity (fixed images) so that a redistribution of the senses might take place for the benefit of psychic health rather than plunging us more and more into ecological disaster ... and death.

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CHAPTER 7

Art|Education: In the Service of Designer Capitalism

INTRODUCTION

As Florida (2002) writes regarding the ‘creative class,’ “Creativity is now the decisive source of competitive advantage” (5). Creativity has indeed received a ‘new life’ in art education. For a long time, no one was speaking about ‘creativity.’ It seemed to be a forgotten discourse, partly perhaps because art could not claim exclusive rights of its possession. Many other ‘subject’ areas could claim the same territory. Things have changed, mainly due to the new economic realization that creativity is good for business and good for everyone. The Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism has declared the twenty-first century to be that of ‘creativity.’ Jesook Song (2010) has recently edited a number of essays that point to this continued neoliberalism in South Korea. The opening keynote for the Second World Conference on Arts Education held in Seoul on May 24–25, 2010, which I attended and participated in, was delivered by the husband and wife research team of Robert and Michele Root–Bernstein (2001), who specialize in ‘creative practices.’ Their presentation was entitled “arts and science, education and creativity, research and practice.” They made the claim that Noble Prize winners were creative people in the way they crossed the borders

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between art and science, and that these two fields are intimately related. This has certainly been the trajectory, especially with design engaging intimately with various wet and dry technologies. Nevertheless, every art practice is now informed by various technologies of all kinds, what I call the inhuman agents of smart machines (AI), as well as biological engineering when it comes to new explorations of bioart as explored in Chapter 11.

The melding of science and art is an initiative long since begun by the American entrepreneur, author, and literary agent, John Brockman (1995), who is the president of the Edge Foundation. Brockman's 'third culture' meets the demands of the information age where the visual and the literary have come together, i.e., image and text form the new 'hieroglyphics' today as company branding of logos and the emergence of an 'image culture' make it mandatory that an aesthetics of the 'glance' becomes operational. By a 'glance aesthetics,' I mean that consumer *attention* has to take place at the 'blink of an eye,' so that the eye/I becomes spellbound for that infinitesimal moment. Entertainment, style, fantasy, play, the body, and the figure are all the new emerging tropes for what is an age of *electracy* (Ulmer 2002). Museum and art education have turned toward exhibitions that now break down the borders between art, technology, and science so that these fields have become more and more fluid and symbiotically engaged with each other. A neologism should therefore be appropriate, something ridiculous like *tech-sci-art*.

Peter Weibel, an influential Austrian art critic who was the chairman and CEO of the *Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie* in Karlsruhe, Germany, has curated many exhibits where art and science have come together: for example, *net condition* (Weibel and Druckrey 2001) and *Iconoclash* (Latour and Weibel 2002). Not surprisingly, he too calls this a 'third culture,' which he maintains is 'beyond art' as we know it. *Jenseits von Kunst* (1997) literally "the otherside of art" was translated into English as *Beyond Art: A Third Culture* (2005). This is a thick compendium of the influences of technology on art in the twentieth century. In his own essay, called "Logokultur" (1997: 732–733), he makes the point that we have moved from the symbol to the logo as everything became commodified, the condition that I call 'designer capitalism.' In terms of electracy, the *figure* as the mode of apparatus replaces the narrative of orality (religion) and argument, the mode of print literacy.

The question I ask in this chapter is just what kind of creativity are artists, and teachers of art being called on to perform where not only ‘logocentrism’ dominates (in the two senses that this word implies: a form of reason and rationality that is being ‘branded’ on the body via corporate logos), and an erosion of what are called ‘traditional’ arts that have become more and more forgotten. Every traditional art now must embrace forms outside its usual purview. A whole new set of artistic fundamentals have emerged to make this possible. Olivia Gude (2004) offers a partial list: appropriation, juxtaposition, recontextualization, hybridity, layering, gazing, text and image interaction, and representin’ It seems that there is no time left in the curriculum for traditional studio practice, especially as we approach the end of secondary education where portfolio preparation is very specific and technological innovation is encouraged in International Art Baccalaureate programs. Perhaps the charge of being ‘backwards’ is most often heard regarding traditional arts since a digital aesthetics seems to be sweeping through schools. The globalization of the marketplace though designer capitalism requires a shift in educational curriculum and reform, and that is what is precisely taking place globally as new flexible workers are needed. As Martin Heidegger (1993) once put it, this is the creation of ‘standing reserve’ of laborers for the twenty-first century.

DESIGNER CAPITALISM’S CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

In the 50th anniversary issue of *Studies in Art Education*, the leading scholarly journal in the field in the United States, Enid Zimmerman (2009), a respected American art professor wrote a comprehensive essay on creativity in art education, examining the various ways in which the field had taken up the concept. It was a useful exercise since it provided the parameters and limitations as to its theorization by those who set policy and leadership. In her conclusions and recommendations, Zimmerman takes note that globally Asia and Europe have embraced creativity and recommends that, as a concept, it should continue to be *leveled*. Creativity should be understood in all-inclusive terms available to everybody, rather than an exclusive endeavor confined to a small coterie of people. Creativity is then beckoned to do yet another task undertaken by classroom teachers. Zimmerman calls on a shift from artistic talent and self-expression to, not surprisingly, reconceptualizing its new role in the twenty-first century in the following way: She writes,

“[I]t is apparent that students need to be prepared for a new information age and that educational interventions in art education for all students that foster creative thinking, imagination, and innovation are important for generating solutions to real life problems both now and in the future. [...] Researchers and practitioners need to conceive of creativity as multidimensional with consideration of how cognitive complexity, affective intensity, technical skills, and interest and motivation all play major roles” (394). Such an agenda seems reasonable. It has so much commonsensical force as it questions what seems like a sacrilege: self-expression, genius, excellence, and the exclusivity of masterpieces. But, perhaps the call for such a paradigm shift is precisely the kind of subject position demanded of the educational system by designer capitalism’s global need for a flexible subject who can problem solve and innovate?

John Hartley’s (2005) edited book, *Creative Industries*, provides a good account of why ‘creativity’ has become the overwhelming road to economic growth and success. Creative industries refer to the “*conceptual and practical convergence* of the *creative arts* (individual talent) with Cultural Industries (mass scale), in the context of new media technologies (ICTs) within a new knowledge economy, for the use of newly interactive citizen consumers” (5, author’s emphasis). Richard Florida (2002) identifies a ‘creative class,’ which is not large numerically as a service class, but provides the dynamics for growth and change, as well as the temper of the times. Richard Latham (2002) has identified the way youth have been seduced into the new media industries (especially video game enterprises) where they have been both exploited and made obscenely rich from their creative passions. The new flexible self is modeled on artists, musicians, professors, and scientists who have always set their own hours, dressed as they pleased and worked in stimulating environments. Never ‘forced’ to work, the difference between play and work disappears. Work is play and play is work. Such a model becomes the new subject position for the no-collar workplace where the hierarchical system of control, at least in the North American context, is replaced by new forms of self-management, peer recognition, and pressure, as well as intrinsic forms of motivation. John Hartley calls this ‘soft control,’ where what looks like independent work, flexible schedules, and bonus incentives shape the workplace. However, job security (tenure, for example) is traded in for autonomy. Incentives are given for more production, and there are opportunities to increase one’s skills, an ability to grow and to shape the content of one’s work. The expectation is that any student graduating today will have several employers throughout their careers;

hence, the portfolio, like the artist, has become a necessity to ‘present’ oneself (a euphemism for ‘selling’ oneself like an itinerant worker).

It should (again) be no surprise why Enid Zimmerman’s call to level creativity for everyone in recognition that in today’s world creativity belongs to the working of global capitalism in its designer mode to encourage technology, lifestyle, and entertainment. When it comes to ‘designer creativity,’ there is really no shortage of it: just open any television channel, or if you want the pure product in North America you can watch Donald Trump’s *The Apprentice* (the celebrity version) where brutal capitalist competition is made into a game, but this is compensated by celebrity players (Hollywood stars, musicians, sports figures, cooking chefs) winning money for their favorite charities. In this game ‘everybody’ wins. Donald Trump’s logo is made more prestigious and the celebrities are not seen as narcissistic and filthy rich, but kind and caring people trying to help the poor and support those with misfortune.

This is an old ploy of capitalist deceit that comes back to the nineteenth century in the Victorian novels of Charles Dickens. It is also a strategy that won Trump the White House in 2016. Entertainment, business, and politics (finally) became indistinguishable and out in the open. Trump showboats, lies, trash talks allies, stages military parades to the economic limits that are possible, golfs, provokes the press and journalists, hosts visiting dignitaries at his resort, Mar-a-Lago, Florida, flies where he needs to on Air Force One (which will soon be redesigned to his satisfaction), eats hamburgers to show he ‘too’ likes fast food, and has many of his staff and trusted employees lunch and dine at the Trump Tower on a regular basis. It is a profile of a millionaire living like a billionaire on taxpayer’s money to make him even more money. In short, the Presidency of the United States has become an Entertainment Factory. His ratings are based on how many eyeballs he can keep glued to his Twitter account, Fox News Network, and right-wing newspapers and Internet sites, as well as his wooed Evangelical Christian communities (estimated roughly to be 25% of the population!), who hypocritically turn a blind eye to all his misdeeds and moral transgressions. They are quite happy making a pact with the devil. Any evangelicals who call this hypocrisy out are seen as a deviant fringe.

If all this is not convincing enough, one should revisit James Cameron’s *Avatar*, the greatest grossing film of all time and watch the way a new post-colonial fantasy is able to reinstate a particular global imaginary. *Avatar* is a cross between the American fantasy of *Pocahontas* and Kevin Costner’s *Dancing with Wolves*. The Natives (the Navi) are

saved by a castrated white savior (he is unable to walk), who learns to tame a dragon so that he can be recognized as their leader. The only choice the Natives have is to *be* saved by humans or be destroyed by them. The fantasy of hybridity, as ‘going Native’ in the manner of French artist Paul Gauguin, comes full circle as *the* hero now biologically transforms into a Native to have sex with the chief’s daughter. Now that’s creative! The \$2.77 billion dollars of profit upon its release was also the highest grossing film of all time.

ART EDUCATION’S RESPONSE TO THE CREATIVE MANDATE

In the March issue of *Art Education* (2010), edited by Enid Zimmerman on the theme ‘considering creativity,’ the eight articles chosen from the forty submitted provide a confirmation of designer capitalism’s thirst for creativity. Aside from Olivia Gude’s article, which I will mention more below, all of the articles support a redefinition of creativity that will *meet* designer capitalism’s demand where technology (see Bryant 2010), science/engineering (see Costantino et al. 2010), and digitalization (see Shin 2010) are put to use in art education. These are all well-meaning projects, sincere in their attempt to revamp the art classroom for the twenty-first century. After all, art educators cannot ignore the media, the new technologies, or the ‘frameless’ digital image, which itself requires a re-theorization as to what an image can ‘do,’ one of the themes that run throughout this book. What it does show, however, is that the best creative minds in this field are caught by the ‘pragmatism’ that drives the student consumer mentality around the need to move in the direction of ‘edutainment,’ a sense of gratification to fill any perceived lack. Digitalization heads toward graphic design and creative problem-solving. The breaching of the borders between art and science is a key issue.

As the lead article, through her seven points that characterize the creative persona, Kerry Freedman (2010) articulates the strongest case for revising the meaning of creativity in this special issue of *Art Education*. When followed and sold as a package, it confirms the marketability of creativity. How can I say this about what seems to be such a solid well-thought-out agenda? It is precisely such an agenda that drives (*Triebe*) corporate global designer capitalism, and unquestionably, if such an agenda (or one closely resembling it) is not followed, then our students will have no jobs and positions. They will not be ready to creatively participate in the economic world. In this sense, we are held accountable

to it, or feel we are letting our students down. I go through her seven points to advertise their urgency and to raise questions:

Creativity Depends on Critical Reflection: ‘Critical’ here refers to self-reflective discontent. Whether its environmentally conscious artists like Chakaia Booker or Korean artist Ji Yong-ho, who both recycle rubber tires: the material becoming both a fetish and a passionate attachment, to make all kinds of strange, grotesque, and ferocious dragons, sharks, minotaurs, unicorns, and beasts in Ji Yong-ho’s case; or public sculptures and personal statements on physical scarring that people go through as they become judged by their class, race, and labor in Booker’s artwork. Freedman mentions both of these artists as being ‘critical.’ We can point to a further example, not mentioned by Freeman, but which makes a similar ‘critical’ statement: the masterminds of FCUK designer clothes, whose economic interests seem to be on the opposite ends. Both exemplars are driven by conflict and controversy. In the environmentalist case, this draws more people into the gallery on the grounds of awareness; in the latter case, wearing FCUK clothing sends the message of being sexy and different out into the public domain. Capitalism’s schizophrenia is driven by creative conflict. This is a tough pill to swallow since a number of artists and educators, myself included, have placed a lot of credibility on the need for critically resistant art.

My point here is to worry precisely how such critically resistant art is part of what drives (in the Freudian sense of ‘drive,’ *Trieb*) the capitalist machinery as well. FCUK is just one example. Recall Oliviero Toscani’s controversial socio-political photographs to sell Benetton line of clothing discussed in Chapter 2. I found Johanna Drucker’s (2006) *Sweet Dreams: Contemporary Art and Complicity* to be most revealing in the way that critical self-reflexion is very much part of the art market game. In brief, it is “complicit” in celebrating the exuberance of visual culture. The rhetoric of the avant-garde as being critical of the social order is long past. “Works of fine art are capable of sustaining contradictions, performing oppositional or resistant functions while simultaneously serving mainstream interest. Fine art frequently is also both what it claims to be (independent thought, discrete from the other form of cultural expression, a separate domain of alternative values) and what it pretends not to be (bound up with the values of the status quo and the ideological system that sustains it)” (17). Throughout her book, she questions the legacy of criticism and any claims to moral superiority. Such an ideological stance has already been hijacked by designer capital. Luc Boltanski

and Eve Chiapello (2005) *New Spirit of Capitalism* outline such historical ‘progress,’ where creativity was hijacked and put to capitalist ends. Suhail Malik (2013, 2019), as well, provides a similar claim throughout his three-part lecture series in 2013; namely that contemporary art functions through negation; it is a Hegelian move that avoids any turn to affirmation, which a Deleuzian approach to art would provide.

Pamela Fraser and Roger Rothman’s (2017) *Beyond Critique: Contemporary Art in Theory, Practice, and Instruction* provides a review as to what has happened to ‘critique’ historically since the Frankfurt school. “Post-critique begins with the identification of limitations (subjective, personal, plural [institutional]) and it never ends—because limitations may shrink and shift, but they can never be made to disappear entirely” (5). This assessment is closer to the more affirmative position of Deleuze and Guattari who maintain that it is a ‘problematic’ that is at stake. Sometimes, in visual and media education, the notion of a ‘big Idea’ identifies such a problematic that artists throughout the ages have struggled with since all such ‘problems’ are set by historical, social, political, and ethical limitations. The current problematic has to do with the Anthropocene, for instance, where the question of agential forces by both nonhuman and inhuman (AI) must be considered. This is unprecedented in ‘human’ history.

In sum, Drucker’s focus was on analogue artists in the 1990s caught by visual culture. In the previous chapter, I suggested (following Maurizio Lazarrato’s videophilosophy) that a critical intervention may be possible—but already this involves quite a different understanding of how ‘critique’ might perform in the capitalism of electracy, one where neuro-receptivity of the brain comes into play. Digital and video art turn the axis from traditional arts to modulating the image, its speed and time dimensions requiring interventions that innovate and disrupt technologies of cybernetic control. Lev Manovich (2002) and Mark Hansen (2004), along with Warren Neidich, would support such a direction as they all attempt to rethink the way brain activity and reception as managed by designer capitalism might be disrupted. Such a direction has yet to have any traction of significance in our secondary schools at the time of this writing.

Creativity is Based on Interests. This second point hardly needs articulation since the days of small inventors and patent acts have intensified into today’s ‘possessive individual,’ the gaming and computing corporations that guard their patents against the free software

movements (FSM). Tapping into desire is designer capitalism's greatest asset. To change the orientation of interest here, something that Freedman does not mention would be to recognize creativity based on interests that are not just self-interests, but global interests such as FSM that sets the agenda in a completely different direction, which is against designer capitalism's greed for empire building. Or, in the case of COVID-19 pandemic, price gouging for indispensable respirators, surgical masks, and personal protective equipment (PPE) could be curbed, and companies federally asked to retool to manufacture such scarce resources. In short, interests are obviously, hierarchically, and politically set. Freeman mentions Kevin Warwick's cyborgian experiments on himself as inspired by the television sci-fi series, *Dr. Who* as an example of a creative thinker. But this seems pale when compared to the thousands of obsessed Asian students, mostly in Japan, Korea, and Singapore who go penniless and hungry so that they can use up their money to build their own personal robots and compete in robot fairs sponsored by Sony, Mitsubishi, Hyundai, and the global robotic industry in general where contracts and awards are given to the most successful. This is not to deny that game-like activities where youth build robots and learn to operate them are somehow a bad thing. No. My point is simply that such activities are being perverted by a robotic industry controlled by major corporations, which make free access, or the sharing of success of youth robotics unavailable to all. What interests are beings served becomes the ethical qualifier.

Creativity Is a Learning Process: Freedman notes that creativity is autodidactic. While this piggybacks on the notion of self-interest as the previous trait number 2, it identifies what has become the mantra of the most advanced forms of schooling by parents who want their children to succeed in a capitalist environment. It is an agenda pushed by charter and private schools as well as corporations in general—and that is: 'learning to learn.' Lifelong learning draws on the rhetoric of the active self-initiated and self-regulated learner exploring in a learning environment where the teacher is a facilitator. 'Learning to learn' is meant to enable the student to adapt to the information society. There is no escape from this. Parents feel that there is no other choice in the matter but to make sure that their children get the very latest and best technological 'toys' in the school environment. Happiness and well-being are considered part of the permanent communication needed for the social learning process. The old expression for this was "whistle while you work."

This now means wearing your earplugs attached to your cell phone when you ‘create’ in the workspace or classroom. The Sony Walkman is a distant memory. The fierce competition to enter the best schools and universities to make this happen has already been discussed in previous chapters.

Creativity Is Functional: Again, it becomes impossible for art schools and educational departments to think the ‘unthought’ of creativity—that is, creativity that isn’t caught by the framework of economy of functionality. Even what is ‘useless’ must become useful; otherwise, it remains non-productive. It cannot be graded on some established scale to identify achievement. The distinction between what was once a divide between play (capitalist leisure) and work (labor) has blurred, if not vanished. In an information designer society, this has collapsed into edutainment—playful work or workful play (see Colman 2008, 2012). The awkward sound of ‘workful’ indicates that the creative task has to first tap desire (Moore 2010: 27 uses the term “play-bour”). Everything one does today has to be performative: ‘learning to learn’ as playful work that, in the last instance, must be proven to be functional, useful, and effective. Anyone applying for research funding learns this quickly. The invention of a wheel without its functionality cannot be called a ‘wheel’ as was the case in the great Inca, Aztec, and Mayan civilizations.

Creativity Is a Social Activity: This rather obvious trait has interesting implications in designer capitalism for it becomes obvious that the lone inventor, patent maker, or ‘da Vinci like’ genius can no longer be functional. Genius is usually co-opted within the corporation. It now takes a marketing team, a production crew, and fan cultures created around some idol or passion to be seen and heard, otherwise forget it. Even so-called indie productions become swallowed up into larger collaborative networks to ensure competition and presence (it’s called market share). When it comes to designer education, creativity as a social activity is cast in environmental terms. The classroom now becomes the designed environment that facilitates learning so that students can pursue their passions independently through technological means such as Internet, game-like curricula, and research via global access to information. The teacher becomes the facilitator. What has emerged from this mentality is the so-called makerspaces spearheaded by a ‘Maker Movement’ where inventive ‘free play’ can go on via new technologies to develop technical literacy.

A great deal has been written on this new movement that finds itself institutionalized mostly in universities, libraries, galleries, and museums that clearly show that these spaces are geared toward the entrepreneurial market (Ratto 2011; Ramsay and Rockwell 2012; Hatch 2013; Rosenfeld-Halverson and Sheridan 2014; Reider and Elam-Handloff 2018). This is largely a do-it-yourself (DIY) movement whose sustainability depends on how regular these spaces are used, maintained, and result in productivity. The bottom line, any major initiative that shows promise is generally scooped up by larger tech-companies, a way to incorporate new talent and keep ideas being fresh. The ‘slave-like’ robotic making mentioned earlier, also a DIY endeavor, is mitigated in these more accommodating places where the technology is available for play. As Paolo Virno (2004) has argued, communication and cooperation have become the very fabric of capitalist production. It is Félix Guattari (1984) who breaks with this kind of organizational thinking through his exploration of the ‘transversal,’ which can produce different forms of (collective) subjectivity that break down the dominant mode of individual and the group. So the question of ‘social activity’ that informs creativity should never remain naively unquestioned.

Creativity Involves Reproduction as well as Production: This is the deal breaker of designer capitalism, the dividing line between economic and non-economic status of creativity. Words like classic, innovative, nostalgic, traditional, and original begin to infest the concept of creativity as it is taken up within knowledge production and functionality. It is a question of how ‘reproduction’ as ‘repetition’ is theorized. Under designer capitalism, repetition and reproduction remain caught by innovation. Economic grounds determine whether the product or any new commodity will succeed or not; thus, some projects are dropped immediately since they are not economically viable. Freedman draws on the Polish philosopher Edward Nęcka, a psychologist at the Jagiellonian University, to make a claim for a number of levels of creativity that range from no conscious employment of knowledge to eminent use of knowledge. Applied to education, the more the knowledge use, the better to achieve accomplishment and satisfaction.

Here, we have the dividing line placed as high as it can go. On the other side of the fence is the non-productive *scribble* where ‘repetition’ can introduce difference that does not repeat the same. Opposed to the non-sensical scribble is the accounting of cognition at the level of the signifier that guarantees or rather assures the success of completion. The

difference between the ‘figural’ (‘scribble’) and the figurative (signified complex cognition) has been explored extensively by Lyotard (2011) showing just how the ‘line’ at the figural level can be ‘taken for a walk,’ as Paul Klee famously said, allowing for new letters of the alphabet to be developed rather than being confined to alphabetic standardization or to acceptable Chinese characters. Such a grasp of how line communicates affectively has been attributed to neuroaesthetic developments where some people actually ‘feel’ line with their bodies (Marks 2018). The return of repetition bringing with it a true ‘difference’ that breaks with production is a thesis Gilles Deleuze (1994) develops in his complex book, *Difference and Repetition*. Deleuze called this return of repetition with a difference as an *event*. And, whereas ‘original’ has lost flavor in post-structuralist thought, it is precisely the ‘unprecedented event’ as theorized by Alain Badiou (2005), a contemporary French philosopher, who has revived creativity proper (see jagodzinski 2010).

Finally, Freedman ends with: *Creativity is a Form of Leadership*. Leadership has become a key signifier in designer capitalism. Leadership on Trump’s *Apprenticeship* television program—as project manager—leads to either failure or big profit pay off, being fired or praised for the brilliance of the creative act—that is, the ‘risk taking’ as Freedman praises. Creativity under the leadership signifier is measured by the potential of who and how many followers—that is, people who are influenced by the creative act. We fall back once more on an economic model. Leadership, especially when it comes to CEOs of companies and corporations, is *the* creative position. The company makes it or breaks it depending on the team assembled. The expectation is that the CEO knows where to take the company ‘forward,’ and is able to keep it as flexible as the individual subject needs to be in a global competitive environment. The leader and the team assembled as measured by some task are the usual formula here.

THERE IS CREATIVITY AND THEN THERE IS CREATIVITY

Probably nothing that I say in this chapter can or will change the trajectory of art and the way it is taught as it presses up to designer capitalism’s demands. Enid Zimmerman (2009) in her historical review of the concept points out on several occasions the many disagreements as to just what creativity ‘is.’ This should not be too surprising, since creativity is not a thing, but its reification within different phases of capitalism

is necessary to put it to economic use by making certain that the educational institution will support the fantasy necessary to sustain a nation's economic growth. Jobs depend on it, the nation's prosperity, the value of its currency, and so on. The increase in postdoctoral positions and PhDs for artists is yet another indicator that the mantra of 'learning to learn' becomes a question of survival in a capitalist world. Parents, students, and professors are not exempt from it, but are held hostage to it. The advancement of chartered schools to promote the flexible, neoliberalist performative subject is well on its way. Multi-tasking is a euphemism that hides the requirement that workers work more efficiently and cost-effectively, often being driven to distraction. Lifelong learning is yet another euphemism. It basically means lifelong career jobs are a thing of the past; expect to lose your job at any time; and be prepared to reskill as companies need to perpetually restructure to remain globally competitive.

We should be reminded that while art education is almost forced to aid and abet designer capitalism to remain viable as a 'subject' area in an age of accountability, the marriage between science and capitalism is equally entrenched when it comes to designer drugs. Pharmaceutical scientists are trained and contracted to work, not on drugs for the newly resistant strains of malaria, tuberculosis, and respiratory infections that killed, for instance, 6.1 *million* people in underdeveloped counties in 2001, but on creating lifestyle drugs for impotence, obesity, baldness, and wrinkles. Of the 1223 new medications introduced in 2001, only one percent was developed for the illnesses in poor countries. Viagra sales totaled more than one billion dollars in the first year alone (Smith 2009). Have things changed since the turn of the century? Hardly. Creativity remains abundant, put always for-profit ends. The jury is still out when it comes to a vaccine for the COVID-19 pandemic. Any mention of an experimental drug that may be helpful to alleviate symptoms is immediately bought up, its price spikes. Trump pushing hydroxychloroquine to ward of the coronavirus despite its dangers and ineffectiveness is a case in point. The research 'race' for a vaccine, or vaccines globally will lead to pharmaceutical windfalls.

WHERE TO NEXT?

My key point has been simply to argue the way art and design are taught, by-and-large, supports and abets capitalism. The signifier of creativity has been mobilized to ensure this situation. It requires that education be held hostage when it comes to the pressure to make sure that art (mostly

as design) remains useful so that employment for its graduates can be found. Creativity directed elsewhere seems to be unfashionable, and a total waste of time for students as clients. It is the central paradox of teaching in what is perceived to be a ‘useless’ subject area unless it leads toward and assures a place in the myriad of practical possibilities: interior designer, animator, game industry illustrator, makeup artist, fashion designer, teacher, and so on. The one exceptional essay within the *Art Education* special on creativity was by Olivia Gude (2010). It was the only essay that dared think the unthinkable—namely the unproductive side of art that targets difference as such, the singularity of the students. As with Freedman, I would like to take each of Gude’s points to show how they potentially offer a redirection from designer capitalism that she has been engaging in.

Anxiety: In her first act of description, Gude reflects on an exchange that took place between student and teacher, wherein the student doesn’t know what to ‘do’ despite the openness of the project. A few weeks later, there is a further reflection by the same teacher on the lack-luster paintings that emerged by those same ‘dispirited’ students. “Both teacher and student are feeling anxiety-uneasiness, apprehension, psychic tension” (32). This situation clearly relates to Freedman’s 2nd characteristic regarding interests. Anxiety may not be the best way to define this incident. To be anxious is to have some object, abstract thing, or person just ‘too close’ so that one cannot bear to have in come any nearer or the body will faint/freak in some way. No. I would say here the concern is with the demand of the teacher. What is the teacher’s desire, and why can’t the student somehow match it? And further, why can’t the teacher match the demand of her students? There is a missed exchange. Something is missing between them that I will come back to.

Resistance: In her second act of description, Gude reflects on a number of teenagers refusing to engage in open discussion on what they can project into a ‘multi-branched inkblot.’ Here, Gude gets closer to how anxiety is generated as she maps out the potential hindrances to a response: not wanting to look stupid in front of peers, not wanting to upset the teacher, not knowing just what the teacher expects, thinking that the exercise is too silly in relation to serious art, and so on. Something is missing here as well, but here resistance also relates to Freedman’s 2nd point.

Cultivating Creativity: Act three is Gude’s resolution to the dilemmas presented by the anxieties and resistances students bring into the

classroom. “Immersion, wonder, and not knowing” (33) are the psychological byes-ins achieved when there is trust, empathy, and an atmosphere that is free of immediate judgment in place within the classroom and among the students and their teacher. Gude’s *Spiral Workshop*, held on Saturdays, and hence outside a school setting, sets up an alternative space, which she frames with her own set of themes and experimentations she calls ‘Principles of Possibility.’ Her curriculum, however, is emergent; it begins with many useless activities based on Surrealist games. Put in my terms, these are the *figural* dimensions of arting, what Klee called “taking a line for a walk” mentioned earlier. This is not simply production (Freedman’s 6th point). Only in this way are signifiers unhinged from their moorings. The most difficult part of remaining open to the world is avoiding the cliché, which infests life through habituation and repetition. Gude brings up anxiety once again when discussing students who then begin to really engage in their own personal *becoming*, overcoming roadblocks, dead ends, and then facing perhaps unbearable anxieties that they must cope with. It is here that a different formation of leadership (Freedman’s 7th characteristic) is raised that speaks to a community of witnessing, including the teacher. This is an engagement that has nothing to do with the usual ‘art critique.’ It is a way the class pulls together to engage in conversation and push onward. Here, different bodies interact in different and unusual combinations so that a new synergy might take place.

WHAT’S MISSING?

Gude has the advantage of home court, not having to be caught by the school’s institutional constraints through her *Spiral Workshop*, which can be found online. It was stated many years ago by Laura Chapman (1982) that schools tend to produce “instant art” and “instant culture” if there is no attempt made to break the spatial and temporal patterns of the structured classroom. You reproduce institutionalized art. It is always a creative endeavor to rearrange the curriculum, the art projects, and materials and vary one’s approach. However, what I think is missing in the debates on creativity is the profound recognition as to what creativity actually is all about, what Zimmerman, despite her comprehensive review, cannot name. Creativity when not captured as a ‘thing’ or a ‘describable process’ is the *spirit of life itself*. It is the *becoming* of things, the changes that are continually taking place, nonstop. Creative life itself,

without capture, is *Zoë*, and *Zoë* is the becoming of things constrained only by the symbiosis of what surrounds them. It is what Deleuze (2001) called *A Life* or *pure immanence*. Captured and made functional *Zoë* becomes bios. The withholding of judgment by Gude in her *Spiral Curriculum* is what allows her classes to have 'life.' Death is allowed in as failure is celebrated. No grades here that appear on a report. The students have not been dispirited. But what if they fail in their creative processes? It is precisely them failing and letting themselves down, not having to listen to the *demand* of the teacher that opens the potential of creativity. Those students pay attention to such a demand only when the teacher's voice becomes psychically healthy. They know she is there to help them through life, holding their spirit intact, so to speak. Creativity is really *the spirit within one*. That is what should be cherished. To the degree it becomes packaged and caught by the *demand* of the Other (teacher, business, clients, priests), creativity will be repressed through anxiety and resistance. I see Gude's pursuing a much healthier road for art education than the persistence of designing a creative subject for economic gain. But, hers is not the direction art education is pursuing.

For anyone who has read Agamben's (1988) updating of Michel Foucault's biopower will quickly realize how creativity as biopower is manipulated within designer capitalism. The never-ending vitriolic debates on health care in the United States are an obvious example where insurance and pharmaceutical companies and the neoconservative agenda that support them deal in death in the name of life. Creativity that deals with death is all around us. Its necrophilic roots (Lushetich 2018; Mbembe 2019) penetrate within our very being wherever we look, yet we cannot think the 'unthought' of creativity that would offer education an escape from the schizophrenic madness of pronouncing judgment, time and time again within the hierarchies of representation that preserves and captures creativity to feed the machinic desire of global designer capitalism. I say as art teachers we should turn our attention to 'life' with its failures and ignore the demand made on us by the pressures of capital. It leads our students more to sickness rather than health.

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Reconsidering Visual Cultural Studies Interrogating Representation

Toward the closing of the twentieth century, we saw the meteoric emergence of visual cultural studies (VCS). There was a wrath of visual ‘readers’ and expositions of visual culture around this time. As a partial list, these included Bryson et al. (1994), Lister (1995), Jencks (1995), Brennan and Jay (1996), Walker and Chaplin (1997), Heywood and Sandywell (1999), Mirzoeff (2000). This was a sure sign that a ‘field’ had emerged especially as theorized by the contributors to *The Journal of Visual Culture*. From my own account (jagodzinski 2010a), the emergence of VCS is best understood from the perspective of its intimate relationship with ‘designer capitalism,’ which continues to invest its energies into sustaining its economic drive for profit through ventures into ‘green’ capitalism where its eco-friendly disguise enables business as usual when it comes to fossil fuel consumption. This is clear by the ‘eco-modernist manifesto’ which the US Trump administration has embraced by denying climate change and dismantling the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of its ability to curb the worst abuses by corporate America.

There is a general agreement among many members of the International Art Education Association (InSEA), as well as the large national body of art educators in United States, the National Art

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Education Association (NAEA) that visual cultural education (VCAE) should provide a way to respond to designer capitalism by becoming critical of its impact. It should, for all intents and purposes, begin to replace the traditional teaching of studio art in public schools as we have known it, or at least introduce a large segment into an art(s) curriculum. It is a response to the digitalization of the image. By visual culture, I am referring mostly to advertising, issues of representation on television and film, as well as the screen culture that comes our way via Internet, cell phone imaging, as well as perhaps satellite imaging (see Parks 2005). All of these machinic screen dimensions help sustain surveillance and modulate affect as a structure of feeling. VCS was basically an outgrowth of the larger movement of cultural studies (CS) in academia, which was characterized by a 'populist politics.' By that, I mean its political orientation was basically a social democratic agenda supported by qualitative ethnographic studies where all points of views were to be appeased so as to sustain some semblance of harmony and diversity. Post-feminism, post-colonialism, post-structuralism, post-Marxism, post-racism, and so on continue to be the emergent forms that present a justification for the neoliberal system of government, what Foucault labeled as 'governmentality' late in his career, and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari called 'societies of control' (Deleuze 1992), both of which are characterizations of designer capitalism.

Since 1990s, CS has established itself globally as an area where the politics of representation is contested through forms of democratic pluralism. In the United States, the many writings of John Fiske during this decade became paradigmatic of this approach. His studies on television (1987) and popular culture (1989) were influential in his claims regarding spectatorship and reception that ranged from blind acceptance to resistant 'readings.' Visual culture studies in art education (VCAE) is often seen as a subset of this development, closely related to English departments rather than art departments, primarily because 'visual literacy' was tied to hermeneutics, reading art as 'text' rather than recognizing its aesthetic dimensions. There is now a critical mass of North American artists and art educators who have embraced this direction. Identity politics is deeply embedded in this movement. Although there have been many isolated educators working in this direction all along in the United States and Canada, notably as part of the Social Theory Caucus in Art Education (see Keifer-Boyd et al. 2008), which has been an affiliate of the NAEA for over twenty-five years, it is only in the

twenty-first century that a claim can be made that such a direction examining the visual culture of everyday life has become a viable alternative, each voice claiming their own particular direction.

Does this direction help ruin representation that designer capitalism has wrought? The following response is rather mixed in its report card. Spectacular cultures, especially popular culture, it is claimed, should be studied on their own merits so that students would be more aware of its manipulative powers and identity issues. As presented in the last chapter, the idea that a critique of culture is what is desired, generally theorized under the rubric of “critical education.” Educators like Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, drawing on the legacy of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire were given the credit for being the early proponents of such a direction given their number of citations in the 1990s. Ideology critique has had a strong current throughout education. While I am a strong supporter of this approach throughout my affiliation with the Social Theory Caucus in Art Education, a number of serious drawbacks have proved to be worrisome, which is not to say this ‘line of flight’ should be stopped in mid-flight, so to speak, but certainly re-examined and re-thought to another level that can overcome the growing number of anomalies. What follows are a number of drawbacks that have appeared and a discussion of how these might be met. My primary concern is that the established field of VCAE is unable to shake its reliance on representational thought, which also informs the field identified as ‘critical theory,’ itself a minority position in the broader field of education where psychometrics rule.

THE BINARY OF DIFFERENCE AND SAMENESS

The first drawback is that identity politics has not worked primarily because VCS as practiced in art|education circles remains caught by representation that is defined through difference and sameness. This binary sustains neoliberalism but also ‘critical theory’ as its very opposite where diversity is forwarded. Difference and sameness can easily be positioned on the same level of equivalence. Difference can be translated into sameness simply by categorizing it under a common signifier. To refer again to the Benetton advertisement that features a series of three organic (pig) hearts, each slightly different in size and aorta openings with the signifier white, black, and yellow written on each one. I have mentioned this advertisement already in Chapter 2. It is easily found through an Internet search. This time I am referring to Benetton using this same

advertisement to offset its defense against racism. If one searches the Internet, the same ‘heart’ advertisement can be found with a caveat attached to it which says the following: “This image is typical Benetton advertising. It doesn’t show any product, instead it’s intent is to get the audience to think about racism and diversity.” This is a rhetorically brilliant move by the company. Representationally, we immediately ‘read’ the signifiers are ‘belonging’ to each heart (although René Magritte’s *This is Not a Pipe* was already a cautionary tale concerning this: an image does not equate to a textual signifier which attempts to fix its meaning). While the signifiers are ‘different’ (white, black, and yellow), they are ‘really’ the same—they are all organic hearts. We read them as ‘human hearts’ despite that they are pig hearts. With this caveat, a similar representational move is made in just the opposite direction: sameness is translated as difference and then back again into sameness. The advertising management of Benetton are certainly no fools. They wish to make sure that the message does not deviate from its course of signification. We are not racist! On the contrary, we promote diversity. The extra print: “It doesn’t show any product, instead it’s intent is to get the audience to think about racism and diversity” is a caveat to make sure that the ideal transcendental signifier—equality as sameness—is somehow achievable: if we just simply keep adding colors that are symbolic of each individual identity to form an open set. Theoretically, the nuances of colors via various shades, tones, and tints of hearts can go onto infinity, yet never arriving at the so-called equality via difference that is being claimed. In this way, the essentialism of colors that are shown (white, black, and yellow) is justified. The blurring of borders where identity begins to wane is not considered as this would change the message: to riff on Magritte—*This is Not Racism*, as Benetton’s advertisement attempt is not to open up the gap between subject and object, signifier and signified, to make sure the message is ‘ambiguously clear.’ Michel Foucault (1983)’s discussion on the rhetoric between image and text at work in Magritte’s painting illustrates the paradoxes that emerge once the assumed discursive message is questioned.

Benetton yet again presents us with such representational thinking through their 2004 advertising campaign, ‘James & Other Apes,’ again easily found on the Internet. This is a very good example of ‘green capitalism’ as Benetton directs its energies to ‘save’ the lives and the possible disappearance of great apes, and come out ahead as a concerned corporate citizen. If Jane Goodall can endorse this, how can it possibly be

immoral? Her star recognition in this area is indisputable. The viewer is presented with various different species of apes: gibbons, pygmy chimps, common chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas. Each is given a name (James, Bonny, Pumbu, Jackson, and so on) and short bio of the abuse suffered on their campaign site. Sameness and difference once again intertwine with each other: they all belong to the same superfamily Hominoidae, and all have suffered from abuse of one kind or another, so they are the same. Yet, each is a different unique ‘individual’ who has been ‘bestowed’ a proper name, anthropomorphized as being ‘human’ just like us. So, what’s so wrong with this picture? It is easy to have sympathy for anyone who suffers from abuse.

Mark Poster (2001) takes note that the communication networks produce a “self that is no longer a subject since it no longer subtends the world as if from outside but operates within a machine apparatus as a point in a circuit” (16). He repeats this notion that the “subject position of the user has become a human-machine assemblage and a node, a cyborgian point in a global network of collective intelligence” (2006: 117). Poster is referring to the general recognition that we are all caught by the transmission of the lowest common denominator (LCD) circuits of technology that shape the aestheticized wor(l)d picture. This portmanteau word where ‘world’ and ‘word’ come together as wor(l)d, acknowledges that in ‘control society’ space and time are designed or choreographed in specific ways to allow entrance or denial of access to knowledge and use. Through various ‘pass’ words, whether they relate to the computerized world of information or the larger world of certification and accreditation, only those with capital can participate in those privileges. Software programs in particular are now licensed. More insidiously, one can only *rent* the master code. No longer can one buy the program outright. Rather, once dependency is established, users must pay (usually monthly) to have access to the primary code. This also means that the ‘screen’ image can play a contradictory role—abetting designer capitalism as well as resisting and exposing its inequalities. The difficulty is always to identify one from the other. Is Benetton ‘truly’ a corporate citizen in its concern over the great apes? Is Jane Goodall being played as a pawn for their ends, or is she too playing Benetton to further her own cause? Such questions point to the ambiguous middle ground where the ‘spin’ of the connected assemblage is engaged. This is a good example of how emotions (sympathy in this case) are harnessed for advertising ends. The ‘gamer world’ presents a similar dilemma. Emily Apter (2008) notes that:

Avatars ... commoditize the component 'features' of top brand bodies and buildings, promote 'safe' *communitas* through online zones of sociability, re-sell already sold properties (land, houses, institutions), and inflate the value of trademark and signature by effectively marketing identities, ideas and products. But they also, countervailing, contour a parallel universe characterized by a de-privatized commons. Avatarity in this instance might well refer to an *equalized playing field of egoic drives and aims* that undercuts fantasies of omnipotence and 'possessive individualism' (added emphasis). (np, last paragraph)

It appears that there is a redeeming feature to gaming after all. Video gaming justifies the 'social democratic' side of such insidious games like *Second Life* where capitalist values are repeated in a cyber world, just as Benetton's 'ape' campaign justifies its own unique 'brand' based on a perverse idea of social justice. Apter (1999) also maintains that the Internet has the potential for a post-identitarian politics—the fluidity of cyber identities makes racial and ethnic categories obsolete. This flattening of the individual to a zero point or proliferation of multiple avatar possibilities, however, is precisely what designer capitalism insists. This is diversity at its finest. It doesn't matter what your ethnicity, color, gender, sexual orientation, class, and so on (this list of signifiers can be endless), it's your money that 'counts'—or rather your ability to go into debt via credit. It is your electronic body that is targeted as being the equalizer of sameness. In capitalist designer society, the trade-off between difference and sameness is repeated in the same way as the trade-off between neoliberalism (the defender of sameness through equalization through money and merit) and critical theory (the defender of difference through identity politics). The binary is locked together in an endless loop, much like the two-party system that has historically governed US politics. In such a system of representation where the left hand takes away what the right hand gives, 'resistance is futile' to quote the Borg. One can switch to sameness or allow for as much difference depending on the context of the 'sell' of the spin. Both sides are covered in this 'no win' game. The only winner is designer capitalism.

It appears that designer capitalism via the Internet is able to manage both sides of the identity contradiction within a system of visual representation: the universal liquid subject can have access to the 'good(s) life' if they can pay for it regardless of the signifiers that construct their subjectivity (identity at the level of zero, the erasure of race and so on), as well as accommodate the new Internet users who refuse to cover their

bodies, the hybridic multitude that ranges from identifiable stereotypic groups to the infinite number of possible networks who blog and represent themselves as long as this does not upset the symbolic order (e.g., same-sex desire is allowed online whereas in some US states same-sex marriage is not permitted). A VCAE orientation that still pushes for difference via representational politics will simply be a stalling game; at worse it becomes confrontational even among ‘visible minorities’ themselves as to which group can claim to be most oppressed. For those who are and continue to be sympathetic with Paulo Freire’s (1971) paradigm and the host of critical educators who believed that this would make a significant difference find themselves facing a system that has absorbed this initial ‘threat’ and has incorporated a way to diffuse it under the sign of the ‘post.’

There is another way to theorize difference that avoids the trap of representational thinking. We can turn to Deleuze and Guattari and the subsequent developments from their premises of ‘transcendental empiricism’ that have not yet been tamed into some apolitical form or variation of complexity or chaos theory (ironically as versions of Dolce & Cabbana). Sylvere Lotringer’s (2001) edited book shows how Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy has been conservatively appropriated by the US academy, especially their concept of rhizome, which has become a cliché for nonlinearity by every open-system thinker (see Wallin 2010b). My concern is with the ethico-political thrust of their theory. Deleuze (1994) specifically argues that *difference*, as he develops it, “is not diversity” (222) as is maintained within representational theories of identity. Deleuze (1986: 14) identifies the structure of identity within representation as the One and its multiple. The paradox that emerges in this designer schema is that the singularity of difference, of a person—a life—disappears. And, this is precisely again what designer capitalism in its post-spectacular phase works with, namely with the simulacra of identity as a ‘dividual’ who can be described via an algorithm of signifiers.

For Deleuze (1994), “All identities are only simulated, produced as an optical ‘effect’ by the more profound game of difference and repetition” (xix) How? The performance of online identities in cyberspace through avatars or text-body requires that the console user is able to perform or imitate a role, norm, or stereotype in order to ‘pass’ given that the visible ‘real’ body has been decoupled of its signifiers. In order to ‘pass’ means to construct one’s identity that is believable within the context. In a virtualized system of representation, what is required of identity is therefore

an imitation of an imitation. You imitate what is a role or norm, which is itself an imitation sanctioned by the cultural context. Passing seems to be all the more important in well-defined communities online where an authentic essentialism of the body must be performed otherwise suspicion sets in, for anyone can upload a file and create an image and ‘pretend’ to pass. This is why identity ‘theft’ now becomes possible. As Mark Hansen (2004) puts it, such mimicry “requires a wholesale replacement of the lived body with a new prosthetic body” (113) (avatar or text-body, fake or authentic). This means that there is “no possibility to form a site of resistance within the process of interpellation” (ibid.).

A prosthetic body that replaces the lived body in order to ‘pass’ means that there is no residual body, no bodily ‘singularity’ to speak of. It’s the projected screen image that ‘counts.’ This would apply equally to identity formations that claim some form of belonging as being ‘authentic’ (e.g., *Moms Over 30*, a website devoted to pregnancy and everyday life would obviously expect women over 30 who are pregnant or want children to participate). Identity in all these cases is a question of simulacra. To ‘recover’ the singularity of a lived body requires a move ‘beyond interpellation’ that breaks with the demand of the simulacra. Singularity in the above sentences does not refer to the individual, but precisely the opposite; the ‘individual’ (as identity) is but a simulacrum whereas singularity refers to the fundamental irreducible quality of life as difference in and of itself (Derrida 2002). A better term for this is ‘individuation’ as developed by Gilbert Simondon (Muriel 2013). A person is an ‘effect’ of individuation; that is, the individual must be produced through a process starting with the pre-individual’s radical potential (which will be further discussed in Chapter 9). An individual is always a ‘becoming,’ never final. Individuation cannot be understood in categorical terms of arranged signifiers as it is informed by a virtual real, the past tracings of transformative events.

Difference in the Deleuzian sense is a ‘posthuman’ concept for it points to those bonds beyond ‘just’ the human, to relationships that break down our human/animal separation, human/machine separation, and organic/inorganic separation. For this very reason, Jean-Luc Nancy (2000) calls it ‘singular plural.’ Such ‘singularity’ requires an engagement with the affective body of the viewer, a form of interaction, which I would identify as self-reflexivity—a taping of the presymbolic Real. The Real refers to a Lacanian paradigm; it is that realm that does not lack, that is beyond the imaginary and symbolic, while the ‘X’ refers to the

nonhuman foreignness that dwells within us, as the predicate to thought (cognition) itself. As Nietzsche (1989) put it,

A thought comes when ‘it’ wants to and not when ‘I’ want it, so it’s a falsification of the fact to say that the subject ‘I’ is the condition of the predicate ‘think.’ It thinks: but that this ‘it’ is precisely that old, celebrated ‘I’ is, to put it mildly, only an assumption, an assertion, in no way an ‘immediate certainty.’ After all, we’ve already done too much with this ‘it thinks’: this ‘it’ already contains an interpretation of the event and is not part of the process itself. (17)

The ‘it thinks’ is the unconscious affective body that has to be ‘moved’ for something to happen; otherwise, there is no encounter with the image. This is not an aesthetic response, as it is so often theorized phenomenologically, but an aesthetic one (jagodzinski 2010c) that calls on the neuronal unconscious system of non-thought. Both Mark Hansen (2004) and Ashley Dawn (2001) explore Keith Piper’s interactive video installation *Relocating the Remains* (1997), considered a ‘black’ British artist, as an example of how the ethnic and racial images of the Internet can be disturbed by tapping into the affective body of the spectator given that designer capitalism has invested the image as a wholesale prosthesis for the body.

RUINING REPRESENTATION?

VCAE needs to attune itself to ‘ruining representation,’ as Piper’s installation does, and not to modulate it like Disney Princesses. Disney has produced a string of these. An Internet search for ‘Disney Princesses’ will yield a long line of images beginning with Ariel and ending (so far) with Tiana. There are about a dozen of them, each produced to ‘represent’ a particular race, class, and gender equality. The latest released in 2020 is Mulan, a young Chinese maiden who disguises herself as a warrior to save her father. To ‘ruin’ such representational images is to follow the path set out by Deleuze (1994) as many others have—that is, an attempt to understand difference as a form of ‘singularity,’ which is independent from concepts of sameness, identity, resemblance, similarity, or equivalence. These are the contradictions that arise within a system caught by sameness and difference. Each princess is different in identity, the lot of them held in sameness by challenging gender equality within a

male-dominated world, just like the Benetton advertisements discussed above. But this equality never succeeds. It is an endless repetition without establishing a difference; we have a wish fulfillment that claims itself as a truth. Singularity, however, should not be thought as that which is unique and thus distinguishable from the generic. Singularities are turning points of systems; they would be special events, remarkable points that are distinguished from ordinary ones, such as when the ‘it speaks’ as the unthought emerges within an interactive installation. We would need a princess that is *not* a princess as already symbolized within the system, but a figure that destroys the binary that is in place: a probe-head princess. (Unfortunately, Dreamworks’ Princess Fiona in *Shrek* doesn’t qualify either.) Such a narrative would not make much profit for Disney. The idea of self-reflexivity is to remain faithful to the irreducible singular qualities of forms of life. These are encounters where something indeed ‘does’ happen. Pedagogically, one never quite knows when this happens since time here is not chronological, but heterogeneous (what Deleuze called Aion). Pure difference identifies uniqueness of such a ‘singularity’ that is not a factor of negativity, or a negation of sameness, but affirms the actuality of existence and becoming.

There are many installations that do this besides Keith Piper who potentially solicits such self-reflexion. The archival work of Mongrel (1995–2006) (www.mongrel.org.uk/) is an excellent example, as are the video installations of Candice Breitz. For Deleuze (1994), difference in a system of representation where the binary opposite is sameness places the subject in either of two positions: the first is one of hierarchy and the second is one of degree. It depends on how far you are away from the impossible point of transcendence. This is a spatial system that can be managed complexly. This system of representation also interprets the notion of difference negatively, which has a major impact in the way cultural art criticism is performed. Dialectical logic establishes that a particular description—call it ‘x’—is possible when it is contrasted with the element’s universal negation—‘non-x.’ Such a result means that the element ‘x’ is described by a ‘double negation,’ namely ‘non-x’ and ‘not non-x.’ Identity is always defined in negative terms. The description of difference remains external to itself.

Unfortunately, as discussed in the previous chapter, this has been the tact of critical theory, which must perform such logic in order to question the hidden hegemony. However, a post-hegemonic position (Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt, and Giorgio Agamben) provides the

necessity that hierarchy in and of itself as bound by sameness and difference cannot be toppled in such away. The shifts of power are redefined as force affects at the level of productive desire that requires interventions at the level of fantasy given that the social efficacy of ideology has run its course: ‘everything’ has become ideological, diluting its once substantive power as a concept. It is precisely that ‘ambiguous area’ mentioned above that has become the new battleground. It has enabled the relativism of ‘fake news’ to run its course as if there is no ‘reality’ being constructed by spinning the sameness-difference binary around. To the extent that VCAE continues along a hegemonic path, it will repeat the symptom of neoliberalism as a two-sided coin with critical theory. What is needed is a shift to the body, but not the body as theorized by Maurice Merleau-Ponty by so many VCAE advocates, but the Spinozian body as quoted by Deleuze: we still do not “know what a body can do” (Spinoza 1986: 88). The affective topographical landscape holds the social order in its current state, in brief the ‘aesthetic regime’ (Rancière 2009) that is held hostage by designer capitalism’s harnessing of affectivity—this is where the challenge lies for the future of VCAE.

CHECKING A WRONG TURN

Deleuze’s own way out of this trap of representation is to recognize the productivity of desire, which is a force of its own becoming. He follows the anti-dialectic of Nietzsche’s logic of nihilism as pure will to power—as emergent self-willed nature and maintains that *the simulacrum is not that of a copy but an eternal affirmation of difference*, forever in process, never arriving at some presence once and for all. That is its political force. Unfortunately, not only is visual culture media caught by representation, but schooling is as well. Teachers are unable to escape artistic evaluation that falls on this system of representation. Performative objectives of the neoliberal subject promote innovation as opposed to creativity proper. We live in a gaming society of entertainment where affect is continually harnessed for profit ends. Art|education, despite the rhetoric of creativity (see Chapter 7), is continually supporting and abetting designer capitalism. It is not a question of interpreting art—that is a representational question. As educators, we are excellent at this task. Rather, it is a question of asking what art is doing. How might it intervene to change the affective topological landscape.

Simon O’Sullivan (2006) has explored what this would mean to shift the practice of art based on Deleuze|Guattarian grounds. He has since gone on to suggest that fictioning through mythopoesis, myth-science, and mythotechnesis are directions that need to be developed (Burrows and O’Sullivan 2019). Fictioning for Burrows and O’Sullivan can be understood as a working out of what Deleuze called the “powers of the false.” In what way do the various forms of fictioning address desire and what are the ethico-political consequences in the way this question is answered? From my position, this would be the self-reflexion necessary for interactive spectatorship and the need for an *avant-garde without authority* (jagodzinski 2019). Critique is replaced by ethico-political concerns in the way the affectivity of the body is being remapped at the neurological level. For VCAE, this means a reorientation to a new *Kunstwollen* that is not confined to site specificity, but to the site of the Real, that is to the affective restructuring of the body’s energies and that of the earth for psychic health free of profit, replaced with the free energy of creativity—*Zoë* rather than *bios*. Color released from its confinement to the signifier, to roam around in crystalline structures as a cosmic reorientation of art|education (jagodzinski 2019).

Within the VCS approach, the exposure of visual rhetoric as a means of persuasion (as a counterpart or support to the critical dialectical tradition—Habermas, Adorno, and others) is supposed to help viewers grasp the way readers|spectators are being ideologically manipulated by the text (Hill and Helmers 2004). By so doing, the pedagogical claim is that the student becomes aware of the social inequalities that are being reproduced. Often, the term ‘visual literacy’ is applied to visual culture in art education so that these representational inequalities can be ‘deciphered’ and then interpreted so that students are then able to ‘understand’ how racism or gender is being ‘(re)presented.’ Unfortunately, this is not enough. Gunter Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996) have done an admirable job in this regard in their book *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. They show how images are coded through representations. The field of art education is full of such textual semiotic attempts to get at such interpretations, so as to ‘reveal’ how the form structures and manipulates us (A representative array can be found in Debbie Smith-Shank 2004). Kress, a good friend and colleague over many years, generously accepted my particular quarrel with this approach as was presented in his *Festschrift* dedicated to him on his retirement (jagodzinski 2013). I am sad to say that he has passed away since the writing of this book.

Critical representational theory continues to be the dominant approach in the *Journal of Social Theory*, of which I have personally a strong commitment to. Its arsenal of post-structuralist approaches—ethnographical, experiential and narratological, and (at times) post-qualitative—is said to be pedagogically and effectively critical. Such a ‘literacy’ approach is supposed to overcome the fantasy structures, the persuasion, and seduction of consumerism as well as expose students to the social inequities that exist between sex|genders and so on. Félix Guattari’s (1995) deconstruction of the signifier/signified relationship by what he calls *a-signifying semiotics* at the physiological level shows the folly of this approach. There is an affective embodied and embedded dimension to contend with. John Protevi (2009) has tried to put this affective dimension into a political context, to think through embodied subjectivity as affective cognition. The worry, however, is that complexity theory, which he draws his theory from, as applied to education (a huge industry in and of itself) has avoided the politics and fallen into a state-of-the-art instrumentalism to abet designer education that generates a flexible subject for industry, the perpetuation of a standing reserve. What separates the application of complexity theory in the name of transformative critical education from neoliberalist values is not entirely clear. Complexity theory is often conflated with Deleuze and Guattari’s own attempts to draw on it and chaos theory with one important exception—desire. In science education that draws on the work of Bruno Latour’s Actor–Network Theory (ANT), for example, or those who follow the work of Manuel DeLanda’s particular grasp of emergence, or Humberto Maturana and Francisco Valera (1980) notion of autopoiesis, there is a failure to come to terms with psychoanalysis as contributing to the ‘drift’ of the assemblage. Desire in all cases is under-theorized both in its negative forms (as lack) and in its affirmative forms, as symbiotically forming assemblages.

Politics from Deleuze|Guattarian standpoint is not a focus on individuals, but on the social formations that produce different kinds of subjects, the problematics as to how they are constituted or produced through desire that has assembled itself via a particular dispositive (a disposing or structuring device), shaped by the forces of a particular problematic. There are two moments which constitute a subject’s becoming informed by desire: a moment of de-individualization that escapes from the limits the subject is in, and two: new ways of thinking and feeling have to emerge. New forms of subjectivity for political change require that philosophy, science, and art provide the means for new potentialities; each can inform

the other. Art's function is to create new affects and percepts. Hence, new ways of seeing, feeling, knowing, and being affected are practices that do not represent the world.

Burrows and O'Sullivan's (2019) fictioning comes into play. Imagination becomes imagin/action as its dynamic forces are released. The task of art is *not* to describe, represent, and narrate the world but to be proactive in it—to create new ways of experiencing the world, as way of feeling (affects) and perceiving (percepts). The moving-image and the time-image (Deleuze 1986, 1989), the neuro-image (Pisters 2012), and the video-image (Lazzarato 2019) provoke affects in the unconsciousness, predisposing consciousness to produce effects in the world. These images speak to the changed axis of digitalized media. The action that the image produces on the body should be VCAE's concern, especially within the world where bodies meet and desire, thereby modifying one another. In this sense, art is not slated for a predetermined audience (as in the best-seller marketing where demographics count or where the cult of the personality sells books). The evocation is toward a 'people to come' (Deleuze 1994). A 'new people and a new earth' is called on where the future simply remains open based on the here and now. VCS in education does not appear to be engaged in the creation of new affective domains. It is preoccupied with critique.

The advocates of the 'rhetoric of persuasion' (e.g., Hill and Helmers 2004) have yet to take seriously the possibility that the most significant forces are not at the level of meaning. Signs have a force independent of the reference that is prior to the connection between signifier and the signified. The 'subject' that is addressed by this force is not a 'human-being' per se, as understood by the humanist discourse, but an affect-structure shaped by memory and unconscious desire, not one of language and image alone, but of material and social fluxes that are taking place below the level of language, at the 'molecular' level. This means recognizing the significance of the posthuman in art and media education within the context of the 'new' technologies that impinge on us constantly through interactivity.

FORMATIONS OF FANTASY

Interpassivity, as articulated by Robert Pfaller (2007; jagodzinski 2018), theorized from a Lacanian perspective provides insight as to how we are being structured at the unconscious bodily level by these interactive

technologies. Pfaller attempts to provide the ‘other side’ of interactivity that is touted as the defining feature of the ‘new media.’ His thesis is a simple but an effective one: just how does media ‘enjoy’ in such a way that this enjoyment can be vicariously experienced by its spectators? It presents some semblance of understanding how AI has a ‘life’ of its own, which is transferred to us without us needing to engage with it, but passively accept its actions. A simple example is a spell check, or auto spell check on Microsoft Word. When the program changes the misspelt word, we think nothing of it as it self-corrects for us. We are quite satisfied by its actions. This is a form of interpassivity. Such an approach is completely missing with the appropriation of visual culture into art education. Representation is an image of thought that is caught by the dialectic based on sameness and difference. This defines popular media today where identity is managed through pluralism based on secondary characteristics—mainly skin color, like the US election polls taken by pundits, but also lifestyle, religion, and language. Yet, the differences within a category are often greater than the difference outside that same category. What is required is changing the axis as to how we are to understand difference in-and-of itself so as to escape the continuous categorization that representation brings. How can art|education ‘ruin’ the continuous management of identity representation that mobilizes difference for political ends? This is the challenge that VCAE faces. How can new affective assemblages be created that begin to change the toxic landscape of the emerging green capitalism?

The second drawback of accepting a VCAE approach as it is dominantly practiced is reliance on the antagonistic power dynamics of critical theory without any thought to the transference process of fantasy that takes place between spectator and the object of desire. It remains unaware of psychoanalysis, relying on post-cognitive and post-psychological theories. Psychoanalysis, especially as developed in the Lacanian context by Slavoj Žižek and the schizoanalysis of Deleuze|Guattari as continued by Ian Buchanan, Brian Massumi, Gary Genosko, Claire Colebrook, among others, explores the affective dimensions of the body’s existence—the way we experience our passions that define the singularity of our difference, and the way fantasy formations trap our desires as lack in capitalist formations. The very difficult questions that surround fantasy formations have yet to be taken seriously within VCAE as practiced in public education.

The two notions of the psychic Real—presymbolic and postsymbolic—strike me as two strategies—the physiological and the psychoanalytic understandings of the unconscious—that need further consideration for the way screen society is constantly mediated and negotiated (jagodzinski 2010b). These two psychic dimensions are the same phenomenon, but presented in a “parallax view.” A parallax view is attributed to Slavoj Žižek (2006). He takes the accepted definition of parallax as the “apparent displacement of an object (the shift of its position against a background), caused by a change in observational position that provides a new line of sight” (17) and amends it. This shift in perspective is not merely subjective but constitutes the object itself. The parallax creates a ‘minimal difference.’ “It is at the very point at which a pure difference emerges— a difference which is no longer a difference between two positively existing objects, but a minimal difference which divides one and the same object from itself” (18). Pure difference and minimal difference are one and the same thing—the point or gap within the object. One arrives at this point either too early or too late for the gap structures the logic of between the either/or. This strikes me as the same concept developed by Marcel Duchamp’s “infra thin interval” as discussed in Chapter 2. Lacanians and Deleuzians are separated by a parallax view concerning the psychic Real. There is only the phenomenon of the Real but viewed differently. Throughout this book, it is perhaps my own failure to try to maintain that both views are necessary. Žižek’s Lacan relies on the Hegelian dialectic and desire as lack, both of which are operative in capitalism; Deleuze and Guattari provide a way out, to show an affirmative notion of desire released by schizo-fluxes. I have tried to show their difference approaches to pedagogy (jagodzinski 2015).

The body|mind structure at the unconscious level mediates an intrinsic and extrinsic body image. Their misalignment marks certain moments when subjects are ‘out of phase’ with themselves or ‘time is out of joint.’ It is affectivity as a mode of body experience that mediates these two body dispositions to ensure ongoing genesis of the subject; one ‘ages’ without being able to register the changes moment by moment. This politicization of the bodily affect is missing in VCAE discourses. Deleuze|Guattari follow Spinozian defining what a body can do, the body’s ability to act and be acted upon. Such an understanding has slowly trickled into educational discourse, mostly by way of philosophical and curricular concerns (Roy 2003; Reynolds and Webber 2004; Semetsky 2008; Wallin 2010a). In an encounter between two bodies, there may well be an enhancement of power of one body over another,

or there may be a mutually destructive encounter, or yet an increase in power by both, which is ideal. This affect happens in two registers—physiological and psychological. There is an imperceptible bodily change in the encounter with the object and then a changed emotional state (enhanced joy or sadness). This bodily affect is inherently political (dominating, mutually empowering, destructive) as it is a basic constitution of bodily politic and the circulations of power.

The distinction is drawn as to the meaning of power between *pouvoir* and *puissance* to show the difference of approach when it comes to the ethical considerations of different assemblages. The production of desire is crucial. *Pouvoir* is taken as being transcendent. Coming from above, it is hylomorphic and thereby imposes a form upon the chaos of passive material. Deleuze|Guattari warn that fascism is the extreme manifestation of such power since the body politic is shaped by a strong leader. Trump and many contemporary leaders (Putin, Orban, Duarte, Xi Jinping, Duterte, Duda, Moreno, Bolsonaro, Kim Jong-un, to name a hand full) exhibit fascist-like tendencies of authoritarianism. In contrast, *puissance* applies to immanent self-organization and hence to the structures of participatory democracy. While there is emotional affective bonding in both cases, the former is marked by passivity while the latter is active in making mutually empowering connections. When it comes to art (installation work and performance in particular), the ethico-political affective body needs to be considered, as should the social spectacles that we engage in our classrooms—our own affective assemblages that we actively shape and hold together.

Visual literacy in art education needs to shake off its legacy of semiotics where ‘literacy’ remains representational and categorical—already framed. It is a form of technesis. To think *before* the frame—along with Deleuze|Guattari—is to consider processes of becoming not being, the relation between movement and stillness, so to speak. Grasping ideology from the perspective of representation—as identity politics—does not penetrate the nervous system where injustice is felt on the body so that the status quo is then forced to change. That requires a grasp of the affective-aesthetic (not aesthetic) domain; the difference is between the interiorized and exteriorized body. Affective intensity is embodied “in purely autonomic reactions most directly manifested in the skin—at the surface of the body, at its interface with things” (Massumi 2002: 4). For VCAE, this would entail a post-semiological and a post-ideological approach to visual culture in art education. It is ‘post-ideological’ only in

the sense that designer capitalism has already territorialized the spaces of affect through the hegemony of gaming and entertainment industries so that the spaces of a more transformative affective approach have already been colonized for profit ends. This is why cynicism and irony are so common in the media (see Žižek 1989: 28–33). Most of the VCS as so often applied to art|education misses the entire dimension of the bodily unconscious. Once again, not aesthetics as it is most commonly used and understood, but as aisthesis as the logic of the senses as Deleuze (1981/2003) writes in his study of Francis Bacon, for instance. The way the presymbolic and the postsymbolic realms intertwine together in an act of creation is described in relation to the figural (form of sensation) and figure (form of object). For the future of VCAE, an attention to the affective body politic within a society of control seems inevitable to break the deadlock of semiotic and post-structuralist analysis.

Knowing the structure of how representational inequality manifests itself—on a cognitive level—does not change social inequality. Sadly, this is the problem with so much social justice curricula. The student simply ‘nods’ and then moves on repeating the same gestures. This is precisely what designer capitalism is brilliant at doing through market analysis (jagodzinski 2006). IT already knows how we should ‘nod,’ just like the student. IT already knows what images ‘sell’ through the particular fantasies offered. The sell is at the level of fantasy as lack and not at the level of rational understanding. IT already knows how to harness our libidinal drives (*Triebe*) for our own pleasures, through forms of interpassivity. There is a huge disconnect between the logic of the senses that operate at the level of unconscious bodily feelings and the so-called level of linguistic level of ‘literacy.’ It is the affective nonhuman (Nietzsche’s ‘it thinks’) import of the body that presents the critical thrust of VCAE with an enormous challenge.

BODY OF THE SENSES

Brian Massumi’s now classic work—*Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (2002), a Deleuzian inspired text—provides the case for affect. Massumi makes several deductions based on the work of a number of paradoxical and unexplainable research findings by communications researchers. The broad conclusion is that the process of image reception is certainly ‘multileveled,’ but most certainly ‘bi-leveled.’ Most often this is taken by post-structuralists to be evidence of multiple meanings and

various subject positions—the usual discourse for advocates of this position. It shows the pluralism of democracy at work and so on. But perhaps this is not ‘true’ democracy. Massumi takes it another way. Image reception involves ‘immediate bifurcation’ as a viewer responds to two systems of ‘information’ flow. The first level is related to the content of the image, which is contextually indexed to conventional meaning, and is semantically or semiotically ordered. So here we are in the realm where the hegemony of VCAE is at work. The second simultaneously given level is related to the felt affect, which is ordered according to ‘something’ else via the intensity, duration, and strength or force of the image. *Both sound and vision as registered on the skin are faster than the word.* They penetrate at the level of the non-psychological unconscious. These two heterogeneous orders of reception operate in parallel with each other. The interior body reception resonates at a deeper level of consciousness where memory, cognition, and emotion operate. This feeling effect is ‘nonconscious,’ it is outside expectation and adaptation, and further, it is disconnected from meaningful sequencing, from narration itself. Jacques Lacan, for example, maintains that a mother tongue (as *lalangue*) has affections that perhaps are impossible for a foreigner to feel. There is always an inadequacy. The linguistic meaningless sounds with their accompanying affects are already structured at neurological levels. The bottom line is that screen interactive communication with the body vs. body to body interaction is entirely different as the way information is exchanged is quite impoverished with the former in relation to the latter. The neurological studies in this regard seem to bear this out, what many researchers have long intuitively known (Jiang et al. 2013).

Bodily affect as the place of desire is ‘crossed wired’ with the semantic dimension in many paradoxical ways. These paradoxes are what Deleuze (1969/1990) calls the ‘logic of sense.’ But, what does this mean? Janae Sholtz (2020) answers the question of paradox that pervades Deleuze’s oeuvre as a central feature of an image of thought that pushes past representational logic. It is the figure of ‘para-sense’ that is developed in the *Logic of Sense* that enables discordant relations to maintain themselves in tension, allowing a kind of doubling to be sustained. This seems to be the tact that Massumi takes. He explains through a series of ‘parables’ that there is no direct correspondence or conformity between content and intensity—something might be sad, yet produces pleasure! Something might be very good (like ‘quality’ educational television programming), but be boring or meaningless. Violence and pornography

can be strongly affective and visceral, yet claimed outright to be morally bad by the larger social order. This ‘logic of sense’ maintains that the questions of reception and making are extremely complex. They constitute the paradoxes of ‘lived’ life. Great film and art do precisely this—they examine such paradoxes (or Ideas in Deleuze’s terms) and put it to us as ‘impossible’ contradictions to cope with, and ultimately to decide as life requires us to go on. Becoming does not stop. Art makes us ‘work’ through ethico-political dilemmas. The power and force of the image in an expanded sense (be it in performance, film, television installation, and so on) reside in its affect or intensity in parallel with its contents. This means that semantically or semiotically ordered levels of analysis—representation as such—are no longer adequate for the task. A turn to process philosophies of the unconscious that address the paradox that these two levels present: the semantic and the affective—working and twisting with each other in different contexts—becomes a necessity for VCAE to move on.

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Challenges for Art|Education: The Digitalized World of New Media

THE FRAMELESS IMAGE

We live in a world of digitalized information and a digitalized screen culture. For art|education this means that we have to start thinking of a ‘frameless’ image. In this chapter, by using a straight line (|) inserted between art|education, I am implying that these two fields are intimately entwined with each other. All artists are engaged in one form of research or another, and this is also a form of ‘education’ as they work in transdisciplinary fields. This also changes how the image is to be theorized. We have always thought of the image in representational terms where the *frame* has been the border between inside-outside, marking various boundary limits. Now the frame must be thought more as a membrane where the exchange between the dichotomy of the inside-outside no longer holds, but are intertwined, enfolded and exchangeable. It has become more ecological, a field of forces that engenders atmospheres of influence. This applies across all arts.

Digitalized art technologies are characterized by a dromology, a neologism coined by Paul Virilio (1989) as the logic and science of speed,

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which produces dromospheric conditions that change perception and has ‘birthed’ a “dromospheric generation” (Colman 2012, 2015). The resultant dromoeconomy has restructured the perception of space|time that has problematically initiated an “accelerationist aesthetic” (Noys 2010; Shaviro 2010a). Virilio (2000) revises Marshal McLuhan’s well-known formula “the medium is the message” to: “it is not the *medium* which is the message, but merely *the velocity* of the medium” (141). This is what matters. The experience of the interrelations of speed and movement has vastly changed via the technologies of the new media. It is *transmission*, the absolute speed of electromagnetic transmission and *mediatisation* that changes the paradigm of reception and affect. Media are transformers and translators of Being (existence). Each platform presents its own specificity of affects that shapes ‘the machinic unconscious’ in Guattari’s (2011) terms. The gaming platform is perhaps the most influential in shaping the affective body (Colman 2008). For Virilio it is the “vectors” of energy and forces of transmission which now shape reality, or in Guattari’s (1995) terms “vectors of subjectivation” (25). For Guattari, “The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation or a reinvention of the subject itself” (131).

Virilio and Guattari are at odds when it comes to what might be called a ‘pedagogy of the image.’ Virilio (2010) supports a “grey ecology” of digital information which distorts the visual field, and with it the scalar integrity of the Earth’s horizon has been lost. In a control society, technological surveillance “reduces to nothing earth’s scale and size?” (1997: 58). Complementing Jean Baudrillard’s (1994) concerns over simulacra and simulation, Virilio likewise maintains that technologies have ‘blocked’ images. He calls these an “image block.”

Images are always inter-connected: there’s the mental image, the ocular image, the optical image, which is the one you correct with glasses, and then the graphic or pictorial image as well as the photographic, cinematographic, videographic and infographic image. These eight images constitute an entirely opaque block that totally conceals reality since we haven’t sufficiently investigated what they are ... The image has become the world. That’s why I talk about a block. They make up the world, and they’re on the way to shutting it down. ... It’s the image that allows the sharing of a reality. But now we have this great opaque block that no one can share. Everybody has a piece of it. (Virilio: 117–118, in Armitage 2001)

Virilio defends “a pathology of the image.” This glut of technologized images “have damaged people’s ability to create mental images, to make their own cinema in their heads.” He contributes this to “the decline of writing,” which “comes principally from the fact that graphic, photographic and videographic images have replaced mental images” (118). In contrast, Guattari is much more optimistic. While there is a recognition that play spaces, such as gaming, can become striated and manipulated, he still calls for the possibility of a ‘smooth’ space to open up in what seems like a closed territory through processes of auto-affectation; that is, a disruption or a divergence to striated spaces to reconfigure social, cultural, and political spaces. As Guattari (1995) maintains, “Just as scientific machines constantly modify our cosmic frontiers, so do the machines of desire and aesthetic creation” (54). Of course, this is the hope and belief of educators such as Paul James Gee (2003) who believe in edutainment as a way to learn in the twenty-first century. I personally am not so convinced of this (jagodzinski 2019a). But, then there is the Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) own warning: “Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us” (500). These are pedagogical challenges for art and media educators.

SYNAESTHETIC PERCEPTION AND NEUROAESTHETICS

AI technologies are inhuman, as theorized throughout this book; they are prosthetic devices that enable the reprogramming of the senses, an insight already developed by Marshall McLuhan, but, following Michel Serres (2011: 37) it is an “exo-darwinist” process. By this, Serres means that these technologies are exteriorizations of human organs and functions. Clothing, buildings, tools, vehicles, book, computers, for example, are externalized versions of skin, legs, muscular energy, memory, and regulatory control. This has implications of how we think through art and design. Cognitive theories of perception *still* dominate art|education where hermeneutics (meaning making) and communication are said to be the primary tasks for learning the ‘grammar’ or language of art and applying it. Neurological studies between ‘art’ and the brain (Ramachandran 1999) have simply strengthened this cognitive direction. Yet, in an age of ‘electracy’ (Ulmer 2002) such thinking seems limited and applicable to less and less of the screen reality that is experienced. Neuroaesthetics has introduced the phenomenon of ‘mirror-touch,’ a

new form of synaesthesia that raises new questions in the way images are experienced within the new media contexts.

Tactile conscious sensations are felt on one's body when an object or a person is seen or touched; this is an extreme form of physical empathy (Martin 2018). While this applies only to a small percentage of a population where a person with 'mirror-touch' also experiences, through vision, mirror-pain of violence images, or mirror-taste, and mirror-smell, mirror-cold and even mirrored proprioception, it gives us pause as to the importance of affective transferences between bodies and objects. Laura Marks (2018), for instance, provides many instances as to how 'line' is felt in various cultures. This is a social phenomenon that is intensified by the amplification of sound and sight via new media. The 'affective turn' has been widely discussed (e.g., Smith 2011). Of course, as mentioned in earlier chapters, affective transference serves the advertisement industries well to sell more commodities. Aesthetic experience is put to good use on the emotional level, calling on the 'feeling-brain' (Solms 2018). Disney's Pixar industries movie *Inside Out* (Pete Docter and Ronnie Del Carmen, 2015) was specifically based on a cognitive understanding of the brain where the characters, Joy, Fear, Anger, Disgust, and Sadness work with and against each other inside the head of the eleven-year-old protagonist, Riley, to provide her life-lesson as she moves to San Francisco from the Midwest to start a new life. But, this is much too simple a grasp of what goes on psychically and bodily.

Mirror-touch evokes a Deleuzian 'transcendental empiricism' that this book has been advocating, which straddles both East and West cultures. It is the dimension of *aisthesis* (sense-perception) that offers a way of escaping designer aesthetics through the arts. Jacques Rancière (2013), for example, presents fourteen important 'aesthetic events' in the history of Western arts (visual, dance, photography, design, pantomime, literature, cinema) which had ethico-political manifestations in the way these events changed the 'distribution of the sensible' in the social order. In short, 'aesthetic events' break with the contemporary regime of habituated and commodified aesthetic consumption. These 'events,' as I argue below, introduce difference which provides a new understanding of 'equality': equality not as something that one strives to achieve, but equality as singularity where each is recognized for its contribution to various assemblages (ecologies) that it finds itself in. To recall from Chapter 6, this addresses the heterogeneity of transindividuality.

This is in line with Guattari's (1995) attempt to think a 'third assemblage' that reaches beyond two others that precede it, but also inform

it: an animistic territorialized pre-capitalist formation of the transindividual and a capitalist deterritorialized assemblage of the individual. This third assemblage is the optimism I spoke of earlier contra to Virilio. For Guattari, there is always an auto-affection involved with creativity as an emergent condition. Guattari sees this as a processual assemblage of post-capitalism and the post-individual. It is a form of self-mastery by becoming the author of our own subjectivation that requires continuous experimentation and testing. Basically, Guattari seems to be calling for a “politics of singularity” that is not unlike the achievement of a Toa Master, or even Lacan’s move late in his life in *Seminar 23* concerning the *sinthome* where he identifies Joyce as his own *cause*; his own symptom that infolds his desire, at the same time becoming a condensation of something new that is a true *art-event*. Guattari quotes Duchamp approvingly “art is a road that leads towards a region which is not governed by time and space” (101). Duchamp could be considered perhaps an exemplar of this third assemblage as well (see also Chapter 2) (O’Sullivan 2010).

Guattari’s machinic unconscious and conceptualizations, like his third assemblage, is complicated by metamodelization, which involves a ‘schizoanalytic cartography’; that is, an attempt by each of us to break with debilitating patterns and models that keep us striated so as to produce new ones through, as yet, an unexplored pedagogy. Guattari recognizes that neuro-ontological (cosmic) functions are in play, the contagious spreading of affects that happen in certain forms of enunciation, and the way screen cultures govern subjectivation through various forms of image speeds, screen sizes, lightening, pixel illumination, in brief the physicality of the platform assemblages that are at work, especially in the gaming industry where the sophistication of technologies at the neurological levels are extremely sophisticated. In this sense, Maurizio Lazzarato’s call on artists who exploit the neuro-net, mentioned in the previous chapter, is along the same path of post-individuality, toward recognizing the change of transmission of environments and perceptions that structure the ‘digi-child’ in capitalist formations.

The complexities of such perception bring to fore neroaesthetic questions that surround the ‘mirror neurons’ that cognitive scientists have latched onto since 2005 through brain scans, fMRI imaging and the like. Brian Massumi (2018) attempts to clarify from a Deleuzian perspective the mistaken notion of ‘mirror-touch’ and ‘mirror-neurons’ research that relies so heavily on passive perception and cognition. The notion

of ‘mirror’ is the troubling part, for it raises the question as to the *way* perception ‘participates’ in the world before it can effectively ‘mirror’ it. This is the main issue. Massumi develops the significance and importance of the way perception is a “subtractive” process, as “a limitation of possibilities” (following Charles Sanders Peirce); the primary state of the infant is multimodal sensation, a state of synaesthesia. Any number of child psychologists, psychologists and psychoanalysts already have come to this conclusion, especially Daniel Stern (1985) and Richard Cytowic (2018). Wilma Bucci (1997, 2018) also develops a comprehensive multiple code theory for an originary state of infant synaesthesia. All infants possess connecting lines between diverse nervous systems, whether by way of the eye or the ear. However, after a period of about three months these nerve pathways begin to degenerate and slowly disappear. As children grow up in various cultures and situations this ‘neurodiversity’ becomes restricted; for example, autistic perceptions are extremely varied in the way neurological pathways are wired, yet a ‘neurotypical’ standard becomes established; namely, the senses and feelings become separated from each other. They become channeled in specific ways as certain neuro-connections are no longer functioning: “vision that is only sight, separated from what is felt by the touch; an audition that is only a sound, and not a colour” (Massumi: 194).

Following Charles Sanders Peirce, Massumi maintains that this originary neurodiversity of neurotypicals remains as a source of *potentia* at the unconscious neurological levels. ‘Cross-connections’ between the senses are not fully ‘extinguished,’ or ‘practically’ extinguished. Residuals of other senses remain in the functioning of a dominant sense (e.g., how a seen object potentially feels in the hand). “Every ‘single’ sense experience is the envelopment in a dominant mode of appearance of an ‘infinitesimal’ (virtual) continuation of other-sense experiences. Every perception is a *composition* of the full spectrum of experience, ‘practically’ appearing as if it were disparate and disconnected from the continuum. ... Perceptual strata in composition—a geology of experience” (195, original italic). Which sense becomes dominant is a question of habits and skills. “Given a number of dimensions of feelings, *all possible varieties are attainable by varying the intensities of the different elements*” (Charles Sanders Peirce: 196).

This basically sums up Massumi’s analysis. New habits and skills are possible by recomposing and varying the intensity of the elements—a

creative and artful endeavor. This is the ‘escape’ from a strictly cognitive view of the emotional brain, but not a *voluntary one*; a disinhibition is required to reintensify perception. At that moment an entanglement happens: a perception has been composed, but at the same time, the ‘affected’ person has also been composed by the new processes of perception that have taken form. Will and consciousness are just *one* element in this ‘fusion mix’ of flux and flow. Massumi follows Deleuze in maintaining that the continuum of potential experience is not an extensive but an intensive domain that is qualitative in nature; it is defined by “potential cut and recomposition” (198). This then limits expression “of the potential it holds to definitively appear” (*ibid.*). Each ‘cut’ produces a fold, and with each refold a new *facet* is produced. The stand-out form of experience emerges from the imperceptible organization of the subfolds of the continuum of sensibilities. “A qualitative continuum is defined as one that cannot be cut without changing in nature” (198), which restates what characterizes an intensive multiplicity, a difference in kind rather than degree occurs. If it were to refold itself, it would express a difference. An example here is when yellow light is cut out of LED lightbulbs, a different quality of light emerges. The originary continuum is conceived as being *mutually inclusive*; that is to say, infinite qualitative varieties are located ‘in each other’ but do not interfere with each other: a state of ‘mutual interpenetration’ (Bergson) or ‘reciprocal presupposition’ (Deleuze), much like white light, which holds the entire color spectrum including the infinitesimal graduations of tones and tints of those colors.

This state of the originary continuum (chaos) is a “limit concept,” and it is unactualizable because it is virtual, or (more accurately) a virtual form of hyper-differentiation of potential qualities of experience, a “hyperorder of qualitative varieties in mutual interpenetration” ready to express via a cut (a subtractive process) that requires the primacy of *bodily movement*. “Every movement makes a cut,” says Massumi, where certain elements of experience are brought into relief, by folding and refolding the continuum of sensibilities. The body’s movement is the potential that eventually orders the chaos of sensations. Each culture, through patterns and habits of repetition, shapes and organizes the infant’s sensory channels via neurological circuits as an extensive order is relatively stabilized. “[E]xperience is an unlimited confound of infinite, self-folding complexity (physiologically registered in the extensive folds

of the brain)” (200). The key here is vibration. “The displacements of the physiological body in extensive displacement in space is doubled in intensity by *a vibratory virtual body of pure variability*” (201, added emphasis). Massumi summarizes this process as:

A determinate experiential form organics [folds and refolds] into relief when an actual movement cuts its patterning and orientation into the vibratory intensity of the virtual body, drawing out a determinate stand-out expression of the potential it enfolds. (201)

Topological forms approximate the hyperorder of the virtual body (what Deleuze and Guattari call a Body without Organs [BwO]). Topology is a geometry of continuous deformation where there is no break, a mathematics of folding. A topological form is limited by cuts, which are the events Deleuze and Guattari speak about. “A topological figure comprises all of folding’s and stretching’s and refolding’s that fall within the limits of two cuts, as when a rubber band breaks” (201). A common example is how it is possible for a mug to metamorphize (to ‘stretch’ itself) into a doughnut form without breaking. All these shapes ‘in between,’ so to speak, belong to the same process and same topological figure. Topology is an ‘endo-referential’ time-like process, all the included variations are all ‘mutually interpenetrated,’ and infinite. “Topological transformation implies a virtual time of transformation—pure process” (202). In mirror-touch, sight and touch are enfolded into each other as a double register, occurring on the virtual body; the physiological body being merely the tip of the iceberg of the virtual body.

The genesis of experience is fundamentally sympathetic. The event of synaesthesia confirms such sympathy. It is the virtual body that represents the “relationality of the life of the body” (203). Empathy (in-feeling, an interiority of experience) as opposed to sympathy (‘feeling-with’) is an identificatory phenomenon that is a secondary process, characterized by an extensive relation with the other. It is localizable, whereas sympathy is not. Empathy is rather, an immediate relationality that reverberates everywhere, exerting an unconscious influence. Sympathy is typological, whereas empathy is geometrical, spatially gridded; that is, separated as points in space. The separation that characterizes empathy is illusionary; it is disavowed through projection. Given this distinction, a number of educators, who call on Deleuze, recognize the importance of sympathy in the learning process. Elizabeth de Freitas (2018; de Freitas et al. 2019) has extensively explored its implications for sympathy (in relation

to media in this case) is the seed of learning. It affords the opportunities for collaborative inventive practices as it is a state of feeling together, or as Deleuze maintains “becoming other that does not erase the other (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 53). Perhaps, more to the point, Tim Clark (2008) wonderful analysis as to why sympathy from a Deleuzian minoritarian political stance is central to thinking past identity politics of any sort, and furthers an understanding of what becoming imperceptible is all about where ‘utopia’ stands for complete deterritorialization. This is quite different than the post-structuralist approach to the Other either through distancing or nearness as developed in Chapter 2.

BACK TO DIGITALIZATION

Given the originary state of child synaesthesia with its potential to be culturally re-wired differently, it is perhaps not surprising that the digi-child is always already shaped by the technological screen toys that are manufactured for play. Colman (2015) presents the case of an eighteen-month child playing Temple Run on a handheld tablet that is codifying her synaptic relays in particular ways through movements coordinated with the screen’s game algorithms. The image in relation to what has been said regarding synaesthesia and neuronormativity raises the relational complexity of experiences that are in-the-making. Such images are informed by the enfoldment of both analog and digital technologies in complex ways (Sundén 2015; jagodzinski 2019b). New peaks of perception can express the living moving body’s potential for new variations by varying the intensities of different elements. Digitalization via technologies enhances such possibilities. Digitalization forces art|educators to think differently as to what an image ‘is’, since it has now become a constructed ‘immaterial object’ that can be manipulated in any number of ways: an image can be serialized; that is, it can be modified ever so slightly so that it changes into something else. This is the famous ‘morphing’ process used in films and advertisements for special effects. The image may be repeated endlessly without change, stretched into different proportions, manipulated around various shapes, and so on. It becomes a topological mathematical form of manipulation. It has become a series of mathematical combinations of 0’s and 1’s. No longer an *index sign* of the world as theorized earlier beginning with the camera obscura. The production of images becomes independent of human intervention. The ‘kino-eye’ has an agency of its own that extends human eyesight of ‘natural perception.’ What was developed by reviewing Massumi’s (2018) analysis of synaesthesia is supplemented by such digitalized

technologies of vision as perception is enhanced, skewed, heightened, and played with in terms of frames per second that are projected via such technologies. Capitalism and its technologies introduce movement and time into images and vice versa. Above all else, digitalization has revealed how *time* has entered art, and how a very different understanding of the *body* has emerged. I will develop these two points.

In the twentieth century, art as influenced by standardized language (grammar and dictionaries), the progress of art history, criticism and the stress on the creative use of the skilled hand applying artistic grammar meant that particular genres of art remained in separate spheres: painting, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, and so on. The *moving* image-cinema and the exploration of *moving* space-architecture within the urban environment remained largely at a distance from art|education. Film studies had its own territory, which today in North America at least, still belongs more to the English department than the Fine Arts department. The introduction of video and video art based on performance began to change that separation of powers (see Chapter 7). The same can be said in a public-school system. Architecture and urban design were introduced into art|education in the mid-1980s, mainly in England by the pioneer work of Eileen Adams and Colin Ward (1982). Both fields have not had a strong tradition in the United States nor Canada. With the emergence of the new media (video, installation, performance) and screen culture in the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century there has been a major paradigm change. Art|education can no longer ignore the changes of time and space that have taken place when it comes to media electracy (cf. Gregory Ulmer). Urban design once more emerges as a crucial concern as populations flood into cities, while the rural populations thin out.

Already in 1929, the soviet cinematographer, Dziga Vertov theorized a machinic vision. The disembodied ‘kino eye’ of the camera was able to extend vision and redistribute the way we sensually experience the world through such *inhuman vision*. Audiences were astonished and frightened as images of trains came at them ‘off’ the screen and into the seats where they sat, as if they were going to be crushed and run over. At this time, the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1959) theorized about this movement image maintaining that image *is* movement, not an image *of* movement, but image = movement. The world was a flow of images, a flow of movements that the body, consciousness, and memory were able to subtract and process (extrapolate or frame) from this continuous endless flux

as developed earlier through Massumi's analysis, whose seminal book, *Parables for the Virtual* (2002) is now considered a 'classic.'

Perception was a relation between flows of images, between different rhythms and 'durations' in relation to the body. While Maurice Merleau-Ponty was to provide a phenomenology of 'natural' perception, which was the central paradigm for much of art theorizing in the twentieth century, it took sometime well into the twenty-first century before the realization that perception was machinic; technologies changed how the world was to be perceived by a dominant image of thought. Lacan's gaze-look entanglement had to be rethought to go beyond just the cinematic eye as its conveyor as the apparatus theory of video became more dominant. Such theorists as Kaja Silverman, Norman Bryson, Slavoj Žižek, Joan Copjec, to name the most prominent, centered on Lacan had to at least 'adjust' as Deleuze's cinematic books gained traction once translated into English (Jagodzinski 2012).

As Bergson forcefully showed, time was not chronological, like clock time or sequential causal time. Time as *durée* was more like a musical melody. Melody is an indivisible multiplicity that is always qualitatively changing in an ongoing movement. A melody does not consist of discrete notes; rather it passes *through* an entire succession of notes thereby forming a single process. This process is not a simple unity but an indivisible heterogeneity (mixture). It is fundamentally indeterminate as to where it's going; the future is truly open and unforeseeable. Deleuze's cinema books (see Chapter 5) play with time as *durée*. He shows us how the time-image plays with its various combinations: past-future, past-present, present-future, present-past, and so on. Patricia Pisters in her *Matrix of Visual Culture* (2003) provides many examples of this play of virtual time, exploring digitalization as a "neuro-image" (2012), while Maurizio Lazzarato (2014) provides more insights regarding the digital image, drawing heavily on Guattari's work to make the case for the "social subjectivation" of capitalist identity formations through "machinic enslavement."

When it comes to the 'new media' (which are really 'old' now but the field persists in using the term), Bergson's formulation image = time takes on a very special importance, especially when it comes to comprehending a digital image. Photoshop, for example, requires that an image is layered through a series of planes as it is built up. Each layer exists as a 'sheet of time.' The image has a digitalized 'memory' of its construction. Many artists use layering as a technique in their artwork. Introducing time into art has made it an immaterial substance, no longer a permanent object on display. Art has become a gaseous substance infiltrating all dimensions of

life, from cooking to advertisement. For example, the photographer Nan Golding has marketed herself to the French railroad service to promote travel through her art. Rirkrit Tiravanija literally cooks noodles in gallery spaces and feeds art collectors and visitors who come there. When art becomes an interval of time, rather than an object, it becomes more of an experience or event. Vectors of its forces or intensities are in play. What is important is no longer what it means but what it does—the effects it can make rhetorically, when it becomes performative fiction generating and producing its own energy. Fiction as power and not a model.

The other starting aspect of the digital image is its direct tie with the electromagnetic field (EM). The kinetic manipulation of this field is what distributes sensibility and images. Given that each of us carry an electric current, one wonders what the links here are to synaesthesia mentioned earlier, and the so-called auras some people see around bodies. This shift means that an ecological way of thinking about images requires a more comprehensive grasp of kinesthetic fields; movement= image still applies, but becomes more complicated. The primary kinetic process is *mediation*, which moves away from objects and emphasizes processes (Kember and Zylinska 2015). Digitalized images are a *material* phenomenon as any number of media theorist have demonstrated (Hansen 2004; Munster 2006; Herzogenrath 2017). Electronic wave folds (or bits) in the electron field (EM field) are produced; photons are emitted. Electrical, that is digital images are defined by continuous material and kinetic processes enabling material *self-affection*, while a loaded term with many problems, it simply means the EM field becomes animated. When matter interacts with itself (as in feedback) sensory images are produced, qualities and folds in being appear. Interaction takes place between matter and itself, but also between matter and human sensation, which is part of any art encounter. Self-affection is much like the Deleuzian concept of ‘auto-affection’ where thought affects itself. Thought is also a looped system, folded over into itself. Given that all images are materialized and mediated from a primary electrokinetic field, this means that they can be coded and transcoded from one medium to the next; the code of any medium can be manipulated and combined with others (a form of ‘electrical elasticity’). Remediation is common as prior media forms are refashioned; exchanges of procedures and processes between media are constantly taking places (e.g., Internet and television). As Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin (2003) argue, it is the desire for ‘immediacy’ (transparency) and ‘hypermediacy’ (hyper-awareness) that drive these ‘new’ media technologies.

It should be understood that the digital image is not the binary code. Coding is a secondary process; the primary process is the flow and the fold of the electromagnetic field, which is its primary material condition. But there is yet another more primary level. It is well-known that a whole field of ‘glitch aesthetics’ has opened up given that at the quantum levels, levels that are ‘beyond’ the given materiality of the EM field, present issues of indeterminacy, superimposition, chaotic fluctuations and the like. Glitch art relies on feedback distortion and various effects of pedesis for its experimentations. Einstein’s theory of special relativity, which shows that time and space are relative to one another in relation to motion, means that aesthetic fields are affected by this as well. When degrees of fluxion increase, then a slowing down of time occurs. Time ‘dilates’ and space ‘contracts’ relative to a given field. This is consonant with Deleuze and Guattari’s position: “There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules, and particles of all kinds” (1987: 254). Linda Henderson (2009, 2013) has extensively documented and written about how the avant-garde at the turn of the twentieth century intensely explored this phenomenon, which they called the “fourth dimension,” especially the Suprematism of Kazimir Malevich. “Malevich sought to convey the physiological experience of four-dimensional cosmic consciousness, relying on concepts long associated with the fourth dimension: spatial vastness and infinity, freedom from gravity and specific orientation, and implied motion” (Henderson 2009: 150). Marcel Duchamp was also ‘anti-retinal,’ attempting to put art “in the service of the mind,” engaging with “playful physics” and the speculation on the four-dimensional geometry with his *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors* (151–155). Henderson ends her review with the artist Tony Robbins who is well versed in mathematics and physics. His painting in the 1970s eventually led him to interface with what is now the field of computer graphics.

Henderson’s important study clearly shows the antecedents of the digital image as a visualization of hyperspace of non-Euclidean geometries, which tie into the topological geometries mentioned earlier. X-ray vision uses a particular section of the EM’s spectrum (10^{-10} Angstroms) that remains invisible to us. This raises the way technology begins to play more and more of a role in the production of art to the point where AI is capable of creating its own algorithmic images: these images cannot be distinguished from the human ‘touch,’ so to speak: the Turing Test

is vindicated. Thomas Nail (2019) in his *Theory of the Image* attempts to explicate how the digitalized image now provides algorithmic generative forms that “create new kinesthetic processes that play in the complex region between highly ordered and highly disordered images” (351). A director such as Michael Bay, who has directed five ‘transformer movies,’ is perhaps a good example of the creation of algorithmic images that lie in this in-between space of order|disorder. Nail’s book is an ambitious attempt historically to show how the EM field has always affected images and spectators experiencing them, and how the new technologies have been able to increase this interaction by intensifying and amplifying the invisible realms of the electromagnetic field that are beyond our senses.

LIQUID ART

Art has become liquid as developed in Chapter 6. The sociologist, Zygmunt Bauman (2007), a former teacher of mine, points to this fluid state that has become part of the capitalist post-Fordist economy. To recall earlier passages, on his visit to Paris in 2006, Bauman cites three artists who were given prominence in galleries all around Paris: Jacques Villegle goes around Paris with a camera and takes pictures of billboards or empty walls that have been already filled in with information. Gallery walls now become city walls. Manolo Valdes paints or rather collages one thing: a face, always the same face on canvases made of jute or hemp. You cannot tell if these works are being created or in a state of decomposition (destruction). Lastly, Herman Braun-Vega paints impossible encounters; that is, fragments are taken from historical eras and put together in a comfortable organization. Again, a clear example the way sheets of past time and memory enter into art. In all three cases, life and death lose their meaning-bestowing distinctions. For Bauman, these are representative arts of ‘liquid capitalism.’ They are temporal in their performative affect; they last only for a given chronological time. They mark a constant change with no particular direction, only that the termination of the object is already built into the art project, like any commodity form. The opposition between the creative and destructive arts, between learning and forgetting, forwards and backwards seems to no longer hold with any conviction.

To add to this state of affairs of time is to bring out a new conception of the body, much different from the phenomenological understanding

that still persists in art|educational circles. Many sociologists and philosophers have explored Bergson's writings to recognize the importance of the *affective body* when it comes to processing the senses. This is especially evident in the synaesthetic body already discussed. This body is related to but entirely 'different' than the body imagined by conscious cognition, that is to say a body image. The body image has been very influential in visual culture studies in art|education (VCAE) when arguing for representational identity as discussed in Chapter 8. Especially, in the United States the racial discourses surrounding African-Americans and Mexican Americans revolve around issues of representation. This is also true when it comes to feminism concerning the way a woman 'looks', such as her body appearance (is she fat or slim). This has a long history in feminist thought that draws on Lacan's notion of the gaze. Who covets the gaze and has the right to 'look,' and thereby render judgment. Disability studies as well take the normative body's representational or symbolic position in society as their starting point. For example, should someone who is obese pay for two seats on an airplane? Should every apartment be wheelchair assessable, and so on?

The *affective body* in deference operates on virtual time, on habit and memory, independently of conscious cognition. Its realm is that of vitality effects, energies and thresholds that are abstract forms (Stern 1985; Bucci 1997, 2018). There is no image at this level. The affective body is an unconscious and involuntary body that controls the proprioceptive processes of the body, the sensory receptors found in the nerves and muscles of the body. Philosophically this affective body has been termed 'flesh' by Merleau-Ponty's (1969) posthumous writings. The most basic passions such as joy, fear, sadness, desire, and anxiety are felt by this affective body as processed sensations coming from the 'outside.' These passions are not as yet formed emotions but are 'becomings.' It is best to describe them as in a state of motion or movement, images that are about to be formed. Gerunds and infinitives capture this 'becoming' of all things in time and space. Rather than thinking of a color, such as green, we try to imagine it as always changing with other colors at the same time: *greening* (which implies growth and change, transformation). Becoming also implies intensity, a change of power as in the color green, which can increase or decrease its vitality affects in the way other colors symbiotically enter with it. Blue greens to yellow greens have no easy measure as to where one stops and the other begins.

This intrinsic body is related to the extrinsic imagined body. But this also means that this intrinsic body can override what the conscious imaginary body ‘thinks.’ Feelings can be more powerful than cognitions, and beliefs that are conditioned by habit and memory are not so easily overcome through rational thinking. Why this is important for art|education, especially for those concerned with artistic research, is that the technological machinic visions of contemporary art and the ‘creative industries’ (advertising, Internet, fashion, design, and so on) target or address the moving affective body and the spaces it moves in by staging its directions, and what it can and cannot sense. The affective body is choreographed by the way space is structured. Space is converted into time and time is converted into space, while kinetic movement is imaged. In the urban environment this bodily choreography means surveillance as well as the contemporary use of architectural space that has rediscovered *scale* as the combing of specific forces rather than being confined to *size* (small, medium, large). Scale is part of the post-Fordist economic paradigm where object and spaces are designed for niche markets by understanding the forces within a particular *situation* or environment that maintains that particular shape or form. An understanding of forces within a field is already at the intrinsic body level. One thinks here of artists like Andrea Zittel who redesigns furniture and spaces so that the body experiences the movement of space differently than the carpentered standardized world most citizens are put into. Think of IKEA here! To overcome scale, which is a representational and categorical, requires reconfiguring geography itself that is captured by Google Earth and satellite surveillance (Tong 2014; Woods 2014).

VIDEO AFFECT

Perhaps more importantly has been the way video as one of the many time-information recording machines of the twentieth and twenty-first century is able to ‘cut’ into the streaming of flows that Henri Bergson spoke about. Video is able to manipulate the time-image through slow motion, replay, looping, and freeze-frame time. By capturing the time that has passed, video is able to open up future time. How? It can capture the ‘spirit’ of animation, of life itself, which goes under the name of *Zoë*. Foucault argued that capitalism traps this ‘free life’ of creativity and turns it into bios-life; life that is contained and put to use for capitalist profit

gains. In Chapter 11, I discuss this more fully by raising the specter of bioart and biomimesis. As art|educators, I believe we must decide whether the art we teach is for the freeing up of creativity; that is, freeing up *Zoë for ethical and political endeavors*, or whether we join the ‘creative industries’ and work for capital as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. It is a difficult choice since there really is no easy escape. However, these same information technologies can be used to open up questions and enable a way to escape the flows of capture. Take this sentence from a popular song:

I deal in the market, every man, woman and child is a target; a closet full of faceless nameless pay more for less emptiness.

As capitalist affect Grace Jones addresses what Deleuze (1995) called ‘dividuals.’ We have become bodies choreographed through affect. Grace Jones was first known as a performance artist, a singer, and an actress. Her flat hair top remains unmistakable as a trace of who she is. The music video, *Corporate Cannibal*, also speaks to the tropes of self-cannibalization, self-management, self-consume, self-evaluation, self-regulation, and so on. So, the question for art|education within a digitalized screen culture is not what ‘images’ mean—to repeat—it what they *do*: their neuronal affect that target the intrinsic nonhuman body, that part of ourselves which we do not control since it is unconscious structured by the past, habits and memories. We must learn to treat images not as representations but as forces, blocks of sensations with their own intense powers that either further the joy of life (*Zoë*) or capture it (bios) for other means.

A video like Grace Jones’ *Corporate Cannibal* illustrates what can be called the post-cinematic condition (Shaviro 2010b); the notion of a blink aesthetic and modulation (serialization) of the object by inhuman manipulation. While Grace Jones is still recognizable in this video, she has become a ‘probe-head,’ as Deleuze and Guattari say (1987: 190–191). By that I mean she is becoming something else—an animal ... a vampire, identifying with capitalism as that cold and distant machine that devours all that stands in its way. In this digitalized video, Grace Jones becomes only a modulating signal, a magnificent example of ‘glitch aesthetics’ as the producers played with feedback of the images. There is no background, but a frameless image, pure energy that doesn’t ‘morph’ into something else, but remains flexible and subtle, always undulating into something else. Pure electromagnetism put to use.

MEDIA VIOLENCE

Perhaps the most dramatic example of what is at stake for art|education occurs with media violence. The images of a seventeen-year-old Kurdish girl, Du'a Khalil Aswad being stoned to death with concrete blocks in Bashika, Mosul by relatives for having fallen in love with a Sunni boy are *still* available. They can be found on *YouTube* and several Web sites, posted May 18, 2007 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIZJNrc8sKw). Love, honor, fear, hate—all sink in a hole together, impossible to disentangle as to which passion is the most powerful; to do so only produces impossible rationalizations as to why and how such horror could happen. Barbarism, cowardness, savagery, tradition, patriarchy—all crash together down that same gaping hole. The event in the end remains unexplainable. Traumatic. A photograph of Du'a Khalil Aswad often appears in any number of stories that freeze-frame her image as a pretty teenager, instantly distancing the reader/viewer from envisioning that tragic sight. 'Warning! — extremely graphic video' is cautioned now and again. Captured on cell phone videos, perhaps as infamous as the footage of Saddam Hussein being hanged, and then posted on the Internet, they can be replayed endlessly. Stones and cell phones; a brutal patriarchal tradition mixed with cell technology, present us with a surrealistic site/sight/cite (I use this homonym to refer to the three psychic registers as developed by Jacques Lacan: the *site* of the Real, the *sight* of the Imaginary, and the *cite* of the Symbolic register.) of a seemingly non-existent time that spectacularizes a 'ritual killing' for moral misbehavior.

On the YNC.com posting, the constant howling, gargling voices of men and their frenetic movements around her body present a claustrophobic in-your-face affective pierce as the handheld scopic point-of-view (POV) shakes incessantly, blurring the jerking images when capturing the fleeting instances of excited bodies. Their nervous tensions are immediately felt. It cuts through the crowd, finding its target already lying still, lifted once like a rag-doll to see if it is still alive. Everything happens around the body as if in a vortex. Glimpses of cell phones are seen stealing close ups of the body. It then begins to bleed; a large cement block hits her head and then rests on her back. The scopic cellular eye ends with an extreme close-up of her head, blurred like pulp. Only the affective force of Francis Bacon's own 'probe-head' images matches the viscerality of this two-minute video.

I have watched this particular loop over and over again. Filmed by a desperate man pushing his way through the crowd wanting to capture the scene of violence—perhaps for gratification, perhaps as a witness, perhaps to sell it for profit to CNN—leaving its trace like no other image of the event. In a digital age of recording and playback, the teletechnologies of CNN, BBC, NBC, Reuters that bring us the ‘news’ of such honor killing, tame the force of the image. They package it for Western eyes, incorporate its horror under human rights actions, use its images to divide the civilized West from the savage Middle East, and juxtapose portraits of many young victims wearing Western make-up and clothing intermittently against the beatings and stoning to make the sight bearable for the newscast, leaving its viewers with a feeling of disgust and self-righteousness.

Is such an accusation meant to condone such practices? Certainly not! But, the contrast between the horror of the affective image (inadvertently?) posted without the aestheticized surround of the killing by Western reportage exposes for a brief duration an *objectile*, a forceful pulse, that pierces the body of the viewer, shocks it to an awaking horror. Which is why such images are never shown on the news, why they are appropriated and used for various ideological purposes or simply to confirm why the United States is in the Middle East in the first place, to continue to bring civilization into a region that still practices such barbarism. As viewers, we find ourselves positioned impossibly by the corporate media: our horror and indignation of such an act that can only emerge by being felt on the body—to be truly ‘moved,’ as it were—is continually stolen from us, packaged in whatever discourses seem appropriate at the time. No time for *sympathy* here. Some call this postemotionality (Mestrovic 1996).

CAN ONE CONCLUDE?

Maybe my claim is too cynical, or perhaps not cynical enough? Well meant, but too naive? So much of the horror that takes place in the world comes to us as aestheticized images. We watch, shake our heads in disbelief, register in our minds the atrocity by those barbarians ‘over there,’ and then go on about our work since there is little that can be done. And, besides, the state and government are already doing it. We have not felt the shock of the event, merely cognitively recorded its brutality. And, so it goes on day after day.

W(H)ITHER PAIN?

Such a portmanteau word places two words it contains into tension with each other. *Whither* in English means ‘where’ and *wither* means ‘to slowly dry up and disappear.’ So, I am asking where is the ‘pain?’ It seems to have disappeared despite its ‘abundance’ on our television and film screens.

CNN—‘Be the first to know.’ This is CNN’s signature saying as a news network. But does that even matter?

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PART III

The End of the World: Posthuman
Consequences



CHAPTER 10

Art|Education at the ‘End of the World’

Globally, the technological developments in the past 60 years have been astounding within those post-industrialized countries who compete against one another on the global market via capitalist principles of growth. Korea, as we know, has suffered from economic crisis in its past due to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Global capitalism is the ‘only game in town’ as they say. Whether its communist capitalism or capitalist communism in China, this doesn’t seem to make much difference as a small percentage of their population has become rich, much as in Korea and much as in each of the G-20 countries. Psy’s song and dance routine, *Gangnam Style*, has gone globally viral. The Gangnam is the most exclusive district in Seoul. It’s so expensive that it accounts for more than 10% of the land value of the entire country. Only the wealthy can afford to live in Gangnam, not the kids in the latest styles who hang around COEX mall. Psy, as one of the stars of K-pop, part of Korean Wave or Hallyu since the turn of the twenty-first century, has placed Korea on the global map. Even Wei-Wei, China’s dissident artist, tried to do a subversive take on Psy’s song,

A variation of this essay was specifically addressed to an audience of Korean students who were good enough to come to listen despite a heavy snowfall to a presentation by the same title given at University of Gongju on December 4, 2014.

calling his song, “Grass Mud Horse Style.” This was a subversive phase of his defiance against the state of China. He even waved around a pair of handcuffs in reference to his arrest in 2011. Psy and Wei-Wei form a startling contrast in terms of their values and ideals. In many ways, their tension addresses what this chapter is about.

Housing, money, and work define our urban landscape today. People are leaving the countryside and coming into the metropolises all over the world. This has been especially the case in China. Shanghai has grown to be a city that rivals New York as a center of trade, commerce, and marketing. Where we live and the financial debt we carry is constantly increasing. Young people all over the world are searching for their place in society where there are no jobs, and where learning to learn has become the new criteria of existence. A ‘flexible subject’ is demanded for industry. It seems we must continually be in school so that we can keep up with technology, both formally and informally. With the COVID pandemic of 2020, this situation has been exacerbated. The question of how the world’s economy is about to change is in the balance as a ‘depression’ is likely with so many unemployed in each and every country.

NOMADIC YOUTH

Against this background, the brilliant director Kim Ki-duk (see Chapter 5) wrote and an incredible film addressing this issue, very much against the K-pop phenomena, questioning what is going in in the Korean society. He is not a popular director as he has become, in many respects the ‘moral consciousness’ of the nation, raising questions that are difficult—to say the least. Kim Ki-duk, following Deleuze (2004), “is a symptomologist’ [...] The world can be treated as a symptom and searched for signs of disease, signs of life, signs of a cure, signs of health. [...] The artist in general must treat the world as a symptom, and build his work not like a therapeutic, but in every case like a clinic. The artist is not outside the symptoms, but makes a work of art from them, which sometimes serves to precipitate them, and sometimes to transform them” (140).

In every which way Kim Ki-duk is such an artist. In 빈집 (Bin-jip, literal translation is *Empty House*, unfortunately sold as *3-Iron* as an English title, 2004), we are introduced to a young man, Tae-suk, who has no last name. He is homeless, yet seems extraordinarily happy, practicing golf, a symbolic game for the rich businessmen and CEOs, with a three-iron, the most difficult club to use and control the ball.¹

The story line is that he breaks into homes of (mostly) wealthy people who are on vacation. Rather than stealing anything, he ends up repairing broken things. He makes himself 'at home.' Eventually, he breaks into a house where a young woman, Sun-hwa, is being abused by her rich businessman husband. The young man 'rescues' her. She leaves her husband, and she and the young man begin to live what is a nomadic existence, occupying empty houses wherever they find them. In the last house they occupy, they find an old man that had died. Tae-suk and Sun-hwa lovingly give him a traditional burial, but the dead father's son comes to the house and the two are arrested. Upon investigation, the young woman is released and sent back to her business husband while young man is detained, put in prison until they find out if he indeed had killed the old man. The police are unable to find any history of this young man. No family name, no family, nothing. It is as though he were a ghost, occupying time and space that are outside the symbolic universe.

It is precisely this idea that Kim Ki-duk wants his audience to think about. Another way of living and being outside of the way Korean society is structured, a parallel universe that is 'outside' Korean society and yet intimately inside it as well. This is a folded space and time (Deleuze 1992) where a different order of values *insists*. These values are 'timeless' in that they are part of an ethical system long since abandoned by technological societies. Kim Ki-duk does this by illustrating a mental framework (a way of becoming) that gives Tae-suk freedom despite being put into chains. We might think here of the 27 years Nelson Mandela spent in South African jail cell, as the young man is put in a small cell. It is here that Kim Ki-duk shows us how to 'become-imperceptible'²—that is how to become a 'free spirit' freed of material goods that are taken as the substitution for what is the most valuable things in life, like love, friendship, the repairing of broken things, walking on the earth as if it were rice paper so that the paper does not tear.

There is an amazing sequence of events where Kim Ki-duk shows how Tae-suk becomes imperceptible while put in his tiny cell. Kim Ki-duk positions his camera angles in such a way that the audience is able to grasp the interaction between the guard and Tae-suk. The guard enters the cell three times, each time beating Tae-suk for trying to escape, until he visits him a fourth time when he has become 'invisible.'

In the first visit, Tae-suk learns to become an insect. It seems he can effortlessly climb the walls of his cell. When the guard comes in and sees



Screen image 10.1 Bin-jip: *Becoming insect*



Screen image 10.2 Bin-jip: *Tae-Suk becoming space|floor*

that he has ‘impossibly’ climbed to reach a window high above, he beats him (Screen image 10.1).

In the second visit, Tae-suk begins to meditate and move around the cell to feel of the space and the floor of the cell (Screen images 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4).

When the guard comes into the cell for the second time, Tae-suk has ‘disappeared.’ The camera shows us that he is making the very same moves as the guard, but behind him. He has become the guard’s shadow (Screen image 10.5). However, the sunlight gives him away as the guard looks down on the floor and sees his shadow. The guard then proceeds to beat him with his stick (Screen image 10.6).



Screen image 10.3 Bin-jip: *Tae-Suk becoming space|floor*



Screen image 10.4 Bin-jip: *Tae-Suk becoming space|floor*



Screen image 10.5 Bin-jip: *Shadow*



Screen image 10.6 Bin-jip: *Floor shadow*



Screen image 10.7 Bin-jip: *Eye-hand*

Now, Tae-suk draws an eye on his hand which enables him finally to become ‘one’ with the cell of his existence (Screen image 10.7). He now becomes imperceptible as Kim Ki-duk’s camera unable to follow him. He has disappeared, becoming imperceptible (Screen image 10.8).

In the last sequence, he has become a ghost—invisible. When the guard comes into the cell for the last time, Tae-suk taps him on the shoulder and hits him so that he falls against the wall. The guard tries to go into the cell but he is firmly hit again by this ‘ghost.’ The guard is so shaken by this happening to him that he closes the door. Tae-suk is finally freed as he is found innocent of any wrongdoing.



Screen image 10.8 Bin-jip: *Empty wall*

It has been the genius of Kim Ki-duk, to show that there is another side of living the Tao that seems to be ‘lost,’ or no longer as important in such a technologically fixed world such as ours. It is technology that raises all sorts of questions for art|education in today’s contemporary world as questioned in the last chapter. Young people are confronted with the speed of the information age and the flood of screen technologies where smartphones and online games are the most prevalent. It has led to pathologies that remain inexplicable.

In Korea, which is one of the most digitally connected societies in the world, the problem of Internet addiction was recognized as far back as the late 1990s, and now the claim by Byun Gi-won, the leading researcher at the Balance Brain Center in Seoul (Baek Il-Hyun and Park Eun-Jee 2013) provides evidence that there is a huge increase, up to 18.4% of people aged 10 through to 19, who use their smartphones for more than 7 hours a day, suffering from what has been called ‘digital dementia’ (디지털치매). Short-term memory is being affected because there is an overreliance on the archive—that is, the stored memory within the machine. Certain areas of the right brain begin to atrophy; they become smaller and shrivel up, just as in dementia patients. While there is some truth to this, this is not to sound the alarm regarding technologies. One should, of course, be leery of applying such research as a scare tactic. In the nineteenth-century England, women were told not to read romance novels because they would become too absorbed in these stories, which would have detrimental effects on society—meaning that their husbands were being neglected! The overuse of any one thing leads to concerns,

but to remain ignorant of effects and affects of technology seems equally foolish. Franco Berardi (2015) makes a strong point: “According to many linguists and anthropologists, the ability of Koreans to transmit digital content faster than in any other country of the world is an effect of the Hangeul writing system, which is ideally suited for digital technology” (191). More to the point:

Unlike other alphabetic writing systems Hangeul has a similar number of consonants and vowels. Thus, when designing a keyboard it is possible to arrange consonants and vowels symmetrically, assigning 14 keys to the consonants on the left and 12 keys to the vowels on the right. Cellphone keypads have far fewer keys than computer keyboards, but since there are only eight basic letters in Hangeul before adding strokes or combining letters, sending text messages on a cell phone using Hangeul is more convenient and accessible than is the case with other alphabets. Korea’s leading cell phone makers applied the basic principles of Hangeul in their text-input methods. (Koehler 2011: 62)

For Berardi (2015), this has had severe consequences. To quote his worried conviction:

In a cultural space already eviscerated by military and cultural aggression, the Korean experience is marked by an extreme degree of individualization and simultaneously by the ultimate immaterial cabling of the collective mind. The individual is a smiling, lonely monad who walks in the urban space in tender continuous interaction with the photos, the tweets, the games that emanate from a personal screen. The social relation is transformed into a cabled interconnection whose rules and procedures are hidden in the coded linguistics of the web. Perfectly insulated and perfectly wired, the organism becomes a smooth interface of the flow. In order to access the interaction, the individual must adapt to the format, and their enunciations must be compatible with the code. (193)

Just to what extent has the technological revolution of high-tech capitalism in Korea proved to be devastating? Berardi notes that since 1982, suicide rates have been steadily and significantly on the rise. Korea has the highest suicide rate per 100,000 among all OECD countries in 2017. “Insulation, competition, a sense of meaninglessness, compulsion and failure are the legacy from which twenty-eight people out of every 100,000 succeed in their attempt to escape, while many more try in vain” (195).

FROM TOA TO ZEN AND BACK AGAIN

Nan June Paik's well-known monumental *Dadaikseon* (*The More the Better*), produced in 1988 that stands in the foyer (lobby) of the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, speaks to the technological age. Nan June Paik was one of the first artists to develop video art that addresses the technological changes that were taking place in the 1960s and 1970s. Ideologically, this monument has been used to celebrate Korean nationalism, celebrating the 24th Seoul Olympic Games in 1988. Its 1003 TV monitors are said to represent the Third of October, the National Foundation Day of Korea.

As is well known, Nam June Paik has been immortalized as a national and cultural hero, a pioneering figure of the Korean avant-garde, despite his family's background (Paik left the country at the age of 17 and half and spent his adulthood in Germany and America). Less well known is Nam June Paik's critical stance toward technology that his explorations of video art reveal. Paik called his strategy "the Zen gaze," a way of seeing that expects the audience to 'see' where there is nothing to 'see,' and to *create* perception, to make us think for ourselves instead of consuming the image. Paik's conceptual work addressed the televisual and video area of images theorists like Paul Virilio (see Chapter 9) were so alarmed by. As Paik says, "Enjoy boredom" (from, Nam June Paik, *Zen TV* 1973, see also Munroe 2009). The 'boredom' is to make you think, to avert your gaze or vision from the short circuit of being attracted and then immediately distracted by his video artworks as if there is nothing to 'see.' In other words, Paik is asking viewers to contemplate rather than consume screen media. The title of his monumental sculpture, 'The More the Better' becomes rather ironic from this understanding. His Zen gaze is evident in this work as well. The viewer becomes quickly absorbed by the many television sets that arise from the circulation of images on the tower's surface, at the same time distraction arises almost immediately as it is impossible to concentrate on the entire work, not even by looking at individual television sets that have 'found footage,' some from the broadcasts of the 1988 Olympic events, but no narratives can be 'read.' Paik also places empty white screens in among these 1000+ screens to further distract the viewers. The spectator encounters an endless circulation of images that is a strong contrast to the static quality of the tower that offers another critical distance for possible contemplation.

The static tower reduces the frenetic quality of the images, and despite the claim it is a national monument to “the artistic and technical excellence of the Korean people,” this work is supposed to embody “the artist’s sincere hope for national prosperity,” the words that are found on the official museum placard describing the work of art. Paik is more interested in the social commentary of the televised image and the way his monumental tower addresses the iconic towers of the past like Tatlin’s Monument to the Third International, Brancusi’s Endless Tower, and Stonehenge. These works appeared on the cover of the art catalogue in 1988. The impermanence of television image and the permanence of the monument seem to be the contrast he was asking us to think about through his Zen gaze.

Paik’s use of the Zen gaze via closed-circuit technology appears throughout his oeuvre, most prominently perhaps in the series of Buddha video artworks that he did, the most famous being *TV Buddha* (1974), which is so minimalist that it raises many questions as to what boredom as contemplation is all about. As Hans Belting (2002) put it, “There is actually no viewer but a Buddha statue, and we are seeing what the statue cannot see: the duplication of the same image which thereby empties itself. The statue is also an image which means that an image is mirrored in an image” (402). Paik was to do many variations on this theme, such as his *Techno Buddha*, *Whitney Buddha* (1982) and his *Something Pacific* (1986). Eventually, turning to Rodin’s “The Thinker” to bring home that the Zen gaze in art is *not* about the image. It’s about turning our contemplation to the world around us, asking us to think what is being presented. Paik revealed the ‘riddle’ of these Buddhas when he wrote: “The very old mirror and the Buddhas are one and the same. The one who sees, and the one who is seen, are one and the same, much as the one who is mirrored, coincides with his mirror image” (in Belting 2002: 404). So, for Paik, the world is nothing more than an image, which is reproduced like a living mirror. Reflexivity and mirror reflection fall into one in his case. I am too ignorant to know what the subtle differences are between Tao and Zen, but it seems they meet in that emptiness of the gaze that enables us to think, which seems to directly address Deleuze’s notion of the unthought where the image has yet to be framed, and the virtual remains *in-potentia*.

DARKER SIDES

This is one side of this strange world we are living in. There are technological advances and dangers that a younger generation is living with. The speed of images provides no time to reflect, as they are continuously transmitted. At the same time, it is a world seemingly at your fingertips, literally through touch technologies that are now becoming more and more prevalent. Just by the brush of a hand, or via the movement of the body, a click of a button, and you can buy any commodity one wants. Supported by the 'creative industries' and a host of brilliant artists playing with media effects, the success of targeting personal desires has increased sales. But there is a darker side to all of this play, which brings me to my subtitle: *At the End of the World*.

The movie *Goemul* [*The Host* 2006] by the amazing Korean director Bong Joon-ho raises many themes that echo throughout this strange time we live in. On the one hand, we have amazing technologies that have arisen exponentially in the last 50 years. On the other hand, we have a global condition where the dangers of both environmental disaster and the spread of global virus are not just imaginary dangers considering the AIDS crisis, viruses such as SARS, the avian flu, mad cow disease, West Nile disease, Ebola breakouts in parts of Western Africa, and the coronavirus (CoV) outbreak in China in 2020. The magnitude of pandemics is increasing and getting worse. Toxic waste, nuclear waste, and climate change all threaten human existence. Bong's movie, *The Host*, plays on many of these levels, especially the IMF financial crisis of 1997 in Korea where suicide arose dramatically as many businessmen jumped into the Han River unable to face bankruptcy, and anti-US sentiment due to its military occupation that remains a repressed discourse despite the show of military strength together to ward off North Korean threats (Hsu 2015; Lee 2018). One wonders what will be the aftermath of COVID in the following years with so many unemployed, so many infected, and so many businesses and lives disrupted. The apocalyptic movies of Hollywood are being realized.

In *The Host*, it was the American scientist who is responsible for having the formaldehyde dumped in the Han River that one guesses is the cause of the monster fish to mutate, feeding off suicide jumpers. The story is based on an incident that occurred in 2000 when Albert McFarland, a US military mortician at the Yongsan camp, ordered two assistants to dump 80 liters of formaldehyde into the sewerage system

that drains into the Han River. Despite the outrage by environmental activists and demonstrators protesting against US military presence, Albert McFarland got away with a light sentence, charged \$4000 fine by the Korean Ministry of justice, and given a 30-day suspension by the United States Forces Korea (USFK). One wonders who the ‘real’ monster in the movie is?

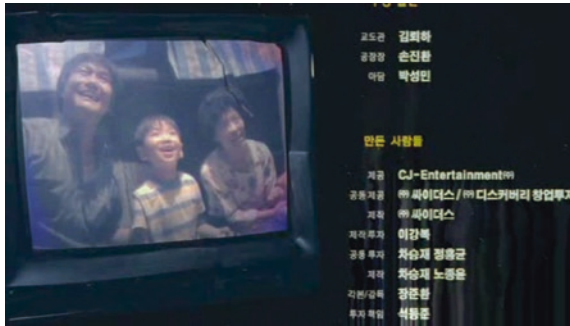
“The two-syllable word, *goe*(괴)-*mul*(물) in Korean literally means a ‘grotesque creature or object’ and refers in the film to a dangerous entity that terrorizes human beings in modern Seoul” (Lee 2018: 720). While *Goemul* may be translated as ‘monster’ or ‘creature’ in Korean, naming the film *The Host* in the English is more accurate as to what Bong was after. It raises questions of international hospitality. If the *Host* is the monster, then it blurs the distinction between monster and society it ravages. Hospitality and hostility are found in the ambiguity of word ‘host,’ which raises questions of foreign influences, the role of the US military and foreign investors who have no interest in the nation’s social fabric. Bong’s monster is anthropomorphized as it is also a victim. We have sympathy for its condition and behavior. Its genesis emerges from the toxic outbreak of the deadly virus that reporters claim could be traced to an US officer treated in a US military hospital, but these turn out to be questionable facts in this movie. Perhaps there was no virus to begin with? But the population will be treated with ‘Agent Yellow’ according to the United States and the World Health Organization. The allusion is to Agent Orange used in Vietnam, but also the yellow dust from the Gobi Desert that has brought carcinogenic pollutants from China’s industrial cities into Seoul (Hsu 2015: 130, ft. 9). The political import of Bong’s movie is very obvious: *Goemul* is a ‘sign’ of the “ambivalent and conflicted coexistence of tradition and modernity, family and the state, democracy and militarism, nationalism and imperialism/globalism, and the monstrous and the human in contemporary South Korean society” (Lee 2018: 721). Monsters seem to lurk everywhere globally as conspiracy theories over COVID’s spread proliferate; the one that receives most traction is that it was a synthetic warfare virus manufactured either in China or in the United States, depending on what political advantage is being sought. An accident of containment set it loose. UK and US conspiracy theorists push for the first, Russian conspiracy advocates spread the second.

Bong’s *Snowpiercer*, 2013, continues to raise questions regarding these difficult times we are living in. This narrative takes place in the

post-Apocalyptic world. The earth has phased into an ice age as scientists failed to control its atmosphere. An experiment gone awry triggered the phase change. The only way to survive was to find passage on a run-away train. The class hierarchy on the train is analogous to the current global social order. The incredibly rich 1% are in front of the train and bathed in luxurious living, and the rest of the 99% survivors are divided up in the 1001 coaches that stretch back to the last car. In the last car are the *Lumpenproletariat*, the discarded bodies that no one wants, where cannibalism is prevalent.³ Much more than an allegory, a variation of such a hierarchy, *Snowpiercer*, can be sociologically and politically compared to the Occupy squatter movements that spread around the globe in 2011 before they were dismantled. *Snowpiercer* is a dystopia of our own making. The circular route of the train, which takes a year to complete, is a repetition without change and without solution. The train is run miraculously by a 'perpetual engine' that harbors a secret. When it finally derails, viewers are left with a state of ambiguity as to the hope for human survival.

Maybe less well known is Jang Joon-Hwan's *Save the Green Planet!* (Jigureuljikyora! 2003), which has now become a cult movie, and is certainly one of my favorites. I have mentioned this movie in Chapter 4, but here I would like to concentrate on the final credits. To recall, in the narrative Lee Byeong-gu is unable to save the planet from Kang Man-shik, the Emperor of the Andromedeans, who was disguised as a business executive in Seoul, doing genetic experiments to see if the human species was worth saving by eliminating violence. To spoil the 'second' ending for you, Jang ends his movies with *out-takes* (cuts) by showing the audience another side of Byeong-gu as a child. In the movie, he has become psychotic because of the 'mad' world he is living in. Jang, like Kim Ki-duk (Chapter 5), is another artist-symptomologist of Korean life. You see all the various scenes that you were not privileged to see in the film—scenes of Lee Byeong-gu's life that were the most tender moments to remember, like the joyful times with both parents (Screen image 10.9).

Jang Joon-Hwan's brilliant film asks us to reflect, like the Zen gaze of Nam June Paik, what is important in this world when we have come to such historical time when we finally realize that something needs to be done as global capitalism of the well-to-do G20 countries—Republic of Korea, my country Canada, and the United States continue to be primary polluters of carbon dioxide. To what extent are we becoming ill because of over-consumption and increased aggression?



Screen image 10.9 *Save the Green Planet!*: Out-take, Lee Byeong-gu as boy with parents

ATTEMPTS AT CHANGE

One of Korea's most influential environmental design artists, Hoseob Yoon, who is now 70 years old, began as a corporate designer. He was influential in designing the Citibank logo and the Pepsi logo, as well as the famous Olympic poster for the 1988 Games held in Seoul. In 1991, he had an about face when he attended a Boy Scout Jamboree and met a Japanese college student. When given the chance to run the design school at Kookmin University, he turned it into a green adventure. Hoseob Yoon has been influential in educating his many gallery visitors, who come on a regular basis to visit with him as he discusses his work. Yoon's commitment and passion are infectious, and it is precisely that sort of teacher that is needed in this time of ecological awakening. Hoseob Yoon is but one of the many environmental artists who are trying to make us aware of the changing world we face today, what is referred to as the Anthropocene. It is a time when our human history is directly encountering Earth's history changing the planet.

Chris Jordon, a filmmaker and photographer, is yet another artist-symptomologist of today's global environmental crisis. He forces us through his film, *Midway: A Message from the Gyre*, to witness a tragedy that is occurring on one of the remotest islands on our planet, Midway, located on an ocean gyre that is composed of floating plastic. Tens of thousands of baby albatrosses lie dead on its shores, their bodies filled with plastic from this 'Pacific Garbage patch' (Screen image 10.10).



Screen image 10.10 *Dead Albatross, still from Midway*

If you have no idea of what the Pacific Garbage patch looks like, please search for images of it on the Internet. It offers us an awakening shock. That landscape of plastic is what birds feed on, the shiny bits of plastic objects they think are food.

We live in an extraordinary historical time where the greatest technologies and consumer goods are polluting the earth, species are becoming extinct, and carbon CO² is now at 415 parts per million at the start of 2020. We have long since crossed the 350 parts per million threshold that was considered the uppermost limit. Climate change is occurring, and unlike in previous historical periods of the earth's history where warm spells were followed by cold spells on a regular basis, there is now the danger that the *planet* will go into a *phase* that is unknowable. We, as a species, may not be able to survive. Many artists are trying to make us aware of the need to bring to consciousness as pollution seems to be choking the planet. This seems to be especially the case in China.

One amazing artist who is making the world aware of climate change is the Brazilian artist Néle Azevedo. *Army of Melting Men*, mentioned already in Chapter 2. This is a repeated installation performed in Brazil, France, Japan, Italy, and Germany. It addresses global warming and presents the precariousness of existence under climate change. 1000–1300 cast mold ice figurines, generically male and female,

approximately 45 cm high, are placed by a participating public on site, usually on the steps of some well-known state building of legislative authority (but not necessarily). Like the melting of the Arctic ice in Greenland and Antarctica (sea levels will rise over a meter by 2100), these statuettes begin to ‘disappear’ as they melt—in some iterations of the performative as quickly as 20 minutes in the sun. During this duration, the melting ‘sculpturines’ undergo subtle differences of form before ‘becoming extinct.’ Their inactivity as they melt away speaks directly to the inactivity of humankind toward climate change. The sculptural minimalism and autonomy addresses ‘every[man-person]’ who cannot escape, regardless of class, wealth, and power, the impending apocalypse.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE: ART EDUCATION AT THE END OF THE WORLD

It is too late to prevent climate change? Is that a question for Art|Education at the End of the World? It is the ‘end of the world’ on two accounts: the first is that the anthropogenic activity of ‘Man’ has radically changed the question of the anthropocentrism of ontology that has been centered by a Greek model. The second is the worrisome one considering our species extinction (Colebrook 2014; Ballard 2017; Grusin 2018). The event of the Anthropocene *has already taken place*. Climate change is already here. Some call it a slow apocalypse as populations will have to begin to migrate when the water continues to rise and some parts of the world too hot to live or too polluted to breathe the air. G20 governments are caught by the dictates of consumer capitalism so they do not impose any sort of strict sanctions that will stop economic growth. Ecomodernism provides the necessary manifesto that leaves the entire planet ‘for sale.’ *Commonism* (Dardot and Laval 2019) has had little traction. In many respects, it may well be too late to do much about this difficult situation, except work toward ‘sustainability,’ a discourse already captured by market forces (Parr 2009).

Nitrogen and the carbon dioxide thresholds have already been crossed, while species extinction is happening at an incredible rate. There is no global political will at the time of this writing that will avert this disaster. The COVID pandemic has simply made things that much worse. Oddly, enough it put a halt to pollution for a short duration, showing that drastic measures can and do make a difference. Species

can never be brought back to life, despite Jurassic Park-like fantasies. They remain extinct. Only technological fixes parading as dreams are left. As art and media teachers, we have no choice but become symptomologists of our current crisis that penetrates so deeply how we live in the environment that we are modifying (Parr 2018; jagodzinski 2019; Loveless 2019). In Bong's *Snowpiercer*, those in the very front of the train (especially the Wilfords' of the world who are 'running' Earth's train) are *literally* eating their children, not only on their dinner plates, but their use as labor power to keep the perpetual train engine going. Goya painted his famous image of *Saturn Eating One of his Children* as a vivid illustration and reminder that the youth of the world are being devoured by the 'greed' of Saturn. Their future robbed and their hopes crushed. So was the message by Greta Thunberg, a seventeen-year-old Swedish climate activist whose plea has been ignored by the Wilfords' of the world both at the UN and at the 2020 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on Climate Change and Fossil Fuel Divestment. It would seem as art and media teachers we should continue to point to the 'deeds' of Saturn today, and try to become aware of what this means for our survival as we are all riding in the same train.

NOTES

1. Golf is truly a symbol of control and success in Korea. 20 of the top 50 golfers in the world are Korean. But especially Korean women who play on the LPGA tour are revered as cultural stars. Historically, the case of Se Ri Pak is well known, whose career was driven by a demanding and sometimes cruel father, Joon Chul. In 1998, at the age of 20 she won the Women's US Open at the time when the IMF crisis was looming large, boosting the nation's resolve and pride (see Cho 2008).
2. Becoming imperceptible is the last form of 'becoming' that Deleuze|Guattari develop in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). Becoming occurs when a zone of indiscernibility is produced between two entities so that a symbiotic exchange happens. The famous example they develop is the orchid and the wasp: the wasp exchanges 'sexual' favors so that the orchid can propagate.
3. A variation of this same narrative structure is presented by the Spanish film *El hoyo*, 2019 [translated as *The Hole*, English version *The Platform*]. *Snowpiercer's* horizontality of classes now becomes a verticality, a tower of 333 cells, two 'prisoners' to each cell, who must survive by a floating platform of food that starts from the top floor as a lavish feast that slowly descends down each platform for a short period time as those near the top can eat as much as they are able until all the food is gone. Cannibalism

then becomes prevalent after a certain level as all the food is gone. The difference is that this hierarchy of platforms is subject to the randomness of fate. After a certain fixed period of time, one month, prisoners are put to sleep and wake up on a new level, never knowing just how far they are from the bottom, but they know very well how close they can come to the top given the platform number and the food tray that comes down to them. To add to this allegory of the social order, each prisoner is allowed to bring in one artifact (commodity) of choice that will help them survive. What is a 'prisoner' in the social order is also questioned. Goreng volunteers for a six-month stay to earn a diploma. His cell-mate, Trimagasi is serving a year sentence for manslaughter. Goreng's object is a book, *Don Quiote*, while Trimagasi cherishes the latest in knife technology, metal that can cut through cement, handy when carving human flesh. There is no 'ending' to this narrative, only an endless horrifying and living nightmare.

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CHAPTER 11

Thinking ‘The End of Times’: The Significance of Bioart|BioArt for Art|Education

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to bioart, in this chapter, I am addressing a possible future of what is slowly becoming to be taken more seriously by global institutions of art and design, perhaps less so by art|education. Yet, there is little to no place for bioart in universities and public schools as they presently stand. I was fortunate enough to experience a taste of what bioart offers at the Biofilia initiative situated at the School of Arts, Design, and Architecture, University of Aalto, Finland, in December 2018. While my experience was somewhat impoverished as I did not have a residency there, it did offer me some insights regarding CRISPER-Cas9, and my participation occurred at the very same time that news came that a Chinese doctor, He Jiankui, had gene-edited two babies: Lulu and Nana. Video conferencing and discussions with leading bioartists (Marta de Menezes ran the lab at this time) furthered my grasp of what had just happened.

Bioart might be identified as a relatively insignificant, if not minor development that is inaccessible to most of these institutions: the ethical and political questions that this development raises, as well as the procedural protocols that are required for the production of ‘life’ are simply

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too worrisome and too expensive for art and design departments, and certainly for public schools. In short, while a large body of literature now exists examining the wide range of bioart installations since the turn of the twenty-first century, bioart remains idiosyncratic and marginal in relation to the dominant trends pursued by art and design departments where the turn has been toward the do-it-yourself (DIY) entrepreneurial spirit of ‘maker culture’ or ‘makerspaces’ as a way of meeting capitalist market demands (Rosenfeld and Sheridan 2014). In what follows, I will make a distinction between bioart as a minor development and BioArt as a ‘minoritarian’ development in the field of art and technology. Minoritarian BioArt will refer to those artists and their explorations, which directly question the bioengineering that is underway where many bioartists are playfully manipulating DNA of species (plants, bacteria, in some cases animals) more for aesthetic ends than ethico-political concerns. The manipulation of the human genome being the most egregious act possible.

Historically, at the turn of the twentieth century, as it can be recalled, art|education in schools was directed primarily at mechanical and realist drawing targeted for vocational training to meet industrial demands of international capitalism at that time. At the same time, the art-world was flowering in new ideas, exploring changes in the world order that demanded a new understanding of time and space. The proliferation of various isms: Expressionism, Impressionism, Cubism, Fauvism, Surrealism, Dadaism, Futurism, Vorticism, Constructivism, and Suprematism, came to be collectively known as Modernism. These movements were tuned to the scientific developments of the day, especially the fourth dimension of time, its relativity, and speed as Linda Henderson (2013) has brilliantly shown.

Modernism decentered the meaning of art, which was entrenched in mechanical thought, not only in public schools but also in art galleries and museums around the world. It was not until the 1950s, after World War II, that these modernist ideas were finally introduced into public schools in both North America and Europe, primarily through Expressionism where individualist artistic subjectivity overcame the mechanistic objectivity of drawing for industry. This development is often referred to at the beginnings of art|education. By this time capitalism had expanded into its post-international phase requiring higher education to meet the new industrial needs for the job market. Adolescence was ‘invented.’ Colleges and universities began to flourish (Fasick 1994).

In the contemporary world, we find another decentering of art taking place that incorporates science and technology. Much has already been written about bioart, yet I hope to bring something new to this development by showing why its decentering force and the questions concerning life that it raises have become so important given the state of the ecological crisis—the so-called Anthropocene that my subtitle alludes to: ‘thinking the end of times.’ By this turn of phrase, I mean that the ontology of the way we understand ourselves in relation to the Earth has changed. It is a recognition that both nonhuman (both organic and inorganic life) and inhuman (artificial intelligence, technologies per se) have agency. Their agency has historically shaped ‘human cultures’ as they profoundly affect what is defined as ‘human,’ an inclusionary category that has excluded women, children, ‘primitives,’ animals, and so on in the history of humankind. In the previous chapter, I referred to the way the original synaesthesia of the infant is subject to manipulation via technologies, a cyborgian development. It is possible for the ‘tongue to see,’ enabling the blind to experience unprecedented sensations (Weibel 2015).

Bioart exceeds the computer digitalization that initiated a posthuman future in the 1970s and 1980s—the so-called dryware influences of cybernetics, information theory, and discourse analysis where research stressed language as the key to ‘reality,’ often referred to as the ‘linguistic turn,’ which pervaded the academy in the last quarter of the twentieth century (Toews 1987). With the advent of DNA research at the turn of the twenty-first century, the focus has turned to ‘life.’ What *is* life? Can it be created and changed? Bioengineering introduced an accelerating dynamic between cultural and genetic evolution—a co-evolution between technical knowledge and an understanding of living matter. Technogenesis refers to the interactions between technology and biology—the way this development impacts on our understanding of nature, and the way nature can be manipulated and reconfigured in and for the future (Stiegler 1998; Hayles 2012). Eduardo Kac (1998) coined the term ‘transgenic art’ when referring to this development (Savini 2017). Today bioart or sci-art has injected ‘wetware’ into this former ‘dryware’ development of the 1990s. The twenty-first century, often cited as the ‘biotech century,’ is framed by biopolitics and biotechnologies that are integrated and informed by algorithms, which, through transcribed programs, set limits and scenarios as to the possibilities when it comes to creating life (Rifkin 1998).

At the turn of the twenty-first century, in 1999 and 2000, bioart also made its appearance by exploring ‘life’ as its medium, just like stone, clay, paint, metal, and other materials were understood as artistic media or mixed-media, introducing what a host of critics, art historians, and curators eventually called a ‘post-media condition’ or ‘post-medial condition’ (Guattari 2009; Krauss 2000; Manovich 2000; Quaranta 2011; Weibel 2012). The scientific understanding of a *medium* is a substance that enables bacteria and microorganisms to grow. Overlaying this definition is the added idea of *media* itself, which is pertinent to the imaginary in both art and science. Which is to say that images, located somewhere between illusion, proof, and cognitive projection, have become critical fictions that operate within a cultural imaginary. Three overlapping meanings of media|medium thus emerge: media as a sense of milieu (growth in petri dishes for instance), media as a means of transformation or generation (the ability to transmit, store, and process to produce genetically modified organisms), and, lastly, media as instances of measurement, especially where one biological entity is capable of measuring another. Best examples include Green Fluorescent Proteins (GFPs) as biomarkers and gel electrophoresis where DNA molecules are cut by enzymes to locate genetic sequences: hence the post-media condition. Fact and fiction are blurred as visual models in art, science, design, advertising, and journalism, clarify, mislead, stimulate, and aggrandize reality, often referred to as a post-truth era, as discussed throughout previous chapters as ‘powers of the false’.

GENESIS

I will take one well-known and famous example of bioart performed in 1999 for the Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria, to illustrate the importance of this development where a collapse between art, science, and technology takes place—where ‘dry’ digital information is linked with ‘wet’ biology via biotechnology, which is also overlaid by media (usually video, image projections, photography, film). This would be a prime example of BioArt as it questions the bioengineering of life. One of the foremost pioneers of BioArt is the Brazilian artist Eduardo Kac (2007a, b, c), famously known for his GFP [Green Fluorescent Protein] Bunny (a genetically modified rabbit that glows a bright green under ultraviolet light). This ‘rabbit’ illustrates an early form of technogenesis, raising questions as to what precisely is creativity and creation. When Alba, the name of the bunny,

was displayed in 2000, both scientists and animal activists protested; the scandal that biotechnology could be used for an art exhibit, regardless of how harmless, drew sensationalist reporting and shock. It often appears as the primary exemplar of the bioart genre in various 'histories' of art.

What became significant was Kac's exploring the question of *genesis* as linked to genes: the complex DNA sequences with their potential to create mutant biomorphic creatures. Kac explores the boundaries between humans, animals, and robots, in my vocabulary the relations between the nonhuman (organic and inorganic matter) and inhuman (AI or artificial intelligence of any degree like biobots). DNA's double-helix structure was discovered in 1953 by David Watson and Francis Crick, and was quickly elevated and given special status in relation to cracking the code of life, leading up to the Human Genome Project (HGP) that was to chart the entire human genome—a complete and accurate sequence of the 3 billion DNA base pairs, some 20,000–25,000 human genes. This project was started in 1990 and completed in 2003. DNA was then quickly linked to identity, heritage, and immortality. DNA testing was used to 'discover' bio-historical ancestry, family identity and genealogical connections, paternity testing, and even linked to personal gene therapy. To ascertain one's genealogical gene history, all that was needed is a sample of one's saliva sent to any one of the many companies who do the analysis (MyHeritage DNA, Ancestry, Living DNA, GPS Origins), and 'presto,' your ancestry is magically revealed! Unfortunately, much of these findings remain bogus. Assurances of DNA testing began to be plagued by the ecology of gene life, commonly known as epigenetics where the modification of gene expression was not so easily predicted as once thought.

The second phase of genetic engineering that followed became known as 'recombinant DNA,' essentially all this meant was a 'cut and paste' technique, or 'dice and splice' gene sequences to form a mutant collage—inventing new forms of life such as transgenic bacteria, mice, fish, and Kac's GFP Bunny. This is where Kac's installation called *Genesis* comes in, setting the stage for the next 20 years. Kac's installation *Genesis* (1998–1999) explores the feedback loop between computers (algorithms) and biology that is central to current genetic engineering. The artwork focuses on three acts of coded translation, which are then reversed. The flow chart of the *Genesis* installation goes as follows: a Biblical sentence is translated into Morse Code, and the Morse Code is translated into synthetic DNA, which is then subjected to ultraviolet

light enabling it to mutate. This process is then reverse-coded back to a modified Biblical sentence. The first act is to translate a sentence from an English version of the Old Testament:

Let man have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air
and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Obviously, Kac chose this sentence from the Biblical *Genesis* to show the anthropocentrism that defines our species—it's central place as the apex of all life.

The second translation was to take the sentence and change it into the binary system of Morse Code, a series of dots and dashes. For Kac, the Morse Code binary was first employed in the nineteenth century and extensively used in radiotelegraphy. Morse Code represents the dawn of the information age—a dry information medium based on the Latin alphabet and extended to include other languages that have more than 26 letters.

The third translation is to convert the resultant Morse Code into a DNA sequence—a genetic alphabet: GATC. This is an arbitrary code that uses only capital letters: G, A, T, and C. Within molecular biology, G, A, T, and C function as a textual shorthand for the four nitrogenous (chemical) bases within a DNA molecule: guanine, adenine, thymine, and cytosine. These four base chemicals interact with a phosphate group and sugar that are the same in all DNA nucleoids. While such chemistry is difficult to grasp, unless you are a geneticist, Kac sent this line of text to a laboratory where technicians linked these four DNA bases—guanine, adenine, thymine, and cytosine (GATC)—to form a 'synthetic art gene.' Many bioartists make themselves familiar with the biochemistry of cells, bacteria, viruses, and so on. Through Internet research, they are able to 'download' in many instances the complete genetic code of an organism they are working with.

When Kac's 'text' was translated or transcribed into a DNA sequence by an outside lab, what emerged was what Kac called an 'artist's gene,' or '*Genesis* gene,' which was synthetic, artificial, and arbitrary. The next step was more complex for it involved molecular cloning. The artist's gene was placed into a petri dish next to a protein called ECFP—a protein that emits a cyan fluorescent light under ultraviolet radiation. The artist's gene now became color-coded through this interaction.

This color-coded engineered artist's gene was then inserted into a species of *E.coli* bacteria that lacked the artist's gene. This colony of *E.coli* was color coded with an Enhanced Yellow Fluorescent Protein (EYFP) that emitted yellow light when exposed to ultraviolet radiation. A mutant gene developed through this interaction which underwent color changes.

For the interaction to occur, the two strains of cyan and yellow bacteria were placed in a petri dish with a medium that encourages their growth. A video projector and ultraviolet light were placed above the petri dish so that spectators were able to see an enlarged image of the mutant bacteria in *real time*. The bacteria replicated every 20 min. The audience could visualize both the inter- and intra-generational movement of *Genesis*' genetic sequence. It was possible to monitor how the bacteria retained or lost their respective color, as well as how they produced a hybrid green. Participants in the gallery space could go online and manipulate the amount of ultraviolet radiation that enabled the gene to mutate. Outside observers could do the same by logging on to the installation's website and view the changes that were taking place.

Such interactive 'telepresence' (the virtual reality or streaming media created by the Internet) is common to bioart installations. Spectator-participants could alter the amount of ultraviolet light to which mutant *E.coli* were subjected to. Kac called this 'transgenic bacterial communication.' By switching the ultraviolet light off and on, the DNA sequence was disrupted in the plasmid. Ultraviolet light accelerated the mutation rate and visually changed the colors that were projected on the wall.

The installation, for Kac, had an ethical purpose: not only to question man's dominion over nature, but also to exploit the feedback loops between dry information and wet biology. It was possible, at the end of the first *Genesis* exhibition at Ars Electronica to translate back the modified DNA of the artist's gene into Morse Code and then back into English. The new sentence read:

Let aan have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air
and over every living thing that loves ua eon the earth.

The Judeo-Christian message has been altered. The word 'Man' had become a nonsensical signifier and the sentence transformed—a small gesture to be sure, but one of ethical significance. It was Kac's way of

questioning the ‘god-complex’ that bioengineering presents. Kac’s installation, *Genesis*, shows that ‘life’ is very much unbounded, contingent, and subject to chance events where mutations occur (Causey 2002). When spectator-participants are placed in a ‘disembodied’ position based on their telepresence through computer-mediation, their interactions with ‘living material’ force an immediate encounter that has strong affective resonances, soliciting feelings of disgust, sympathy, anxiety, and bewilderment.

Kac’s BioArt brings together a ‘convergence’ where physical material (life in this case), dryware (information, code, patterns), and meaning ware all come together. Meaning ware in this case is less what a BioArt installation means, as in representational epistemological discourses, but more to what is ‘does.’ What are the affects on the spectator-participants? How are they affected and changed? The ethical question of *Genesis* concerning creation and creativity was not only raised by Kac at the turn of the twenty-first century, but also by a group of cyber-artists and theorists who became collectively known as Critical Art Ensemble (CAE). In 1999, they presented a performance/installation called *Cult of the New Eve* (CoNE). They drew a parallel between two historical periods: the first is the period of Catholic Church dominance, and the current era characterized by bioengineering. DNA was extracted from the blood of an anonymous volunteer. This DNA was then copied and mass-produced. It turned out that the donor was a woman from Buffalo, New York. She became the ‘new eve’ of the second Genesis as she was the first person who donated her genes for the Human Genome Project. During the presentation, members of the audience were asked to join them in an act of molecular cannibalism: CAE offered beer and biscuits that were made with genetically modified yeast containing human genes!

In yet another work around the same time, Italy’s *Societas Raffaello Sanzio* theater company, under the direction of the acclaimed theater director Romeo Castellucci, wrote and performed *Genesi: From the Museum of Sleep* in 1999 that echoes both Kac and CAE in the way the work represents the emergence of a New Eve. In the first part, Madame Curie’s discovery of radium is juxtaposed against Eve’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden (Causey 2001). The point of genesis in these works of art, like Alba Kac’s GFP Bunny, is that a new line of life has emerged: what are the consequences?

CONSEQUENCES

I have spent some time mapping out Kac's early work *Genesis*, which has been followed up by two decades (20 years) of bioartists exploring the implications of life as an artistic medium. Here are some startling considerations that have yet to be fully grasped when it comes to the posthuman condition: all of which will impact the way we view art|education in the near future.

There has been a blurring between art and science; science also includes technology and the importance of algorithms that both predict reality by sifting through Big Data and their cybernetic use that limits the future. This is why bioart enables a speculative endeavor since such experimentation is not obligated to scientific research, nor must it follow a set scientific methodology, nor must bioartists answer to the demands of industry—especially 'big Pharma.' We all have heard about the entrepreneurial emphasis of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Adding A—Art—to make it STEAM means little if the ethical and political direction of such research is not considered. Video games are already a good example of STEAM gone awry where entertainment for profit is developed. Of course, there are exceptions.

Bioart blurs the line between art and non-art. bioart draws on two previous art historical developments. The first is the ready-made by Duchamp, with an important proviso. Art as life within the gallery and life as art outside the gallery have become indistinguishable. Considering the first, art as life within the gallery, sees the ready-made in Duchampian terms. The use of living beings and tissues as artistic media is plausible because it reframes biotechnological tools and techniques as 'ready-mades' within the space of the gallery. The artist is less an autonomous 'creator' and more of an agent who selects objects from the realms of non-art and brings them into the space of the gallery. For Duchamp, this was to bring in industrialized commodities into the gallery; for vitalist bioartists, this means bringing in 'real' biotechnology into the gallery space and using the gallery to establish the art status of biological experimentation—petri dishes, bacteria, sustaining media, incubators, and so on. This is especially true of tissue culture, as famously grounded at the turn of the century by Ionat Zurr and Oron Catts at the SymbioticA lab founded at the University of Western Australia in Perth (Catts and Zurr 2007). They were the first to recognize that the 'look' of their lab within the gallery had to significantly differ from a regular science lab. This meant designing their own glassware.

The question of biomimesis: Ready-mades also begin to appear outside the gallery as well, blurring the distinction between gallery space and its outside. Here questions are raised about the genetically modified organisms and grain crops (GMOs), and the development of new species of plants and animals, which are used as ‘pollutant sensors,’ engineered using Green Fluorescent Protein (GFP) enabling them to act as biosensors (like the proverbial canary in the coal mine indicating dangerous levels of methane or carbon monoxide) (Johnson 2017). Can these developments also be identified as ‘bioart’ where the emphasis is placed on design and technology? It raises the way designer capitalism has aestheticized the entire Earth, commodifying and aestheticizing anything that can be sold for a profit based on nature’s design. We have the entire development of biomimesis which does precisely that. Not all of which should be dismissed, however most of the projects are not for a ‘commonism’ (Dardot and Laval 2019), but for profit and patent rights.

The question of performance: Besides the ready-made, bioart draws on the tradition of performance art or ‘live art,’ where affect becomes a key factor: how are bodies of spectator-participants affected by the bio-performance? Again ‘art is life’ and ‘life is art’ of the gallery and its outside become indeterminate. Historically, in the 1960s and 1970s artists such as Joseph Beuys, Allan Kaprow, and Chris Burden extended art beyond the space of the gallery and undercut the distinction between artists and spectators (Mitchell 2010). These works existed only for the duration of the event rather than persisting as objects that could be collected and purchased. Art and life become blurred yet again. Spectators became involved in completing bioart installations, which often puts them in a position of uncertainty: what am I to do? Is the performance now over? Spectator-participants are encouraged to think of themselves as part of the artwork itself.

Bioart moves the performance to living matter producing an intensification of ‘liveliness’ and ‘happening’ both in the gallery and outside it. Within gallery spaces, the pioneers of tissue culture, Ionat Zurr and Oron Catts form one of the most prominent collectives: the Tissue Culture and Art Project (TC&A). They have been growing evocative transgenic organisms or ‘semi-living sculptures’ or ‘partial objects of life’ or ‘tissue sculptures’ since 1996, bioengineering tissue organisms that are in composition with non-living materials (biopolymer scaffolding). They, like Kac and Critical Art Assemblage, have staged sci-art experiments where the audience are encouraged to participate

in the unfolding dynamic. Like Kac's *Genesis*, spectator-participants can manipulate the growth of mutant genes. At the end of *Disembodied Cuisine*, one of TC&A's (2003) more controversial performances, the spectator-participants were asked to collectively consume a 'victimless steak' they had grown. They have also grown frog steaks, pig wings, and auxiliary ears. TC&A are BioArtists in relation to the distinctions I am making. They hold a minoritarian position in the field of bioart, along with many 'bio-hackers' who are questioning the powers of bioengineering. The writings of Jens Hauser (2017) address this phenomenon.

The blurring of artist and audience, or artist and machine: Artificial intelligence of one degree or another is a strategy that enables an encounter with 'life' to take place. BioArt problematizes the binary distinction between life and death, that is to say, living and the non-living, organic and the inorganic. TC&A's (2000) tissue experiments challenge the question of human/nonhuman animal relationships—the hypocrisy of anthropocentrism and speciesism (i.e., human species superiority allowing the exploitation of animals). One striking example is *Victimless Leather* (2004). TC&A experiments are prone to failure. The aesthetics of failure is very much part of the process as, often, the tissues that are grown in the art-gallery-lab become contaminated with bacteria, viruses, or fungi and then die, confirming, time and time again that the tissue membrane mediates the inside from the outside and vice versa. Failure belongs to all forms of bioart, but not to the engineering designer's mind that must solve problems. (I personally experienced this failure during my time spent at Biofilia. All the experiments turned out to be failures!) TC&A establish a 'quasi-ritualistic' protocol at the end of each performance that effectively kills the tissues. The audience-participants are put in an active position concerning the performance of life and death, and the ethics and responsibility that go along with it. This is not atypical of their BioArt performances. In 2001 Critical Art Ensemble staged *GenTerra* where audience-participants faced the decision to release or 'kill' the grown *Escherichia Coli* bacterium with its genetically modified DNA. Although this bacterium was rather harmless and benign, the audience did not know this, but had to face the consequences of their decision with all its risks and responsibilities.

Time limits? What is death when it can be suspended or terminated at will? Is it then murder? The character of semi-living organisms where technology and biology come together is characterized by a 'process of duration,' a time limit. Recall, the science fiction film *Blade Runner*

where the replicants (sophisticated AI clones like one sees recently on the television series *Westworld*) strive to stop their life from being terminated at a specific year, date, and time; they have a limited shelf-life, like the living tissues that are created in bioart experiments. But, there is also a plasticity that pervades these semi-living organisms: they can be altered, transformed, and manipulated without resulting in ‘death,’ a certain ‘immortality’ pervades cell lines and tissues grown as generations of stem cells and bacteria are maintained through mutations. The metamorphosis and transformations that characterize life show that it is unpredictable, unbounded, and not controllable. Semi-living BioArt presents monstrous hybrid mutants that are positioned somewhere between the living and the non-living, between the organic and the inorganic; they are part-bodies, not completed in any way. The spectacularized mutant sculptures of Patricia Piccinini are perhaps the projections of such a future? A new category emerges when technology sustains life: ‘life beyond life’ or a ‘suspended death.’ Catts and Zurr call this a ‘meta-body’ or an ‘Extended Body,’ a fragmented body that can only survive by technological means.

Such a concept does not only apply to tissue culture BioArt. I am reminded of Marc Dion’s *Neukom Vivarium*, installed in 2006, located in a specially constructed greenhouse space housed in the Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle Washington, another example of a semi-living creature—an ‘extended body,’ this time a rotting hemlock tree, dragged from its environment and put on life-support systems through high-technology so that an entirely new ecology would develop within its artificial environment. Again, audience-participants are encouraged to interact with the tree to learn how its ecology is sustained, raising questions of speciesism and anthropocentrism.

Resurrection: Bioart also raises the question of ‘resurrection,’ the immortality factor mentioned earlier. What to make of the current genetic engineering projects to clone back to life species that have gone extinct, pejoratively called ‘resurrection ecology,’ ‘species revivalism,’ and ‘zombie zoology.’ The preferred term is *de-extinction* where, Revive & Restore, the name of the firm that has the capacity to do such genetic engineering, presents its mission statement: “to enhance biodiversity through the genetic rescue of endangered and extinct species.” This is the revival of what is dormant life or necro-life, life that is like death, an afterlife that continues to fascinate us through the figures of the living dead (zombies), the undead (vampires), disembodied spirits (or

phantasms), and possessed life by demons. Resurrection just does not go away, nor does the long-standing fascination with this possibility as the *Jurassic Park* film franchise shows us, which projects its sixth film in the series in 2021.

NATALIE JEREMIJENKO

In the above section, I have spent some time indicating BioArt that is performed within art gallery labs that worries bioengineering, but what about outside: life as art? The foremost exemplary BioArtist here is the campy technological aesthetics developed by New York professor Natalie Jeremijenko, who converges inhuman (AI technologies like biobots), nonhuman agencies (animals, plants, inorganic minerals) with human interaction to form assemblages of affect that make a difference to the health of the environment, and to our species in general. Jeremijenko has set the path and the standard for what many BioArts have come to develop further: her reversal of anthropocentrism is that we are the ones who must listen to the voices of the nonhuman other, to co-habit with them in healthy environments.

Jeremijenko achieves this by constructing interspecies technologies. In her TED talk, *The Art of the Eco-Mindshift* (2010), Jeremijenko unveils her vision to confront the global healthcare crisis, the major environmental health issues culled by interviewing New York physicians. The idea behind her founding the Environmental Health Clinic in NYU is to turn the table around between humans and the environment; human well-being requires a healthy environment, and so '(im)patients' who visit her clinic, so named because nothing environmentally is ever done quickly enough, are given ways they can actively intervene to make changes. But this intervention is somewhat absurd, ironic, campy, and whimsical—almost laughable—yet oddly scientific and soundly engineered, supported often by sophisticated technological interfaces and the telepresence of media.

An example of her interspecies technology is *Tadpole Bureaucratic Protocol* (Jeremijenko 2007, 2009). Tadpoles are treated as a companion species, each named after a local bureaucrat of the Department of Environmental Conservation, whose decisions effect water quality in NY; each tadpole is thus given a personhood. A 'tadpole walker' is developed, a stroller with a tadpole in a glass container that can 'inquire' into the local water quality when released. The idea is to stroll NY streets to do

some testing. Tadpoles have exquisite biosensors to respond to industrial contaminants of endocrine disruptors and t3-mediated hormone emulators—ingredients in personal care products, cleaning products, BPAs found in plastics and canned food containers, pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones fed to farmed animals.

These toxins find their way into the local water supplies and then into the oceans, putting aquatic animals and fish in danger. The idea of such a seemingly outrageous act of taking a tadpole for a stroll is to have neighbors or anyone on the street ask what's going on so that the tadpole walker can explain the issues regarding water quality. Tadpoles use the same mediated hormones as humans, so a network is established between humans and nonhumans to see how each tadpole is getting along. The link to the endocrine disruptors is made to the bodily changes young girls are undergoing: the falling age of puberty, obesity, and breast cancer. Once the social network is established and the 'health' of the network tadpoles is assessed, it is possible to approach the local bureaucrat with evidence to insist on environmental policy change. Tadpoles are used here as a sensitive bio-monitoring device, and one assumes ethically (as well as politically) in the assemblage created.

It should be pointed out that animals of all kinds have been instrumentally employed in the same capacity as these tadpoles, like canaries in mines. A whole new technology of genetically modified plants and animals is emerging in the new field known as biosensing: the others being biomimicry and synthetic biology (Ginsberg et al. 2014). Such a trajectory of animal capital expands the more-than-human sensorium, reinstating an anthropocentric worldview where plants and animals become 'pollutant sensors' (Johnson 2017). In Jeremijenko's case, tadpoles are given 'citizenship' and personhood. Being vulnerable to toxicity, they are able to produce knowledge and metrics regarding their condition that can be 'shared' for changes to the quality of water consumed in NY. They are not instrumentalized solely toward human ends; they are given agential powers. Humans are affected by them in turn.

Jeremijenko's ethico-political stance is quite unlike genetically modified plants using GFP as an environmental biosensing pollutant indicator, or LimCo BioSensor System (LBS) that uses multiple species whole body organisms to monitor fresh and marine life water sources for pollutants. Such mimetic developments are in direct contrast to Jeremijenko's (2007, Jeremijenko and Dehliia 2017) project *TREExOFFICE*. A tree is recognized for the agency of its sentience, consonant with Bolivian

Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth, which became a law in 2010. The tree acts as its own landlord; it has property rights in the space it occupies in the city. With the technology provided, humans become its tenants who pay rent by using it as a workspace or office for freelancers. The proceeds then go to the tree that ‘determines’ if its soil needs augmentation, or if other trees should be planted, giving it a self-monitoring agency, capitalizing on the resources it receives. So, personhood is bestowed on nonhuman and inhuman worlds, recognizing their agential contributions to the nonhuman, inhuman, and human assemblages that are symbiotically formed. Agential contribution does not refer to full individual agency, but is ‘distributed’ over the assemblage itself.

THINKING THE END OF TIME

In this last section, I wish to address the subtitle of my chapter: *Thinking the End of Times*, the health of this planet and ourselves as they both constitute one another. It is well known that the Anthropocene, better known by its euphemism as climate change, is heading in the direction of our species extinction. With the COVID pandemic spreading, the ecological crisis is made that much more acute. Educational thought for the future should take seriously what BioArts are exploring. There are many who have specifically focused on viruses through their art installations, including Ebola, HIV, and Zika, under the rubric ‘microbe art’ (<https://www.virology.ws/art/>). For the future of education, if there is to be one, this requires a collapse of subject areas, most broadly of course as science/technology with the humanities, which have been separate cultures. Perhaps more so, it requires a rethinking of subjectivity—posthuman as a new relationship with Nature, a decentering of humanist anthropocentrism, and a serious questioning of speciesism to provide an understanding of ontogenesis (the processes of becoming) and not fixated on ontology (the states of Being). Art, science, and philosophy must come together in ways that minoritarian BioArt (transgenic) art has begun to show us. Why is this so important?

While art|education remains buried in humanist issues, issues that are defined by states of justice and equality, and science is busy generating new commodities and drugs to sustain the capitalist global economy, which of late has turned to the selling of extremely potent opiates, like Fentanyl, via the Internet for safe post-delivery to anywhere in the

world. There is little talk in our schools of a future imaginary that has a different relationship with the Earth, and a different use for the technologies that have been developed. The COVID pandemic is a wake-up call to the business as usual approach. There are major questions concerning surveillance and identity as face profile recognition systems can track every moving body. The fear is that this pandemic will only strengthen such tracking systems, to identify the ‘zombies,’ so to speak. The question of identity is a crucial one when it comes to BioArt. Who owns your DNA? Who has the right to trace your biological body as your electronic one has already been captured? The Chicago-based BioArtist, Heather Dewey-Hagborg is able to 3D print faces based on the DNA sampling alone, which she finds on gum and cigarette butts. The masks that are produced are startling look-alikes of the actual persons as Heather Dewey-Hagborg’s own self-experiment confirmed. Ironically, like many BioArtistic tactics, Heather Dewey-Hagborg has marketed a spray to mask one’s DNA. It works, of course, but it is highly impractical and somewhat ‘useless,’ not unlike the technogenic tissues produced by TC&A, Kac’s glowing green bunny, and quintessentially Revital Cohen and Tuur van Balen’s *Pigeon d’Or* (2010) genetically altered gut bacteria so that pigeons would only defecate soap, or better still, their *75 Watt* performative piece (2013) where a useless commodity is manufactured on an assembly line! These experiments are meant to raise ethical and political issues and not become useful for capitalist industries.

When it comes to the Anthropocene, ‘Thinking the End of Times’ has largely resulted in the instrumentalization of nature, perhaps the fastest growing area is known as biomimesis where species are bioengineered with a terminal life to do their job within an ecological environment—like the genetic modified plants mentioned earlier, the biosensing animals and plants and new synthetic bacteria that will eat plastic and make alternative fuel sources to replace the world’s dependency on oil. The vision is the complete control of life as a commodity, including terraforming and eventually leaving the planet for another—like in the dystopian film—WALL-E. Nanotechnologies, synthetic biology, cloning technologies, in vitro insemination, geo-engineering, cognitive engineering (smarter kids), and neuro-engineering that, at times, come close to neo-eugenics, brain imaging—and the entire restructuring of the body which I have not mentioned (breast augmentation, thigh and buttock lifts, penile enlargements, transgender operations, and so on)—are supposed to guarantee the future and control over living matter so that life is monopolized.

These are the extreme views of transhumanism within a posthuman world order where the end goal is to produce a modified cybernetic body. This results in the twin fears of bioerror and bioterror. A plethora of companies have already applied for over 100,000 patents on genes and parts of genes. Biotechnologies, Big Pharma, and reconstructive surgeries are all directed toward the anthropocentrism of Man and establishing the exclusivity of our species as to what is considered *human*. It is this engineering mind-set toward Nature that BioArtists are pushing back against through their useless, ironic, flippant, and campy aesthetics, hoping to have audience-participants encounter 'life' in such a way that at least a hesitation in their thinking takes place.

BioArt subverts any distinction between different fields that public schools and universities still pursue: art is separate from science is separate from language arts is separate from mathematics is separate from music and so on. BioArt carries the potential to examine possible futures—especially the techno-scientific engineering claims and the ethico-political concerns that this view brings. BioArt shows that life is unbound. This is an understanding of life as passive vitalism, uncontrollable, where mutation and unpredictability occurs. Such a position is contra to an active vitalism, which follows the dominant hylomorphic understanding of matter developed ever since Aristotle. Hylomorphism is the view that Man imposes form over matter; that matter is passive, unable to respond, only to be formed. In short, the active vitalism of matter supports the belief that technology can control matter and impose form on it without life's excess 'escaping' in directions it so wishes. An interesting film that shows this very paradox is *Life* (2017, Daniel Espinosa), a sci-fi horror film where scientists discover a new life form, and think that it can be tamed. Like most dystopian films, things go awry!

BIOPHILOSOPHY

I have avoided spending time discussing the philosophical shift that is necessary in understanding subjectivity that is required in order to move education out of its humanistic and technical instrumental mind-set. Previous chapters have already done this. Eugene Thacker (2008), currently professor at the New School in New York City, has usefully made a distinction between the philosophy of biology and biophilosophy, which helps to understand what is so pressing. Biophilosophy is not a philosophy of life that deals with essences—like the structure of the genetic code and its categorizations—a

representational theory of life; rather, biophilosophy focuses on that which transforms life—the focus is on the multiplicity of relations—the network of relations that take the living outside itself, a diagram that is extrinsic as opposed to intrinsic characteristics of a form of life.

The philosophy of biology is trapped in a dichotomy between nature and culture or human and nonhuman or human and inhuman (AI, biobots). Biophilosophy tries to overcome this dualism by decentering the agency of the human subject, a non-anthropocentric ontology and ethics that considers the human as necessarily enmeshed in a multiplicity of relations with human and nonhuman and inhuman (Artificial Intelligence) others. Relational multiplicity is not the same as ‘many’ (like the one and the many) but in terms of a combination—a proliferating number that differs. Gilles Deleuze would call this the connective ‘logic of the and+and + and.’ This is a dynamic and agentic account of matter, and a refusal of human exceptionalism (i.e., placing humans foremost in a world only for-us—only for our species).

Thacker draws on the philosophies of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and Gilbert Simondon. Their theories underlie BioArt developments. I end this chapter by stating that artistic research practice (like a/r/tography, for example, that dominates a large part of art|education) is much too caught by the major practices of post-humanism based on a world-for-us, supporting an anthropocentrism and speciesism, two developments, which, while related, are not synonymous. Anthropocentrism focuses on the dominion of Man, as in Kac’s *Genesis* sentence. Speciesism refers to an exclusion to all those who do not belong to a species. One can substitute ‘human’ for species to show its effects as many are excluded historically from being human (slaves, women, the colonized, and so on). Given the state of the ecological crisis as presented by the Anthropocene era, what some have called a ‘postbiological condition’ of a new Earth, which is the convergence of nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology, and cognitive science (NBIC) (Dick 2008; Ćirković 2018). To what degree is this vision caught by the transhumanist fix? It seems imperative that artists and art|educators begin to pay attention to what BioArtists are trying to do; to heighten the awareness that not all life is controllable, and that we must begin to live differently if we are to avoid extinction in the future.

The chapter has focused more on synthetic biology that has forwarded ‘the living’ as carbon based through the *technologization of the animated*. Biomimesis is such a direction where the biochemical wetware

of the natural organism is abstracted and transformed via technology into various bio-synthetic forms. I see this extrapolation taking place by subjugating the nonhuman. On the other side of the ledger are those artists and engineers who place more on *animation of the technological*, more in line with the purity of AI as silicon-based entities where art is generated by robotics and the algorithms that make them function. A good example here is Leonel Moura robotic paintings. This development extends itself more into the transhuman realm, raising new forms of animated life. While divisions such as software, wetware, dryware, and hardware are perhaps crude ways to categorize the various forms of animated simulation that are being created, their possible combinations seem endless (like Joe Davis' *Bacterial Radio*). In the next chapter, I further make use of the terms nonhuman and inhuman to make these distinctions.

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Between the Nonhuman and Inhuman: The Challenge of the Posthuman for Art|Education in the Twenty-First Century

The oeuvre of Deleuze and Guattari offers artists, educators, and curators a rich body of work to pursue ethical and political dimensions of visual art in what they call societies of control. These are societies where time and space are modulated through virtually invisible means utilizing the latest smart technologies, and where mathematical algorithms set the parameters of what is and is not possible. Big Data via corporate interests shapes our technological imagination as to how we are supposed to live. It is our ‘elephant in the room.’

Such a situation addresses a *core competency* of the twenty-first century: the way art and design education must grapple with the changes designer capitalism has undergone. For artists and designers alike, this means a designer mentality that has become more and more dominant for their livelihood as we live in a world mediated by screen images, already discussed in previous chapters. The Maker Movement, which calls for a DIY approach to electronic engineering as championed by Massimo Banzi’s Arduino project (2012), for example, enables all sorts of interesting inventions to be made by those who have had no ‘formal training’ in design engineering. But, it should be no surprise that the copyrights for the best products invented in so many ‘start-up’ businesses are bought by large corporations. Designer capitalism requires programmers and design engineers to continue economic growth. Educational curriculum reforms in post-industrialized societies of control such as England, the United States, Canada, China, and Australia, to

name a few, have instituted programming at the elementary grades so that the very young become data savvy. As we know, the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), which makes up the core of such initiative for design, has been lobbied by art educators to include art as part of this movement known as STEAM, to little avail when it comes to funding through grants. STEAM would need to be re-orientated to the state of the Anthropocene that shifts economic priorities to the values of what has been called ‘commonism’ (Dardot and Laval 2019) where the basic elements that have no boundaries, such as water, land, and air, become a global responsibility to be cared for and carefully monitored for global health. Such a dream, while far away, can be realized after such a devastating pandemic like COVID-19.

In this chapter, I want to explore two things: the first is Big Data, what I refer to as the *inhuman* in my title, and to touch on the nonhuman which, in recent literature, points to the vibrations of matter itself (Barad 2007; Bennett 2010). By inhuman, I refer to technologies that have shaped human capacities, or what is often referred to as technogenesis (Hayles 2012; Stiegler 1998; Simondon 2016). Derrida (1976) referred to this same development as *grammatology*, which seems to collapse everything into ‘text.’ His claim that “there of nothing outside the text,” is too limiting. In contrast, the nonhuman in Deleuze and Guattari’s terms refers and extends the range to affects and percepts. As they write in *What is Philosophy?* “the percept is the landscape before man, in the absence of man [...] Affects are precisely these nonhuman becomings of man, just as percepts— including the town—are nonhuman landscapes of nature” (1994: 169).

Nonhuman extends into *inorganic life* for Deleuze and Guattari. It is not confined to the organic sphere; life in this realm is closer to *Zoë* than bios, and it refers to virtuality, the potential that may be actualized by ‘releasing’ life. This distinction I am making is not maintained in the broad literature when it comes to thinking the nonhuman. Some authors recognize this difference between inhuman and nonhuman but simply do not state it (Barnet 2004). Inhuman, as I am thinking it through, is closer to Michel Serres (see Moser 2016) notion of *exo-Darwinism*, which is the reprogramming of the senses as each new technology is invented that affects and effects the ‘human’ body reciprocally, both physiologically and psychically. To recall Chapter 9 when reviewing infant synaesthesia: it is possible now, with the help of technologies like fMRI to isolate specific areas of the brain, to link otherwise

separate domains of senses such as ‘seeing’ with the ‘tongue.’ Peter Weibel (2015) uses the term ‘exo-evolution’ to identify the processes of technology being able to cross-reference our senses. The invention of the Josephson Junction of superconductivity has made it possible to form a bridge or ‘junction’ between natural and artificial nerve cells. This has enabled a revolution in thinking how the brain can be ‘rewired.’ Its neuroplasticity—the capacity of synapses, nerve cells to change their functions—enables quite literally the development of cyborgian body where it has been possible for blind people to ‘see’ with their tongue via an instrument called a BrainPort invented by Paul Bach-y-Rita in 1998. Reprogramming sensory life in the processing of data by the brain is now a reality.

The affective turn has spread throughout all disciplines and the hallmark of relational ontology has been ‘affect’ and ‘becoming.’ Multiple ontologies are now called on (Paleček and Risjord 2013). In the more conservative circles, affect is treated as emotion (the emotional brain) and ‘becoming’ simply another form of social transformation. Deleuze and Guattari had already developed the more radical position through their machinic philosophy. Affects and percepts are understood as being autonomous entities—inorganic—and ‘becoming’ is grasped as an ‘event’ that deterritorializes entities in an assemblage. The nonhuman and the inhuman both shape what it *is* to be human—better understood as what is now called the ‘posthuman’ with its competing definitions that include the transhuman and the ‘human’ as thought through the lens of neoliberalist thought. This latter development *should* be identified as ‘posthumanism,’ a continuation of humanist developments in contrast to the posthuman with its attempts to decenter the human.

Let me begin with the inhuman—and the question of Big Data as information that art and design educators need to visualize, which is the dominant mode of modulating and controlling movement and time in control societies. The question to ask when it comes to Big Data: What should art|educators worry about especially in the way images and digital information is related? Big Data refers to what one can *do* with large-scale data that cannot be done with smaller batches, to extract new insights or create new forms of value in ways that change markets, organizations, the relationship between citizen and governments, and more for our purposes, the perception of images today that interest artists and educators (see, for instance, Andrejevic 2013).

Contemporary Big Data Banks are well protected both physically and cybernetically secured. The headquarters of Bahnhof, a Swedish Internet Service (ISP) provider, the former home of WikiLeaks, is located 30 meters (100 feet) under the granite rocks of Vita Berg Park in Stockholm. The location was a former nuclear bunker and command center during the Cold War. Internet companies like Google process more than 24 petabytes of data per day. 1 petabyte is 1 million gigabytes. In 2007, it was estimated that there was about 300 exabytes of stored data. Astounding when one exabyte is equal to one billion gigabytes! (Techcrunch 2008). These numbers are unfathomable and sublime. They cannot be comprehended. The core of Big Data is *prediction*. It's the application of mathematics to huge quantities of data in order to infer *probabilities* and *not* potentialities and possibilities. Potentialities and possibilities belong to the virtual realm of all things.

The various modeling predictions that took place during the COVID pandemic is a good example of the way Big Data outcomes are projected depending on what statistical numbers are supplied, and how 'good' the data is. For instance, Dr. Deborah Birx, one of Trump's top official advisors, reported as of April 2, 2020, that 50% of the data for the coronavirus tests was missing. Not all the states had reported in. The televised charts presented could not be trusted. Virtual factors, all of which are lumped together under what behaviors the populace will take (distancing, washing hands, wearing masks, isolating, equipment available, and so on) are not part of these outcomes. We don't know which virtual multiplicities will be actualized.

Big Data research calls for self-correcting autopoietic systems that can augment or replace the fallibility of human judgment, like smart cars that can drive themselves, the environment is constantly 'read' via information flows so that such a 'smart' car, for example, can respond to each situation and even 'learn' from it: thus its 'smart' car status. The application of Big Data takes human judgment out of making recommendations, diagnosing certain illnesses, and recommending certain treatments. The central message of COVID is "stay home," isolate, and keep distance. Such proclamations of judgment are not prophetic but prophylactic. For that to take place requires the cinematic science-fiction world of *Minority Report* where 'criminals' are identified *before* they commit their crime. They are magically identified through the clairvoyant networking of three "pre-cogs." It is they who are capable of grasping the virtual dimension and not Big Data.

No human, however, is able to outplay a computer at chess as we saw Garry Kasparov lose to the supercomputer Big Blue. Humans are, however, better at the game of *Jeopardy* where guesswork and memory are still involved. Watson, the computer lost. But, then there was the matchup with the world champion of the game Go, 9 dan ranked Ke Jie of China, who lost three consequent games to Google's AlphaGo. It was so devastating that Ke Jie decided to give the game up. China and Korea have the best Go payers in the world. Despite these 'smart machines,' there seems to be little comfort in the complexity of urban living when it comes to banking, finance, and health. Such complexity is now navigated via machinic thought. Machines 'talk' to one another at supra-human speed without our knowledge and comprehension of such coded language. Inhuman seems to be the proper descriptor for AI in such cases. 'Terminator-type' movies that directly address the anxiety of AI's superiority seem plentiful. *Star Trek: Picard* ends its first season with Picard becoming a "synth."

The use of Big Data is applied to be given a sense of direction, to gain insight into the macro-level, to predict future scenarios. *Causes* are not what is searched for, rather *patterns* and *correlations* within the sifted data that have been mined and gathered constitute results from which policy is then extrapolated. It is about *what* is happening, not *why* it is happening, and *that* it is happening. 'Real time,' so to speak. Big Data, in short can identify more accurately the 'control' needed in a managed society that Deleuze and Guattari address. Big Data has become a significant corporate asset to set economic plans in motion, as well as enabling the use of algorithms throughout the designer world, a development that has been carefully explored and critiqued through the many writings of Luciana Parisi (see, for instance, Parisi 2013).

Perhaps more unnerving is the continual mapping of the body via datafication. By this, I mean both the extrinsic and intrinsic human body. The extrinsic body refers to "quantified self-movement," initiated by fitness aficionados, medical maniacs, and tech junkies who measure every element of their bodies output so as to live 'better,' better referring to controlling and managing their energy expenditures in the environment: calorie intakes, steps taken during the day, power meters, and so on. The *intrinsic* body (or affective body) is being tapped as well. You can now track sleep patterns by measuring brainwaves, or have a GPS system that tracks a sensor attached to an asthma inhaler to warn you of environmental triggers that can bring about an asthma attack; you can

buy a wristband that monitors your vital signs like heart rate and skin conductivity so you know how stressed you are. There is an app, which can be installed on your smartphone that enables you to monitor a body's tremors for Parkinson's disease and other neurological disorders. You can even generate a networked social map that shows how Linked-In you are with others.

The point to be made here is that both the conscious and unconscious thoughts, both intrinsic and extrinsic body sensations are now being exteriorized through digitalized technologies. The future manufacture of avatars is said to increase in complexity and sophistication due to the proliferation of such research. In 2045, a hologram-like avatar is projected, like the hologram Doctor on the television series *Star Trek: Voyager*. This has now been 'one-bettered' by a number of holographic variations of captain Cristóbol Rios of *Star Trek: Picard*, each with a task to perform on board his spaceship. It is unlikely that such design engineering developments are likely to stop before such seemingly impossible goal is reached. The desire is there. What this means is that *all* Life as *Zoë*—as nonhuman (inorganic) or 'free' life—is being captured as bios, *captured* through hyper-capitalist research, production, and expansion, which is then packaged and sold back to us. Creative energy (*Zoë*) comes with a price tag, metaphorically like the commercial energy drinks (Red Bull, Monster Energy, Full Throttle) that promise an explosion of *Zoë* once they have been consumed. In short, the human is reduced to an object of technological manipulation and is no longer properly 'human' as we once thought. This presents the paradox now famously made by Bruno Latour (1993): *we have never been modern* from the start but have modified our species through our invented technologies. There is no hard distinction between nature and culture, and never has been. The eoliths, tools used by the various Australopithecus species that have been discovered thus far (afarensis, africanus, anamensis, sediba, and robustus), were a factor in modifying their brain/body physiology and cognition.

We can also look to Bernard Stiegler's (1998) stance by recognizing what he calls the *epiphylogenetic development* of our species according to the logic of prosthetic supplementation. This has led us to a point where the industrialization of memory leads to a loss of individuation (see Chapter 6), the inability to create outside of these technologies of control, the data banks that archive knowledge, which perpetuate the

illusion of participation, democracy and ‘free’ play, and the capturing of “tertiary memory,” or mnemotechnics as suggested by Stiegler. “Savoir-faire,” the knowledge of how to make do in the Marxist sense, is now being replaced with “savoir-vivre,” the knowledge as to “how to live” based on psycho-technological apparatuses that capture and package life as bios. Even the Maker Movement referred to earlier, which does enable free experimentation to release the Life of Zoë is being harnessed by corporations.

I would like to look at one example where image impact and information come together to show that the *excess* of Zoë as nonhuman life always escapes the capturing of life through capitalist means of inhuman biopower as theorized by the late Michel Foucault (1978). In my own work (for instance, jagodzinski 2010), I differentiate machinic technologies of *Macht* pervaded by biopower from machinic technologies of *Lassen*, technologies that enable a release of the ‘free’ life of Zoë, which belongs to the virtuality of all things. This was a distinction first made by Martin Heidegger and later explored by Krzysztof Ziarek (2013).

Machinic technologies of *Lassen* tap into creative potential so that the future is not closed by a control society as envisioned by capitalist grasp of Big Data. An example here is Fabio Lattanzi Antinori’s *The Obelisk* (2012), a circular sculpture placed on a pedestal that changes color from opaque to transparent according to four main crimes that are committed against peace: genocide, crimes against humanity, crimes of aggression, and crimes of war. The color changes depend on ‘current’ online news data that is ‘fed’ into this sculpture as it processes and translates the data. (Copyright prevents me from showing the image, but an Internet search readily shows a number of angles of this sculpture.) The assemblage technology of Lattanzi Antinori’s sculpture deterritorializes, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, the datafication that is constantly capturing attention and affecting extrinsic and intrinsic bodies, and marketing that experience as bios. In this view, the exchange of Life as Zoë and Bios forms a never-ending becoming of transformation pervaded by ethical and political values. The danger is that any release of Zoë through deterritorialization in a capitalist system is always dependent on economics where profit dollars are the issue, not necessarily the health of our species or the planet. *The Obelisk* is a beacon giving us a state of our global health. Its technology is enabling (*lassen*) and not controlling.

THE VISIBLE HUMAN PROJECT (VHP)

The Visible Human Project (VHP) (for images, simple search the Internet for this project) offers perhaps the best example of Big Data in service of biopower for surgical planning and visual pedagogy. In my view, this is an example of *Macht* technology. In a nutshell, this is an archival project where a data set of an entire human male and female cadaver was rendered as a three-dimensional image utilizing Computed Assisted Tomography (CAT) and Magnetic Resonance Interferometry (MRI). MRI and CAT are the new visual technologies of datafication. These visual digitalized technologies have become new ways of surveying the body as well as the brain. They are both beneficial and detrimental in the way visual information provided is interpreted and applied. When it comes to neurological research, in many cases equating specific emotions to specific parts of the brain, interpretive scans come dangerously close to phrenological research of the nineteenth century. The sole use of fMRI to make projective determinations concerning mental health has been flagged for its uncertainties.

Issues of visibility, the rendering and management of the body's interior, the relations of part to whole and between the normal and pathological, all come into play in this VHP project. The cadaver selected to be the first man into digital space, preserved indefinitely, was a convicted criminal, 39-year-old Joseph Jernigan who had signed a donor consent form making his corpse available for scientific research, despite an appendectomy and a missing tooth. Physiologically, as a specimen he was certainly less than 'perfect' in this sense. The transformation of his body into digital data required placing the cadaver in an MRI machine to be fully scanned, which then provided the needed template. The cadaver was then frozen in blue gelatine at -85°C . Once suitably solid, it was then cut into four sections. Each section was then CAT and MRI scanned. The cadaver was then planed (cut) into 1-mm intervals. Each body section was digitally photographed, so that each photograph registered a small move through the body's mass.

1878 slices, each slice was a 24-bit digitalized colored image, and when put together composed 15 gigabytes of computer space, equivalent to 23 CD-ROMs. That was back in 1994. These slices could be restacked and manipulated via so-called computer 'flythroughs' to explore specific organs and body parts. The data set allowed organs to be isolated, dissected, and orbited; sheets of muscle and layers of fat and

skin could be lifted away, and bone structures could be isolated. More animation and computer simulation have now been introduced to make the visual more ‘alive,’ going beyond mere color play and resolution. As a body archive of visual data, it could then become ‘shareware’ for any medical lab who wanted to buy and use it. Its transmissibility—the quality of telematicity—is inscribed in the data itself, and it has particular agential powers.

The VHP, which effectively is a virtual cyber-body, is a biotechnology that is meant to aid the ‘live body’ for therapeutic ends—the improvement of health and medical education, for more accurate imaging and removal of tumors or organ malformations, the planning and rehearsal of new surgical procedures such as telesurgery and keyhole surgery, and so on. The comparison that is made from an image-object (i.e., the virtual cyber-body) to a ‘real’ body-object (i.e., an actual patient), and then back again in a continuous circuit of referencing, establishes a startling relation. The VHP *not only* creates an archive of knowledge about the human body, but *it also asserts* that the body is itself an archive and an organic form of storage and replication. This is not simply a metaphor. The procedures of the VHP literally make the body an archive. It is a way to itemize and index an actual human body composed of finite content, open to multiple forms of ordering and modes of retrieval.

As Martin Heidegger (1977) presupposed, bio-scientific ways of modeling and understanding the order of living matter carry with them the means of instrumentation. This link between art and science goes back to the Renaissance. This means, on the one hand, understanding the human body as database or information archive is metaphorical. On the other hand, this very mode of understanding produces material practices that work the body as simply a database. In short, this is medicine’s structuring fantasy of perfect management where living bodies predictably embody the application of biomedical techniques that are developed utilizing Big Data research like the VHP. This is paradigmatic for *Macht* technologies.

The fantasy of biomedicine is that matter is somehow programmable; the desire is to order materiality according to algorithmic efficiencies of the computer and the shutting out of Life as *Zoë*. The VHP from this perspective is a form of medical pornography providing an inexhaustible satisfaction to fulfill that desire. The medical gaze is capable of seeing ‘everything’ there is to see in and through the body. Life here,

designated as bios and information, act as synonymous terms. In the VHP, we see how *form supplants matter*. If the materiality of the flesh, or ‘meat’ as science fiction writers refer to it, the density, recalcitrance, palpability, and opacity of flesh were considered positive values, then the production of VHP figures could be evaluated as a violent procedure, the annihilation of body substance valued only for the production of a navigable spectacle. In the form/matter distinction, the only significance of matter for anatomy is its yielding of form for the medical gaze. The palatability of matter, that is, its ability to encounter and resist touch, is simple an obstacle to the eye, an inert and incidental biomass. It is matter as *Zoë* that is being ignored and thus the need for other medical imaginaries. It is interesting to note that as the number of actual cadavers being dissected by hand drops, the more fine-motor hand skills are lost as the necessary neuronal circuits atrophy. It was André Leroi-Gourhan (1993) who warned: when the hand loses its importance, crafts(person)ship also fades, and begins to be carried out by media machines. This de-manualization of art is a sure sign of decay. We might say that such skill has migrated to the two thumbs used exclusively for texting on cell phones. Ganglia growth that connects those neuronal circuits is certain to be strengthened and thickened.

The VHP exemplifies the Aristotelian tradition of hylomorphism—the notion that matter obeys laws imposed on it from the outside. Life as bios forwards form, the categorization of parts and pieces by way of the iconic form of the body, animated by speeding up and arresting the body’s cycles or capacities. What continually is excluded is the becoming of Life as *Zoë*, which is the time of becoming, organic time of death and decomposition—the nonhuman or inorganic in Deleuze and Guattari’s terms. In short ‘death’ as the entropy of the organism is made amenable to the virtual time of computed space—the time of storage, retrieval, morphing, and computer serialization as in any videogame. The data object can be destroyed and then restored, repeated, deleted, deformed and reformed, morphed from one form into another without damage, loss or labor, just like in a videogame. There is only cyber-death as when an avatar disappears on the screen. Virtual computer time is a negentropic eternity—no death is ever felt. In all those operations, Life as *Zoë*—the nonhuman—does not enter into the process; entropic time does not exist. Yet, the *haunt* of the criminal Jerrigan does not go away from this project, but this is another story that brings to the surface historical traces that ethically insist on the past. The virtual (which is real) is again missing.

To end this section with perhaps an obvious claim: the aesthetics of the VHP, which is generalizable to all hylomorphic thought, presents a view of biomedical health based on Big Data where the diseased living body can potentially return to its original condition of equilibrium or homeostasis from which it departs, and the problem of death postponed. It is life-in-death that pervades the biomedical imagination. Such an aesthetics defends against the full recognition of the hypercomplex formation of the living organism characterized by iatrogenic illness—that is, the flux and eddy of health and illness that characterizes the uncertainty of any medical intervention into a field of disease. This realization stares us in the face in the flux of the 2020 COVID pandemic. Deaths are Real.

The recognition of *Zoë* as a perpetual movement of non-reversible imbalance, an aleatory, and uncertain flow and, of course, the irreversibility of an organism's being toward death become less of an issue for the biomedical gaze. Humans, like homeorhetic dynamic assemblages, are fluid not static systems, singularities modified by both inhuman and non-human entities—by the bacteria and viruses that live within us, and the technologies that modify us. This dimension attaches us to the *creaturely life* of the Cosmos and dark matter, which Deleuze and Guattari refer to as the inorganic (*Zoë*). The VHP is paradigmatic of posthumanist developments of mastery over matter as part of the Big Data craze in control societies, rather than posthuman developments that recognize the precarity of all living organisms—that is Life as *Zoë* that is so crucial due to climate change, the era of the Anthropocene, and pandemic catastrophes.

DESIGN PEDAGOGY

I end this chapter with the importance of recognizing that 'life,' referred to as free energy of *Zoë* is what artists and art educators must address and keep in mind. I refer to this life as the nonhuman, as opposed to the inhuman of algorithmic Big Data. *Zoë* as nonhuman life needs to be constantly forwarded. This is not to say that I am supporting an either/or binary: *Zoë* or bios; analog or digital; continuous or discontinuous. No. Analog is not 'superior' to digital, both are in play. It is a matter of recognizing the status of this 'play' in every assemblage. In the VHP, the digital supersedes the analog. A *Macht* technology overwhelms the materiality of flesh as the cadaver vanishes. In distinction, operating rooms are exemplars where enabling technologies (*Lassen*) are inseparable from the body in which they intervene to save lives. Yet, the

encroachment of AI technologies into healthcare systems as *Macht* technologies via body area networks (BAN) cannot be ignored (Peterson & Iliadis 2020). In the contemporary world, pervaded by climate change, only an ecological consciousness can off-set the pervasive technological instrumentalized imaginary. One way to do this is to overcome the hylomorphism by pointing to artists and designers who have embraced science, but have done so in ways that overcome the false division between culture and nature, embracing the technologies of *Lassen* as the freeing up of *Zoë*.

The contemporary situation that design pedagogy faces is one where there is a finitude of planetary resources. All those minerals and fabricated plastics that are needed to constantly innovate computerized technologies are presenting significant geopolitical problems. Jussi Parikka (2014) has called this the ‘Anthroscene.’ Certain minerals are not easily mined due to the politics between corporations and national states, as weak as some of those states are. It is a ‘no brainer’ that the anthropocentric activities of Man are changing the global climate where the 6th extinction of our species is now occurring; the way food is grown and distributed via global trade agreements and global capital means that the growing global population cannot be fed within these capitalist distributive systems.

The ravages of war and terrorism have become a permanent feature of everyday life in Syria and Yemen, and globally as well. This has led to massive refugee and asylum seekers flooding into the post-industrial countries, a factor that global capitalism cannot control. The conflict over natural resources, especially water, and the constant air pollution in countries such as China raises basic issues of sustainability of the human body. We can add to this list of ‘capitalist woes’: unemployment, homelessness, trade-wars, resource conflicts, foreign debt, arms trades, nuclear weapons, and inter-ethnic violence. Worse, perhaps is that there has been a significant shift toward fascist regimes and right-wing populist politics globally. The election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States has worried what is already a precarious global order—then a Covid pandemic to ensure true confusion and devastation. Against this backdrop designing for designer capitalism seems like folly, and art and its education need to recognize this global precariousness to educate our children otherwise.

There are several designers that art educators can turn to address this situation. For designers such as Tony Fry (2009, 2010, 2012), ‘sustainability’ is not understood in terms of capitalist design, but sustainability as

the necessity of ontologically designing ourselves, as we, as a species have blindly done until reaching this critical point of anthropogenic change. This requires making a world-within-the-world other than as it currently exists. Design education at all levels has to wean itself off its current entrapment with the corporate world of designer capitalism for non-sustainable life as presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

Sustainability is about the ability to create so as to keep up generative connections; these connections can only arise out of differential relations that will maintain an intensity to continue to generate difference. This is most certainly a twenty-first-century core competency. While there is no running away from current technologies, science and art can come together in different sustainable ways. There are a number of designers, artists, and architects who are working with scientists across a wide variety of fields who have questioned the hylomorphic thinking where form is imposed on nature, often by brute force, what is often referred to as a ‘heat, beat, treat’ process, which uses up 96% of the material that results in waste but produces only 4% of the product!

The work of Rachel Armstrong (2015) in collaboration with Christian Kerrigan is an outstanding paradigmatic example where the nature|culture divide no longer holds as the attempt is to develop living systems of their own invention that are able to symbiotically come together to create sustainable structures, for instance the project to prevent Venice from sinking (Hobson 2014). This is an excellent example of *lassen-technology*. Rachel Armstrong’s thrust here is to develop ‘living architecture’—that is self-repairing architecture through ‘protocell’ technologies. Together, with other chemists and scientists, Armstrong and her colleagues are able to manipulate these ‘protocells,’ which have properties of living systems, so that a new form of architecture emerges free of hylomorphism. Projects include attempting to prevent Venice from sinking by having these metabolic materials grow a limestone reef around the aging and rotting wood. While this is not an overnight process, it is a sustainable project.

In 2013, the EDF Foundation in Paris presented an exhibition that drew artists together who demonstrated this geo-biological turn (see ULGC 2013). The shift in paradigmatic thinking to understand ‘distributive agencies’ is well on its way. The realization has come that the nonhuman world and the inhuman world of artificial intelligence or smart technologies possess ‘agentic capacities’ and must be understood symbiotically and put to use. An attunement with Nature is necessary and urgent. Human action is conditioned by a manifold of social,

material, institutional, and corporeal factors that come together as assemblages that are held together through desire. This is in keeping with the machinic thought of Deleuze and Guattari. Such an understanding is beginning to pervade all the sciences as a direct effort by well-known pioneers such as Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, and Katherine Hayles to note the most prominent and often quoted.

There is no ‘pure’ Nature that has not already been altered. As Bruce Sterling (2000) the founder of the Viridian Design Movement maintains, there is not a liter of seawater anywhere without its share of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). New microscopic bacteria have now been discovered that thrive on plastic waste thrown in our oceans. The entanglement between the technologies of Nature and technologies of culture fold over each other; they are no longer separate spheres. There is no ‘nature’ per se. It becomes ‘ecology without nature’ as argued forcefully by Timothy Morton (2009). Brute force (hylcentrism) has been the previous approach to issues of bioenergy (oil, coal, gas); the shift with biological design treats the cell as the hardware and the genes as the software. Life becomes a code that is interchangeable, depending on the manipulation, to produce energy for specific purposes. It can become energy, food, and fiber, analogous to what is happening in the domain of stem cell research. It is possible to transfer genes from one cell to another to create new species. Here, Zoë and bios *work together* symbiotically as both genetics and genetic drift are accounted for. Nanotechnologies, for example, are used to purify water. Given that water continues to be a growing problem, desalination becomes possible by making water filters with carbon nanotubes; it is possible to remove salt from saltwater without the need to apply extreme high pressure to force water through conventional semipermeable filters. Nanotechnology overcomes hylomorphic mentality as well. Again, I would see these as exemplars of ‘lassen-technologies.’

Biomimicry as championed by Janine Benyus (2002, 2009b) offers many examples of design that uses Nature as a guide. She offers a re-designing of the world based on the designs of Nature. “In a biomimetic world, we would manufacture the way animals and plants do, using sun and simple compounds to produce totally biodegradable fibers, ceramics, plastics, and chemicals. Our farms, modeled on prairies, would be self-fertilizing and pest-resistant. To find new drugs or crops, we would consult animals and insects that have used plants for millions of years to keep themselves healthy and nourished. Even computing would take its

cue from nature, with software that ‘evolves’ solutions, and hardware that uses the lock-and-key paradigm to compute by touch” (Benyus 2009a, online).

This emerging field of biomimicry, as it too moves away from hylomorphism, however, *remains trapped within a capitalist economic system*, bringing certain skepticism as to just how such design can address a planetary ecological consciousness in clever ways without addressing the ethico-politics means when doing so. But, perhaps this is the best hope we have now? The same question can also be extended to the ecological imagination as applied to ‘vibrant architecture’ by Rachel Armstrong (2008, 2015), which views building as part of (inhuman) computer programming that establishes a ‘germline structure,’ offering humans the potential to make genetic adjustments with a predictable lifecycle of the architecture once it is no longer responsive to human activity. It then decays in the ecosystem to be recycled by its progeny.

Currently, an ecological pedagogy of design that grapples with the very ‘design’ of our species via technologies (what I have called inhuman) and nonhuman forces of *Zoë*, as illustrated by the intermingling of art, design, and science via biomimicry, seems far from sight/cite/site. However, it seems to me this is the way art education’s imagination needs to go to help re-orientate the current direction of art and design education from its capitalist orientation to one that recognizes the forces that shape the Anthropocene. This seems to me to be a twenty-first-century imperative for art|educators. Without such a reorientation, what might be called an ecologies that supports an ecosophy in Félix Guattari’s (2000) terms, it is unlikely that a new generation of children will be able to overcome a ‘strictly’ technologic (inhuman) mentality of *Macht* technologies as it is such a powerful force today, whereas it is precisely the combination of art|science|philosophy that is badly needed for post-conceptual art (Osborne 2013) that explores the anthropogenic production during this era of the Capitalocene (Moore 2017), yet another, more accurate term for what has been inappropriately popularized as the Anthropocene.

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INDEX

A

- Accelerationism, 8
Accelerationist theorists, 5
Action-image, 134
Actor–Network Theory (ANT), 215.
 See also Latour, Bruno
Actual, 11, 30, 42, 45, 54, 100, 130,
 131, 176. *See also* Virtual
Aesthetic wars, 172, 176
Affection-image, 106, 136
affective body, 109, 166, 173, 175–
 177, 210, 211, 219, 220, 228,
 241, 242, 297. *See also* intrinsic
 body
affective turn, 57, 173, 230, 295
affects, 12, 49, 51, 52, 54, 58, 103,
 134, 149, 150, 174, 176, 177,
 179, 213, 216, 221, 228, 231,
 238, 241, 258, 278, 294, 295.
 See also Percepts
AfterLife, 19, 282
Age of Access, 7
Aion, 29, 30, 44, 154, 212
aisthetics, 174, 176, 178, 204, 211
AI technologies, 5, 12, 229. *See also*
 inhuman
Algorithm, 7, 12, 14, 39, 209, 235,
 273, 275, 279, 289, 293, 297
alien phenomenology, 16. *See also*
 Bogost, Ian
A Life, 45, 198. *See also* Zoë
Altermodernity, 168. *See also*
 Bourriaud, Nicolas
Amazon, 6, 7
Anomalous beings, 149
Anthroscene, 18, 52, 304. *See also*
 Parikka, Jussi
Anthropocene, 2, 17–20, 47, 52, 68,
 114, 178, 179, 190, 264, 266,
 273, 285, 286, 288, 294, 303,
 307
Anthropocentrism, 38, 52, 266, 276,
 281–283, 285, 288
anxiety, 20, 104, 109, 146, 167, 173,
 196–198, 241, 278, 297
any-place-what-so-ever (*espace quelcon-*
 que), 125, 138
Apujeong culture, 64

- Appu-jung* culture, 64, 108
The Apprentice (television show, Donald Trump), 187
 Armstrong, Rachel, 305, 307. *See also* living architecture; Venice
 Army of Melting Men, 59, 265. *See also* Azevedo, Néle
 Artistic research, 32, 33, 242, 288
The Art of the Eco-Mindshift (TED Talk). *See* Jeremijenko, Natallie
 Artist's gene. *See* Kac, Eduardo; synthetic art gene
 art|science|philosophy, 307
 asemiotics, 127
 assemblages, 3, 8, 11, 16, 18, 33, 44, 51–53, 55, 121, 148–150, 172, 176, 177, 207, 215, 217, 219, 230, 231, 283–285, 295, 299, 306
 asylum seekers, 304
 atmosphere (*Stimmung*), 172
atopian (non-place, without place), 124
Aufhebung (higher state), 36, 175
 authenticity ('soul searching'), 99
 Avatar, 101, 187, 208–210, 298, 302
 Azevedo, Néle, 58, 59, 265. *See also* Army of Melting Men
- B**
 Badiou, Alain, 4, 15, 16, 47, 125, 167, 194
 Bae Yong-joon. *See* Korean stars
 Baudrillard, Jean, 228. *See also* simulacrum
 Bauman, Zygmunt, 95, 169, 240
 Beatriz/Paul B. Preciado.
See *pharmaco-pornographic era*
 Becoming, 30, 180, 210, 241, 295
 becoming-animal, 28, 125, 151–154
 becoming butterfly, 130
 becoming Dog, 153
 becoming imperceptible, 29, 38, 41, 124, 131, 137, 144, 146, 147, 156, 235, 256, 267
 becoming insect, 28
 becoming-Other, 51, 149–151
 becomings of man, 294
Becoming Space|Floor, 254, 255
 becoming-woman, 130, 132
 Benetton, 35–37, 54, 189, 205–208, 212. *See also* Toscani, Oliviero
 Benyus, Janine. *See* biomimesis
 Berardi, Franco ('Bifo'), 63, 258
 Bergson, H., 45, 47, 145, 174–176, 233, 236, 237, 241, 242. *See also* image = movement
 Big Data, 7, 9, 13, 16, 98, 113, 157, 279, 293–297, 299–301, 303
 big Idea, 190
 Big Other, 13, 14, 16, 20
Bin-jip [Empty House or Ghost House] (Korean film), 144, 146, 252
 bioart, 173, 184, 243, 271–275, 277–283, 285–288
 biodiversity, 2, 282
 bioenergy (oil, coal, gas), 306
 bioengineering, 1, 18, 19, 272–274, 278, 280, 281, 283
 bio-hackers, 281
 biomedical gaze, 303
 biomimesis, 18, 243, 280, 286, 288
 biomimicry, 284, 306, 307
 biophilosophy, 287, 288
 biopolitics, 2, 75, 273
 biopower, 1, 2, 10, 17, 19, 173, 179, 198, 299, 300
 bio-production, 1
 bios, 198, 214, 243, 294, 298, 299, 302. *See also* Life, Zoë
 biotechnology, 274, 275, 279, 301

- bitcoin, 8
 body|mind structure. *See* Spinoza, B.
 Body without Organs (BwO), 12, 28, 30, 33, 52, 54, 124, 126, 128, 150, 173, 234
 Bogost, Ian, 16. *See also* alien phenomenology
 Boltanski, Luc, 189
 Bolter, Jay, 238
 Bong Joon-ho, 69, 261. *See also* Korean directors; *Snowpiercer* (Korean film)
 Bourriaud, Nicolas, 168, 169, 176. *See also* Altermodernity; relational aesthetics
The Bow [Hwal] (film by Kim Ki-duk), 138, 149, 150
 Braidotti, Rossi, 20
 brain imaging (CT scans), 286
 brain scan (fMRI imaging), 231
 Brassier, Ray, 5, 135. *See also* Nihilism
 Bratton, Benjamin H., 7, 8, 12, 13, 16. *See also* *The Stack*
 Breitz, Candice, 212
 Brexit, 15
The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors (artwork by Duchamp), 239
 Brockman, John (third culture), 184
buchu (thin spring onions, Asian chives), 86
 Burden, Chris, 280
- C**
 Cameron, James (*Avatar*), 187
 Capitalocene, 307
 Castellucci, Romeo, 278. *See also* *Societas Raffaello Sanzio* theater company
 CAT scans, 300. *See also* fMRI
Chaebol, 76, 79, 81, 82, 101, 112, 122. *See also* Hyundai, KIA and Samsung, Daewoo, CJ, Dongyang
 chaos, 14, 31, 33, 47, 57, 209, 215, 219, 233
 Chi, 28, 29, 57
 Chiapello, Eve, 190
Chông, 80. *See also* *han* (sentiment)
 chora [khora], 175
 Chosun Dynasty, 111
 Chung Kyung-Won, 68, 166. *See also* Korean design
 Cinema of imperceptibility. *See* Kim Ki-duk
 Cinemasochism, 230
 climate change, 18, 28, 58, 59, 179, 203, 261, 265–267, 285, 303
 Cloning technologies, 286
 Cloud platforms, 7
The Coast Guard [Haeanseon] (film by Kim Ki-duk), 137
 cognitive capitalism, 1, 8, 16
 cognitive engineering, 286
 cognitive theories of perception, 229
 Colebrook, Claire, 217, 266
 Colonial, Veteran, Democracy, Baby Boomer, Silent and Network, 94
 Commonism, 280, 294
 Commons, 5, 8, 11, 18, 37, 42, 56, 67, 68, 98, 107, 178, 205, 207, 208, 220, 234, 238, 277
 Computed Assisted Tomography (CAT), 300
 Confucianism. *See* Confucianist values; neo-Confucianist
 Confucianist patriarchy, 76, 97, 124
 Confucianist values, 72, 75
 Confucian legacy, 93
core competency, 293
 Coronavirus (CoV), 261, 296

- Corporate Cannibal* (song by Grace Jones), 243
- Correlationalism, 38. *See also* Meillassoux, Quentin
- Correlationism, 37
- Cosmetic surgery, 75, 100
- Cosmic music, 145
- Cosmic silence, 126
- cosmology, 33, 50
- Counter-actualization, 125
- COVID-19, 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 40, 179, 180, 191, 195, 252, 261, 262, 266, 285, 286, 294, 296, 303
- creative class, 170, 183, 186
- creative industries, 166–168, 171, 172, 179, 180, 186, 242, 243, 261
- creativity. *See* performativity
- Creon (*Eating his Children*), 6
- Critical Art Ensemble (CAE), 278, 281
- critical reflection, 189
- Cultural studies (CS), 34, 64, 204
- Cute avatars, 97
- cybernetics, 7, 10, 17, 39, 190, 273, 279, 287
- cyber-technology, 39. *See also* Land, Nick
- Cyberworld, 95, 96
- cyborg (cyborgian body), 191, 207, 295
- Cyworld (I-chon)*, 96
- D**
- Dao. *See* Tao
- datafication, 297, 299
- de-extinction*, 282. *See also* Revive & Restore; resurrection ecology
- Deleuze, Gilles, 6, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 27, 28, 30–33, 35–42, 44, 46, 47, 50–54, 56, 57, 59, 85, 86, 111, 112, 121, 122, 124–126, 128, 132, 136, 144, 145, 149, 150, 156, 169, 173–175, 190, 204, 209, 212, 214, 216–219, 221, 233, 234, 239, 293, 295, 302. *See also* Guattari, F.
- The Deluge* (artwork by Bill Viola), 179
- design education, 293, 305, 307
- design engineering, 293, 298
- designer capitalism, 6, 8, 16, 68, 69, 72, 77, 84–86, 93, 98, 106, 110–113, 169, 171, 174, 184–186, 188, 190–196, 198, 203–205, 207–209, 211, 213, 220, 280, 293, 304
- design pedagogy, 303, 304
- designs of Nature, 306
- desubjectification, 56
- detritorialization, 5, 32, 57, 124, 127, 235, 299. *See also* reterritorialization; territorialization
- Dewey-Hagborg, Heather (artist), 286
- difference, 34, 37, 50, 194, 211. *See also* negation; sameness
- digital dementia, 257
- digitalization, 2, 110, 172, 173, 174, 188, 204, 235–237, 273
- digitalized image, 238, 240
- Dion, Mark, 55, 282. *See also* *Neukom Vivarium*
- discourse theory, 38. *See also* Foucault, Michel
- Disney Princesses, 211
- dispositif*, 8, 11
- Dissensus, 180. *See also* Rancière, Jacques
- dividual, 12, 20, 136, 141, 157, 209, 243
- DNA molecules, 274, 276
- DNA of species, 272

DNA's double-helix structure, 275
 DNA sequence, 275–277
 drive (*Trieb*), 130, 189
 dry digital information, 277
 dryware, 273, 278, 289
 Duchamp, M., 45–48, 50, 52, 53,
 218, 231, 239, 279
durée, 174, 237

E

Ecologics, 307
 ecology without nature, 19, 306. *See also* Morton, Timothy
 ecosophy, 307
 ecosystem, 55, 168, 307
 educational fever, 58, 285. *See also*
gyoyungnyeol
 elasticity, 238
 electracy, 6, 166, 168, 169, 172, 177,
 184, 190, 229, 236
 electrokinetic field, 238
 Electromagnetic field (EM), 238–240
 Emotional brain, 233, 295
 empathy. *See* sympathy
 End of the World, 261, 266
 End of Times, 286
 Enlightened modernism, 172
 Environmental biosensing pollutant
 indicator, 284
 Environmental Development Fund
 (EDF, Paris), 305
 Environmental Health Clinic, NYU,
 283
 Environmental Protection Agency
 (EPA), 203
epiphylogenetic development. *See* Stiegler,
 Bernard
 ethico-political, 41, 171, 180, 209,
 214, 219, 222, 230, 272, 284,
 287

Evangelical Christian communities,
 187
 event, 2, 20, 29, 33, 44, 45, 51, 57,
 58, 107, 151, 154, 174, 175,
 180, 210, 212, 230, 244, 245,
 295
 exaggerated Oedipus, 125
 exo-Darwinism. *See* Serres, Michel
 exo-evolution, 295
 extrinsic body image. *See* intrinsic body
 image

F

fabulated image, 130
 Facebook, 6–9, 11, 14, 20, 99
 fascist democracy. *See* Badiou, Alain
 FCUK designer clothes, 189
 feeling-brain, 230
femme fatale, 102
 figural (scribble), 194, 220. *See also*
 figurative
 figurative, 194. *See also* figural
 (scribble)
 Filter for Good Campaign, 52
 flexible subject, 170, 186, 215, 252
 The Flaying of the Senses. *See* Kim
 Ki-duk
 Florida, Richard, 3, 4, 166, 183, 186,
 187
 Floridi, Luciano, 4
 flythroughs, 300
 fMRI, 231, 294, 300. *See also* CAT
 scans
 forcework, 58
 Foucault, Michel, 1, 2, 10, 17, 19, 38,
 173, 179, 198, 204, 206, 299.
See also discourse theory
Fountain Buddha (artwork), 49, 50.
See also Levine, Sherrie
 Freeman, Kerry, 189, 191

free software movements (FSM), 190, 191

G

gajok families, 76

G-20 major economies, 251

Gaming Industry (World of WarCraft, Dota, League of Legends, Counter-Strike), 101

Gangnam Style, 65, 251. *See also* PSY (pop idol)

geim maeniak (transliterally, 'game' and 'maniac'), 101

geim pye-in (gamer), 101

gel electrophoresis, 274

generic human. *See* Laurelle, François

Genesis (artwork by Eduardo Kac), 275, 278, 281, 288

genetically modified organisms (GMO), 274, 280

genetically modified rabbit. *See*

GFP Bunny (Alba) (artwork by Eduardo Kac)

genetic alphabet (GATC), 276

genetic engineering, 14, 275, 282

genetic sequence, 274, 277

genetic testing labs (MyHeritage DNA, Ancestry, Living DNA, GPS Origins), 275

geo-engineering, 286

geology of experience, 232

geontology, 19

geontopower, 19

germline structure, 307

GFP Bunny (Alba) (artwork by Eduardo Kac), 274, 275, 278

GFP [Green Florescent Protein], 280, 284

The Gifts. *See* Kim Ki-Duk

global capitalism, 17, 18, 39, 187, 251, 263, 304

globalization (*seggyehwa*), 75, 76, 107

Go (game), 297

goemul (monster or creature), 261, 262

The Gold Bride. *See* Korean melodrama

Goldin, Nan (artist), 168, 238

Google, 6–9, 11, 13, 14, 98, 169, 296

governmentality, 9, 20, 204

Goya, F., 267

GPS system, 297

Green Florescent Proteins as biomarkers, 274

Grusin, Richard, 238, 266

Guattari, Félix, 6, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20,

28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 39, 41, 44,

52, 57, 85, 111, 113, 119, 121,

122, 124–126, 128, 132, 133,

137, 149, 150, 165, 168, 172,

173, 175, 176, 180, 193, 204,

209, 215, 218, 228, 229, 231,

234, 237, 243, 274, 288, 293,

294, 297, 303, 306, 307

Guattari (transversal), 175

Gude, Olivia, 185, 188, 196, 197

Gun mandu (*gyoza*, the dumpling), 86

Gwangju Uprising, 84. *See also* Korean nationalism

Gwoemul [The Host] (Korean film, Bong Joon-ho), 106, 111

gyoyungnyeol, 71. *See also* educational fever

H

Hallyu Cinema, 251

Hallyu (Korean Wave), 66, 72, 76–79, 94, 119, 121

han (sentiment), 73, 119. *See also* *Chông*

Hangeul (Korean writing system), 258

Hansen, Mark, 190, 210, 211, 238

Haraway, Donna, 305

Hauser, Jens, 281
 Heidegger, M., 170, 185, 299, 301
 Henderson, Linda, 239, 272
 hermeneutics, 165, 229
Hojuje, 73
 Hollywood blockbuster genre. *See* *Joint Security Area, Shiri*
 Hologram doctor. *See* *Star Trek*
 Homeorhetic dynamic assemblages, 303
 Hoseob Yoon (Korean ecological artist), 264
 Hsieh, Tehching (performance artist), 147, 156
 Human Genome Project (HGP), 275, 278
 Humberto, Maturand, 215
 Hybridity (hybridic, hybridic multitude), 65, 66
 Hylomorphism (hylomorphic), 18, 287, 302, 303, 305, 306
 Hypercapitalism, 172, 179
 Hypermediacy, 238
 Hyperobjects, 17, 179
 hyperorder, 233, 234
 Hyundai, KIA and Samsung, 81. *See also* *Chaebol*
 Hyundai, KIA and Samsung, Daewood, CJ, Dongyang, 76, 79

I

Ideal Ego. *See* Lacan, Jacques
 Ideal Ego image. *See* Lacan, Jacques
 identity politics, 5, 37, 40, 204, 205, 208, 219, 235
 Idol Boy Bands, 77, 108
 Idol K-pop boy bands: Super Junior, SHINee, 2PM, 2AM, B2AST, MBLAQ, Nichkhun 2PM, 109
 IKEA (design store), 242

image = movement, 175, 177, 236. *See also* Bergson, H.
 image culture, 184
 image worlds (life-styles), 167
 IMF (International Monetary Fund), 76, 77, 79, 80, 83, 84, 93, 94, 103, 107, 113, 251, 261
 immaterial object relations, 235
 (im)patients, 283
 Imperceptibility, 29, 32, 42, 138, 139, 144. *See also* Kim Ki-duk
 impulse image, 124, 134, 144, 154
 index sign, 235
 Indian|White Man (relationship), 40
 indiscernability, 137, 178
 Information technology, 288
 Information theory, 273
 inhuman, 8, 11, 13, 58, 128, 172, 174–176, 184, 190, 243, 273, 275, 283, 285, 288, 289, 294, 295, 297, 303, 307. *See also* AI technologies
 Inorganic life. *See* organic
 intensity, 46, 57, 58, 150, 152, 186, 219, 221, 222, 232, 234, 241, 305
 interkingdoms, 173
 International Art Education Association (INSEA), 203
 Internet research, 135
 interpassivity, 217, 220. *See also* Pfaller, Robert
 intrinsic body, 57, 173, 174, 242. *See also* affective body
 intrinsic body image, 242
 intrinsic virtuality, 174
The Isle [Seom] (film by Kim Ki-duk), 127, 128, 137, 149

J

- James & Other Apes (advertisement campaign). *See* Benetton
- Jang Joo-hwan (Korean director), 111, 112, 114. *See also* *Jigureul Jikyeora!* [Save the Green Planet!]
- Jeopardy* (game), 297
- Jeremijenko, Natalie (artist), 283, 284
- Jernigan Joseph (Criminal). *See* The Visible Human Project (VHP)
- Jigureul Jikyeora!* [Save the Green Planet!], 106, 111. *See also* Jang Joo-hwan (Korean director)
- Ji Yong-ho (artist), 189
- jjang* (best syndrome), 98
- Joint Security Area*, 66, 121
- Jones, Grace, 243
- Jordon, Chris. *See* *Midway: A Message from the Gyre* (documentary by Chris Jordon)
- The Journal of Visual Culture*, 203
- Juyuso seubgyuksageun* [Attack the Gas Station! (Korean film)], 76, 102
- JYPE (JYP Entertainment), 108, 109

K

- Kac, Eduardo, 273, 274
- Kafka, F., 85, 125, 126
- Kaprow, Allan, 280
- Kasparov, Garry (chess champ), 297
- Ke Jie (Go champ), 297
- Kim Dae-jung (Korean administration), 73, 76, 81
- Kim Ki-duk (Chapter 5), 106, 263
- Kim Kung Hyun, 120
- Kim Kyung Hyun (author). *See* *The Remasculinization of Korean Cinema* (book)
- Kim Kyung Hyun (singer), 70, 80, 83–86, 106

- Kim Young-sam (Korean administration), 76, 79, 81
- The King and Clown* (Korean film), 111
- Kino-eye, 235
- Klee, Paul, 47, 53, 194, 197
- Korean Baby Boomer cohort, 94
- Korean cinema. *See* Korean directors; Paik, Peter Yoonsuk; *Parasite* (Korean movie)
- Korean cohorts. *See* Colonial, Veteran, Democracy, Baby Boomer, Silent and Network
- Korean Democracy cohort, 94
- Korean design, 68, 166. *See also* Chung Kyung-Won
- Korean directors. *See* Kim Ki-duk, Bong Joon-ho, Park Chan-wook
- Korean economy, 64. *See also* Korean Federation of Banks (KFB); Korean financial crisis of 1997; Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)
- Korean educational system, 71, 72. *See also* wild goose families (*kirogi kajok*)
- Korean Federation of Banks (KFB), 82
- Korean food. *See* *buchu* (thin spring onions, Asian chives); *Gun mandu* (*gyoza*, the dumpling); *Mukbang*, *muk-bang* or *meokbang*, (food gorging, food porn), Soju
- Korean global competitiveness, 82
- Korean melodramas, 66, 107
- Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 165
- Korean nationalism, 259. *See also* Gwangju Uprising
- Korean Network cohort, 95
- Korean New Wave music. *See* *Hallyu* (Korean Wave)

Korean Presidents. *See* Lee Myung-bak; Moon Jae-in; Park Geun-hye; Roh Moo-hyun (Government)

Korean Silent cohort, 95

Korean Society of Education Through Art (KoSEA), 27

Korean stars, 66

Korean Veteran cohort, 94

Korean Visual and Popular Culture, 63, 93

Korean youth, 74, 101, 107

K-pop idols. *See* Tai-Ji and the Boys (boy idol group)

Kress, Gunther, 214

Kubric, Stanley (director), 113

kukmin. *See* non-kukmin

kung fu, 28, 29

Kunstwollen (will to art), 42, 171, 179, 214

L

Lacan, Jacques, 29, 80, 85, 86, 98, 126, 131–133, 144, 173, 174, 221, 231, 237, 241, 244. *See also* *lalangue*; *sinthome*

lack (*manque*), 128

lalangue, 221. *See also* Lacan, Jacques

Land, Nick, 5, 39. *See also* cyber-technology

Laruelle, F., 29, 33

Lassen (technology), 299, 303

Latour, Bruno, 16, 184, 215, 298, 306. *See also* Actor– Network Theory (ANT)

Laurette, François, 54

La Vie. *See* Yoshida, Kenji

learning to learn, 170, 191, 192, 195, 252

Lee, Meera, 119, 120, 261, 262

Lee Myung-bak, 69, 82, 83

Leeuwen, Theo, 214

Leroi-Gourhan, André, 302

Levine, Sherrie, 50. *See also* *Fountain Buddha* (artwork)

Life. *See* Zoë and bios (symbiotic relationship)

life beyond life (suspended death), 282

LimCo BioSensor System (LBS), 284

line of flight (*ligne de fuite*), 42, 47, 171, 175, 205

Linguistic turn, 273

Living Arts, 168, 240

living architecture, 305. *See also* Armstrong, Rachel; Venice

Logic of the and (+ and +). *See* Deleuze, Gilles

Logokultur, 184

love marriages (*yonae kyorhon*), 105

The Gold Bride, Lovers, The Woman Next Door, Viva Women, 73

ludocapitalism, 167

Lumpenproletariat, 125, 263

M

MacCormack, Patricia, 20, 126, 153, 154, 156

machinic vision, 171, 236, 242

Macht (power technology), 299–301

Magnetic Resonance Interferometry (MRI), 300

Magritte, René, 206. *See also* *This is not a Pipe*

Maker Movement, 6, 8, 192, 293, 299

manager mothers (*maenijeo eomma*), 71

Man (capitalized), 266, 277

mass customization, 7, 166

Massumi, Brian, 217, 219–221, 231–235, 237

mathematics of folding, 234

- Matrix of Visual Culture*. See Pisters, Patricia
- Mbembe, Achille. See necropower
- Mbnomics. See Chung Kyung Won; Korean design
- McConnell, Mitch, 3
- meaningware, 278
- media|medium, 274
- media violence, 244
- Meillassoux, Quentin, 16, 37. See also Correlationalism; subject-object melodramatic form. See *The Gold Bride*; *Lovers*; *The Woman Next Door*; *Viva Women*
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 213, 237, 241
- Mexican Americans, 241
- Microsoft, 6, 217
- Middle School Non-Examination Entrance Exams, 72
- Midway: A Message from the Gyre* (documentary by Chris Jordan), 264
- minimal difference, 218
- minjung* theologian, 119
- minoritarian, 41, 272, 281
- minoritarian art (minoritarian BioArt), 180
- minoritarian film, 124, 128, 132
- minoritarian politics, 235
- mirror-neurons, 231
- mirror-touch, 229–231
- mirror-touch, sight and touch, 234
- mnemotechnics, 11, 299
- Modernism, 64, 141, 272
- modulated* society of control. See Deleuze, Gilles
- molarized, 173
- Mongrel (art collective), 212
- Moon Jae-in, 69, 82, 83
- The More the Better* (artwork by Nam June Paik), 259
- Morse Code, 275–277
- Morton, Timothy, 19, 179, 306
- Moura, Leonel (robotic paintings), 289
- movement = image, 238
- moving space* (architecture), 236
- mugukjeok* (non-nationality), 67, 77
- mugukjeok* (transcultural hybridity), 67
- Mukbang*, *muk-bang* or *meokbang*, (food gorging, food porn). See Korean Visual and Popular Culture
- mukokuseki* (non-nationality or non-Japaneseness), 67
- multiple ontologies, 295
- multiplicity, 42, 44, 46, 50, 53, 145, 156, 169, 173, 233, 288
- Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), 83. See also Korean economy
- Myoung Ho Lee (artist). See *Tree* series
- N
- Nail, Thomas, 240
- Naming* of the Father, 126
- Nam June Paik (artist). See *Something Pacific*
- nanotechnologies, 14, 306
- nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and cognitive science (NBIC), 288
- National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, 259
- natural perception, 235
- Nature (as a guide), 10, 179, 285
- Natureculture, 18
- nature|culture divide, 305
- necrophilic roots, 198
- necropower, 19
- negation, 190, 212. See also difference, sameness

- neo-Confucianist, 65
 neo-eugenics, 286
 neoliberalization, 93
 neo-racism, 34. *See also* post-racism
 nerval visceral body, 174
Neukom Vivarium, 55, 282. *See also*
 Dion, Mark
 neuro-advertising, 98
 neuroaesthetic developments, 194
 neuroaesthetic question, 177, 229
 neurocapitalism, 14, 16. *See also* cogni-
 tive capitalism; designer capitalism
 neuro-engineering, 286
 neurological studies, 221, 229
 neuroplasticity, 14, 295
 new Earth, 216, 288
 New Korean Cinema, 83
 New Korean Wave stars, 95
 new media (or technological arts), 95,
 166
 New media generation. *See* Korean
 cohorts
 New media technologies (ICTs),
 186
 Nietzschean *ressentiment*, 85
 Nietzsche, F., 41, 50, 122, 126, 176,
 211, 213, 220
 Nihilism, 135, 179, 213. *See also*
 Brassier, Ray
 nomadic becoming, 53
 nomadic youth, 252
 Nomadism, 27
 Nomadology, 165
 Nonhuman, 1, 2, 8, 11, 13, 18, 52,
 53, 128, 150, 151, 173–175,
 178, 180, 190, 211, 220, 273,
 275, 281, 283–285, 288, 289,
 294, 295, 302, 303, 305, 307.
 See also inhuman
 nonhuman agencies (animals, plants,
 inorganic minerals), 283
 Nonhuman foreignness, 211
 nonhuman (inorganic or ‘free’ life),
 298
 nonhuman (organic) forces, 273
 nonhuman other, 8
non-kukmin, 76
 NonLife, 19, 20
 non-living materials (biopolymer scaf-
 folding), 280
 nonsensical signifier, 277
 North Korea, 36, 82, 83, 120, 121
- O**
The Obelisk (artwork by Fabio Lattanzi
 Antinori), 299
 Objectile, 51, 245. *See also* superject
 Object Orientated Ontology (OOO),
 16, 179
objet a, 29, 51, 53, 84, 86. *See also*
 Lacan, Jacques
 OECD countries, 72, 258
 Oedipalization, 126
Oegyeeo (Alien Words), 97
Old Boy (film), 77, 85, 86
 Open Whole. *See* Kim Ki-duk
 Oracle. *See* data company
 orchid|wasp (symbiotic exchange), 149
 Order|disorder, 240
 orgamies (folds and refolds), 234
 organic, 18, 206, 210, 275, 281, 282,
 294, 301, 302
 originary continuum. *See* chaos
 originary state of infant, 232
 Orlan (artist), 53, 54
 O’Sullivan, Simon, 27, 40, 54, 214,
 216, 231
 Otaku, 95
 Other. *See* Lacan, Jacques
 Outside, 51, 53
 outside|inside mediation, 128
 overcode, 171. *See also* designer
 capitalism

P

- Paik, Peter Yoonsuk, **70**. *See also*
Korean cinema
Pairan (Korean movie), **101**
Palace (MBC Miniseries), **103, 106**
Pan-Asian Visual and Popular Culture,
67
pan-East Asian consciousness, **66**
Parables of the Virtual. *See* Massumi,
Brian
parallax view, **218**
Parasite (Korean movie). *See* Bong
Joon-ho
Parikka, Jussi, **18, 52, 304**. *See also*
Anthroscene
Parisi, Luciana, **18, 297**
Park Chan-wook (Korean director),
77, 85, 86
Park Chung-hee (military rule), **72,**
152
Park Geun-hye, **6, 69, 82**
Parkinson's disease, **298**
Passions (art work), **177**
The Path (artwork by Bill Viola), **179**
PC bangs (PC rooms), **100**
PCB's (Polychlorinated Biphenyls),
306
Pedesis, **239**
Peirce, Charles Sanders, **232**
Peppermint Candy (film), **77, 80,**
83–85, 121
Percepts, **216, 294, 295**. *See also*
affects
performativity, **71, 98**
Peru's Branding, **38**
Pfaller, Robert, **216**. *See also*
interpassivity
Phallus. *See* Lacan, Jacques
Pharmaceutical scientists, **195**
pharmaco-pornographic era, **17**
philosophy of *becoming*. *See* Becoming
photoshop, **237**
phrenological research, **300**
Piccinini, Patricia, **282**
Pigeon d'Or (artwork of Tuur van
Baken), **286**
Piper, Keith (video artist), **211, 212**
Pisters, Patricia, **216, 237**
Pixar industries, **230**
Platform capitalism, **4, 7–9, 98, 101,**
108
PLURALISM=MONISM. *See*
Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Felix
pollutant sensors, **280, 284**
Popular culture, **20, 63, 65–70, 75,**
84, 93–96, 99, 105, 109, 110,
112–114, 119, 204, 205
possessive individual, **190, 208**
possible world, **53**
postbiological condition, **288**
post-colonialism, **38, 204**
post-Confucianism/Feminism, **72**
post-Confucianist development, **72**
postemotionality, **245**
Poster, Mark, **207**
Postfeminism, **74, 102**
posthuman, **20, 210, 216, 279, 285,**
287, 295, 303
posthumanism, **295**
posthumanist developments, **303**
Posthumanities. *See* Braidotti, Rossi
post-identitarian politics, **208**
post-ideological, **219**
postindustrialized countries, **96**
post-Marxism, **204**
post-medial condition, **274**
post-racism, **34, 204**. *See also*
neo-racism
post-semiological, **219**
post-structuralism, **70, 204**
pouvoir, **219**. *See also* *puissance*
Povinelli, Elizabeth. *See* geontology,
geontopower
powers of the false. *See* Deleuze, Gilles

pre-individual affect, 176
 presymbolic and the postsymbolic realms. *See* Lacan, Jacques
 presymbolic Real. *See* Lacan, Jacques
 private after-school education, 71, 171
 proprioceptivity, 176
 prosumers, 39, 57, 113, 166
 Protevi, John, 215
 Protocells, 305
 psychic minorization. *See* schizo
 psychic Real. *See* presymbolic Real and postsymbolic Real
 psychocultural differences. *See* difference
 PSY (pop idol), 65, 251, 252. *See also* Gangnam Style
puissance, 136, 144, 219. *See also* *pouvoir*
 pure difference, 212, 218

Q

qi, 74
The Quintet of the Astonished (artwork by Bill Viola), 177

R

radicant, 169
The Raft (artwork by Bill Viola), 179
 Rancière, Jacques, 180, 213, 230. *See also* *dessensus*
 R&D opportunities, 168
 ready-mades, 45, 96, 279, 280
 Real (capitalized). *See* Lacan, Jacques
 Real-variety Shows, 109, 110
 Recombinant DNA, 275
 Red Stack, 8. *See also* Terranova, Tiziana
 relational aesthetics, 168. *See also* Altermodernity; Bourriaud, Nicholas

Relationality, 16, 168, 178, 234
The Remasculinization of Korean Cinema (book), 77, 120
 remediation, 238
 Repetition with a Difference. *See* Deleuze, Gilles
 Replicants (*Blade Runner*), 282
 Representation, 32, 34, 36–38, 41, 42, 44, 46, 49, 51, 57, 78, 106, 132, 171, 175, 198, 204, 205, 208, 209, 212–214, 217, 219, 222, 241, 243
 Representational thought, 33, 37, 38, 40, 42, 50, 205
 Resistance, 39, 65, 71, 94, 103, 109, 196, 198, 210
 resurrection ecology, 282
 reterritorialization, 5, 124, 170
 Revive & Restore, 282. *See also* *de-extinction*; resurrection ecology
 Rhetoric of persuasion, 216
 Ritchie, Matthew, 42, 59
 Roh Moo-hyun (Government), 69, 81
 romantic anticapitalism, 94

S

sameness, 217. *See also* difference
 Samsung Empire, 69
 Samsung Fashion and Design Funds (SFDF), 166
The Sand Castle (Korean television), 104
Saturn Eating One of his Children (artwork by Goya), 267
 Savoir-faire, 299
 scale, 12, 44, 52, 54–56, 150, 166, 186, 192, 242
 scan aesthetic, 99
 schizo. *See* minoritarian
 schizoanalysis, 111, 126, 217
 schizo-flows (of difference), 136

- schizo-fluxes, 218
 schizo-level, 130
 schizophrenia, 6, 113, 121, 189
 schizo-power, 136
 Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics (STEAM), 279, 294
 Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), 279, 294
 scopic cellular eye, 244
 scopic point-of-view (POV), 244
 screen cultures, 10, 172, 175, 204, 227, 231, 236, 243
 Sculpturines. *See* Azevedo, Néle
 The Second World Conference on Arts Education, 183
seggyehwa (globalization policy). *See* Korean economy
 self-affection, 238
 self-reflexion, 78, 174, 176, 214. *See also* self-reflexion
 self-reflexion, 176, 214
 Seoul, 54, 64, 65, 67–69, 71, 73, 82, 105–107, 120, 131, 141, 144, 149, 152, 170, 183, 251, 257, 262–264
 Seoul Olympic games, 1988, 259
 Serres, Michel, 229, 294
 Shaviro, Steven, 228, 243
 she-bear (Korean mythology), 75
Shiri, 66, 81, 84, 121
 Silent Cohort. *See* Korean cohorts
 Simondon, Gilbert, 18, 178, 210, 288, 294
 Simulacrum, 42, 45–50, 209, 210, 228. *See also* Baudrillard, Jean; Deleuze, Gilles
sinthome, 126, 132, 135, 144, 151, 231
 site/sight/cite, 244
 Sixth (6th) extinction of our species, 304
Snowpiercer (Korean film), 5, 107, 262, 263, 267. *See also* Bong Joon-ho
 Social Theory Caucus in Art Education, 204, 205
Societas Raffaello Sanzio theater company, 278. *See also* Castellucci, Romeo
Something Pacific (artwork by Nam June Paik), 260
 space|time, 144, 145, 172, 228
 species revivalism, 282
 Spectator-participants, 277, 278, 280, 281
 Spinoza, B., 41, 51, 174, 213
Spiral Workshop. *See* Gude, Olivia
 Srnicek, Nick, 5, 7
The Stack, 7
 Star Trek, 13
Star Trek: Picard, 17, 297, 298
Star Trek: Voyager, 298
 Sterling, Bruce, 306
 Stern, Daniel, 232, 241
 Stiegler, Bernard, 2, 294, 298, 299
 Stonehenge, 260
 subfolds, 233
 subjectlessness, 74
 subject-object, 37. *See also* Correlationalism; Meillassoux, Quentin
 subsumption, 8
 subtractive process, 233
 superject, 51. *See also* Objectile
 supplementary dimension, 51
 supra-human speed, 297
 surveillance capitalism, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16
 sustainability, 193, 266, 304
The Swan (television), 74
 SymbioticA (biolab), 279. *See also* University of Western Australia in Perth

- sympathy, 83, 207, 234, 235, 262, 278
 symptomologist, 252, 267
 synaesthesia, 29, 230, 232, 234, 235, 238, 273, 294
 synaesthetic perception, 229
 synoptic society. *See* designer capitalism
 synthetic art gene, 276
 synthetic biology, 284, 286, 288
 Syria and Yemen (war-torn countries), 304
- T**
- tactile conscious sensations, 230
Tadpole Bureaucratic Protocol. *See* Jeremijenko, Natalie (artist)
 tadpole walker. *See* Jeremijenko, Natalie (artist)
 Taich Ohno (Toyotism), 6
 Tai-Ji and the Boys (boy idol group), 107, 108
 taking a line for a walk (Paul Klee saying), 197
 Tao, 28–33, 38, 44–47, 50, 52–55, 75, 129, 130, 135, 139, 140, 156, 257, 260
 Taoism, 28, 32, 45, 59
 Taoist zero, 30
 Tao of Zen, 38. *See also* Tao
 Tarantino, Quentin, 85
 Tatlin's Monument to the Third International, 260
 Technesis, 219
Techno Buddha (artwork by Nam June Paik), 260
 technocratic tendencies, 3
 technogenesis, 273, 274, 294
 technological instrumentalized imaginary, 304
 technologies of *Lassen*, 303
 technologies of *Macht*, 299
 technologization of the animated, 288
tech-sci-art, 184
 telematicity, 301
 telepresence, 277, 278, 283
 television drama series (*Friends*, *Winter Sonata*), 66
 Terminators, 6, 297
 Terranova, Tiziana, 8. *See also* Red Stack
 territorialization, 5
 Thacker, Eugene, 287, 288. *See also* biophilosophy
 Theory of the Image, 240
 there of nothing outside the text (Derrida), 294
 Thinking of the End of Times, 285, 286
 third capitalism, 1
 third industrial revolution, 2
This is not a Pipe. *See* Magritte, René
Three Iron (film by Kim Ki-duk), 144
Time [Shi gan] (film by Kim Ki-duk), 75, 154
 Tiravanija, Rirkrit, 168, 238
 Tissue Culture and Art Project (TC&A), 280, 281, 286
 tissue sculptures, 280
 topological forms, 234
 topological transformation, 234
 topology, 234
 Toscani, Oliviero, 35, 189. *See also* Benetton
 transcendental Cosmic plane, 54
 transcendental empiricism, 209, 230
 transcendental illusion, 37, 41
 transcultural hybridity, 67, 109
 transductive unity, 178
 transgenic bacteria, 275
 transgenic bacterial communication, 277
 transhistorical fantasy, 85
 transhuman, 289, 295

transhumanism, **18, 287**
 transhybridity, **107**
 transindividual subjectivity, **178**
 transindividuation, **177**
 Tree series, **54, 56**. *See also* Myoung Ho Lee (artist)
TREExOFFICE. *See* Jeremijenko, Natalie, **284**
 trickle-down economics (Reagan), **2**
Triebe (pulsions de mort) (drives), **134, 188, 220**
 Trump, Donald, **2, 3, 10, 12, 15, 28, 82, 102, 167, 171, 187, 194, 203, 219, 296, 304**
 Tunick, Spencer, **57, 58**
TV Buddha (artwork by Nam June Paik)tv lawyers, **260**
tvNGELs (Korean television), **102, 105**
 Twenty-first (21st) century competency, **305**
Twice (K-pop girl's band), **108**
 Twitter (#MeToo movement), **3, 167, 187**

U
uljjan (best face), **98**
 Ulmer, Gregory, **6, 166, 184, 229, 236**
 ultraviolet light, **274, 275, 277**
 unconscious neurological levels, **232**
Unhate Campaign. *See* Benetton
 Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth, **285**
 University of Western Australia in Perth, **279**. *See also* SymbioticA (biolab)
 Urban design, **236**
 UV+CC (User Created Contents), **98**

V

Valdes, Manolo, **169, 240**
 Valera, Francisco, **215**
 van Balen, Tuur (artist), **286**
 Venice, **2, 123, 170, 305**. *See also* Armstrong, Rachel
 Vertov, Dziga, **172, 236**
 vibratory virtual body, **234**
 Victimless Steak. *See* Tissue Culture and Art Project (TC&A)
 Video, **56, 65, 75, 108, 109, 142, 151, 171, 172, 176–178, 180, 190, 236, 242–244, 259, 260, 274**
 video affect, **242**
 video games, **96, 97, 101, 123, 186, 279, 302**
 Villegle, Jacques, **240**
 Viola, Bill, **177–179**
 Viridian Design Movement, **306**
 Virno, Paolo, **193**
 Virtual, **11, 29, 33, 42, 44–47, 51, 53, 54, 57, 86, 96, 100, 124, 125, 130–134, 139, 144–147, 150, 152, 157, 169, 170, 176, 210, 232–234, 237, 241, 260, 277, 296, 301, 302**. *See also* Actual
 Virtual cyspace, **99**
Virtual Hallyu, **78**
 virtuality, **45, 47, 78, 294, 299**
 virtual time, **233**
 The Visible Human Project (VHP), **300–303**
 visual cultural education (VCE), **204**
 Visual Cultural Studies (VCS), **33, 64, 203–205, 214, 216, 220, 221**
 Visual culture, **51, 64, 66, 68, 72, 73, 79, 95, 112, 176, 189, 190, 203–205, 214, 217, 219**
 visual digitalized technologies, **300**
 visual technologies of datafication (fMRI CAT), **300**

Vita Berg Park (Big Data, Stockholm),
296

vital force of *Gi*, 74

vitalist bioartists, 279

W

WALL-E (sci-fi film), 286

Wang-ta effect (video bullying), 101

Warwick, Kevin (cyborgian experiments), 191

Watson, David & Crick, Francis
(DNA, double-helix structure),
275

we have never been modern (saying). *See*
Latour, Bruno

Weibel, Peter (director, artist), 184,
273, 274, 295

Wei-Wei (Chinese artist), 251, 252

West-East Meet, 27

Westworld (television show), 282

wet biology, 277

What is Philosophy? (Deleuze and
Guattari), 32, 294

Whitney Buddha (artwork by Nam
June Paik), 260

W(h)ither pain, 246

w(hol(e)ly space, 144

Wiederholung, 154. *See also* *Wiederkehr*
Wiederkehr, 154. *See also* *Wiederholung*

Wild Animals [Yasaeng Dongmul
Bohoguyeong] (film by Kim
Ki-duk), 134, 150

wild goose families (*kirogi kajok*), 72.
See also Korean educational system

World Banks, 10, 251

wor(l)d picture, 207

World of WarCraft, Dota, League of
Legends, Counter-Strike, 101

World War II, 94, 141, 272

X

Xenomoney, 86, 97

Xpression, 135, 150, 174

Y

Yoshida, Kenji, 135

Z

Zen. *See* Tao

the Zen gaze, 259, 260, 263. *See also*
Nam June Paik

Zentrum für Kunst und
Medianttechnologie (ZKM), 184

Zen TV (artwork by Nam June Paik),
259

Ziarek, Krzysztof. *See* forcework

Zimmerman, Enid, 185, 187, 188,
194, 197

Zittel, Andrea, 242

Žižek, Slavoj, 13, 85, 128, 132, 134,
217, 218, 220, 237

Zoë, 33, 45, 173, 175, 179, 198, 242,
298, 299, 301, 303, 307. *See also*
A Life; bios

Zoë and bios (symbiotic relationship),
299, 306

zombie zoology. *See* *de-extinction*;
Revive & Restore; resurrection
ecology

Zuboff, Shoshana, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16,
17, 98

Zurr, Ionat & Catts, Oron. *See* Tissue
Culture and Art Project (TC&A),
SymbioticA(biolab)