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Between the Times: Trans-Temporality, and Historical Representation

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in Gender Studies

by

Jacob Roberts Lau

2016

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Between the Times: Trans-Temporality, and Historical Representation

by

Jacob Roberts Lau

Doctor of Philosophy in Gender Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor Kyungwon Hong, Chair

While the field of transgender studies has recently emerged at the boundaries of feminist and queer theory, only recently have scholars begun to theorize “trans” as an intersectional category that is always formed through constructions of race, gender, class, sexuality, nationality, and imperialism. This project contributes to this conversation by arguing for reading trans history, memoir and literary representation as a different experience of gendered and racialized time. In order to survive a cis (non-trans) normative world, trans bodies, narratives, and lives are narrated as a linear transition from one gender and/or sex to another in ways that preserve gender binaries and developmental notions of progress. Coining the term “trans-temporality” as both an experiential affect and a method of reading trans narratives against normative notions of sex, gender, race, class, sexuality and nationality, my project primarily thinks transgender through postcolonial, queer, and historical materialist theorizations of time and historicism that push against and suggest alternatives to purely linear temporalities, situating trans within traditions of temporal critique, and affective histories of non-normative embodiment.

The dissertation of Jacob Roberts Lau is approved.

Sarah Haley

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2012

DEDICATION

To Blanche Ching Lau, who gave me the space to be, and to imagine otherwise. Without your acceptance there would be no trans-temporality.

And also, to Hermione, my feline companion who is really glad I'll no longer be muttering to her and myself about trans-temporality.

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As my mentor since I stepped foot on the UCLA campus, Grace Hong has unfailingly molded me into the scholar I am today. Whether it was to teach me the importance of being on time, lending me briefcases for job interviews, helping me find my voice in the classroom or lending me *Battlestar Galactica* dvds for post-surgical recovery, Grace did it all. I cannot begin express my gratitude to be her advisee.

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Introduction:
Why Trans-Temporality?

Introduction and Overview of Topic

Although Transgender Studies is often thought through feminist and queer theories and histories of embodiment, materiality, spatiality, sexuality, history, and cultural representation this project asks what can be gained by situating the temporalities at work in trans narratives and representation through questions of time as well as racial, sexual, and gender economy through the use of post-colonial theory, women of color feminism, critical trans theory, and queer of color critique.¹ While this dissertation is concerned with theories of materiality and cultural representation, it is more concerned with asking how state enacted forms of time regulate and discipline the experience of embodiment, allowing some bodies more time to be visible, celebrated, and claimed by the nation, (as exceptional figures, as well as projects and products of empire, and transnational circulation), while others survive through informal economies, are locked away in prisons, and are decried as sexually aberrant, out-of-sync with the progress of the nation state. Of course, depending on who is narrating a story and how that narration is mediated trans narratives, bodies, and lives can come in and out of view multiple times, because various populations desire to claim parts of their identities for various ends, and these are the trans narratives this dissertation is structured around.

I describe the necropolitical pull of normative temporality regulating trans narratives, bodies and lives, as cis normative time, or in its shortened form cis time,

¹ See Jay Prosser, *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), and Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, *The Transgender Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

which can both be felt affectively through phenomenological pressures on the trans body and remains the master code through which trans folks must translate their racialized, gendered, and sexed histories.² Cis time presumes a kind of linear coherence to and with white supremacist capitalist heteropatriarchy's super-structures in order for the trans (and particularly the trans of color) subject to be understood as a coherent, not-impossible subject. Institutions and practices recording state acknowledged subjectivity such as social security, the military, immigration, higher education, records of genealogical descent, such as peerages, and birth and death certificates function as temporal checkpoints of a cisnormative life. When there are discrepancies between the times of cis normativity and an alternative temporal mode of existence, what I am coining "trans-temporality," one must read between the times and competing desires of and for acknowledgement and survival. Trans-temporality's intellectual genealogy stems primarily from subaltern studies of historicity, as well as postcolonial and queer theories of time. Both a reading methodology and an experiential phenomenological affect, trans-temporality is the B-side of cis time, it is often left on the cutting-room floor of national visibility, or edited to the point of self-contradictory sanitation, but its missing traces are still felt within trans narratives.

Terminology

² In *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity* (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2007), by biologist and trans activist Julia Serano uses the term "cissexual" "people who are not transsexual and who have only ever experienced their subconscious and physical sexes as being aligned" from the Latin prefix "cis-" (12) In other words cisgender is non-transgender, and in my theorization, presumes a linear trajectory of lifelong gender identification, and sex embodiment stemming from one's declared birth sex. For example, being declared female at birth, subsequent gendering as a girl, growing into and identifying as a woman (whatever that can mean) and keeping that identity with all of its nuances until death.

In this dissertation I use the terms trans-temporality and its correlate cisnormative time to designate the twin modes of gendered, racialized, classed and national affective existence within both national and transnational imaginaries. These bifurcated temporal and existential modes provide two different methods of reading trans bodies, lives, and narratives. Trans-temporality understands trans embodiment, narratives, and livability as possible branching alternative temporalities to state bio- and necropolitical practices. Trans-temporality reads for the informal economies of survival and alternative lifeworlds beyond the eyes and values of the neoliberal state, for those racialized, sexualized, and gendered object subjects that have historically been denied state recognition and continue to have dis-ease with state practices controlling citizenship. Reading and residing not against cisnormative time, but within and beside it, Trans-temporality feels out the nonlinear history of state subjection that cannot be linearly narrated or visualized by the state.

In contrast, cisnormative time (hereafter also shortened to cis time) centers on reading for coherence, linearity, and progress. Like heteronormativity, cisnormativity presumes a desire for the transgender subject to assimilate into current national narratives of post-race, homophobia and transphobia through transgender civil rights, and investment in punitive hate crime laws. Imbued with neoliberalism's political and economic ideology of individual uplift and American exceptionalism, cisnormative time's central organizing force is incorporation of respectable diverse subjectivities for capitalism's march of accumulation. This dissertation will look at both figures who either refuse the pull of cis normative time, or demonstrate its melancholic after effects while being pulled in its wake.

Queer of Color and Postcolonial Theories of Spatiality, Affect, and Temporal Critique

Rather than focusing the ways in which space is differentially occupied, shared, lost and reclaimed based on race, class, gender, sexuality as scholars such as Karen Tongson, Samuel Delany, Vivanne Namaste, Jose Esteban Munoz and Sara Ahmed have done, I am wondering how cis normative temporalities at work in institutions such as U.S. state-regulated prisons, education, immigration, health care, the policing of informal economies such as sex work, as well as legacies of British colonialism and U.S. imperialism regulate the life chances³ of trans lives, bodies, and narratives. Tongson and Delany map out the shifting terrain of non-normative racialized, sexualized, classed and gendered spaces of suburban Los Angeles and the now defunct Times Square porn theaters, due to gentrification and “urban renewal.”⁴ In Namaste’s chapter on “Genderbashing” she explores the how sexual and gendered geography of (un)safety for trans women sex workers in the red light district in Montreal interfaces with anti-violence legislation predicated on theories of “queerbashing” that separates perceived gender non-conformity from acts of violence based on a survivor’s sexuality.⁵

Different from the geographical spatial politics of Tongson, Delany, and Namaste, Jose Esteban Munoz and Sara Ahmed draw on affect, phenomenology and temporal studies of futurity to look at queer performance spaces and mixed race affect. Late Performance Studies scholar Jose Esteban Munoz looks at how punk/queer poc

³ As well as precarity, death, and vulnerability.

⁴ Karen Tongson, *Relocations: Queer Suburban Imaginaries* (New York: NYU Press, 2011) and Samuel Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* (New York: NYU Press, 1999).

⁵ Vivianne K. Namaste, “Genderbashing” *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

performance spaces' past and present enable the enactment of utopian performativity in Los Angeles in *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, while affect and phenomenology scholar Sara Ahmed traces differing lines of bodily orientation in racialized, gendered, and sexualized spaces from racially mixed and sexually queer genealogies in *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*.⁶ While urban spaces do figure predominantly in this dissertation (namely New York and Manila), like Munoz and Ahmed I focus more on the residual temporal affects and cultural representation of such spaces and less on the politics of urban geography.

My theory of trans-temporality also builds off of the notion of looking at population level controls of life chances through the unequal distribution of punishment in systems of power, something central to Dean Spade's recent work on developing a "critical trans politics." Spade elaborates on a critical trans politics as "a trans politics that demands more than legal recognition and inclusion, seeking instead to transform current logics of the state, civil society security, and social equality...engaging in constant reflection and self-evaluation...it is about practice and process rather than a point of arrival, resisting hierarchies of truth and reality and instead naming and refusing state violence."⁷ His critical trans politics draws from longstanding critiques of political economy focused on practice and processes of state violence found in Women of Color feminism. In this dissertation, I investigate the notion of trans-temporality as an experiential affect to address how past histories of British colonialism and U.S. imperialism continue to effect contemporary subjects enmeshed in formations of U.S.

⁶ Jose Esteban Munoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: NYU Press, 2009). Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

⁷ Dean Spade, *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law* (Brooklyn: South End Press, 2011), 19-20.

state-regulated racialized, classed, and gendered economy. I do so in order to theorize “trans” as a category that is always formed through processes of race, gender, class, nationality, imperialism and under the specter of colonialism.

Drawing on Foucauldian notions of discursive power and technologies of discipline by tracing genealogies of ideology and identity, I am extending a critique of historicism begun by Dipesh Chakrabarty and the subaltern studies group and applying it to notions of poetry from the future and queer time put forth by Kara Keeling. Keeling expands upon Karl Marx’s term “poetry from the future” by applying a theory of affect as everyday common sense that exceeds present conditions. Keeling argues that Fanon’s usage of Marx’s term in *The Wretched of the Earth* unpacks the difference in common-sense time during black anti-colonial struggle between the colonized and colonizer. Temporal by nature, poetry from the future takes on poetry’s sense of breakage from normative linear narrative by creative, fragmented force and exposes the what-could-be as well as the what-is-not-yet. As such poetry from the future’s “impossible possibility” is both “subjective” and “collective” and calls into question the ways in which normative institutions (the school, military, prison industrial complex, documentary) temporally constrain black queer masculine subjects; yet those subjects are never completely documented spacio-temporally by those constraints.⁸

This rethinks the conversation about queer time as articulated by J Jack Halberstam in *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* which argues that queer time is marked against the straight time of heteronormativity (namely “the institutions of family, heterosexuality, and reproduction”) it encompasses “specific

⁸ Kara Keeling, “Looking for M-: Queer Temporality, Black Political Possibility and Poetry from the Future,” *GLQ* 15.4 (2009): 566.

models of temporality that emerge within postmodernism once one leaves the temporal frames of bourgeois reproduction and the family, longevity, risk/safety, and inheritance.”⁹ While Halberstam is interested in thinking how transgender subjectivity is first recognized communally without the aid of state practices and processes, Halberstam is also primarily interested in thinking transgender through processes heteronormativity and less cisnormativity and state practices of citizenship.

For marked trans-bodies the question to ask is not how or where they were/are located and somatically existed, but in the words of Kara Keeling to ask when they were/are. In “Looking for M-:” an essay on the film ‘The Aggressives,’ Keeling situates visibility itself as implicated in the surveillance tactics of U.S. state violence, in particular the military, the education system and the prison-industrial complex, against working-class and poor black masculine queer subjects.¹⁰ Rather than looking for and at trans subjects (and objects) in the plane of the visual, reading between the lines or rather between the times of nationality, race, sex, gender, and class economies might open up transgender studies to a more complex analysis of race, class and nationality’s essential imbrications within any gender history.

My dissertation explores a variety of theories of temporality including: Walter Benjamin’s notion of the past as “flashing up in a moment of danger,” the above mentioned Keeling’s theorization of “poetry from the future,” Sara Ahmed’s discussion of disorientation qua Franz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*, Heather Love’s “backwards reading,” Bliss Cua Lim’s Bergsonian theorization of “immiscible temporality,” and Dipesh Chakrabarty’s problematizing of translating history 2 into the

⁹ Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: NYU Press, 2005); 1, 6.

¹⁰ Keeling, 575.

homogenous, disenchanting, linear time of history 1.¹¹ These different theorizations of temporality help me elaborate the ways in which I think of trans-temporality as both a methodology (reading practice) and an experiential affect that mediates moments of rupture from trans bodies being both in and out of cis-time. Trans-temporal moments are often affective events of somatic dislocation and point to hopeful moments in which current and past displacements could be rewritten.

Why Post-Colonial Theories of Time and Historicism? Locating Trans Bodies in Historical Stream of Abject Embodiment Politics

In this dissertation, I use the term “trans bodies” to reference not only what we might think of today as “transgender” but also a longer history of bodies rendered temporally dissonant with hegemonic narratives and histories of normative embodiment, such as the white European prostitute and “Hottentot” women.¹² This political act of historical solidarity is not to flatten the sex, gender, racial, temporal, and geographical differences between cis and trans of color bodies but rather to think about discursive and material similarities between narratives, bodies, and lives rendered abject to the state, and to make clear the stakes of thinking trans through histories of scientific racialization.

Trans bodies come into view through their evocation of the temporally backward, the

¹¹ See Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” in *Illuminations* ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, Schocken Books: 1968): 253-264. Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke UP, 2006), 156-79. Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009). Bliss Cua Lim, *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique*, (Durham, Duke University Press: 2009). Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press: 2000).

¹² Sander Gilman’s discussion of eighteenth century human taxonomy in *Difference and Pathology* unpacks the discursive similarities (and assumed anatomic genital similarities) between white female prostitutes and black Hottentot women based on their characterizations as being “sexually primitive.” Sander Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 83-91.

sexual deviant, the psychologically pathological gender dysphoric, and the anxiously disclaimed mixed race body against imperial romances of teleological salvation through modern progress epistemically rooted in enlightenment discourse. Against a unidirectional history of the ideological drive of western taxonomy to “know” and “educate” the native, the genealogy I outline moves towards scholars who theorized modes and methods of power multidirectionally within post-colonial studies. I find their way of historicizing colonialism and imperialism particularly apt for thinking about bodies whose lives have moved across and been read outside of national, geographical, historical, racial, sex, gender, sexual and class borders.

The first intellectual genealogy that this project brings together is post-colonial theories of temporality, history and embodiment as historicized through colonial medicalization. I trace a genealogy of colonialism and imperialism’s disciplinary, discursive, epistemological and ideological regime on trans bodies. For example, while Sander Gilman’s work on Saartje Baartman was not directly in conversation with either Michel Foucault’s appraisal of the human sciences or Dipesh Chakrabarty’s thesis on the twin histories of capital operating in and against European historicism, all circle a common criticism of an imperialist enlightenment telos rendered ideological through an unspoken normative time working against indigenous subaltern bodies and lives.

Aside from briefly engaging Michel Foucault’s genealogies of knowledge in this introduction, most of the post-colonial scholars I deploy to theorize trans bodies, and informing the methodology of trans-temporality are primarily critiquing historicism and time in Anthropology and the history of colonialism. Particularly, the ideologies, epistemologies and discourses foundational to colonialism and imperialism have been

generated around the quandary of classifying, stabilizing and periodizing trans bodies through medicalization and the western telos of linear progress.

In addition to being sites of colonial taxonomic anxiety, trans bodies also discursively and ideologically function as contested sites of transference of indigenous knowledge. I understand these sites of transference to operate like temporal thresholds in which progress narratives are shown to be dependent on those temporally abject, and upon reflection often lead to trans-temporal moments in films, histories, memoirs, and other literary forms of cultural representation. This is seen most clearly in David Arnold's work on the incorporation of colonial medicine in India, and Gyan Prakash's historical study of Indian indigenous elites re-narrativization of Indian scientific modernity. The subaltern studies group contests Eurocentric histories of colonialism in India in which Indians were homogeneously indoctrinated into British notions about modern medicine, public health, science, labor and religion through medical clinics, laws, schools and the British East India Company.

Asking questions about the differential experiences of time beyond abstract labor¹³, my conception of trans bodies' temporal dissonance is especially influenced by Dipesh Chakrabarty's reframing of historicity in *Provincializing Europe* (2000). Chakrabarty characterizes the ideological, discursive and epistemological effects of colonialism and imperialism as Eurocentric postcolonial historicism's channeling force of subaltern temporalities into a disenchanting world and homogenous, linear time.

Disciplining bodies through the channels of political modernity through liberalism's

¹³ Chakrabarty is expanding on Marx's critique of capital and applying it to postcolonial histories that homogenize and singularize temporality. While both histories originate from Marxist ideology, history 1 is the hegemonic economic discourse of capital. With difference at the center of history 2's temporalities, unification for an endpoint to the development of whatever is being historicized is left behind for the life beyond abstract labor and with it mystery and complication. (Chakrabarty, 23)

discourse, Chakrabarty's history 1 creates the modern citizen-subject and throws the ethnic-racialized peasant into the anachronistic past (Chakrabarty, 34). But history 2, understood as subaltern histories crafted in the vein of "hermeneutic tradition," disrupts, fragments, and show the limits of history 1 producing, "a loving grasp of detail in search of a loving understanding of the diversity of human life-worlds" (18). While bound together and working through each other history 1 and/or history 2 surface with unequal treatment by the scholars in my genealogy of colonial discourses, ideologies and epistemologies about trans bodies.

Trans bodies take up the space of difference in colonial discourses, ideologies and epistemologies and as such have to be temporally translated back into history 1. Framing the temporal dissonances between discourses, ideologies, and epistemologies produced about trans bodies through Chakrabarty's characterization of the ideological workings of postcolonial historicism and European history, I now jump backward in time to a (European) continental philosopher post-colonial theorists would expand upon and criticize for his lack of attentiveness to colonialism and racial economy.

Returning to my outlier theorist and his obsession with the 18th and 19th centuries, before revoking his allegiance to structuralism and Marxism, Michel Foucault wrote the taxonomic *Order of Things* (1966) a rather dry and lengthy tome dedicated to providing an archeology of the natural sciences' ascent to the human sciences, specifically historicity and ethnology.¹⁴ Foucault's thesis centered on the discursive asynchrony of historicizing humanity, yet the text performs its own linear telos towards psychology

¹⁴ Foucault defines ethnology as "the studies of societies without a history" which are therefore dependent on the central Western ratio to exist (381). Here is the idea that in order to be legible to the west, non-western societies need to be brought into rational humanism's temporality; being able to replicate a linear narrative of existence through scientific periodization.

based ethnology.¹⁵ There remains an unresolved tension between Foucault's anti-humanist excavation of the "dehistoricization of man at the beginning of the 19th century" with the philosopher asking "can [man's] history ever be anything but the inextricable nexus of different times, which are foreign to him and heterogeneous in respect of one another?" and his simplistic rendering of the ethnic other as final object of knowledge for the human sciences.¹⁶ By showcasing the multiple temporalities at work within what he names the counterscientific discourses of linguistics, psychology and ethnology, Foucault concludes "man is not himself historical."¹⁷ Time comes to man by superimposition, "he is subjected to these pure events those histories [counterscientific discourses] contain."¹⁸ But while time is artificially superimposed onto the discursively subjected man he can only come into view through his will to know what I understand as the trans body.

For Foucault the concept of mastery through historicization is illusive due to the competing counterscientific discourses used to document any society's history and yet *The Order of Things* is riddled with a desire to provide a structured account of the evolution of thought leading to colonial studies of cultural and racial difference. Thus, I begin with this highly structured moment from one of the least traditionally historical theorists of knowledge to illustrate the way in which even while being profoundly anti-humanist and seemingly rejecting an enlightenment telos, Foucault is still entrenched in a colonial ideology of dependence on disappearing the Other into history by ending his

¹⁵ Specifically Freud's racialized theorization of the savage alpha males killing the father as original sin and the foundation of civilized kinship formations in *Totem and Taboo*. (381) Evoking the savage as pre-modern other to Western (modern) man, Fabian argues that ethnographic discourse continues in this line of Freudian thought, but applies the Other to any population studied by the anthropologist out in the field. Foucault only questions Freud's certainty in interpreting a singular meaning from incest taboo, and while bothered at any idea of mastering the psyche does not discuss Freud's problematic racialized imagery further.

¹⁶ Foucault, 369-70.

¹⁷ Foucault, 370.

¹⁸ Foucault, 370.

discussion with the rise of ethnology but declining to discuss its connection with colonialism. Foucault's progressively dehistoricized European man standing at the nexus of differential times is dependent upon the invisible racialized native frozen in the past who only appears as an object of knowledge.

Theorizations of Abjection through Critical Race Theory and Queer of Color Critique

Because my primary question is how trans bodies, lives and narratives are disciplined and regulated temporally through progress-orientated historicism the intellectual genealogy informing this project is also made up of: women of color feminism, Asian American critique, queer of color critique and recent transgender theory concerned with temporality, processes of state regulation and an intersectional understanding of cultural representation. As mentioned earlier in this introduction, central to my project is the work of Dipesh Chakrabarty and Kara Keeling. Just as important is the work of Roderick Ferguson, Grace Hong, David Eng, Audre Lorde, Dylan Rodriguez, Eric Stanley, Judith Butler, Karen Shimakawa and Avery Gordon, on racial economy, communal survival, affect, abolition, haunting and queer and national abjection.

Putting forth the analytic of trans-temporality to continue theorizing times other than that of history 1, I see my project coming out of queer of color critique through similar methodologies of analyzing nonheteronormative racial and sexual economy in cultural production. A mode of analysis, Roderick A. Ferguson's queer of color critique "[studies] racial formations that will not oblige heteropatriarchy, [analyzes] sexuality not severed from race and material relations" and "[interrogates] African American culture [keeping]

company with other racial formations.”¹⁹ Ferguson’s concept of queer of color critique is also indebted to Performance Studies scholar Jose Esteban Munoz’s understanding of disidentification as a survival strategy for queers of color in a majoritarian field; Ferguson applies this concept to Karl Marx’s ideas of political economy in order to utilize historical materialism. Particularly, queer of color critique’s understanding of “culture as one site that compels identifications with and antagonisms to the normative ideals promoted by state and capital.”²⁰

In a similar way Dylan Rodriguez extrapolates on the antagonisms within cultural production during the time of imprisonment in *Forced Passages*.²¹ Both Ferguson and Rodriguez demonstrate that the conditions in which memoirs, novels, and essays are produced reflect the ways in which current conditions of neoliberalism render certain populations what Grace Hong would call “existentially surplus” particularly impoverished, queer, people of color.²² Hong shows how current conditions of capitalist neoliberalism mark surplus populations as “*nonlaboring* subjects, that is, the populations that are surplus not to production but to speculation and circulation. If the fundamental characteristic of capitalism is circulation, rather than production, and if contemporary capitalism has increasingly been organized around finance capital acting in and of itself, rather than anchored by production, today’s populations are not only surplus *labor* but are also merely surplus: existentially surplus.” My project is turning to cultural production for similar purposes because racial, gender and sexual economy is best depicted through

¹⁹ Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 29.

²⁰ Ferguson, 3.

²¹ Dylan Rodriguez, *Forced Passages: Imprisoned Racial Intellectuals and the U.S. Prison Regime*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2006)

²² Grace Kyungwon Hong, “Existentially Surplus: Woman of Color Feminism and the New Crisis of Capitalism,” *GLQ* 18 (2012): 92.

reading the narratives of those surviving in economies other than what is publically celebrated by the U.S. nation state and British colonialism. Literature produced by and about trans-bodies fraught relationship to the medical and prison industrial complexes, and immigration exposes the ways in which time runs out much more quickly for trans bodies in those spaces, but also how cis time functions by trans (particularly of color) bodies “doing time.”

In his introduction to *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex* Eric Stanley describes queer/trans abolition, as first and foremost the political commitment to feeling and imagining an alternative temporality “that makes the PIC impossible.”²³ He writes, “the time of abolition is both yet to come and already here...as both a dream of the future and a practice of history, we strategize for a world without the multiple ways our bodies, genders, and sexualities are disciplined.” Rather than just being a responsive and reactive politic to the Prison Industrial Complex, abolition is reading for a shared temporality with those who also took up the personal and political commitment to think beyond reforming always already violent state practices. Trans-temporality engages with a temporal vision of abolition as outlined by Stanley, indeed it is a practice of historicism that attempts to strategize the dream of a future, and a mode of narrating a trans self outside the dictates of cis time which is reliant on rendering so many trans bodies existentially surplus.

Theories of queer and national abjection by Asian American Cultural Studies theorist Karen Shimakawa and post-structuralist queer theorist Judith Butler also lend an understanding to the place and time of the existentially surplus. Karen Shimakawa

²³ Eric Stanley, “Fugitive Flesh: Gender Self-Determination, Queer Abolition, and Trans Resistance,” *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, (Oakland: AK Press, 2011). 8.

describes "...a process of abjection, [as] an attempt to circumscribe and radically differentiate something that, although deemed repulsively *other* is, paradoxically, at some fundamental level, an undifferentiable part of the whole."²⁴ The abject, not quite object or subject is subjected to an ongoing scrutiny to differentiate her or him from the larger body while still retaining membership within that body. It is important to note that Shimakawa describes abjection as a systemic process upon a marked body, which is fundamental to the functioning unit. The merely and existentially surplus are those marked bodies upon which contemporary capitalism is dependent, and therefore the time of abjection is essential to the time of the nation-state. Butler adds, "the abject designates here precisely those 'unlivable' and 'uninhabitable' zones of social life which are nevertheless densely populated by those who do not enjoy the status of the subject, but whose living under the sign of the 'unlivable' is required to circumscribe the domain of the subject."²⁵ Although Butler is utilizing spatial metaphors to describe the abject's circumscription of subjectivity through existence in socially "unlivable" zones, she is flipping around Shimakawa's understanding of the abjection and exposing the anxiety of those subjects at the uninhabitable and perhaps dangerously unregulated temporality that marks the abject.

Women of color feminism documents many survival strategies of navigating socially unlivable zones and understanding the conditions of being caught in the process of national abjection. Frances Beale, Wahneema Lubiano and Audre Lorde discuss the ways in which recognizing intersectional oppression, changing everyday ideology, forming coalitions and addressing difference begins the work of theorizing and working

²⁴ Karen Shimakawa, *National Abjection: The Asian American Body on Stage*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 2.

²⁵ Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex,"* (New York: Routledge, 1993): 3.

from within temporal abjection.²⁶ Queer/trans of color critique begins from women of color feminism's theorizations of the systemic intersectional nature of oppression and the importance of reading for different possible ways to navigate the cis and heteronormative times that regulate queer/trans of color bodies.

Recent Postcolonial and Trans of Color Theory

Finally, as mentioned earlier in my introduction, since beginning work on this dissertation there has been a boom of scholarship thinking the category transgender through trans of color post-colonial theory by preventing trans- from singularly attaching to gender and/or sex. Besides Keeling, scholars such as Dean Spade, Aren Aizura, Nael Bhanji, Jin Haritaworn, C. Riley Snorton, and Che Gossett have begun unpacking how neoliberal administrative systems such as the prison industrial complex, racial economy, higher education, and immigration reform effectively limit the life chances of queerly racialized, classed, and sexed populations across national borders. Particularly, Aren Aizura's work on the persistence of the "safe return" "one way" narrative in transgender travel stories, and Nael Bhanji's examination of the imperialist rhetoric bound to the "homing desires" of Canadian Transsexual citizenship.²⁷ Explicitly linking current narratives of trans visibility to neoliberal practices of incorporation and gay tourism, Che Gossett's stringent critique of revamping and revisiting sites of memorialization ties

²⁶ See Frances Beale, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," in *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African American Feminist Thought*, ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall (New York: The New Press, 1995): 146-55. Wahneema Lubiano, "Black Nationalism and Black Common Sense: Policing Ourselves and Others," *The House That Race Built: Black Americans, U.S. Terrain* ed. Wahneema Lubiano (New York: Pantheon Books, 1997): 232-252. Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007).

²⁷ See Aren Aizura, "The Persistence of Transgender Travel Narratives" in *Transgender Migrations*, (New York: Routledge, 2012) 140; 158.

rewriting necropolitical history to positivist celebratory capitalist practice in ways that align with the project of this dissertation. I am excited that much of the new work in Trans studies has begun unpacking the relationship between transgender citizenship and transnationality, with attention to post-colonial theorizations of diaspora within the United States, Europe and Canada.²⁸ This dissertation adds to this growing list of scholars in critical trans politics, post-colonial trans studies and trans of color critique.

Methodology

My methodology brings together the above outlined fields of study through the theoretical parsing out of trans-temporality and cis normative time during three time periods beginning in the aftermath of World War II and stretching into 2011. As stated earlier in this introduction, I am propositioning trans-temporality as an analytical reading practice to unpack the ways in which trans narratives, bodies, and lives are pulled along, rub against, and fall out of teleological cis temporality. I also use the term trans-temporal to describe synchronic moments of disorienting experiential affects when trans bodies, narratives and lives break from cis normative time or feel as if they are falling out of line. My reading is constellated around three primary sets of figures in three chapters that I will outline below, but I should note that my project was initially born out of the desire to trace a genealogy of time discursively regulating and disciplining trans bodies, lives, and narratives from Saartje Baartman to CeCe MacDonald.

²⁸ See Jin Haritaworn's "Colorful Bodies in the Multikulti Metropolis: Vitality, Victimology and Transgressive Citizenship in Berlin," *Transgender Migrations: The Bodies, Borders, and Politics of Transition*, (New York, Routledge: 2012): 11-31.

CeCe McDonald, is a 24 year old black transgender woman who accepted a guilty plea deal for 2nd degree manslaughter after defending herself and her friends from racist and transphobic attacks, and served a sentence of 21 months in a male prison in St. Cloud. In June of 2011 MacDonald was walking down the street with a group of her black queer and trans friends when two white women and Dean Schmitz, a white man, started calling MacDonald and her friends “chicks with dicks” “nigger” and “faggot.” One of the white women suggested MacDonald “was dressed as a woman” in order to “rape” Schmitz. After CeCe MacDonald told the attackers she wouldn’t stand for their hate speech, MacDonald was slashed in the face with a cocktail glass, puncturing MacDonald’s salivary gland. MacDonald began to fight eventually fatal stabbing Schmitz. MacDonald was the only one arrested that night, and was continuously denied adequate medical care for her cheek wound.²⁹

An odd couple when understood according to diachronic cis-time (Baartman a cisgendered indentured servant from South Africa toured in freak shows during early nineteenth century Europe as a display of overdeveloped black sexuality. While MacDonald an African American trans woman subjected to the same rhetorical frame of deviant black hypersexuality and genderqueerness was incarcerated for fighting against that violence.) trans-temporality reads for the similarities and differences within the conditions of possibilities shaping Baartman and MacDonald’s vulnerability, precarity, and life chances. The processes and formations of temporal normativity and deviance within race, class, gender, sex, and sexuality, from the state become a way to begin understanding MacDonald and Baartman’s trans-temporal moments of rupture from cis-

²⁹ Katie Burgess and CeCe MacDonald, *Support CeCe MacDonald! Solidarity with Trans People targeted by the Prison Industrial Complex*, <http://supportcece.wordpress.com/> (5 June 2012).

time and lend trans-temporality its multilayered synchronicity. Racialized gender queerness's dissonance with national, colonial and imperial time (and by extension the imagined normatively raced, classed, gendered, and sexual citizen subject) organizes all of the subjects of this project.

In this dissertation I read through several autobiographical texts written shortly before a subject's death (largely due to the ways they fall out of state-regulated and/or national time, and unbeknownst to her or him) for moments of temporal dissonance. I then understand those moments of self-representation in light of the archives those subjects left behind. This includes: poems and articles Dr. Lawrence Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka wrote for his collection *Poems of Truth* and in the British Buddhist Journal *The Middle Way*, interviews, identity documents, and essays Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson gave to *The Village Voice* and wrote for their work in the Street Transgender Activist Revolutionaries and Transy House. Dillon/Jivaka and Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson's archival materials are located in Harvard's Widener Library Archives, the New York Public Library Archives and the New York LGBT Center's National Archives respectively.

There was far more ephemera memorializing Johnson than I could write on, so I used Rivera's essay *Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones* as my guiding affective and temporal guide. I went into the archive looking for connections between Rivera and Johnson's work in the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) and their work with the Black Panther and Young Lords Parties in New York. But I found instead a thick file documenting the discrepancy between the state's understanding of Marsha P. Johnson (namely that she did not exist) and the reality of her vibrant and precarious life

amongst street queens such as Rivera. This led me to I ask how cis time structured the life chances of Rivera, Johnson, and Dillon/Jivaka in each instance and how those chances were conditioned by their different positionalities to the U.S. nation-state, or British nationality and colonialism.

I end this dissertation with a reading of R. Zamora Linmark's postmodern and narratively disorienting novel *Leche* because it allows me to ask into what I see as the potential future for Rivera, Johnson, and Dillon/Jivaka, namely; what affectively happens to the historically trans body when cis time remakes it as celebratory? When visibility's spotlight turns on the temporally backward and sexually degenerate mixed-race, queer and diasporic subject and instead posits that subject as the neoliberal exceptional par excellence, what does that feel like temporally? What interestingly resurfaces is the temporality of haunting, via melancholic connection to the protagonist's mixed race paternal ancestors, all former military officers working within the confines of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines. A reflection on 1990's narratives of Asian American neoliberal exceptional, Linmark's Vicente de Los Reyes unknowingly faces a different kind of death; that of forgetting and disappearing the colonial conditions of his arrival until they can only return as suffocating nightmares.

Chapter Descriptions

Structurally, my dissertation begins demonstrating trans-temporality as an analytic reading practice through unpacking temporal dissonances within the Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson archives, structured by Rivera's 1999 essay "Queens in Exile, the

Forgotten Ones.” I then turn to Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka’s 1962 memoir *Out of the Ordinary*, to examine the ways in which Dillon/Jivaka’s privileged spatial mobility did not extend to interpreting his sex/gender history within British imperialist and Hinayana Buddhist monastic systems of sex and gender. Finally, R. Zamora Linmark’s novel *Leche* demonstrates trans-temporality through a representation of neoliberalism’s fondness for mixed race Asian American and queer exceptionalism. If the first two chapters call out cis normative time’s temporal regulation of trans bodies and histories, chapter three focuses on two identitarian subjectivities that were very recently incorporated into discourses of cisnormative exceptionalism at the expense of their radical and “unruly deviant” lineages, a move that I fear is happening to a more mainstreamed transgender identity and politics. Even while rights and visibility become marks of progress’s march, they come for those respectable subjects of history and leave the rest as background projections in the indefinite waiting room of normativity.

Chapter one, “Sistership as Survival” ask what trans bodies’ differential positionalities to European historicism’s linear imperialist temporality (and consequent managing of racial, sexual, and classed economies) can tell us about past and current formations of the “exceptional” ethnic-racialized, sexualized, and gendered subject. This question is formulated partly due to the ways in which reductive histories of moments such as Stonewall in queer and trans history, will superficially celebrate Sylvia Rivera and forget all the state conditioned deaths of the community that enabled her survival. Beginning with an examination of Marsha P. Johnson’s state issued identity documents, I show that cis normative time renders trans bodies, lives, and narratives as impossible abject subjects. I then move to the discourse of sistership in Sylvia Rivera’s 1999 essay

from *genderqueer* “Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones” as well as an archive of newspaper articles, pictures and interviews with Marsha P. Johnson to demonstrate trans-temporal alternatives to the state’s imaginary. In this chapter I put Johnson and Rivera in conversation with Achille Mbembe, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Kara Keeling, Dan Irving, Avery Gordon, and Audre Lorde. As bodies and lives marked by haunting, “madness,” and death Rivera and Johnson’s narratives read against the time of the prison industrial complex and ideals of public health, through their participation in street sex work, and creation of kinship networks unrecognizable to state logics.

Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka’s memoir contains a similar unease with public visibility, due to his gendered/sexed history being read against and through linear times of surgical intervention, developmental economic progress circulating through British Imperialism, the time of familial inheritance, and Buddhist monastic theologies of bodhisattva enlightenment. If chapter one thinks about trans-temporality through the time of haunting and memorialization, my second chapter focuses on the affect of cyclical nonsecular time and particularly, the time of continuous delay and waiting. Depicted in Dillon/Jivaka’s unpublished 1062 memoir *Out of the Ordinary* as well as his poem “Karma” this chapter meditates on trans-temporal moments of Buddhist recursivity amidst the pull of Dillon/Jivaka’s desire for the “conquest of the body and mind” in his writings. Chapter two utilizes Janet Gyatso’s “One Plus One Makes Three,” Sara Ahmed’s discussion of disorientation, Benjamin’s “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” and extends an engagement with Dipesh Chakrabarty’s *Provincializing Europe* from my first chapter. I posit the interpretation of Dillon’s white masculine trans body’s temporality within and against early modern European medical surgical practices pre-

dating the identity of “transsexual surgery” as well as changing Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhist monastic conceptions of sex and gender.

As a piece of writing that is informed by the conventions of English modernism *Out of the Ordinary* tends towards both the goals of liberal historicism yet “trans-es” the normative temporal borders of national, ethnic, religious, sex/gender time through Dillon/Jivaka’s events of affective somatic dislocation. Looking at Dillon/Jivaka’s story out-of-time means reading non-linearly, because Dillon’s temporality when read trans-temporally is immiscible to both the time of capital and the current narrative of hegemonic transsexuality. Dillon/Jivaka attempts to narrate his trans-sexed history through both his British masculinity and Buddhist medicalized discourse (particularly utilizing the *pandaka*, a “third sex” figure in the *Discipline*) avoiding any sort of semblance to the now popular hegemonic transsexual narrative. However as a man out of cis-time, Dillon/Jivaka is granted conditional privilege due to his whiteness and visual maleness, yet his gender/sex history undoes him, and his narrative cannot escape its troubling orientalism.

To take up either Rivera or Dillon/Jivaka as exemplary figures of LGBT history is to flatten their lives into a timeline that created the conditions of for their deaths. By choosing Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, and Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka as three of the main figures standing inside and outside the temporal logics of the U.S. nation-state and British Colonialist Enlightenment, I am wary yet mindful of the ways my project may in fact reproduce historicism’s salvific project of reclamation, i.e. “we must reorient trans and gender non-conforming history around figures such as Dillon/Jivaka or Rivera to change the political trajectory of queer/trans of color studies.” Instead I see

differential experiences of time operating within and between the positionalities of Rivera, Johnson and Dillon/Jivaka as promoting their exceptionalism within dominant revisionist historical narratives while also alienating them from the privileges of that exceptionalism while they were alive.

Similarly in the novel *Leche* mixed-race Filipino (American) Vince de los Reyes's desire for an uncomplicated, ending of balikbayan return and existential epiphany only points to what structural violences we must ignore to continue desiring and reading linearity and coherence in trans narratives and onto trans bodies. The second part of R. Zamora Linmark's duology begun with *Rolling the R's*, *Leche* is focus of my third chapter. I ground my analysis of Linmark's novel in Jodi Kim's "politics of refusal" within the unsettling hermeneutic of Asian American Critique, David Eng's understanding of the temporal "in between," Walter Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History" and utilize much of *Leche*'s own history-giving-time-warping-genre-mash-up to contextualize the questions of time and place Linmark pens.

In *Leche*, Vince's discovery of his mixed race heritage coincides with the unearthing of his melancholia for his deceased grandfather, a former WWII veteran, and his affective tie to both the beginnings of his queerness and his complicated relationship to the United States and the Philippines. Like the trans drag bar of *Leche*'s title, Vince's blood genealogy contains traces of colonial violence along with the celebratory visibility of light skin tone from racial mixing. *Leche* is the ultimate symbol of an experiential trans-temporal space; it is a national museum to colonial education, a postmodern mash-up of identitarian celebration, linguistic contestation and globalized culture.

As the correlate body to Leche, college educated Vince is the posited as the neoliberal model minority. He is exceptionalized for his light skin, a reminder and remainder of his mixed race lineage, and this privilege allows him face time with the nation on television. Yet Vince's own quest for a knowable linear familial history becomes a chaotic, disorienting experience in globalized capitalism's interface with American Imperialism. As mentioned previously, final chapter takes up the narrative of a fictional mixed race queer Pinoy (American) cisman, as a historical trans body, and asks what trans-temporal affects he experiences in neoliberalism's nightmarish global wake. In the ripple effects of cisnormativity's enveloping timestream may we be open to feel the lingering affects of haunting, indefinite waiting and melancholic gesture from trans bodies, lives and narratives pointing us to different times?

I conclude this dissertation by connecting the three affects this project maps out (haunting, waiting, and melancholy) to the importance of thinking and reading trans lives, narratives, and bodies beyond the progress-oriented "will to know." Trans-temporality allows for trans-bodies to exist somewhen on their own terms and in the midst of their own potential privileges and contradictions. I ask that we begin reading and understanding trans of color narratives by suspending the expectation of a linear trajectory "crossing over" from one gender and/or sex to another. In his work *Aizura* criticizes the metaphor of arrival and crossing for its class, racial, national and gender privileges. Vince, Rivera, Johnson, Dillon/Jivaka can all exist in their own times if we read them on their own terms, which may or may not be ours.

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Chapter 1

Sistership as Survival: Memorializing and Remembering Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson and Street Queens in Exile

“Rivera’s life shows that queer/trans visibility is not a simple binary; multiple kinds of visibilities, differentially situated in relation to power, intersect and overlap in people’s lives. The consequences and voluntariness of visibility are determined in part by social location, and by the systems of power that write gendered and racialized meanings onto bodies.” - Jesse Gan, “Still at the Back of the Bus”: Sylvia Rivera’s Struggle”

“...by contrast, Rivera’s own political affinities, while fiercely resisting cooptation, remained inclusive, mobile, and contextual. Her political practice, informed by a complexly situated life, built bridges between movements, prioritizing the project of justice above arbitrary political boundaries. Her personal identifications, similarly, eschewed categorization and resisted reductive definition. Press narratives pegged her as “gay,” neighbors had called her a maricon, transgender and genderqueer activists narrated her as transgender and genderqueer, and Jean O’Leary asserted that she “parodied” womanhood.” – Jesse Gan, “Still at the Back of the Bus”: Sylvia Rivera’s Struggle”

What is the relationship of trans of color (in)visibility to power and discourses of incorporation? Trans scholar Jesse Gan’s analysis of Sylvia Rivera’s disidentification with sexual and gender categorization, and her detailing of Rivera’s differential ways of organizing within and outside of collective networks seeking justice for Puerto Rican, Black, street and trans people, astutely parses out how different interests have attempted to pin down the figure of Sylvia Rivera. According to Gan, attempts to contain Rivera within a single identity category are at best an exercise in speculation; at their worst, such attempts re-enact the violences that probed and entrapped her body and narrative while she was alive. In this chapter I attempt a different kind of historical work by “looking after” Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson and the street queens of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (hereafter STAR), by reading trans-temporally through historical and cultural archives. Through this reading, I look after and counter the many levels of mediation operating within formal and informal archives, through the form of interviews, video recordings, books and essays. Those forms and levels both allow and constrain how narrative and narration happens, which intersects with the researcher’s own hopes and desires. It is my desire to begin this project of trans-temporality at the nexus of Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson’s complexly mediated (in)visibility, detailed in the

traces of their attachments and detachments with and from leftist late 1960's and early 70's movements, their rise as exemplary figures in popular queer and trans history, most importantly with the sisters of STAR and each other.

I do this not because as a mixed race trans of color academic I somehow understand the systems of power that write gendered and racialized meanings onto Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson's bodies better than those historians and theorists who have already done so. Rather, because the method this project is organized around, trans-temporality, allows for "multiple kinds of visibilities, differentially situated in relation to power" to be re-narrated as multiple temporalities interacting with each other and mutually informed by national and transnational histories of racialized, classed and sexualized gender and sex.³⁰

Reading Rivera and Johnson's lives trans-temporally means first recognizing how cisnormative time misreads and operates on trans of color bodies, lives, and narratives through state regulation. Cisnormative time is the hegemonic discursive lens through which trans bodies, lives and narratives are read and become understandable. However, in the process of making trans narratives, lives, and bodies fit into cisnormative time, cisnormative temporality like heteronormativity must disappear race and class's undergirding of normativity. Deceptively focusing on a single identity axis, cisnormative temporality attempts to fit trans figures into hegemonic expressions of cis gender, sex, sexuality, race and class. Removing an intersectional framework from trans narratives, lives and bodies always includes flattening and cutting trans-temporal modes of existence

³⁰ Jessie Gan. "Still at the back of the bus': Sylvia Rivera's Struggle," *The Transgender Studies Reader 2* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 297.

to fit cisnormative narratives of sex, gender, class and race and is reflected across various discourses (including medical, legal, religious).

This chapter concentrates on how cisnormative time renders the trans of color body and narrative impossible primarily through mandatory state-issued identity documents reflecting sexes assigned at birth, and consequent processes of racialized gendering. Some of these processes include: navigating educational systems, biases in hiring practices, and differential access to health care and social services. Cisnormative temporal regulation proceeds throughout trans lifetimes pathologizing trans of color lives, bodies and narratives through lessening the chances of formal employment, increased chances of imprisonment, being sent to the mental ward, and everyday street policing for poor street queens in New York City during the early 1970's.

A few personal concessions as I begin this chapter. I began looking after Rivera and Johnson as a middle-class half Chinese/half-white transman in earnest during the last few years of my doctoral program. The ethics of looking after a subject in terms of non-paternalistic care after s/he has disappeared for reasons of material survival implicates the privileged and potentially violent place of the scholar taking M- (in the case of black queer feminist film theorist Kara Keeling) or Rivera as her or his "object" of study.³¹ This is especially true when "my own critical work in this article might contribute to fashioning a politics capable of redressing the very inequalities and injustices it illuminates rather than simply furthering my career by feeding the academy's contradictory need for knowledge about and sometimes by queers of color."³² As black feminist Hortense Spillers reflects when writing about Sojourner Truth, "We must be

³¹ Kara Keeling, "Looking for M-: Queer Temporality, Black Possibility and Poetry from the Future," *GLQ* 15.4 (2009): 577.

³² Keeling, 577.

careful here not to romanticize the singer, with her sometimes unlovely self-destructive life, as a lame reading of the content of Sojourner's life turns it into an idea that Truth herself would probably not recognize. I do not intend to take the vocalist out of history, but to try and see her firmly within it."³³

As I proceeded through the archives at the New York Public Library and the National Archives at the NY LGBT Center, I found myself feeling increasingly unsettled by my desire to angelicize Johnson and Rivera up as exemplary heroines of the early LGBTQ movement, when so much of the archive reflected the ways in which Johnson was estranged from everyone the day of her death, especially Sylvia Rivera. The unromantic parts of Johnson and Rivera's pasts that had everything to do with their means of survivability as poor, often homeless black and Latina transfeminine subjects existing in and creating a means of living on the fly and through imagining a less difficult future. This chapter utilizes those ambiguities of desire and the uncertainty of historical revisionism as key to the methodology of trans-temporality. Switching between modes of articulation and visibility, but never fully seen, Rivera and Johnson's ambivalent relationship to mainstream LGB organizations such as the Gay Activist Alliance and Gay Liberation Front as well as seeking redress for continuing state violence through (civil) rights discourse, law and protections should be read speculatively. This chapter while making claims is not claiming to speak for Johnson or Rivera, or to any hard notion of "fact." It is instead a suggestion of how to read their work, words, and residual affects through temporal modes within, beside and beyond the life lines mapped out and enacted

³³ Hortense Spillers, "Interstices: A Small Drama of Words," *Black, White, and In Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 165.

on non-normative racial, gendered and sexualized abject subjects out by various institutions of the U.S. state (prison and medical industrial complex, capitalism).

As mentioned in the introduction, I am choosing to begin the gist of my argument for trans-temporality with Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson rather than chronologically with Michael Dillon. This choice serves my project for two reasons: first, in Johnson's archive there is a very clear demarcation of cisnormative time's effects on shortening and misreading her life. Second, my choice is a political one, trans-temporality as a methodology is a theorization primarily for trans of color bodies, narratives and lives. I did not want to begin with a white upper class British man, despite Dillon's complex situation to all of those identity categories. As Gan points out in the passages with which I open this chapter, Rivera and Johnson tell an ambivalent and complex tale of embodied gender expression and political identity; a complex ambivalence which is also prevalent in the ephemeral traces they left behind and which illustrates the tensions between cisnormative time and trans-temporality.

Temporal dissonances

In contrast to their speculative complexity, trans narratives must speak to specific racialized, classed and gendered situated embodiment through their forced engagement with and regulation by state mandated linear cisnormative time in order to be understood as non-impossible subjects.³⁴ These simplified and regulated versions of trans narratives of bodies and lives are a product of projects engaged in trans visibility. Trans lives, bodies and narratives (particularly those of color) precariously surface in moments of

³⁴ I use "non-impossible" here as a marker of both the ways in which discursively trans of color people are always seen as impossible/nonexistent subjects, yet counter that charge through their existence and communities.

partial recognition (or more often misrecognition) by the state.³⁵ More often though, state recognition of trans lives occurs to discipline the trans of color body for its abrasive, pathological and non-secular trans-temporality.

State methods begin reading trans bodies, narratives and lives within cisnormative time rather than from a more speculative trans-temporality asking the trans of color body, life and narrative “where?” rather than “when?” This emphasis on visualizing the trans of color body in space couches legibility in a cisnormative notion of everyday common sense that only understands the body within present conditions.

By turning towards queer of color theorists who also think beyond the spatial, trans-temporality draws from a genealogy of existence within and beyond temporal registers of the present and poses ethical questions about documenting those who have been lost. In “Looking for M-” queer of color film theorist Kara Keeling expands upon Karl Marx’s term “poetry from the future” by applying it as a theory of affect as everyday common sense that exceeds present conditions. Keeling argues that Fanon’s usage of Marx’s term in *The Wretched of the Earth* unpacks the difference in common-sense time during black anti-colonial struggle between the colonized and colonizer. Temporal by nature, poetry from the future takes on poetry’s sense of breakage from normative linear

³⁵ In the preface of *Normal Life* trans legal scholar Dean Spade provides the not-uncommon example of “Bianca” a 19 year old transwoman who is homeless, unemployed, accessing hormones through street economies and stuck in an abusive relationship because she could not be recognized as a woman without identification with her female name and gender. Dean Spade, *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*, (Brooklyn: South End Press, 2011), 10. Additionally see the work of Lori A. Saffin on the statistical evidence of skewed levels of violence against transwomen of color and the responding silence from queer and poc populations in which trans of color deaths occurred. Lori A. Saffin, “Identities Under Siege: Violence Against Transpersons of Color,” *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, (Oakland: AK Press, 2011), 141-62. Finally, see Sarah Lamble’s work on the erasure of race, class, and sex work identities as factors in acts of violence leading to largely trans feminine and women’s deaths in Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremonies and Remembering Our Dead websites. Sarah Lamble, “Retelling Racialized Violence, Remaking White Innocence: The Politics of Interlocking Oppressions in Transgender Day of Remembrance,” *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 31-45.

narrative by creative, fragmented force and exposes the what-could-be as well as the what-is-not-yet. As such, poetry from the future's "impossible possibility" is both "subjective" and "collective" and calls into question the ways in which normative institutions (the school, military, prison industrial complex, documentary) temporally constrain black queer masculine subjects. Yet those subjects are never completely documented spatio-temporally by those constraints.³⁶ Keeling argues that asking the question "when?" in relation to the subaltern, necropolitical subject/object is both fundamentally anti-racist and anti-imperialist, because it acknowledges the present realities of the not-yet impossible possibilities. Time is the superstructure of regulation, possibility and impossibility for black queer masculine subjects.

Because of her transmasculine of color subjects' precarity and the uneven power dynamic between academic and studied subject, Kara Keeling designates two ways of "looking after" a subject of study. The first is "sequential and aligns with temporality in which the past is put in the service of the present."³⁷ The second is "colloquially and affectively [...] protective and sheltering...making meaningful for and within a collectivity that presently needs it and therefore affectionately 'looks after' or cares for it."³⁸ While Keeling's first definition belies a hierarchical linearity between present researcher and studied (and objectified) subject, the second understands the continuous affective need for the past "within a collectivity" and the accompanying responsibility to "colloquially" protect and shelter the figures of the past.

Trans-temporality understands that time is also the superstructure regulating possibilities, precariousness and impossibilities for trans feminine of color subjects' lives.

³⁶ Keeling, 566.

³⁷ Keeling, 571.

³⁸ --, 572.

When the conditions of possibility for existence as a gendered, racial and classed subject are so often denied by necropolitical state regulation, to look at and after trans bodies, lives and narratives requires parsing out what is happening between the times of expectation and (im)possibility. And, given the current conditions of violence for trans people of color in the United States, trans-temporality allows us to be especially attuned to how trans abject-subjects make life more livable through informal economies, often unrecognized (or again characterized as pathological and problematic) by the state. Trans of color bodies, lives and narratives seem to appear within cisnormative time postmortem or through discourses of pathology (to the self and/or to the state) because of their discursive similarities to other unruly bodies (racialized, sexualized and classed) deemed unincorporable by the U.S. nation-state. As such, trans-temporality's analysis of the material conditions of trans of color subject (or abject) cultural and political formations is thoroughly ensconced within the intellectual genealogy of Women of Color Feminism and Queer of Color Critique along with the project of revisionist or subaltern history. Trans-temporality is a kind of materialist historicism that aligns itself with the political projects of Kara Keeling and postcolonial theorists Dipesh Chakrabarty and Achille Mbembe more so than U.S. based histories of trans recognition via the printing press and medical industrial complex like that of Joanne Meyerowitz and Bernice Hausman.³⁹

Chakrabarty's theory of temporality is rooted in what he reads as the twin histories of Marxist Historicism (history 1 and history 2). Looking at the historical production of South Asian political modernity, Chakrabarty posits the time of history 1 as that of "Europe" (the imagined Europe of progressive post-Enlightenment historicism)

³⁹ See Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). ; Bernice Hausman, *Changing Sex: Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

whose linear narrative of time traces the development and dissolution of capitalism. Understanding itself as universal, this social science-based history functions as the singular temporal narrative into which all local cultures have or will transition. History 1 is also assumed to be able to translate all local culture(s) into its master historical narrative. As such history 1 is a singular disenchanting, empty homogenous temporality; it is the time of capital. Disciplining bodies through the channels of political modernity via liberalism's discourse, history 1 creates the modern citizen-subject and throws the ethnic-racialized peasant into the anachronistic past. Chakrabarty is careful to point out that the present form of globalized capitalism should not be read as proof of history 1's universalism. Instead, globalized capital illustrates how imbricated history 1 and 2 are.

History 2(s) disrupts and exposes the limits of history 1. Chakrabarty names Subaltern histories as history 2s. Here Chakrabarty expands on Karl Marx's theory in *Capital*. Like Keeling's poetry from the future, history 2 fragments any concept of historical temporal linearity or the idea of a disenchanting, "reality" posited by the triumphalist progressive narrative of homogenous time. While "constructed within the master code of secular history and using the accepted academic modes of history writing" history 2 also "cannot ever afford to give this master code its claim of being a mode of thought that comes to all human beings naturally."⁴⁰ History 2 injects life back into the abstract labor of history 1, and as such is the "antisociology" narrative of affect and the uncanny within any translation of difference.⁴¹ In other words, history 2 points to other temporal possibilities outside of history 1, and these alternative modes of thought carry

⁴⁰ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 93.

⁴¹ Chakrabarty, 89.

their own common sense that may be characterized as unnatural, pathological or backward under the master code.

It is important to note that there is no inside or outside in regards to Marx/Chakrabarty's history 1 and 2, both cannot exist without the other. The main problem of historicism is not one of pre-modern to modern postcolonial transition, which was the question asked by past anthropologists; instead it is one of translating heterogeneous temporalities and trying to force them into the singularity of history 1.

For Chakrabarty crossing temporalities is the stuff of translation (the trans- if you will), and he moves to a Heideggerian hermeneutic of reading upper-caste Hindu Bengali poetry and memoir to illustrate his point that European historiographies are crucial yet lacking to any project of historicization.⁴² Translation by and for the master code of history 1 does not lose meaning so much as leave traces of affective limitations and excesses.⁴³ History 2 is crafted in a vein of "hermeneutic tradition" which Chakrabarty says, "produces a loving grasp of detail in search of an understanding of the diversity of human life-worlds."⁴⁴ With difference at the center of history 2's temporalities, unification for an endpoint to the development of whatever is being historicized is left behind for the life beyond abstract labor and with it mystery and complication.⁴⁵

Trans-temporality is history 2 to cisnormative state time's history 1, in search of the diverse pockets of trans life-worlds through tracing scattered ephemeral details left behind by trans bodies, narratives and lives operating in times of death that reflect our own.

⁴² Chakrabarty, 19.

⁴³ This has resonance with Keeling's definition of affect as poetic and touching the everyday, although Chakrabarty is more interested in the role of the enchanted (or non-secular) than Keeling.

⁴⁴ Chakrabarty, 18.

⁴⁵ Chakrabarty, 23.

Achille Mbembe's description of necropower's operation through state narratives of history holds many similarities to the work of Chakrabarty's history 1, and thereby links the time of homogenous, disenchanted capital to colonial deathworlds illuminating how cisnormative time is also necropolitical. Extending Franz Fanon's depiction of colonial boundary making in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Mbembe describes the political-spatial mapping of racial abjection through the borders of township in colonial South Africa thus: "In this case, sovereignty means the capacity to define who matters and who does not, who is *disposable* and who is not."⁴⁶ The demarcation of "who is disposable and who is not" is the operation of necropower. While Mbembe proceeds to discuss the current colonial occupation of Palestine as the most accomplished form of necropower, what his formulation of necropower as a "specific terror formation" lends my understanding of trans-temporality is the notion that "the colonial state derives its fundamental claim of sovereignty and legitimacy from the authority of its own particular narrative of history and identity."⁴⁷ The colonial state's historical narrative of the necropolitical right to territorialize is set against the non-secular of the abject, who is up against the discourses formed by state's tools of the will to knowledge. Mbembe explains:

This narrative is itself underpinned by the idea that the state has a divine right to exist; the narrative competes with another for the same sacred space. Because the two narratives are incompatible and the two populations are inextricably intertwined, any demarcation of territory on the basis of pure identity is quasi-impossible. Violence and sovereignty, in this case, claim a divine foundation: peoplehood itself is forged by the worship of one deity, and national identity is imagined as an identity against the Other, other deities. History, geography, and archeology are

⁴⁶ Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15.1 (2003): 27.

⁴⁷ Mbembe, 27.

supposed to back these claims, thereby closely binding identity and topography.⁴⁸

The colonial narrative of unity under one deity and national identity operates similarly to Chakrabarty's history 1. Through the historico-religious discourse of sovereignty and violence capitalism operates by utilizing social scientific discourse to prove the righteousness of continuing colonialism and imperialism. Translating the local non-secular time into the universal historical narrative of the (colonial) state, territorialization, sovereignty and history become bound up against the Other's unfreedom on which the national subject receives its legitimacy.

The speculative visions of a future not-yet realized, the temporalities of those living in history 2 exceed national identity's history 1 in Mbembe's configuration of terror, death, (un)freedom. Mbembe writes, "What connects terror, death, and freedom is an *ecstatic* notion of temporality and politics. The future, here, can be authentically anticipated, but not in the present. The present itself is but a moment of vision – vision of the freedom not yet come. Death in the present is the mediator of redemption."⁴⁹ The present cut off from redemption by death's presence, is full of visions of future freedom. What can be imagined but not experienced are trans-temporal moments of "what if" and "when?" that may be glimpsed but not fully understood or articulated. The ecstatic within temporality and politics makes the terror of living within death-worlds open up to the potential of freedom.

In contrast to cisnormative time's attempts to limit and regulate trans of color lives, trans-temporality recognizes trans existence somewhere between survival and communal safety through informal and ephemeral affective networks of care. In this

⁴⁸ Mbembe, 27.

⁴⁹ Mbembe, 39.

chapter these mobile, fleeting affective collectives of care are the ecstatic pointing to timelines and histories deemed pathological, impossible and unimaginable by the state. Described by Sylvia Rivera as “sistership” and these ecstatic ephemeral collectives of care were glimpsed through the shared imagined times of Puerto Rican, Black and Gay liberation in New York of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. By moving from notions of the temporally ecstatic within necropower, and a discussion of history 1 and 2 as the genealogical theoretical backbone to trans-temporality, we must move to a discussion of visibility’s capital and relationship to state-recognition.

Life and deathlines: The precariousness of state-recognition and the desire for respectability

Reading between the lines within trans representation and narratives for their temporal undergirding means first understanding that reading trans-temporally is looking back or after a moment of contestation. Looking backwards at moments in which trans bodies, lives and narratives become hypervisible to the nation-state because they are out of bounds from cisnormative citizenry, the historical record of the non-white, middle class trans subject/object is often that of death and memorialization. In these instances, in which memorialization can often become a second death, it is clear that subjectivity is conferred first through a “coherent” linear narrative of sexed, classed, gendered and racialized embodiment, one that can be uncontestedly categorized and documented by the nation-state. This has meant that the first popularly known trans bodies, narratives and lives have been those most closely adhering to notions of heteronormativity and respectability. As political scientist Dan Irving aptly demonstrates it is no coincidence

that those trans people “who have the potential to become respectable social subjects” (white, gender conforming, able bodied middle class transsexual bodies such as Christine Jorgensen) were the first able to be imagined by the popular press as incorporative into the body of the U.S. nation-state rather than eschewed.⁵⁰ In “Normalized Transgressions: Legitimizing the Transsexual Body as Productive” Irving argues that discourses of productivity for capitalist accumulation served to legitimize gender/sex changing hormonal and surgical therapies as well as political recognition (as a socioeconomic good for the company and state). Irving first observes the productivity narrative in David O. Cauldwell’s 1966 *Psychopathia Transsexualis* and applies it to Christine Jorgensen’s account of her work life in her autobiography as well as white FTM millionaire Reed Erickson. However, Irving neglects to account for how race interacts with class and gender under the narrative of respectability.

Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins discusses the ways in which respectability as a racialized and sexualized class politics and behavior was created by middle-class African American reformers for black women in urban spaces to gain white approval in the early twentieth century. Collins notes, “Achieving respectability pivoted on adhering to standards of White femininity inherited from the tradition of Southern chivalry. Not only were these standards difficult for Black female industrial and domestic workers to achieve, to the dismay of middle-class reformers, many working-class women rejected them.”⁵¹ Respectability is a replication of hegemonic white middle-class racialized and classed gender norms, and has never served to protect those who must work to achieve it;

⁵⁰ Dan Irving, “Normalized Transgressions: Legitimizing the Transsexual Body as Productive,” *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, Ed Stryker, Susan and Aren Z. Aizura, (Routledge: 2013), 24.

⁵¹ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 71-2.

white, respectable national subjects are more easily understood in the temporal register of cisnormative time. Within these narratives, trans-ness is characterized as a temporary anomaly to be corrected, after which the trans body may be biopolitically incorporated and regulated as a normative citizen, looking forward and never backward.

In both *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* and his lectures on governmentality and sovereignty given at the College of France from 1977-78 Michel Foucault began outlining the work of biopower as the state's "power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death."⁵² I understand the contemporary moments' desire to let the government regulate LGBTQ lives via state institutions such as marriage and protections through the Employment and Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) as a partnering with the biopolitical by taking respectability as the means for national incorporation and social acceptance. While early queer and trans organizing was partially politically invested in becoming biopolitical subjects (to prevent sovereign power disallowing life to the point of death), more often trans and queer of color bodies, lives and narratives should be understood through the workings of Achille Mbembe's outline of necropower and necropolitics. This is because trans and queer of color bodies, lives, and narratives cannot and/or refuse to be read as respectable enough to become biopolitically incorporated.

As opposed to biopower's nurturance of life Achille Mbembe describes necropolitics and necropower as that which creates the living dead. Mbembe elaborates:

Moreover I have put forward the notion of necropolitics and necropower to account for the various ways in which, in our contemporary world...the creation of *death-worlds*, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of *living dead*.⁵³

⁵² Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over life," *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1990), 138.

⁵³ Mbembe, 40.

Socially subjected to abject conditions of living, the living dead undergird biopolitical life. While Mbembe is making his argument through a genealogy of colonial state operations of racial capital, his theory of state created death-worlds and social death also applies to non-normative gendered and sexualized peoples. If the lifelines respectability supposedly open up are in fact only available to those raced, gendered, and sexualized subjects already churned out for biopolitical incorporation, then state-regulated institutions such as hospitals, prisons, and schools become intensely visual sites of necropolitical policing for the racial, sexual and gendered nonnormative subject. By trans-temporally reading through Marsha P. Johnson's memorialization in the archives, the imbrication of respectability and cisnormativity becomes increasingly clear.

Cisnormative time: Malcolm without Marsha

“Malcolm Michaels, a legendary Christopher Street transvestite who called himself Marsha P. Johnson, was found dead floating in the Hudson River on Monday...Michaels, 46 – who preferred the name Marsha and the use of the feminine pronoun “she” – led a roller coaster ride through three decades of gay liberation. [...]

At the core of a life that could redefine the word “turbulent,” a longtime friend, Richard Skinner, found a “wonderful, warm and open person” who befriended an astonishing variety of people.

In the 1970's Michaels was occasionally at odds with the mainstream gay liberation organizations, which did not necessarily accept his image...but in the end, he was honored in Gay Pride Day two years ago with a ride in the limousine that leads the annual parade. Michaels wore a suit and tie.” – *Curtis Rist, New York Newsday, July 10, 1992*

New York Newsday's obituary for Malcolm “Marsha” Michaels is a confused mass of gendered descriptors attempting to memorialize a gender non-conforming male figure within the confines of its form. One gets the sense that the author did not know what to make of “Marsha,” her preference for feminine pronouns and her often estranged relationship with mainstream gay organizations, especially since the celebratory nature of obituaries had to end Malcolm's life story on a positive note. The article concludes with an image of Malcolm, in suit and tie, reconciled with mainstream gay liberation through

visual celebration and acknowledgement in the Gay Pride Day Parade. An uneasy reconciliation seems to linger on that verbal image; is Michael acknowledged and celebrated because of donning suit and tie and thereby meeting acceptable standards of masculinity? What happened to Marsha (P. Johnson) and her usage of feminine pronouns? Why is there no mention of blackness or Marsha's life amongst street people in the obituary? What does it mean that an obituary in a mainstream newspaper can acknowledge both Marsha and Malcolm and then essentially disappear what was initially admitted as the preferred (if clearly contested) gendered name that made Malcolm a part of Gay Pride?

These multiple contestations, between Malcolm and Marsha, mainstream gay liberation organizations and STAR, the “wonderful, warm, open person” “befriending an astonishing variety of people” and the mentally disabled patient estranged from Sylvia Rivera at the time of her death, manifest in an incomplete archive full of competing desires, strong attachments and even stronger feelings. (There were even two different memorial services for Marsha after her death; one for Malcolm by her blood family and one for Marsha by her street family. Perusing the programs from both services, it becomes clear that while Marsha's service did mention her birth name, the service for Malcolm contained no traces of Marsha's existence.) Housed in a single box in the New York City LGBT Center's National Archives, Marsha P. Johnson's archive contains keepsakes from her memorial (programs, videos, pictures and flyers), rehearsal music, scripts and newspaper reviews from Johnson's participation in Hot Peaches Revue which ran in the East Village, and a long paper trail of materials her long time white cisgender gay male roommate Randy Wicker put together to have the case of her death reopened by

the New York Police Department's 6th precinct (flyers, posters, tracts). To begin unpacking some of the narrative trajectories claiming Marsha P. Johnson it is helpful, if painful, to begin from the point of view reflected in the *Newsday* obituary, which is ensconced deeply in the optic obsession of cisnormative time.

Looking at Marsha P. Johnson's death certificate and social security card together allows for the multiple (mis)meanings and narratives of cisnormative time to surface. According to the U.S. social security administration and the city of New York's department of health, Malcolm Michaels Jr. was born August 24, 1945. As a "negro," he was unemployed when applying for a social security card at 16, and unemployed at the time of his death. Michaels was male, disabled and never married or served in the armed forces. He was found floating in the Hudson River on Monday July 6, 1992 right after the employed finished the work day. According to the death certificate and Rist, Michaels had drowned himself in a solitary act of suicide.

Under cis time Marsha P. Johnson did not exist; in her place there is a black man named Malcolm Michaels Jr. The identity documents of Malcolm Michaels Jr. contextualize Marsha P. Johnson's lifelong precarious relationship to the state, from her birth and young life within Jim Crow America, to her stints in and out of mental health wards and long bouts of unemployment capped by her death by drowning in the Hudson. Marsha's multiple struggles to survive as a black street queen in the white supremacist homophobic and transphobic U.S. nation-state are flattened out into a singular narrative of a mentally disabled and unemployed black man, committing suicide by drowning shortly after 1992 New York Pride. As such Johnson's identity documents demonstrate

how visible vulnerability haunts the non-normatively racialized and gendered abject/subject.

From this reading of Marsha P. Johnson's life and death, Malcolm Michaels Jr.'s unexceptional life and expendability to the state is immediately apparent. Regulated out of being grievable in cisnormative time (except perhaps as a pitiable figure) by way of his unemployed and disabled status, Malcolm Michaels is a singular number in the countless nameless black male deaths, and besides his interface with mental health practitioners and circumstances of his death, hardly resembles Marsha P. Johnson at all. Malcolm Michaels is not the productive body Irving describes as the desirable target of state incorporation or protection. Even reading Malcolm Michaels Jr.'s cisnormatively places him in precarious territory because of U.S. racial economy and institutional anti-black racism.

In her short work *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Judith Butler explains the double bind/precariousness of coming into subjective existence through address. She writes, "The structure of address is important for understanding how moral authority is introduced and sustained if we accept not just that we address others when we speak, but that in some way we come to exist, as it were in the moment of being addressed, and something about our existence proves precarious when that address fails. More emphatically, however, what binds us morally has to do with how we are addressed by others in ways that we cannot avert or avoid; this impingement by the other's address constitutes us first and foremost against our will or, perhaps put more appropriately, prior to the formation of our will."⁵⁴ State mandated identity documents

⁵⁴ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, (New York: Verso, 2004), 130.

are part of cis time's structure of address through which Malcolm Michaels Jr. came to precariously exist (and Marsha P. Johnson not exist) in the eyes of the state.

Like birth certificates, death certificates narrate a trajectory of gendered, sexed, raced and classed subjectivity onto the deceased. When both documents are read together as bookends of a life's relationship with the state, birth and death certificates demonstrate what could be "officially" recognized within the bounds of normativity. More telling however is what is left out: the alternative economies trans bodies engage in for survival because of what the state would not recognize. What exceed or fall off the official record are points of trans-temporal convergence, the history 2's that re-read birth and death certificates as sites of original and final violences to lives entangled in state biopolitical and necropolitical practices.

If we are to parse out the history 1's of state enacted cis time first we must see where trans bodies, lives and narratives fall out of the normative timelines with which they are supposed to align themselves. Moreover, the social security card, that extra piece of paper so necessary to check an applicant's record of criminality for employment, functions as a middle checkpoint of cis time and often makes the lives of trans and gender variant people economically precarious.

It is important to note that the identity documents making up the public records of Malcolm Michaels Jr.'s life, the backbone of cisnormative time, constitute a permanent archive of Marsha P. Johnson. By definition, they are meant to last rather than constituting ephemera, indeed they are meant to outlive the subject herself. While Marsha P. Johnson lived and breathed they simultaneously opened up and limited her chances of employment by narrating the story of her identities and embodiment through

the state's structure of address. It was quite a shock to open the first file on Marsha P. Johnson and be greeted with the state's recognition of her death as Malcolm Michaels Jr. staring up at me. And yet proceeding backwards from the moral authority of that ending address of Malcolm Michaels Jr.'s drowning seems to be the only way to begin understanding the failures of cisnormative time to acknowledge the end, however it came, as a trans-temporal moment in which the figure, narrative and life of Marsha P. Johnson would break past.

The haunting figure of Marsha P. Johnson points to what was not documented on Malcolm Michaels Jr.'s death certificate and social security card. What affective labors, occupations and relational ties are recognizable to the state outside of heteronormative marriage and what must be kept secret? Which ties and deeds count or are worthy of recognition and which embarrassingly call out the state for failing? What is missing from cisnormative temporality's narrative? Turning to the archive of Marsha's street sister Sylvia Rivera allows those unrecognized kinships and informal economies to surface.

On state made Queens: Sylvia Rivera meets Marsha P. Johnson

Sylvia Rivera's and Marsha P. Johnson's trans-temporal sistership could be understood primarily through queer of color discussions of racialized cultural estrangement and political economy, but Rivera's writings point towards another conversation altogether. Rather than reading Rivera's particular estrangements as general estrangements of Puerto Rican American culture (as Roderick Ferguson does with the figure of the black drag queen prostitute and African American culture in *Aberrations in Black*), I read the alienations and violence against Rivera's gendered, raced and classed

subjectivity as indicative of holding liminal citizenship to the state and membership in the early gay and lesbian rights movement due to her intersectional uncategorizable queendom.⁵⁵ Resisting the terms lesbian or transgender in 2002, Rivera takes as her means of identification the street/drag queen.⁵⁶ Her insistence on this term is an act of racial, class, sexual and gendered solidarity across differing positional identities of racialized feminine gender-nonconformity with a historical link to homelessness and sex work. In “Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones” Rivera says:

In Spanish cultures, if you are effeminate, you’re automatically a fag; you’re a gay boy. I mean you start off as a young child and you don’t have an option – especially back then. [...] You have your journey through society the way it is structured. Those were the words of that era, I was an effeminate gay boy. I was becoming a beautiful drag queen, a beautiful drag-queen child. [...] We had cross-dressers, but I didn’t even

⁵⁵ I am using the term queen to purposefully create a linguistic connection between sexism and racism’s effemiphobia which find a particular nuance through a persistently visible racialized sexuality in the term queen. Ironic in its deployment, queen usually designates a state form of female ruling power, but holds a specific valence in African American and Latina queer (particularly amongst subjects marked male at birth) communities. Indeed as I will explain further it is because of the implied racialized gendered sexuality of the term that the state has designated queen as the marker of “unworthy” racialized-gendered-sexual subjects trying to capitalize on surplus labor. The designations “welfare” and “street” highlight the classed locations on which the queen’s racialized gendered and sexualized liminal subjectivity is formed through state non-allowances. For Ferguson’s discussion of African American culture’s general estrangement from American culture see, Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 2.

⁵⁶ To expand upon what Jessie Gan articulates as Sylvia’s inclusive, contextual and mobile political affinities, I understand her disidentification with transgender in “Queens in Exile” as a strategic act of affective care and solidarity with past and present street queens. Against the hegemonic trans narrative of the transgender subject needing surgery because she is “born in the wrong body” Rivera asserts: “I thought about having a sex change, but I decided not to. I feel comfortable being who I am. [...] People want to call me a lesbian because I’m with Julia, and I say, ‘No, I’m just me. I’m not a lesbian.’ I’m tired of being labeled. I don’t even like the label *transgender*. [...] I am Sylvia Rivera. Ray Rivera left home at the age of 10 to become Sylvia. [...] I don’t need the operation to find my identity. I have found my niche, and I’m happy and content with it. I take my hormones. I’m living the way Sylvia wants to live. I’m not living in the straight world; I’m not living in the gay world; I’m just living in my own world with Julia and my friends.” It is interesting to note that even when Rivera starts to use what could be understood as a narrative of individual determination, she circles back to her formation in community. Refusing the labels lesbian and transgender, is part of constituting the difference between the normative connotations of class, race and sexuality associated with those terms and Rivera’s world. Breaking from the narrow citation of a single axis of Rivera’s identity, Rivera recalls the histories of racial, class, sexual and gendered abjection associated with the street drag queen as well as the visible vulnerabilities that world evokes. Sylvia Rivera, “Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones,” *GenderQueer: Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary*, (New York: Alyson books, 2002), 76-7.

know what cross-dressers were until much later. The street queens have always been prostitutes to survive, because some of us left home so early, or it just wasn't feasible to be working if you wanted to wear your makeup and do your thing. But there was that division at the balls where you had drag queens who were not from the same side of the tracks we were. Some of them were very affluent.⁵⁷

The roots of Rivera's street drag queen identity come from the abjection of Latino effeminacy and therefore racialize what could be understood as merely a gender identity. While Rivera claims her child-self as "becoming a beautiful drag queen" she is quick to distinguish the class difference between the street drag queens and the drag queens walking in balls. For street queens, sex work is necessitated by homelessness at an early age, dodging child welfare services and landlords. Recall Rivera's finding sex work through the *maricons* riding the subway in the epigraph, and the everyday visible vulnerability of the street queens wearing makeup and doing their thing makes the category of "cross-dressing" a rather reductive interpretation of street queen identity. It is only by reading backward that Rivera notes there were queens who were cross-dressers. While balls are designated social spaces for drag queens the everyday-ness of street queen's visible vulnerability qua sex work and homelessness highlights the spatial-class designation "street" from "ball" queen.

Moreover as the street queen encompasses a specific spatial-class-occupational designation within the racialized gendered and sexualized drag queen, Rivera demonstrates that the street queen is entirely reliant on the coalitional support structures of sistership for survival. Rivera's memories of black trans woman Marsha P Johnson begin with a night of hustling on Sixth avenue that ended when Johnson "called me to her

⁵⁷ Rivera, 69, 71.

side, we introduced ourselves, and a very strong sistership was born.”⁵⁸ Sylvia Rivera uses Marsha’s calling over as a means to recall the other street queens of that era:

We stood by each other, had each other’s back for many years. And even back in the days of pre-Stonewall, we would sit on 44th Street, a lot of us girls like Marsha and Vanessa, Miss Edwina, Miss Josie, a whole bunch of us, would sit around the room. We’d be getting high or something and we’d start talking politics. We’d start talking politics and about when things were going to change for us as human beings. [...] Even when we were living on 44th Street, Marsha always took in people, gave them a place to stay. At that time, before Stonewall, everyone always had a house full of people, people crashing because there was no room. If one queen had a place and you were her friend, she would gladly let you sleep on her floor or share her bed. There would be not just the two of us; there would be maybe four or five. And everybody was sneaking around not wanting to get caught by whoever we were renting from.⁵⁹

Working around conditions of poverty through house hopping and room sharing, Marsha’s coalitional sistership is also an alternative mode of kinship from heteronormative state structures.⁶⁰ The systematic conditions determining the queens’ crowded and constantly shifting living conditions are verbalized in the queens’ political discussions about when their liminality will become “full” subjectivity. Here the question discussed is not about becoming more visible, but less visibly vulnerable to the multiple state violences: arrest for prostitution and consequent susceptibility to sexual violence in male jails; rape by clients; and proofing by cops during raids of gay bars. Occupying the place of surplus life in U.S. capitalism, the street queen’s untaxed and unreported income places them in a direct antithetical relationship with the nation-state while also providing the necessary affective surplus labor and liminal citizenship on which capitalism is constituted.

⁵⁸ Rivera, 72.

⁵⁹ Rivera, 72.

⁶⁰ The alternative kinship network of queen sistership later bloomed into STAR and STAR House which provided housing and food for young queens from 1971-3. Rivera, 81-2.

Street queens are rendered visibly vulnerable liminal subjects by heteronormative state terror through police enforcement of prostitution laws and sex-segregation of queens in male jails, resulting in deterioration of the street queen's mental health through continual exposure to police violence and drug addiction in poor communities of color. This is most explicitly addressed by Rivera's discussion of the events surrounding Marsha P. Johnson's death and the police writing off of Marsha's potential murder as suicide.

Talking to Ghosts: Looking after Marsha P. Johnson and Necropolitical Bare Life

"My nerves have been bad lately, and I've been trying to get myself back together since my husband died in March. It's very hard for me. [...] He went out to get some money to buy some drugs and he got shot. He died on 2nd Street and First Avenue. [...] I've been going to the doctor left and right. And then to get arrested for prostitution was just the tops!

It's it dangerous sometimes when someone thinks you're a woman and then they find out you're a man?

Yes it is. You can lose your life. I've almost lost my life five times; I think I'm a cat." – Marsha P. Johnson in an interview with Allen Young, "Rapping with a Street Transvestite Revolutionary," from *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*

"There are two stories of how Marsha died. One is that she supposedly committed suicide, and the other is that somebody murdered her. They fished her body out of the Hudson River at the end of Christopher Street nine years ago. [...] Marsha had been on SSI (Social Security Disability) for quite some time because she had several nervous breakdowns. She had been locked up in Bellevue and Manhattan State. [...] She had a doctor who did not diagnose her syphilis right away. So when they finally caught it, it was in the second stages. Marsha lived in her own realm, and she saw things through different eyes. She liked to stay in that world, so with that and the syphilis infection...and then her husband, Cantrell, was shot by an off-duty officer. [...] She would always go down to the end of Christopher Street, supposedly talking to her brother and wanting to go talk to her father in the water." – Sylvia Rivera, "Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones" from *GenderQueer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary*

In the above quotes Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera address how visibility is bound up with death and talking with ghosts can be a means of survival for those racialized, gendered and sexualized abjects under neoliberal capitalism's necropolitics. Unlike the "factual" report of her death certificate, these testimonies fleshes out the historical context and affective conditions around Marsha's death. Initially printed in 1972 shortly after the founding of STAR, Karla Jay and Allen Young's collection *Out of*

the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation includes a piece stitched together from a series of interviews between Young and Marsha P. Johnson during 1970-1.⁶¹ Johnson, described as a street sex worker, trans- activist and pre-op transgender woman, is subjected to rhetoric by Young that reinforces her “male” anatomy as dangerous to her sex work, the prison industrial complex, the police state and ultimately her life. STAR is positioned in relationship to the Gay Liberation Movement, and when Johnson brings up the subject of misogyny in gay male spaces, the interviewer, Young, quickly moves to a different question. Young does not ask Johnson about her characterization of her deceased lover, Cantrell, as her husband. What is noticeable is Young’s desire to frame Johnson in the terms of the then new gay male subjectivity in service of the project of Gay Liberation. To accomplish this, Young identifies Johnson as a “transvestite,” and scrutinizes the ways in which Johnson is non-normative within the gay liberation movement. For instance, in one specific back-and-forth about the difference between “gay brothers” and “transvestites,” Young and Johnson have the following exchange:

I remember when STAR was first formed there was a lot of discussion about the special oppression that transvestites experience. Can you say something about that?

We still feel oppression by other gay brothers. Gay sisters don’t think too bad of

transvestites. Gay brothers do. [...]

Do you understand why? Do you have an explanation for that?

Of course I can understand why. A lot of gay brothers don’t like women!

And

transvestites remind you of women.⁶²

Johnson’s racialized gender, class and sexuality remain completely ignored while Young highlights the queerness of her profession as a sex worker and work as the vice president

⁶¹ P. for “Pay it no mind.”

⁶² Allen Young and Marsha P. Johnson. “Rapping with a Street Transvestite Revolutionary.” *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*. 1972. Eds. Karla Jay and Allen Young. (New York: New York University Press, 1992). 114-5.

of STAR. This interview with Johnson is one of only two print pieces focusing on Johnson for more than a page; both pieces are in queer anthologies framed around the project of visibility and liberation. Yet Johnson's nonnormative life and devalued racialized and sexualized death fall outside the boundaries of homonormative visibility and actually function as the necropolitical abject that haunts the white middle-class gender-conforming gay American.

Given the constraints and competing archival, historical, and documentary desires of Young, Rivera, Johnson and myself how and in what contexts can Marsha P. Johnson's life and death be grieved? I understand Johnson as occupying racialized, gendered, classed and sexualized bare life in a state of exception always already present in the necropolitical American nation-state.⁶³ This understanding refuses reading Johnson as a victim of various state institutions (the mental asylum, prison industrial complex, failure of the welfare state) which Lisa Marie Cacho argues is predicated on assumptions of valuing normativity and aspirations of alignment with "the American Dream," (and therefore upholds cisnormative time). When understood in this light, the conversations with ghosts of racialized and gendered kin that Rivera speaks about in the interview in *GenderQueer* cannot be read as purely an act of syphilis-induced madness. Rather I read them as a means of living and surviving as a necropolitical abject. Further, the cause of Johnson's death is less determinative of her value and ability to be grieved when her life is framed through U.S. necropolitics via Rivera's essay. Haunting the biopolitical texts in which she appears, Johnson's contrapuntal relationship to visibility

⁶³ Lisa Marie Cacho, "Racialized Hauntings of the Devalued Dead," *Strange Affinities: Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racializations*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 27.

re-members the racialized, sexualized, gendered and classed queers on which celebratory gay history depends.

Dependence on the bare life of queer history is never clearer than in Sylvia Rivera's memorialization of Johnson in her 2002 essay "Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones."⁶⁴ Written shortly before her death at age 50 from liver cancer, the essay finds Sylvia Rivera remembers those queens exiled and erased from mainstream LGBT movement history. Rather than resurrect the dead to re-member them in a universalizing project of trans visibility or individual survival, Rivera recalls her Venezuelan mother, black transwoman Marsha P. Johnson, and white drag queen Lee Brewster to invoke the continuing perils of denied sisterhood amongst varying kinds of racialized and sexualized queens. This denial stems from the intersection of systematic racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism and transphobia as well as the demonization of sex work. For Rivera responsibly "looking after" queens lost to revolutionary movements they helped create means fighting the historical forgetting of the presence of those queens.

Ironically, Rivera's essay is an anomaly to the volume it appeared in, *GenderQueer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary*. As the back cover advertises, "thirty-eight first person accounts of gender construction, exploration, and questioning provide a groundwork for cultural discussion, political action, and even greater possibilities of autonomous gender choices." The final sentence of the cover informs the potential buyer that the academic credentials of Nestle, Wilchins and Howell "provide a social, cultural, and political exploration of gender identity that is essential reading for

⁶⁴ Giorgio Agamben defines bare life as, "the life of *homo sacer* (sacred man), who *may be killed and yet not sacrificed*, and whose essential function in modern politics we intend to assert." Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1998) 8-9.

anyone interested in gender rights – and human rights in general.” This is echoed by the final essay in the collection, penned by Wilchins which ends with the declaration, “ensuring full equality for all Americans regardless of gender is not only about Matthew Shepard, Brandon Teena, Freddie Martinez, and Willie Houston – people who lost their lives, who were picked out and picked on because they were slight or gay or blond or black or visibly queer – but about working until each and every one of us is freed from this most pernicious, divisive, and destructive insanity called gender-based stereotypes.”⁶⁵ Through this discursive framing *GenderQueer* claims gender identity as simultaneously a kind of neoliberal project of individual autonomy in need of protection, and a universal human rights category.

The push for national visibility and the right to be a categorized protected group plays into the desire for biopolitical citizenship, subjects managed by various institutions of the nation-state and regulated according to the standards of cisnormative time. Nicholas Rose and Carlos Novas characterize biological citizenship as, “a demand for particular protections, for the enactment or cessation or particular policies or actions, or... access to special resources – here, ‘to a form of social welfare based on medical, scientific, and legal criteria that both acknowledge biological injury and compensate for it.’”⁶⁶ Seeking redress for previous injury, biopolitical citizenship holds the state responsible for biowarfare and death worlds by attending to “the increasing importance of corporeality to practices of identity.”⁶⁷ By placing Rivera’s essay at the front of the collection, editors Nestle, Howell and Wilchins unconsciously relegate her narrative to

⁶⁵ Riki Wilchins, “Gender Rights Are Human Rights,” *GenderQueer: Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary*, (New York: Alyson Books, 2002), 296-7.

⁶⁶ Nicholas Rose and Carlos Novas, “Biological Citizenship,” *Global Assemblages: technology, politics, and ethics as anthropological problems*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 144.

⁶⁷ Rose and Novas, 440.

the past, and seem to frame her within a discourse of progress ending with gender non-conformity qua identity becoming a visible queer category in need of state protections. While deconstructing stable categories of gender (by ironically positing genderqueerness as the new liberatory category) whiteness and homonormativity disappear narratives of systematic racism, classism, effemiphobia and transphobia for those subjects who are not white, masculine and upper-middle class. Structured around U.S. necropolitics, Rivera's narrative of street queens living and dying amidst their physical and social erasure is an outlier to *GenderQueer*'s singular vision.⁶⁸

In "Looking for M-" Kara Keeling argues that far from being positive, visibility is in fact historically injurious to black subjectivity. She writes, "Insofar as colonial logics can be said to undergird present socio-economic relations, black people can become visible only through those logics, so danger, if not death, attends every black's appearance. Yet precisely because what is visible is caught in the struggle for hegemony and its processes of valorization, one cannot want the relative security promised by visibility."⁶⁹ Visibility is predicated on the desire for security through sharing a piece of hegemony's pie which inevitably will return to harm those already on the losing end of colonial logics. The asymmetrical racial, gendered, sexual and class relations of colonialism's past feed into the present socio-economic conditions of appearance for African Americans making the fantasy of security through visibility impossible. When Johnson becomes publicly visible in the accounts made in "Queens in Exile" and "Rapping" she is subject to arrest, institutionalization, police surveillance, and death,

⁶⁸ Jessie Gan makes a similar critique of Rivera's inclusion in *GenderQueer* to lend "multicultural 'diversity' and historical authenticity to the young, racially unmarked coalitional identity, 'genderqueer,' that had emerged out of middle-class college settings." "Still at the Back of the Bus." (128)

⁶⁹ Keeling, 576.

demonstrating that the dangerous conditions of her visibility are bound to state instruments of pathologization and death.

Paradoxically, street level activism requires making oneself visibly vulnerable. At the beginning of Young's interview with Johnson, when Young brings up a recent series of arrests of STAR members Johnson traces them back to an interview she gave for the *Village Voice*'s coverage of the closure of STAR house and the members' subsequent homelessness. To bring public awareness of the conditions of Street Queens/Transvestite poverty and the presence of STAR, in the article Johnson and Rivera declare STAR's mission to "destroy the system that's fucking us over" with a membership "mainly into whoring and radical politics" (Bell, *STAR Trek*). However, Johnson suggests that the systematic arrests of the named street queens/transvestites was due to detailing their locations as street hustling "girlies" born male working around 42nd Street in the *Village Voice*. Advocating for STAR and trying to reach more possible members Rivera and Johnson's voluntary visibility made them targets for the police state through oppositional narratives of sexual deviance. As Young recalls his conversation with Johnson:

You were starting to tell me a few minutes ago that a group of STAR people got busted. What was that about?

Well, we wrote an article for Arthur Bell, of the Village Voice, about STAR, and we told him that we were all "girlies" and we're working up on the 42nd Street area. And we all gave our names – Bambi, Andorra, Marcia [Marsha], and Sylvia. And we all went out to hustle, you know, about a few days after the article came out in the Village Voice, and you see we get busted one after another, in a matter of a couple of weeks. I don't know whether it was the article, or whether we just got busted because it was hot. (112-3)

Visibility is a quandary for the members of STAR, one Johnson seems to understand may very well cost her her life.

Increasing the life chances of other street queens/transvestites means Johnson and Rivera had to be visible enough to create communal coalition, however fleeting and temporary. The founding of STAR House came from a 1971 Gay Liberation Front sit-in at New York University and Rivera and Johnson's desire to keep younger queens/transvestites off the streets. Financed by sex work, STAR House depended on Johnson and the older members of STAR's erotic capital through their alienated, criminalized labor. As such, being visible (in a specific sexualized and racialized context) was not something Rivera or Johnson could choose to disengage with if they wanted to maintain or improve the life chances of their coalitional community. Rivera recalls:

STAR House was born out of the Weinstein Hall demonstration, because there were so many of us living together, with Marsha and myself renting two rooms and the hotel room, and even then we still didn't have enough room to house people. [...] Marsha and I and Bubbles and Andora and Bambi kept that building going by selling ourselves out on the streets while trying to keep the children off the streets. [...] So the house was well supplied, the building's rent was paid, and everybody in the neighborhood loved STAR House.⁷⁰

Johnson and the members of STAR illustrate Agamben's narration of history as that of the "people"/bare life by dwelling in a state of exception to both normative racial, sexual and classed U.S. citizenship and the gay liberation movement. Agamben's description of the people's history returns us to Mbembe's definition of sovereignty as the capability to define a subject's disposability. According to Agamben, the people's history is in fact a narrative of street people working against a continual state of exception. Agamben describes this struggle as such:

Every interpretation of the political meaning of the term "people" must begin with the singular fact that in modern European languages, "people"

⁷⁰ Rivera, 81-2.

also always indicates the poor, the disinherited, and the excluded. One term thus names both the constitutive political subject and the class that is, de facto if not de jure, excluded from politics. [...] But this also means that the constitution of the human species in a political body passes through a fundamental division and that in the concept “people” we can easily recognize the categorical pairs that we have seen to define the original political structure: bare life (people) and political existence (People), exclusion and inclusion, *zoë* and *bios*. The “people” thus always already carries the fundamental biopolitical fracture within itself. It is what cannot be included in the whole of which it is a part and what cannot belong to the set in which it is always already included.⁷¹

The necessary counterpoint to political and cultural life, bare life and history of the people creates the terms and limits of state recognized life. There is no operation of sovereign power over letting certain populations live without the simultaneous generation of bare life. In these terms, STAR’s declared project of “destroying the system that’s fucking us over” is at once logically utopian and impossible. Exploitative bare life is valuable to sovereign power and political and cultural life because it determines the limits of valuation. The state may point to those it constitutes as bare life as examples of dangerous deviants undeserving of biopolitical protections or life.⁷²

Under cisnormative time, Johnson’s death can be made visible as bare life to warn those in the category of political life how not to live, without attending to the necropolitical heart of the U.S. political system. Dependent on similar colonial logics of visibility to what Keeling addresses in “Looking for M-” the necropolitical production of death and simultaneous subsumption of life reproduces historical practices of state violence in the present. What remains invisible to all but those who constitute bare life is

⁷¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995), 176-8.

⁷² Looking at different forms of kinship, anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli and political theorist Angela Mitropoulos make similar cases about state protections being extended or denied based on forms of intimacy marked deviant. See: Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Empire of Love: Toward a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy and Carnality* (Durham, Duke University Press: 2006). Angela Mitropoulos, *Contract & Contagion: From Biopolitics to Oikonomia* (Brooklyn, Minor Compositions, 2012).

the operations of racial, class, sexual and gender capital on Marsha's narrowed life chances as a black, mentally disabled, and unemployed trans woman in the creation of states of exception. Instead, the institutions supporting cis-normative time makes visible those, like Marsha P. Johnson, constituting bare life in the absence of the necropolitical conditions letting them die. Focusing on the non-normative trajectories of Marsha's life (what enabled who to survive so long) the systems of policing and enforcing normativity (the prison industrial complex, medical industrial complex, social security identification) escape any responsibility for the production of her death. Framed as irresponsible, insane or lazy biological citizens mismanaging the "equal" opportunities for capital accumulation, neoliberal capitalism's narratives of colorblindness, sexual deviance and illegality makes bare life seem like the state of exception it is not.

The binary logic of "good deserving citizen"/"bad lazy deviant citizen," which is formulated around the assumed universal idealization of and aspiration to normativity, carries over to the politics of mourning; specifically who is grievable and how they can be grieved. Lisa Marie Cacho critiques the equation of value with normativity, and how the racialized dead can only be seen as grievable recursively by holding unacknowledged forms of normativity. Cacho explains:

Ascribing (readily recognizable) value to the racialized devalued *requires* recuperating what registers as deviant and disreputable to reinterpret those devalued beliefs, behaviors, and bodies as misrecognized versions of normativity who deserve so much better. Value is ascribed through explicitly or implicitly disavowing relationships to the already devalued and disciplined categories of deviance and nonnormativity. [...] In a sense, a comparative analytic assumes that in the United States, human value, legally universalized as normative, is made legible in relation to the

deviant, the non-American, the nonnormative, and the recalcitrant: the legally repudiated others of U.S. value.⁷³

With normativity remaining as the touchstone, Cacho demonstrates that in order to be grievable, the “behaviors, beliefs and bodies” of the racialized devalued first need to be proven “misrecognized” forms of normativity. To make the reasons for grieving legible, one has to disavow any form of deviance or nonnormativity the racialized (and in Johnson’s case gendered and sexualized) devalued dead have been disciplined for embodying and enacting. Essentially forgetting the violent conditions created by constituting human value through normativity, legibility and therefore grievability will be impossible for those who have no desire or way to be reinterpreted as normative. The “deviant, the non-American, the nonnormative, and the recalcitrant” are those constituting bare life and may not be legally legible or understandably mourned.

Returning to the event of Johnson’s death and her conversations with ghosts, it is striking how Johnson’s visible nonnormativity plays into Rivera’s struggle with the cause of Johnson’s death, and the terms on which Rivera will allow herself to grieve. How would value be ascribed differently to Johnson if she was murdered in an act of racist transphobia and/or homophobia rather than committing suicide? What do both contexts betray about how Johnson can be mourned in Rivera’s witness? Most importantly, is determining the cause of Johnson’s death actually a necropolitical red herring if she really constitutes bare life? Rivera says:

There are two stories of how Marsha died. One is that she supposedly committed suicide, and the other is that somebody murdered her. They fished her body out of the Hudson River at the end of Christopher Street nine years ago. It was very shocking for me when I got the telegram.

⁷³ Lisa Marie Cacho, “Racialized Hauntings of the Devalued Dead,” *Strange Affinities: Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racializations*, eds. Grace Hong and Roderick Ferguson, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 26-7.

Actually I was really pissed at her because our pact was that we would cross the Jordan together. She would get angry with me when I tried to off myself, so we made a pact. That's why I find it hard to believe she committed suicide.⁷⁴

Rivera lays out the mystery of Marsha Johnson's murder in a tone leading the reader to believe Johnson was murdered. Skeptically reporting the conclusion of the police ("she supposedly committed suicide"), Rivera's anger at the possibility of Johnson taking her own life is compounded by a sense of still fresh immediacy at the shock of receiving the news of Johnson's death ("the fished her body out of the Hudson River at the end of Christopher Street"). Rivera must discount the suicide story, the story of the state, to reinforce Johnson's prior commitment to live and die with Sylvia. As a devalued racialized, gendered and sexualized street queens/transvestite Johnson needs to have been murdered by an anonymous killer to be justifiably mourned by Rivera. The possibility of Johnson's suicide is a double betrayal of Rivera, for disallowing Sylvia "cross the Jordan" earlier by breaking their pact and therefore leaving Rivera no recourse to mourn her friend as a victim of hate. Rivera's anger at possibly being betrayed doubly is frustrated by the lack of conclusive evidence for Johnson's murder and the few details surrounding Johnson's death.

Because she did not directly witness Johnson's death, Rivera can only piece together the narratives of death others give to her, some of which contradict Rivera's desire for Johnson's victimization through accidental or intentional murder. Holding out for evidence of Johnson's desire to live, Rivera points to the structural institutions that limited Johnson's life chances, but simultaneously takes away Johnson's remaining self-determinative agency. Rivera writes:

⁷⁴ Rivera, 72.

Marsha had been on SSI (Social Security Disability) for quite some time because she had several nervous breakdowns. She had been locked up several times in Bellvue and Manhattan State. Her mind started really going. She had a doctor who did not diagnose her syphilis right away. So when they finally caught it, it was in the second stages. Marsha lived in her own realm, and she saw things through different eyes. She liked to stay in that world, so with that and the syphilis infection...and then her husband, Cantrell, was shot by an off-duty officer. He was shot to death and she really went over the edge.⁷⁵

What does it mean to go “over the edge” in a context of continuous erasure and literal death? Rivera’s list of state originated ways and means of pathologizing Marsha’s behavior as dis-abling and in need of surveillance narrows down until even her infected body is working against her. Johnson’s nervous breakdowns due to the stresses of life on the street results in her lock up in state run mental institutions and classification as disabled. As a black transwoman sex worker it is highly unlikely that Johnson received adequate medical care, or that her doctor would even bother to report Johnson’s syphilis until it reached the late stages.

But it is not the medical institutionalization, or a late stage syphilis infected mind upon Johnson’s body that Rivera targets as the cause of Johnson’s plunge into living completely “in her own realm” seeing life through “different eyes.” It is an unnecessary everyday act of police violence (the officer was off-duty) against Johnson’s black male lover Cantrell for being a visible man of color involved in “deviant” behavior (exchanging money for drugs), an act that results in Cantrell’s death and that throws Johnson’s own visible vulnerability in the open. What comfort was left for Marsha P. Johnson that did not involve acknowledging and communing with her growing company of state-created specters? After all, through cisnormative temporal regulation she was already in the process of becoming one of them.

⁷⁵ Rivera, 72-3.

Perhaps Marsha P. Johnson searched for and spoke with the racialized masculine devalued dead, re-valuing to their lives through a haunted non-secular mode of trans-temporality; a “looking after” and towards in the face of social and almost certain physical death. In-between the times of health and illness, invisibility and visibility, loss and overwhelming grief maybe Marsha’s visitations to the docks were driven by a need to regain the affective ties that had sustained her survivability. Participating in conversations with the dead and being haunted would have put Marsha in what sociologist Avery Gordon terms the sociality of haunting. Gordon elaborates:

I have offered a cultural hypothesis: haunting is...a specific type of sociality. I might even suggest that haunting is the most general instance of the clamoring return of the reduced to a delicate social experience struggling, even unaware, with its shadowy but exigent presence. Haunting is the sociality of living with ghosts, a sociality both tangible and tactile as well as ephemeral and imaginary.⁷⁶

Feeling out the ghosts in her present to remember the past, Johnson might have moved to life amongst the “reduced” over life among the living leaving Sylvia behind. In this speculative reforming of community with the other ghosts of U.S. necropolitics, operating outside of recognizable cisnormative time, Johnson is lead to the site of her eventual death. Rivera describes:

Bob Kohler, who was very close to her and to me, says that she committed suicide. He was closer to her the last few months. She always would go down to the end of Christopher Street, supposedly talking to her brother and wanting to go talk to her father in the water.⁷⁷

Kohler, a once removed witness in Rivera’s narrative, contradicts Rivera’s desired assessment of murder by declaring the cause of Johnson’s death suicide. Retracing Johnson’s steps to the Hudson River docks at the end of Christopher Street he reports

⁷⁶ Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, 1997, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 201.

⁷⁷ Rivera, 73.

Johnson's conversations with her brother and search for her father in her soon-to-be watery grave. Kohler's report reflects Rivera's earlier declaration of Johnson living and seeing in her own spectral realm, distancing Marsha's sociality of haunting from Rivera's attempts to see Johnson living through disease. While Marsha Johnson's spectrality haunts Sylvia Rivera's text, there is still a barrier between the space and time of Johnson's haunting and Rivera's witnessing of Johnson's death.

In Derrida's work on the poetics and politics of witnessing in Paul Celan's poetry on the Holocaust, Derrida puts forth the impossibility of witnessing in the place of the deceased other. Giving an account, a testimony, is always in lieu of those who did not survive. Derrida argues:

It is a matter of death, if death is what one cannot witness *for* the other, and above all because one cannot witness it *for oneself*. The surviving, as place of testimony and as testament, would here find at once its possibility and its impossibility, its chance and its threat. It would find them in this structure and in this event.⁷⁸

The witness is always a survivor of death, and as such is faced with the ethical dilemma of how to provide a testimony which does not erase the dead. The dead, now Other to those witnesses on the side of life, have no access to language or means to give an account of their experience of death to those can still speak.

But as Gordon suggests, haunting allows the dead to speak through sociality (even though those who witness must first be attentive to ghosts) and structures of feeling. Haunting also allows the conditions of death, and the constitution of bare life to be witnessed hopefully testified, even if that testimony is always already lacking the evidence of experience. As a secondary witness to Marsha P. Johnson's death, Rivera is

⁷⁸ Jacques Derrida, "Poetics and Politics of Witnessing," *Sovereignties in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan*. eds. Thomas Dutoit and Outi Pasanen, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 91.

unable to provide a direct cause of death (that would require Johnson's impossible testimony), and that is precisely why it allows one to question the very desire for a cause.

Until the final paragraph on Johnson's death Rivera's tone foreshadows murder as the cause of death, but she withdraws her assuredness at the absence of a motive. Rivera, who values Johnson for all the reasons the necropolitical state does not, cannot comprehend anyone outside of a transphobe wanting to kill Johnson. Rivera admits:

And there is testimony that some guys were messing with her and they threw her in the river. The police couldn't prove it. So I'm still stuck in the middle. When I heard she was murdered, I couldn't understand why anybody would kill her. Marsha would give the blouse off her back if you asked for it. She would give you her last dollar. She would take off her shoes. I've seen her do all these things, so I couldn't see someone killing her. I know there are crazy people out there. But it's not like she wasn't a known transperson. She was loved anywhere she went. Marsha was a great woman.⁷⁹

Amazingly what Rivera cannot understand is that the same colonial logics of black visibility that allowed an off-duty officer to kill Cantrell subject Marsha to death at the moment of her appearance, celebratory or otherwise. Johnson could have been murdered by virtue of being a visible black transwoman walking alone on the pier after gay pride. In fact being a generous "known transperson" could have made Johnson a more available target for the "crazy people out there." Johnson's visible racialized, gendered, sexualized and classed nonnormativity was enough to make her a dispensable ungrievable life. No motive was needed.

Rivera's grief is predicated on and limited by motives: whether Johnson's desire to end her life through suicide, or an imagined killer's hate of something Johnson did wrong. Anger at betrayal aside, Rivera's testimony justifies Johnson's intent behind her possible suicide by listing all the state run institutions policing Johnson and limiting her

⁷⁹ Rivera, 73.

already narrow life chances. Rivera may angrily grieve Johnson, but as necropolitical bare life Johnson cannot be heroically mourned in cisnormative time; only devalued. If Johnson was killed in an act of racist misogynist transphobic murder, she can die a heroic death and be mourned by “recuperating what registers deviant and disreputable to reinterpret those devalued beliefs, behaviors, and bodies as misrecognized versions of normativity who deserve so much better.”⁸⁰ But as Cacho in her article shows this still leaves normativity intact and victimizes Johnson.

However when understood through necropolitical visibility, motives are not needed to explain the cause of Johnson’s death. Instead Sylvia Rivera’s essay acts as testimony to the necessarily haunted life of a black trans woman sex worker. The cause of Johnson’s death becomes negligible to the underlying narratives of visible vulnerability for queerly racialized, gendered, sexualized, classed and racialized subjects under U.S. necropolitics.

“Queens in Exile” and “Rapping with a Street Transvestite Revolutionary”’s queer placement in their respective anthologies haunt the contexts of their texts. Rather than a celebratory call to regulation/protection by the state through human rights discourse and visibility, Rivera’s essay and Johnson’s interview testify to the colonial logics of visibility and the inherent necropolitical character of the U.S. nation-state. Paying some mind to Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera means listening to the voices of ghosts to soon departed from life, and the reasons why they still haunt us. Most importantly, in means asking if they were living as ghosts before their spectral return.

Spectral temporality will attach itself to trans-temporality again in my third chapter when I pick up with R. Zamora Linmark’s postmodern novel *Leche*. But for now

⁸⁰ Cacho, 26.

let us see what happens when cisnormative temporal regulation travels across national borders and attaches itself to a white colonial trans body. If, under the conditions of survival, taking up discourses of incorporation were sometimes necessary for trans of color lives, narratives and bodies, how does a body privileged enough to refuse those discourses engage with the question of visibility? How might Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka similarly fall between the times of cis and trans temporalities?

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH 52-036568 110

1. NAME OF DECEASED Malcolm Michaelis
(Type or Print) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Last Name)

2. PLACE OF DEATH NEW YORK CITY Manhattan BOROUGH
2a. Name of hospital or other facility (To be filled in by the Physician)
Hudson River

3. DATE AND HOUR OF DEATH OR FOUND DEAD July 6, 1992 5:27
3a. (Month) (Day) (Year) 3b. HOUR

4. DEATH WAS CAUSED BY Drowning
4. Immediate cause
5. APPROXIMATE AGE 46 Years

6. MANNER OF DEATH (Check all that apply):
 Investigation (P/FM) Accident Suicide
 Toxicology Homicide Undetermined

7. INJURY DATE OF INJURY 7-6-92 7b. TIME Unk 7c. AT WORK YES NO
7d. PLACE OF INJURY Hudson river 7e. HOW INJURY OCCURRED Suicide

8. MANNER OF DEATH (Check all that apply):
 Investigation (P/FM) Accident Suicide
 Toxicology Homicide Undetermined

9. Autopsy YES NO
10. On the basis of examination and/or investigation, in my opinion, death occurred due to the causes and manner as stated.

11. M.E. Case No. M92-5002 12a. Date pronounced dead (Month, Day, Year) July 7, 1992 12b. TIME AM PM
12c. (If different from 12a)

13. Usual Residence NJ Hudson Hoboken Marine View Plaza #1 07030#10F
13a. State 13b. County 13c. City, Town, or Location 13d. Street & House No 13e. Apt No 13f. Inside City Limits of 7c

14. Served in U.S. Armed Forces No Yes 1 15. Marital Status (Check One) Never Married Widowed Married or separated Divorced
16. Name of Surviving Spouse (If wife, give maiden name)

17. Date of birth of Decedent August 28 1945 18. Age at last birthday 46 19. Social Security No

20a. Usual Occupation (Kind of work done during most of working lifetime, do not enter retired) Disabled 20b. Kind of Business

21. Birthplace (City & State or Foreign Country) Elizabeth, NJ 22. Education (Check only one) 0-11 12 13-15 16 17+
23. Other names by which decedent was known Malcolm Michaelis, Jr

24. NAME OF FATHER OF DECEDENT Malcolm Michaelis, Sr. 25. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER OF DECEDENT Alberta Claiborne

26a. NAME OF INFORMANT Jean Michaelis 26b. RELATIONSHIP TO DECEASED Sister 26c. ADDRESS (City) (State) (Zip) 953 Lafayette St., Elizabeth, NJ 07201

27a. NAME OF CEMETERY OR CREMATORY Rosehill Crematory 27b. LOCATION (City, Town, State and Country) Linden, NJ 27c. DATE OF BURIAL OR CREMATION July 9, 1992

28a. FUNERAL DIRECTOR Redden FH, Inc 28b. ADDRESS 325 West 14th. St., NY, NY 10014

BUREAU OF VITAL RECORDS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH THE CITY OF NEW YORK

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a record on file in the Department of Health. The Department of Health does not certify to the truth of the statements made thereon, as no inquiry as to the facts has been provided by law.

DEATH TRANSCRIPT

Carlene Price
CARLENE PRICE
CITY REGISTRAR

Do Not accept this transcript unless it bears the raised seal of the Department of Health. The reproduction or alteration of this transcript is prohibited by Section 3.21 of the New York City Health Code.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH THE CITY OF NEW YORK

DOCUMENT NO. B 646512

DATE ISSUED JUL 9 1992

Figure 1.1 Malcolm Michaels death certificate

APPLICATION FOR SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER
(Or Replacement of Lost Card)

Information Furnished On This Form is CONFIDENTIAL

147-34-6493
 DO NOT WRITE IN THE ABOVE SPACE

Read Instructions on Back Before Filling in Form. Print in Dark Ink or Use Typewriter.

1	FIRST FULL NAME YOU USE IN WORK OR BUSINESS (First Name) (Middle Name or Initial - If none, draw line) (Last Name) MALCOLM MICHAELS, JR.	3	DATE OF BIRTH (Month) (Day) (Year) Aug. 24, 1945
2	NAME GIVEN YOU AT BIRTH SAME	6	AGE ON LAST BIRTHDAY 14
4	PLACE OF BIRTH (City) (County) (State) Elizabeth Union N. J.	7	SEX MALE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FEMALE <input type="checkbox"/>
5	MOTHER'S FULL NAME AT HER BIRTH (State) (Date)	8	FATHER'S FULL NAME (Regardless of whether living or dead)
9	HAVE YOU EVER BEFORE APPLIED FOR OR HAD A SOCIAL SECURITY OR RAILROAD RETIREMENT NUMBER? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DONT KNOW <input type="checkbox"/>	11 ARE YOU NOW— EMPLOYED <input type="checkbox"/> SELF-EMPLOYED <input type="checkbox"/> UNEMPLOYED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
10	PRINT YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER IF YOU KNOW IT (Account Number)	12 MAILING ADDRESS (Number and Street) (City) (State) 1056 Lafayette St. Elizabeth N. J.	
13	TODAY'S DATE 8/22/60	14 WRITE YOUR NAME AS YOU USUALLY WRITE IT. (Do Not Print or Type—Use Dark Ink) <i>Malcolm Michaels</i>	

Return completed application to nearest SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION DISTRICT OFFICE

TREASURY DEPARTMENT Internal Revenue Service
Form SS-5 (Revised 2/59)

Figure 1.2 Malcolm Michael's Application for Social Security Account Number (1960)

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Chapter 2
Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka in/on the Threshold: A Meditation on the Time of
Waiting, Post-colonial Crossings, and Religious Desire

We, the readers, know but desire a different ending, and so does Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka, the author. There is a series of deaths and rebirths, a couple of name changes, a religious conversion, and more than a few professions held and discarded in the memoir *Out of the Ordinary* by the author of and subject of this chapter Dr. Laurence Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka. I have been sitting with, editing and attempting to publish the manuscript of Dillon/Jivaka's autobiography for well over seven years now, and have found that summarizing Dillon/Jivaka's life story in any sort of linear fashion is near impossible. It has been easier to minimally engage with *Out of the Ordinary's* diachronic sequencing of life events and focus on the synchronic moments of Dillon interacting with institutions regulating his life chances and choices. Some of the other difficulties in retelling Dillon/Jivaka's story diachronically pertain to the gaps and fissures that inevitably surface in any historical record. Save for a handful of publications under his various names, and a couple of newsprint articles uncovering "what happened" to Laura Maude Dillon, Dillon/Jivaka left few material traces. He had the privilege to cover his tracks and keep moving. His multiple lines of flight also suggest Dillon/Jivaka didn't particularly want his gender history to be found.

Already there is some conflict of interest in continuing to pursue *Out of the Ordinary's* publication and in writing this chapter. On the one hand there is a large and increasingly vocal trans community looking for historical figures, "firsts" in regards to history (Dillon was the first person assigned female at birth to utilize synthesized testosterone and have both top and multiple bottom surgeries resulting in his

phalloplasty). On the other hand, Dillon/Jivaka himself declares, “If men and women had a Right Sense of Values there would never have been any need for this book to have been written and published[...] When they (the yellow journalists who outed Dillon) realized the secret was an old one, might they not have considered that publicity was unsought and, having found I was a doctor, although they did not know at first where practicing, might they not have gauged that destructive impact on his job such an unnecessary denouncement would be.”⁸¹ Dillon desired a privacy that was unavailable to him in life. To honor Dillon’s request for privacy of his past involves reading *Out of the Ordinary* as primarily a postcolonial and trans-spiritual memoir without a traditional happy ending.

Dillon attempts to tell his story in a linear fashion. Thus, a cisnormative narrative could be fashioned out of Dillon’s recurrent appeal to progress throughout the memoir. However, in *Out of the Ordinary* moving forward is more often a rote and ultimately damaging exercise for the author.⁸² Instead, what the memoir ends up being is an extended meditation on irresolution and indefinite (periods of) waiting. I read *Out of the Ordinary* as Dillon/Jivaka’s attempt to string together a history of synchronic affective events in a genre of writing concerned with and conditioned by the diachronic pull of progress and self-revelation. In this chapter, I take a page from Italian literary

⁸¹ Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka. “Out of the Ordinary,” Unpublished manuscript currently in the possession of Andrew Hewson in London, completed c. 1962, i.

⁸² An argument could be made that Dillon/Jivaka’s memoir is entirely a cis-normative transsexual narrative. However, I think applying such a term to Dillon is akin to doing what Heather Love decries as “reaching back toward isolated figures in the queer past in order to rescue or save them.” These historical figures’ texts actively “resist our advances” and disrupt “our sense of queer identity in the present.” See Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 8. Love’s work on queer historicism in *Feeling Backward* understands the ways in which reading monolithic queer identity onto figures from the past is actually an attempt to envelope those figures into the material of progress rather than enliven them. (9) To draw out Love’s line of reasoning; I also see this myopic “backwards reading” as devoid of an intersectional analysis thinking those figures through the racial, sexual, gendered and national political economies in which they became visible circulating subjects.

mastermind Italo Calvino's extraordinary work *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* and read Dillon/Jivaka's memoir as a series of unresolved stories knit together by trans-temporal events, moments of affectual breakage from linear time, jumping back to past moments and forward to some unimaginable (for Dillon/Jivaka) ending.⁸³

(As a spoiler, Dillon/Jivaka dies before both becoming a fully ordained Tibetan Buddhist Monk and the manuscript for *Out of the Ordinary* arrives on his publisher's desk back in London.) To ruin the real surprise; this is a trans memoir, but not really a transgender one. As you will see, transgender as a description does not really fit what Dillon is actually doing and waiting for.

What you should really be concerned with is how Lobzang Jivaka and Michael Dillon emerge in relation to "the time of x." "X" in this chapter is chosen by its relationship to Dillon/Jivaka's emergence through political economies of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, sex, and gender. In particular, the ways in which colonialism and imperialism shaped the conditions of Dillon/Jivaka's body and the body of Dillon/Jivaka's text as incorporable material for progress. So, pay attention to "the time of x," and what phenomenologist Sara Ahmed describes as disorientation.⁸⁴ If you feel disoriented, don't worry. The feeling will pass, if you feel dizzy just look up.

Michael Dillon and... his Disorienting Biography or Making Transgender Strange

In her 2006 monograph *Queer Phenomenology* Sara Ahmed describes disorientation as:

⁸³ Italo Calvino, *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, trans. William Weaver, (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1981).

⁸⁴ Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006. 156-179.

...a bodily feeling of losing one's place, and an effect of the loss of a place; it can be a violent feeling, and a feeling that is affected by violence, or shaped by violence directed toward the body. Disorientation involves failed orientations: bodies inhabit spaces that do not extend their shape, or use objects that do not extend their reach. At this moment of failure, such objects 'point' somewhere else or they make what is 'here' become strange.⁸⁵

What a trans-temporal reading of *Out of the Ordinary* may suggest is the strangeness of the current understandings of transgender and transsexual memoir through the insistent objectification of Dillon's body and text as proto-transgender and transsexual. That is, by looking foremost at *Out of the Ordinary* for traces of the popularized transsexual narrative of bodily discomfort, appealing to the cisnormative desire to make Dillon's story linear and in effect flatten its trans-temporal affects, we may begin to see that attuning ourselves to trans in its current iteration repeats the types of failed readings of Dillon's body while he was alive. Disorientation happens when the body becomes an object, and Fanon's description of the black body in phenomenology qua *Black Skin, White Masks* is Ahmed's primary interlocutory figure. I am positing Dillon as a retreating and disorienting object within a cisnormative narrative of progress and materiality: one that, as Ahmed writes, "trace(s) the lines for a different genealogy, one that would embrace the failure to inherit the family line as the condition of possibility for another way of dwelling in the world."⁸⁶

The question I begin this chapter with is: how can we read Dillon as a soon-to-be claimed "transgender" and/or "transsexual" figure who continuously fails to inherit the family line? What ways could trans narratives, lives and bodies be read (via trans-temporality) according to this new genealogy of "failed inheritance"? In what ways did

⁸⁵ Ahmed, 160.

⁸⁶ Ahmed, 178.

the cisnormative way of reading fail to begin with? And how does this positionality interface with those figures' relative material privilege to be recognized as subject/objects at all? What happens when we understand the visible parts of Dillon's narrative and body through a trans religious, imperialist and post-colonial context? What mirror better reflects our desire for progress when we see Dillon's conditions of possibility forever in the threshold of history?

If the name Michael Dillon is familiar to you already it may be because parts of his life have been documented by historians interested in the history of transsexual and transgender medicalization and identity. Two different biographies of Dillon have been published, the first in 1989 and the second in 2007.⁸⁷ Replicating what others have already done to Dillon, I begin by situating him within linear (cisnormative) time utilizing both the memoir, obituaries and the scattered archive of articles he wrote under his various names. So our first move is backwards, looking through the printed archive for this invisible-yet-visible man, who ironically is only made visible by historians of transgender history and identity because of the surgeries and hormonal treatments that allowed for the emergence of modern medical transsexual and transgender treatment protocols.⁸⁸ In his own time, Dillon's visibility was also produced through his twin relationships to a family baronetcy—in other words, the genealogical politics and time of British capital—and a claimed expertise on Buddhism through his numerous publications as a white monk in India.

⁸⁷ See: Pagan Kennedy, *The First Man-Made Man: The Story of Two Sex Changes, One Love Affair, and a Twentieth-Century Medical Revolution* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2007), and Liz Hodgkinson, *Michael Née Laura: The Story of the World's First Female-to-Male Transsexual* (London: Columbus Books, 1989).

⁸⁸ See Aaron Devor, *FTM: Female-to-Male Transsexuals in Society*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997. 33-35, and Henry Rubin, *Self-Made Men: Identity and Embodiment among Transsexual Men*. Vanderbilt: Vanderbilt University Press, 2003. 49-53.

Dr. Laurence Michael Dillon was born Laura Maude Dillon on May 1, 1915 in Ladbroke Grove, a borough of Kensington, England. His family had a direct line to the Baronetcy of Lismullen, in Meath, Ireland. Dillon was named after his mother who died within the first two weeks of his life. His father sent Laura and an older sibling Bobby away to be raised by his maiden sisters in Folkestone. An alcoholic, Dillon's father died when he was ten. During his childhood Dillon befriended the town vicar Rev. C.S.T. Watkins who suggested he read for Oxford in theology. Thus began Dillon's "search for Truth" allowing him to ask questions about finding deeper meaning and purpose in life. Dillon was accepted into Theology at St. Anne's College (a women's college) at Oxford University, but switched to Classics after realizing he did not want to be an Anglican Deaconess. Dillon struggled with questions of sexual and gender identity. In an attempt to divert unwanted male attention and feel more comfortable in his skin he donned an Eton crop, smoked a pipe, rode a motorcycle and confessed his attraction to women in secret.

After graduating from Oxford, Dillon worked in a laboratory then later as a car mechanic in Bristol, England at the beginning of World War II. In 1939 he was given oral testosterone tablets by Dr. George Foss, a psychiatrist from whom Dillon sought help in answering his gender identity questions. Testosterone had just been synthesized by Dutch scientists four years earlier, and Dillon began his hormone regimen completely unsupervised. (Foss reportedly threw the tablets across the table at Dillon, telling him to see what they could do.) Ridiculed by the male mechanics at the garage, Dillon befriended young Gilbert Barrow, a white working class runaway boy who became his staunchest ally. The two would serve as firewatchers for the town during the war and be

lifelong friends; later Dillon would give away part of his wealth to Barrow's son to pay for school. Prone to blackouts during hypoglycemic attacks, Dillon awoke from one such attack to a doctor suggesting he receive a double mastectomy and reregister as male, advice Dillon took. This same doctor connected Dillon to surgeon Harold Gillies in London, now largely acknowledged as the "father of plastic surgery" who would perform thirteen intensive surgeries alongside surgeon Ralph Millard resulting in Dillon's phalloplasty beginning in 1945. Dillon's phalloplasty was the first for a man assigned female at birth.⁸⁹

While Dillon was undergoing these surgeries he attended Medical School at Trinity College, Dublin and wrote *Self: A Study in Ethics and Endocrinology* (1946), the first text to engage in the ethics of sex reassignment for intersex people and what Dillon termed "masculine female inverts." After a brief stint working at a small hospital north of Dublin post-medical school, during which Dillon began reading the works of white British pseudo-Buddhist theosophists Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, Dillon joined the British Merchant Navy in 1952 as a surgeon and spent six years travelling around the world.

In May 1958 the *Sunday Express* and *Time Magazine* reported a discrepancy between Burke's Peerage and Debrett's about the heir apparent of the Dillon baronetcy. Since Dillon's brother Robert had failed to produce a male heir, as the next living male relative Michael was now the next in line for the title. Dillon's privacy vanished overnight when tabloid journalists came upon his current ship while they were docked in Baltimore. Dillon made the immediate decision to follow through on a plan he had been mulling over in his mind; disembarking in Bombay to seek a Buddhist mediation teacher

⁸⁹ Dillon's case appears in Harold Gillies and Ralph Millard, *The Principles and Art of Plastic Surgery* (London: Butterworth and Co., 1957).

in India. This plan had been suggested by Lobzang Rampa, author of *The Third Eye* and another white British theosophist pseudo-Buddhist teacher, who Dillon had met the previous year and greatly admired.

In summer 1958 Dillon entered Sangarakshita's Theravada Buddhist monastery in Kalimpong, seeking refuge from the Euro-American press and the capitalist values for which it stood. Sangarakshita was also a white Englishman, the first to obtain the highest level of ordination in Hinayana Buddhism. While not intending to be a postulate monk, Dillon spent his days working alongside the young novices and typing up Sangarakshita's own memoir. He became curious about the teachings of Buddhism, but Sangarakshita disallowed him from reading the *dharma* (Buddhist scriptures on the life and teachings of the Buddha). After Sangarakshita left for a three month speaking tour during the winter of 1959 Dillon began reading English translations of the Pali Canon at the Mahi Bodhi Society in Sarnath, and later the Sanskrit University of Varanasi. This study convinced him to pursue Buddhist ordination. Michael Dillon received lower ordination twice; once as a Sramanera under Sangarakshita through the Hinayana sect and later as a getsul under Kushok Bakula in Mahayana Buddhism. After taking ordination under Bakula, Dillon took the name Lobzang Jivaka (meaning teacher physician), a name he would use in future publications and is the second name which appears on his autobiography. Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism interpreted Dillon's bodily history and his capacity to take monastic orders differently. This, in fact, convinced Dillon to continue in Mahayana orders instead of Hinayana. Sangarakshita had also betrayed Dillon's early confidences by revealing facts about his gender history when he was seeking refuge from the Western presses and binaristic gender ideologies; this

exacerbated the two schools' opposing set of hermeneutics. Sangarakshita also wrote to Lama Lobzang and Kushok Bakula to protest Dillon's desire to obtain ordination in the Tibetan traditions. Dillon viewed this as a betrayal: as Dillon describes in *Out of the Ordinary*, Sangarakshita not only broke the vow of confessional confidentiality in protesting his ordination but also added several false details to Dillon's gender and sex history.⁹⁰

Taking the Mahayana specific Bodhisattva Vow in lieu of higher ordination, and a final turn away from Sangarakshita and the Hinayana school, were central factors in Dillon's decision to write *Out of the Ordinary*. Writing about the Bodhisattva Vow in the August 1960 volume of *The Middle Way*, Dillon describes it thus: "vowing to attain Enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and, before this is achieved, to steep oneself in the Dharma and to give it forth to others" (59). Echoing the beginning of his own memoir Dillon declares that the Bodhisattva:

...must have reached a certain stage of progress above that of the common run of men. For of necessity he must have a right sense of values with regard to relative importance of the things of the world and the things of the spirit. Otherwise money, power, position and family, will appear of greater importance than the Desire for Enlightenment which will then not occur.⁹¹

Taking the Bodhisattva Vow from the Dalai Lama's senior guru appeased the immediacy of Dillon's request for higher ordination as a *Rimpoche*. The first "westerner" to take ordination vows in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, Dillon would never receive higher ordination. After moving to his final home at Rizong Gompa monastery in Sarnath, a contested defense area on the Tibetan/Indian border known as Ladakh, Dillon wrote more prolifically than any other period of his life. First, he would finish his final published

⁹⁰ *Out of the Ordinary*, 155-156.

⁹¹ *Out of the Ordinary*, 59.

book *Imji Getsul: An English Buddhist in a Tibetan Monastery*, described by reviewers in *The Middle Way* as a “fascinating work of travel, and religious book of some authority...it is an Englishman’s account of life in Rizong Gompa in Ladakh, which he came to love as much as he had loved Oxford.”⁹² In this book Dillon changed details in his account of his personal life so that British readers would not be able to identify him. Three other articles about Bodhisattvas and Tibetan Buddhism were written during this time, alongside a short abbreviated hagiography of the Buddhist saint Milarepa. Importantly for my project, in late 1961 Dillon began writing his own memoir in earnest. He did not know that these would be the final months of his life.

As he had been a major contributor to *The Middle Way*, Dillon’s death was announced there. The article explains, “Jivaka was on his way to join his guru, Kushok Bakula in Kashmir, and went to see Mrs. Bedi at Dalhousie, *en route* where he was taken ill. He died within two days, and was cremated with the usual Mahayana rites.”⁹³ Dillon had applied for a renewed visa to remain at Rizong in the Ladakh area, but his presence had provoked the suspicions of the Chinese Communist government that he was a spy. A Communist newspaper, *The Blitz*, accused him of espionage and Indian Prime Minister Nehru had to defend Dillon’s intentions before the Indian parliament. Despite Nehru’s public support of Dillon, Dillon’s visa was not renewed and he could not enter Kashmir to rejoin his guru.

How Dillon died has been a source of speculation since his passing. Biographer Pagan Kennedy thinks his jaundiced appearance in photographs taken at Sarnath suggest he had liver cancer or hepatitis. In *Out of the Ordinary*, Dillon writes that moving from

⁹² “An English Buddhist in a Tibetan Monastery Imji Getsul,” *The Middle Way* 37:1 (May 1962): 212.

⁹³ M. H. Robbins, “Lobzang Jivaka,” *The Middle Way* 37: 2 (August 1962): 73.

an omnivorous diet to a vegetarian one adversely affected Dillon's digestive system and weakened him considerably. Since Tibetan Buddhist monks are dependent on means other than the lay community for support (food, shelter, water) while travelling and Dillon had given up any previous financial wealth, malnutrition may have been a contributing factor.⁹⁴ The oral testosterone tablets Dillon took for many years were discontinued by the medical community because of their burden on the liver, the primary processing organ. In researching Dillon for our introduction to *Out of the Ordinary*, Cameron Partridge and I speculate that this might have left Dillon with early onset osteoporosis and a severely damaged liver. Dillon's obituary in *The Sunday Telegraph* reports, "he died in a Tibetan children's school from a sudden infection which caused paralysis." Regardless of the cause of his death, its abruptness was a shock not only to his readers and teachers, but also his literary agent, Jay Johnson, back in London.

To Johnson's surprise, he received Dillon/Jivaka's memoir *Out of the Ordinary* in the mail just days after learning of Dillon's death. Johnson was as unaware of Dillon's failing health as he was that Dillon had written a memoir and reported as much to *The Sunday Telegraph*. Largely due to family requests, Johnson was never able to publish the memoir. The manuscript was locked in a metal filing cabinet in London, where it remains to this day.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ According to Dillon's obituary in *The Sunday Telegraph*, "His manuscript arrived in London in neat script handwriting on both sides of thin foolscap paper. Sometimes he borrowed a typewriter because he was not allowed to own one. He gave post office addresses to which money could be sent. [...]Mrs. M.H. Robbins, editor of the Buddhist newspaper the *Middle Way* said: 'I knew him very well by letters. About two years ago he started sending me articles and I was interested. A Buddhist monk in India is not kept by the populace. He had to provide his own food.'" "Doctor Chose a Tibetan Life. Heir to Baronetcy died a Buddhist monk." *The Sunday Telegraph*, June 24, 1962.

⁹⁵ In fact, according to the *Sunday Telegraph* article, Robert Dillon "instructed his Dublin solicitors that the manuscript be burnt" while "friends of Dr. Dillon believe[d] the manuscript might bring about a new understanding of the problem of sex changes." ("Doctor Chose a Tibetan Life")

In 2007, I was a young Harvard Divinity student studying gendered images and descriptions of divinity in Christian, Hindu and Buddhist scriptures, theologies, rituals and praxis. I was taking a class on women, gender and sexuality in the Pali and Tibetan *Vinaya* (Theravada and Tibetan scriptures detailing the rules for dress, admittance and personal conduct in the Buddhist monastic community, or *sangha*) during the Spring of that year, when I unexpectedly encountered Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka. My friend and colleague, Cameron Partridge let me know a biography had just been written on a British trans man who predated Christine Jorgensen, and later became a Buddhist monk, and that the author of the biography was giving a reading of said book in a local bookstore the following week. I was interested, but cautious about both the whiteness of subject and the intentions of the straight, white, cis biographer.

After the reading Pagan Kennedy, the biographer, commented how wonderful it would be if Dillon's memoir in its entirety was published, and how especially powerful it would be if someone from the trans community would take on the task of editing it and finding a publisher. Cameron turned to me and said I would be perfect for the job. Thus began my eight year engagement with the text of *Out of the Ordinary* and its posthumous author.

There is much I have left out of this short yet lengthy summary of Dr. Michael Laurence Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka's life. More time could have been spent recounting how he decided to give up his wealth to Gilbert Barrow's son after renouncing it in India. I could have commented on his descriptions of awkward encounters with women at Oxford and Trinity College, and the very legitimate fears of discovery that isolated him from intimacy. I might compare him to other twentieth century men who were assigned

female at birth who did live normative lives without the privileged access to medical interventions like testosterone and surgeries: men like Jack Bee Garland and Billy Tipton who coupled with cis women, married, and were later discovered to have different sex embodiments from the gender histories they lived out postmortem. But that would underwrite the story I want to tell about trans narratives, embodiment, and temporality in *Out of the Ordinary*.

I could have also written about Dillon's descriptions of the native Indian postulates while at both Sangarakshita's monastery and later, Rizong. Dillon suspected that Sangarakshita was sexually abusing Indian youths and added a lengthy handwritten note at the end of the memoir manuscript, asking for this note to be removed if those abuses had not become public knowledge at the time of publication. The question of what stays and what goes from Dillon/Jivaka's account feel silenced by the ending of the author himself, but that question is also posited to me as his archivist and commentator. And this attempt to account for his life in a linear fashion undoubtedly fails, simply by skipping over parts even while I look back at the vertical wreckage of Dillon's too short life. Between my account, Dillon's narrative, and his life, is a vertical wreckage of violent colonial encounters and their post-colonial after effects, of newly emerging states and Indian partition (none of which I have explicitly mentioned until now). It is a pile of interpretive shit over what a white male body means: what that body desires and feels entitled to in terms of movement and privacy; and what transnational borders it can cross.

The Time of Progress and the Vertical Wreckage of History

Let's take a break from all this cisnormativity for a little lesson on reading history against the grain and the enchanted world via Walter Benjamin's "Theses on the

Philosophy of History” and Dipesh Chakrabarty’s *Provincializing Europe*. To do this we will start with Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka’s descriptions of his experience of time. In chapter eleven, “Interlude Ashore,” Dillon’s life has circled briefly back around to Oxford, and the author makes the following observation:

How strangely the wheel of my life seemed to revolve.
Instead of progressing in a straight line it seemed to rise in a spiral, each
curve above smaller than the one below. Whither was it all leading?⁹⁶

The feeling of recurrence and return as opposed to linear progress haunts both Dillon/Jivaka’s observations of his behaviors and the narrative structure of *Out of the Ordinary*. Dillon/Jivaka’s choice of describing the map of his life as a tightening vertical spiral without a clear sense of direction, produces a sense of disorganized periodicity and finiteness to his existence in direct opposition to the cleanly spread out “progressing” straight line. The author does not seem disenchanted with the spiraling nature of the wheel of his life, but only remarks on its strangeness when measured against the linearity of the straight line. Leading up instead of forward, Dillon positions his vertical narrative as a search for Truth amidst the pull of what Walter Benjamin terms “the concept of the historical progress of mankind...through a homogenous, empty time.”⁹⁷ Dillon’s memoir stands in the contradiction of this position, an orientation pointing towards the immiscibility of what Dipesh Chakrabarty names as the non-secular in the disenchanted world of historical materialism.⁹⁸

Not knowing the spiral’s endpoint does not concern Dillon the author. Dillon is content with both the spiral’s projection (upward, towards Truth) and its finitude. This

⁹⁶ *Out of the Ordinary*, 122.

⁹⁷ Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 261.

⁹⁸ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

sentiment is evident in other writings by Dillon. During the time of events on which Dillon/Jivaka the author makes the observation of the spiraling trajectory of his life, Michael Dillon the Merchant Navy surgeon began reading the works of G.I. Gurdjieff and Cyril Hoskin (who wrote under the pseudonym of Lobzang Rampa), two European theosophists who borrowed heavily from Tibetan Buddhist ideologies (Hoskin even claimed his work *The Third Eye* was the result of channeling a Buddhist monk). In 1957, shortly after meeting Hoskin while in England between deployments, Dillon composed and published a series of poems printed by Linden Press entitled *Poems of Truth*, which set a precursor to the kinds of semiotics Dillon/Jivaka would enact through his conquest of the mind and body in *Out of the Ordinary*. Encouraged by both Hoskin and Gurjjeff, Dillon's poem "Karma" further elaborates the experience of non-secular cyclical time.

Dillon writes:

This life is meaningless viewed as a two-dimensional picture fitted into a frame of birth, growth and death. If, on the other hand, it is regarded merely as the only visible part of an invisible whole and if, through it, runs the shaft of Karma, manufactured by ourselves who are free to choose at any time between good and evil, then our pasts lie in our present and our present lies in our future; so that the past lies before us as surely as it does behind us. Our life, then, takes on a three-dimensional aspect, filled out by the obtrusion of long forgotten history, of errors and successes, of lapses and improvements, of choices rightly and wrongly made, all tending towards a goal; but whether that goal lies above or below us is in our own hands. This three-dimensional view of life gives a meaning, otherwise absent, to our present situations. We must think of the present in terms of the past and of the past in terms of the future. Then shall we have strength to struggle with circumstances that seem harsh and unjust. Then shall we know whether our feet are on the right road, however weak they may be. Then shall we know there is only one conquest to make: that of ourselves.⁹⁹

At play in this prose poem are several strands of time organizing what Dipesh

Chakrabarty terms heterotemporality. In Chakrabarty's formulation of heterotemporality

⁹⁹ Michael Dillon, "Karma," *Poems of Truth*, (London: Linden Press, 1975), 42.

the resistances created within capital opens up the possibility of experiencing temporality as heterogeneous. He elaborates that “unconcealing the tension between the real and abstract labor ensures that capital/commodity has heterogeneities and incommensurabilities inscribed in its core.”¹⁰⁰ And while “History cannot represent, except through a process of translation and consequent loss of status and signification for the translated, the heterotemporality of that world,” by reading for the inconsistencies, the uncanny, and the unresolvable, one begins to uncover the fissures within a view of time as disenchanted, progressive and capital driven.

Dillon’s poem demonstrates heterotemporality’s inconsistencies and resolvability. First, there is the spatialization of a biological diachronic time determined by the stages of the body (“birth, growth and death”), which Dillon likens to a two-dimensional picture. He rejects this view of temporalized life as meaningless, because it is stripped of the invisible or what Chakrabarty would term the enchanted. This two-dimensional picture of embodied life is only read in empty, homogenous secularized time, the biopolitical time of capital. Importantly, this view of temporalized life is not separated from the invisible, the production of Karma “runs through it like a shaft,” drawing together the “invisible whole” to our two-dimensional lens.

In contrast, the three-dimensional view of life injects the enchanted into secular time: what Dillon terms the karmic, the invisible, that which allows one to produce meaning through a melding of past and future in the present. The present does not lie in a vacuum; instead the past seeps into all times after itself as “the past lies before us as surely as it does behind us.” This “obtrusion of long forgotten history” must always be considered in light of what Dillon proposes as the only ethical goal with a three-

¹⁰⁰ Chakrabarty, 95.

dimensional view of life, the conquest of the self. Reading Dillon/Jivaka's professed goal of conquest for the self in *Out of the Ordinary* in light of this outline of time, positions Dillon/Jivaka's production of binary divisions in the memoir (conquest of the body/mind, flight from England/refuge in India and Tibet, the study of surgery and medicine/monasticism and Buddhist meditation, locating subjectivity through state-regulated genealogies of blood/sangha-based genealogies of Lamas) as impossible to resolve through his location as the threshold between multiple temporalities that historically involve the denial of one within and alongside the other.

Dillon is perhaps ideally positioned to comment on the heterotemporalities at work in his multi-dimensional view of time model, since the obtrusion of long forgotten history has very real power to regulate his own conquest of mind and body. However as will be shown, temporal recursivity makes it impossible for a conquest or resolution occur. But a recursive structure of writing and experiencing time can result in narrating the felt moments in which the past-present-future explicitly touch and inform each other. These are the moments history is read "against the grain" because time is felt to be stuck moving vertically in circles instead of progressing like a story normally does.

Trans-temporal affective break: The Doctor at Sea...

Beyond Dillon/Jivaka's recurrent lessons in self-improvement through the conquest of the mind, there are only two synchronic moments in *Out of the Ordinary* that are narrated twice. In both instances Dillon/Jivaka describes the experience as an affective breakage from time with his body out-of-joint from the time of progress, capital and cisnormativity. Let's begin with the moment that both opens the memoir and is later

re-narrated as starting Dillon/Jivaka's turn to "the conquest of the mind" through seeking refuge in Buddhist Meditation and later, monastic ordination. Moving backwards, here is the first affective moment of breakage narrated in the memoir's text.

It is March 1958. Michael Dillon, author of *Self: A Study in Ethics and Endocrinology* and Merchant Navy Surgeon on *The City of Bath*, has been cycling around Baltimore while on shore leave. Shortly after 8 o'clock in the morning he receives the following cable from the ship's steward: "Do you intend to claim the title since your change-over? Kindly cable *Daily Express*."¹⁰¹ In the memoir's introduction Dillon/Jivaka says, "At that moment my heart stood still. The secret that had been so well kept for fifteen years had at last leaked out, that I had been among the unfortunates who "change their sex" and in addition was heir to a title."¹⁰² However, in the body of the memoir Dillon/Jivaka gives a more through description of his thoughts:

The reference to my change-over could only mean one thing, my secret had leaked out after fifteen years. Here was the end of my emancipation! But had Bobby died, which might account for the leakage? My hand trembled as I screwed the cable up and threw it in the wastepaper basket. Then along came the agent to tell me two reporters were wanting to see me and were in his office on the wharf. There was nothing to be done except accept the inevitable. I went back to my cabin, lit my pipe to steady my nerves and put on my cap without which one should not go ashore, and went down the gangway, my old poker face put aside, once more resumed.¹⁰³

Here, in the introduction and twelfth chapter, we have the first explicitly trans-temporal moment of the memoir: a moment juxtaposing the discrepancy of Dillon's brother Robert's cis-normative kinship to Laura Maude Dillon, who has effectively been written out of the Dillon bloodline (she disappears from Burke and Debrett's records of ancestral

¹⁰¹ *Out of the Ordinary*, 142.

¹⁰² --, i.

¹⁰³ --, 142-3.

lineage), and a questionable relationship to Laurence Michael Dillon, a brother and potential inheritor who has just come into the state's view. The time of capital, property and materiality which Dr. Laurence Michael Dillon will increasingly eschew is directly implicated as the cause of the British press invasively seeking out the "secret so well kept for fifteen years." Dillon/Jivaka directly links Bobby's possible death to the "end of [his] emancipation" and suggests that the appearance of Michael matters only in light of Dillon's new positionality within state practices of patriarchal inheritance.

Dillon/Jivaka's panic at the new levels of increased scrutiny by the British tabloids, and its linkage to the family held baronetcy of Lismullen, is confirmed by Dillon in the following passage from chapter twelve:

Then from G. came a letter and a copy of the Sunday Express, which he had been wont to send periodically anyway. Page three, under Ephraim Hardcastle's social column was the headline: Strange Case of Dr. Dillon. Then two columns were spent explaining that a discrepancy had been found between Burke and Debrett about the heir to the title of baronetcy after Sir Robert Dillon the present holder. It added that all attempts to get Sir Robert to say where his sister was working or what she was doing had been to no avail. A doctor somewhere in England, was all he would say. How Bobby must have hated and feared those reporters! Small wonder that it seems as if on the second day he broke down and gave away the name of my ship; then it was only a matter of consulting Lloyd's register to find out where she was. A further newspaper cutting gave the history of my having changed from a lady doctor into a naval surgeon quite erroneously, since I had never been a lady doctor, but most of their facts were inaccurate.¹⁰⁴

Bobby and Michael Dillon had been estranged for the past fifteen years over Dillon's medical transition. Placing Bobby's anxieties about his lack of heir and lost "sister" alongside Dillon's panic at his sex and gendered history becoming visible to the nation, this passage illustrates how cis-normative time's fissures and cracks were becoming evident. The fact that Burke's listed Laura Maude while Debrett listed Michael as the

¹⁰⁴ *Out of the Ordinary*, 145.

younger sibling to Robert becomes a matter of national interest in aligning the proper progress of property and genealogical capital through patriarchal inheritance. Yet something is amiss, and in writing about the British tabloids' attempts to "straighten out" the "Strange Case of Dr. Dillon", Dillon/Jivaka makes clear that the printed facts recording his "case" are increasingly erroneous and inaccurate. To translate Dillon's history of sexed and gendered embodiment into the time of patriarchal inheritance, of what Grace Hong calls normative reproductivity, involves a turn towards state-regulated materiality.¹⁰⁵ For Dillon to claim the baronetcy would have meant that he invested in heteropatriarchal normative materiality, and with it a desire to be understood in cisnormative time. But the opposite happened: Dillon disavowed any opportunity to make himself understandable to the press. He fled from national visibility or claiming a position as heir to the baronetcy. Instead he took refuge in Buddhist practices of dematerialization giving up home and household for communal monastic life in the sangha.

However, in both tellings of this synchronic moment at sea, a pregnant pause full of waiting for a resolution to proceed onward, Dillon/Jivaka remains invested in the future and with it a notion of progress. While Dillon's desire for the future is not linked to biological, state regulated modes of property inheritance, the author needs a throughline in his story. Thus the story becomes centered in the process of dematerialization, and with it an orientalist idealization of moving "away from the world" through Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhist practices in India and Tibet. Chapter twelve ends on this recursive meditation:

¹⁰⁵ Grace Hong's defines normative reproductivity definition as "a normative narration of history and generational reproduction " which aims to preserve life as a form of protected subjectivity. Grace Kyungwon Hong, "Existentially Surplus: Women of Color Feminism and the New Crises of Capitalism," *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, 18, no. 1 (2012):95-7.

But all this was now the past and must be forgotten. It was the future which was important, completely in the dark as it was. [...] To get away from the world for a while and fit myself for coping with it better. All this time had been but a preparation for that future. There was nothing that had not played its part...¹⁰⁶

However Dillon/Jivaka chillingly ends the introduction of the memoir (and by extension the author ceases writing period) by likening himself to a heckled and handicapped runner attempting to finish a race or “die in the attempt, but he will never give in.”¹⁰⁷ He concludes by stating:

This book is the expression of that determination, and in its attempt to give a better understanding to people it has a message, for with understanding comes an improved sense of values and Right Viewpoint is the first step on the Path to emancipation from the fetters of materialism and all that is driving man insanely to his own destruction.¹⁰⁸

Clearly, for Dillon/Jivaka an “improved sense of values and right viewpoint” is directly related to the release “from the fetters of materialism” and would end humanity’s self-destructive path. Dillon’s moment of discovery by the British tabloids via cable on the *City of Bath* is reread through the author’s somewhat ambiguous “attempt to give better understanding” through the memoir’s narrative. But what exactly constitutes a better understanding? Is it to acknowledge humanity’s overinvestment with materialism and materiality? Is that what is meant by the memoir’s dual conquest of the body and mind? I think it is too simplistic to conclude Dillon/Jivaka only meant a better understanding of what might be understood as “transsexuality” or trans embodiment. Rather, he seems to be co-implicating the obsessive focus on trans embodiment with the fetters of materialism.

¹⁰⁶ *Out of the Ordinary*, 149.

¹⁰⁷ *Out of the Ordinary*, iii.

¹⁰⁸ *Out of the Ordinary*, iii.

Affective Trans-Temporal Break: Waiting in the Threshold of Ordination with the English Bhikshu of Kalimpong

If trans-temporal affective events signal a break from cisnormative time's investment in linear embodied capital and materiality, then whenever a trans speaker or writer finds her/him/theirself dependent on making themselves understandable within cis time they face an almost impossible task of translation. A trans narrative reads like two or three different life stories within cis normative understandings about bio-social-economic life trajectories. It is fundamentally inconsistent in its juxtaposition against cisnormative narrations of autobiography.¹⁰⁹ If the prefix "auto-" assumes that the narrative of "oneself" is a self contained, consistent story of a single character then trans autobiographies are in many ways unhelpfully set up to have the writers create a narrative written against themselves.

In a progress-oriented memoir meant to contain a single self slowly conquering the body and mind of Laura Maude and later Michael Dillon, Lobzang Jivaka must shed these past selves to emerge as a semi-consistent and understandable character. And while an emphasis on dematerialization and eschewing property inheritance and materiality ideologically lines up Dillon/Jivaka with Buddhist teachings providing the memoir with a consistent theme, Dillon/Jivaka continues to be haunted by the inconsistent biosocial aspects of his medical transition. If the English nation-state wanted to visually capture him in order to read his transition as an alignment with patriarchal inheritance, Dillon/Jivaka's first Buddhist mentor, white English bhikkshu Sangharakshita head of the Triyana Vardhana Vihara in Kalimpong, can only understand Dillon's past history as a violation of the monastic discipline. Here, as Dillon turns to Mahayana and Theravada

¹⁰⁹ See Jay Prosser, *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

Buddhist monasteries for refuge from England's scrutiny towards the end of the memoir, Dillon's anxious waiting for interpretation and translation of his sexed embodiment and transnational religious intentions becomes the most consistent and recurrent affect of the book. A further investigation of these episodes is warranted here.

Dillon met Sangharakshita in the summer of 1958, shortly after disembarking from the City of Bath in Calcutta. At the time Dillon had no desire for ordination only seeking refuge from the scrutiny of the British press and the hope that he might learn more about meditation. Because of his prior moment in Baltimore, Dillon discloses the events that have led him to seek refuge at Sangharakshita's vihara.¹¹⁰ In the final chapter of *Out of the Ordinary* Dillon/Jivaka remembers:

That same night I told the bhikshu [Sangharakshita] why I had come and of the events that had led up to my sudden unexpected arrival, since, being a monastery, and not knowing whether my publicity would follow me there, I did not wish him to be entertaining what he knew not. He, on his side, assured me that anything I told him would be as if under the seal of the confessional, or as a medical confidence, and I trusted him because he was both a fellow Englishman and a monk. How misplaced that trust was I could not foresee.¹¹¹

Tellingly, Dillon/Jivaka remarks that his misplaced faith in Sangharakshita is due to what he assumes to be their commonalities of gender, ethnicity and nationality. The English bhikshu also appeals to Dillon's medical and religious ethics of confidentiality under confession. Dillon's disclosure through a will to discourse functions like a mini-autoethnography within the memoir in some ways mirroring that of the relationship between Dillon/Jivaka the author and the reader. Interestingly, Dillon/Jivaka does not narrate exactly what he tells Sangharakshita in that confessional moment. He seems more concerned about the press and unwanted publicity following him from England than a

¹¹⁰ A Buddhist monastery.

¹¹¹ *Out of the Ordinary*, 151.

rejection or ejection from the vihara by the Buddhist monk. We are left to assume that most of what is told concerns the British tabloids, with little emphasis on Dillon's medical transition.

Later, when Dillon takes the name Jivaka (after the Buddha's physician) and decides to pursue ordination, concerns about how to interpret Dillon's sex and gender history alongside the Buddhist monastic discipline (called the Vinaya) surface.¹¹² Dillon/Jivaka's case raised questions of how to translate modern medical transition, newly available due to synthesized testosterone tablets and the rise of plastic surgeries due to injured World War II veterans, and socially and religiously interpreted, against the largely symbolic non-binary sexed figures in the Vinaya. As Dillon/Jivaka's relationship with Sangharakshita begins to sour, Dillon/Jivaka describes his concerns about pursuing ordination under him in Theravada Buddhism. He relates, "We were still on friendly terms but there was a matter which was going to prove a problem. The first thing noticeable in reading the Buddhist canon is the causal reference not to two but to the three sexes, and there are many bans on various types of people from receiving Higher Ordination among them being anyone belonging to this 'third sex.'"¹¹³ While he does not self identify with the third sex in this early mention of the discipline's ordination bans, Dillon/Jivaka opens the temporal door to identifying his embodied history against a secular cis-normative time. The time of the enchanted begins to break through, albeit in a rather tenuous and anxiety filled way.

Dillon/Jivaka's trans-temporal self-identification with the ambiguity of the "third sex" category in the *Vinaya* positions Dillon as modernity's literal embodiment of the

¹¹² The Buddhist monastic rulebook containing many volumes, of which the Suttavibhanga and Cullavagga are two. The Vinaya is one of the three parts of the Buddhist canon.

¹¹³ *Out of the Ordinary*, 154.

pandaka. In the *Suttavibhanga* the pandaka is introduced through the idea of defeat, or expulsion from the order, then appears in a list enforcing a celibate lifestyle. Parajika the sandskrit word used for a “defeated one” carries connotations for a neuter person, both male and female.¹¹⁴ “Whatever monk should indulge in sexual intercourse is one who is defeated, he is no longer in communion.”¹¹⁵ Noted Buddhist Studies scholar I.B. Horner notes that the neuter status of being both masculine and feminine merits one’s expulsion from the order. Engaging in sexual intercourse after renouncing a householder’s life means that a man will take on feminine characteristics; because of the consequent indeterminate, status he cannot attain arahatship.¹¹⁶ While not presupposing the literal transformation of a subject, the exclusive gesture of this gendered linguistic distinction already places subjects grouped in the third category beyond the realm of enlightenment.

The *Suttavibhanga* proceeds to recognize a two-ness within the neuter space by assembling a list of all beings some of which do not fit into the gender/sex binary of male/female. Containing a list of four sexual categories, the *Suttavibhanga* divides all beings into male, female, intersex and eunuch.¹¹⁷ Within these sexual categories a being may be human, animal or non-human (meaning a spirit, or naga of some form). The purpose of listing these categories is to enact a strict code of celibacy so that the sangha will maintain an upstanding social reputation within the lay community.¹¹⁸ Condemning sexual intercourse also functions as a means of restricting sexual desire and overcoming attachment to physical wants. Both intersex beings and eunuchs comprise the neuter

¹¹⁴ I.B. Horner, trans. *The Book of Discipline*, Vol. 1 *Suttavibhanga*, (MA: Wisdom Publications, 1966), 38.

¹¹⁵ *Suttavibhanga*, 38.

¹¹⁶ Arahatsip, meaning enlightenment or nirvana.

¹¹⁷ *Suttavibhanga*, 48.

¹¹⁸ --, 38.

category but only the eunuch takes the word *pandaka*, creating a split between biologically determined and environmentally determined third-sex status. In “One Plus One Makes Three” Tibetan Buddhist scholar Janet Gyatso notes that the *Suttavibhanga*:

...specifies that there may be human, nonhuman, or animal *pandakas*. I have found no definitions of the terms *pandaka* or *sandha* as such until Yasomitra, who distinguishes *sandhaka*, one who lacks either female or male genitals by nature, from the *pandaka*, whose aberrational sex is due either to something undertaken on purpose or to disease or injury.¹¹⁹

Intersex status, as defined by Yasomitra, is rooted in a biologically determined notion of sex; one is naturally born into existence as a *pandaka*. In contrast a eunuch’s neuter sex is “aberrational” because it is determined by a conscious act or an external stressor (disease or injury). While both intersex beings and eunuchs are included in the list of sexually desirous beings and excluded from the categories of male and female, the term *pandaka* only attaches to the “sex-changing” eunuch.

The neuter space occupied by eunuchs and intersex beings is further explored in the *Cullavagga* which is primarily concerned with the admittance of women into the *sangha*. Functioning as the abject sex in the *Suttavibhanga* the female renunciant is regulated throughout the *Cullavagga* by the Buddha’s eight heavy rules accepted by Pajapati the first ordained nun.¹²⁰ Following a section on menstruation, the Buddha also addresses a group of sexual deviants of questionable gender/sex identity who originally made up the order of nuns. As the *Cullavagga* reports:

Now at that time ordained women were to be seen without sexual characteristics and who were defective in sex and bloodless and with stagnant blood [...] and deformed and female eunuchs and man-like

¹¹⁹ Janet Gyatso, “One Plus One Makes Three: Buddhist Gender, Monasticism, and the Law of the Non-Excluded Middle,” *History of Religions* 43:2 (2003): 94.

¹²⁰ I. B. Horner, trans. *The Book of Discipline*, Vol. 5 *Cullavagga*, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1997), 354-5.

women and those whose sexuality was indistinct and those who were hermaphrodites.¹²¹

It is interesting to note that the first group of ordained women are all characterized as hermaphroditic or sexually indistinct yet they are all still labeled women. Further negotiation of the term woman had to be enacted to lift the “true female” from the confusion of bodies that were not male. The passage compounds irregularly functioning female reproductive anatomy with bodies of various unidentifiable gender/sex under female sexuality. Eunuchs are marked with the female gender as well as intersex beings, deformed women, and those ambiguously termed “defective in sex.” A woman’s inability to menstruate, reproduce, or produce “stagnant blood” equates her with masculine women and people of androgynous gender presentation. There is no attempt to distinguish sexually indistinct born “women” from subjects who consciously changed gender/sex, and the natural cessation of reproductive abilities in women.

Unlike in the *Suttavibhanga* intersex people and eunuchs are problematic to the order not for their sexual desirability, but for their sexuality. Because of their intersex or neuter presentation the Buddha commands the monks to question female postulates about their sexual identity. Some of these questions include:

You are not without sexual characteristics? ... You are not a hermaphrodite? Have you diseases like this: leprosy, boils, eczema, consumption, epilepsy? Are you a human being? Are you a woman?¹²²

Reading like the intake form for a doctor’s office; these questions assume that the female subject is ridiculously unaware of how to classify her own body and needs the normative gender (male) to define the female. Not only do women (and whoever else interested in entering the order) need men to explicitly state each non-female category but because the

¹²¹ *Cullavagga*, 375.

¹²² --, 375.

first ordained women were members of what are labeled “abhorrent sexualities” the indeterminate nature of the female sex is marked as a historic stumbling block to women’s ordination. For any being located outside of biologically born male sex is marked as sexual other, even female subjectivity is determined by a male essentialist vision.

Janet Gyatso argues that the third-sex pandaka category is a theoretical grouping of the “abhorrent” and addresses the problematic dynamic of women’s dependency on the abjection of the third sex for ordination rights. With the male gender acting as gatekeeper to female ordination more distinctions were necessary to keep sexual abhorrents out of the sangha and maintain face within the lay community. Gyatso explains:

It is just such a system that calls out for a third rubric – to fill out the space in between the first two, a space that serves precisely to signal the danger of confusion and the need to patrol ever more vigilantly the borders [...] it was the very creation of an other to that other other that allowed the original other in through the door of ordination at all. [...] I would like to suggest that the pandaka category functioned as a scapegoat for the threat that woman was believed to pose to the monastic order. This scapegoat would have served to purify the image of woman (at least, “normal” woman) and allow her inclusion after all-even if she remained hobbled by the eight heavy rules.¹²³

Within Gyatso’s suggested hierarchy of gender the theoretical figure of the pandaka becomes the abject third rubric, a means for which women could enter the sangha. Women gain a type of second-class status, but only through a purification process based on marking the pandaka as the new female. But Gyatso’s analysis also implies the ever-present danger of re-grouping both the second and third genders through the increasingly specified notions of male and female. For while the new boundaries of biological determinism essentialize the female sex in a similar manner to the male, the female is still

¹²³ Gyatso, 114.

attached to the third sex through her continual regulation by the eight heavy rules and her mutual exclusion from the male monastic order.

Waiting in the wings for ordination with the pandaka Dillon/Jivaka's trans-temporal positioning as the third-sex did not negate the history of his female birth and resulted initially in an essentialist reading of sex/gender barring him from Theravada ordination. Rather than stand in as a scapegoat category of sex for women, the gap between Michael Dillon's positioning himself as a member of the third sex and Sangharakshita equating Dillon/Jivaka's medical transition with masking his female birth status, functioned to force sex back into a binary system and demonstrates the cultural anxieties accompanying Dillon/Jivaka's uncategorizability.

Left to meditate on what it means to be physically and temporally untranslatable between the times of sexed embodiment in the *Vinaya* and Euro-American modern medicine, Dillon/Jivaka finds himself caught again at a trans-temporal impasse. Instead of being read against the time of heteropatriarchal resexual capital and the British state, Dillon/Jivaka finds himself brushing against the historically contested sacred time of interpreting definitions of sex and gender in Buddhist monasticism. With no lines of flight this time, Jivaka must wait out his cliffhanger of a hermeneutic situation. Not surprisingly, this trans-temporal moment is punctuated with the same nervous affect and anxiety related in Dillon/Jivaka's previous outing in Baltimore on the *City of Bath*.

Dillon/Jivaka writes:

I was anxious for Higher Ordination and had found all this in my reading. When I asked the bhikshu about the prospects of it [higher ordination] he said in contemptuous tones: "Oh yes, in three or four years perhaps." [...] Then came the time in Sarnath, after some months when one of the bhikshus there offered to give me the Higher Ordination and make me a bhikshu. At once I told him it was not easy as I came under one of the

bans and I even mentioned which. So for the present the matter was dropped.¹²⁴

With such delayed prospects in receiving higher ordination as a Theravadin Buddhist bhikshu, Jivaka meets Locas Rimpoche, a Mahayana Lama who declares Jivaka ready for ordination, while staying at a vihara in Sarnath in late 1959. Jivaka, eager to change Buddhist schools and proceed on the path to monkhood without Sangharakshita, finds himself in a linguistic bind since Locas Rimpoche speaks little English. What occurs next is the reenactment of Gyatso's theory of the pandaka's function of sex/gender abjection in the midst of the sangha's historic attempts to save face. Dillon/Jivaka writes:

I wrote to the English bhikshu asking him if he would like to come to Sarnath for it [what?] and wondering what I could do about explaining things in view of the language problem. [...] to my horror on the Saturday morning I was showed a letter by the bhikshu to whom I had first confided, in which the English bhikshu had given away all my confidences and added a few more imaginary details of his own. What was more this letter had been sent out in triplicate to the Chief bhikshu of Sarnath and to Lama Lobzang. [...] He [Sangarashita] subsequently defended his action by saying it was his duty, in order to protect the *sangha* and monkhood, (and he could easily have stayed my ordination with no more than a hint). In fact he was furious that I should receive full ordination so quickly (actually there is no time limit set) so that he betrayed everything I had so unwisely told him and then added that of course he would never tell a layman a word about it.

Naturally everything was off for the moment.

"It's a very small matter really," Lochas Rimpoche had said, so Lama Lobzang told me, "but since so much noise had been made about it we can't do anything just now."¹²⁵

Just when everything seems to accelerate, Jivaka's attempt to conquer the mind via full ordination is put on hold yet again by Sangharakshita's interpretation of Michael Dillon's prior confession. Sangharakshita's claimed motive in his betrayal of Dillon/Jivaka's confidence is the same reason the pandaka allowed women into the order, to maintain the

¹²⁴ *Out of the Ordinary*, 155.

¹²⁵ *Out of the Ordinary*, 155-6.

order's appearance of purity in front of the laity. Similar to the *Daily Express's* cable in Baltimore, Sangharakshita's letter is full of added details and inaccuracies, provoking more anxiety. And again, Dillon/Jivaka takes a passive approach to the letters, choosing to wait and comment on this moment in *Out of the Ordinary* retroactively instead of seeking to be understood by contesting the "official narrative" circulating about him during this synchronic event in the memoir. There is both anger and resignation in the author's tone at this second (or third? fourth?) defeat to be understood in cisnormative time.

While Jivaka's outing by Sangharakshita demonstrates similar abject positionalities between Dillon/Jivaka and the pandaka in the *Vinaya*, Dillon/Jivaka's memoir also posits the novice monk in a temporal kinship with another Buddhist figure critical to the sangha, that of the Bodhisattva. Dillon/Jivaka having been put in the waiting room for ordination yet again, Kushok Bekula, head Lama of Rizong Vihara in Ladakh and the Dalai Lama's Senior Guru learns of Jivaka's situation via Lama Lobzang and takes pity on him, overseeing Jivaka's pledge to become a Bodhisattva. When Jivaka again requests to take the higher ordination he is told by Bekula and Lobzang, "to wait till the noise had died down. Having already taken the Bodhisattva Vow from the Senior Guru [Bekula] let that suffice for the present."¹²⁶ And so Jivaka becomes a novice monk yet again, adding Lobzang before his name instead of Sramanera (meaning "novice monk" in Pali). Rizong Monastery in Ladakh, Tibet is his new home. And it is there still waiting for ordination that the memoir ends, on a cliffhanger amidst Dillon/Jivaka's handwritten edits making the final chapter itself conditional.

¹²⁶ *Out of the Ordinary*, 156.

Affective Trans-Temporal Break 3: Legacies of Colonialism and Dillon's transnational religious positionality or anxieties over the past and continuing presence of a white British Getsul in Kashmir and post-partition India.

Let me lay out a final trans-temporal event that weighs heavily on Dillon/Jivaka as he waits to return to Ladakh from Sarnath and receive the higher ordination from Bakula in 1961. You may think this moment should probably have been mentioned first, but as they say “good things come to those who wait.” Perhaps Dillon/Jivaka would frustratedly reply to “them” that “nothing but further delay comes to those who wait.”¹²⁷ At this point it should be evident that reading trans-temporally might suggest something else about the time of waiting and the affect of delay; after all Dillon is being read against and within other histories. So recent are the events of Pakistan and India's 1947 partition from the British Empire, it is remarkable how few remarks on British colonial history exist in *Out of the Ordinary* until the final chapter of the memoir. The legacies of the imperial and colonial national kind and the burgeoning Cold War haunt Dillon/Jivaka, especially after he leaves behind Bobby and England and turns to Buddhist monasticism in the contested territory of Kashmir. On the penultimate page of *Out of the Ordinary* Dillon/Jivaka asserts:

In India there is a marked phobia of imperialist spies, although none such exist at any rate from among Westerners. I had begun writing for the *Hindustan Times Sunday Weekly* on Tibetan Buddhism and over the first article the editor wanted a snippet of autobiography in which I mentioned I had been to a Ladakh monastery the last year and hoped to return that year. A Communist weekly paper called the *Blitz* had seized on this and written a column on me charging me with being in the British Intelligence, an-ex Royal Naval officer and a spy especially hired by Mr. Nehru to spy on the Chinese in Ladakh. [...] Eventually two Communist M.F.'s asked

¹²⁷ "Then when I went to Rizong Monastery in Ladakh, Kushok Bakula promised me he would give me the Higher Ordination on my return the following year. Here other factors intervened." *Out of the Ordinary*, 156.

questions in the Lok Sabha about my visit to the defence area of Ladakh and Mr. Nehru vigorously defended me, saying I was a genuine Buddhist and not merely 'posing' as a monk as they had said.¹²⁸

Unsurprisingly, commentary on imperialism does not explicitly surface until the end of the memoir, when so many pasts that Dillon is imbricated in come back to haunt him and literally stop his progress back into Kashmir and deeper into Buddhist monasticism. The result of this investigation into Dillon's whereabouts and motivations for seeking refuge in Rizong monastery is a proliferation of articles attempting to organize all of the twists of Dillon's trans story. These accusations and events could not have come at a more inopportune time as Jivaka has just applied for a new permit to remain in Kashmir. Despite the prime minister's defense of Jivaka's presence and the possibility that the accusations had no effect on the permit renewal, Dillon/Jivaka links the two events together as he writes, "but there was no further permit given, hard though I tried to obtain one."¹²⁹

Between Dillon's diagnosis of the Indian national imaginary's unfounded "marked phobia" of imperialist spies and the Chinese Communist government's suspicion at Dillon's participation in the British Merchant Navy is Dillon/Jivaka's continuing presence as a British national and his questionable desire for Buddhism. However, Dillon/Jivaka leaves his own participation in British imperialism largely unquestioned and unexamined. He had materially been a part of the British imperial machine while serving as a surgeon in the Merchant Navy. However, Dillon's own identification with Buddhism in *Out of the Ordinary* and the numerous columns he wrote under the Buddhist titles Sramanera and later Lobzang Jivaka enacted their own religious appropriation and

¹²⁸ *Out of the Ordinary*, 156.

¹²⁹ *Out of the Ordinary*, 156.

cultural imperialism. While the accusations of covert political motivations may have been false, Dillon's positionality within Buddhism and Kashmir provoked legitimate alarm for Indian and Chinese Nationals by his prolific writing in English language newspapers and British Buddhist journals.

This is actually the second moment in the final chapter Dillon/Jivaka must address Indian anxieties about hosting possible "western" imperialist spies in Buddhist spaces. At the beginning of chapter thirteen in 1958, before Dillon was outed by the British tabloids, a French ex-Roman Catholic nun made a similar journey to Dillon and "persuaded [Dhardoh] Rimpoche against his judgment to make her a Buddhist nun or getsulma" (150). Pitting his own narrative and political-religious intentions against the French getsulma, Dillon/Jivaka decries her as a non-Buddhist, and Communist agent. His conservative anti-communist sentiment is particularly striking in this late passage given *Out of the Ordinary's* recursive denouncement of capitalist materialism. Dillon/Jivaka also very markedly describes Indian nationals as paranoid, having "a phobia of imperialist spies" while simultaneously pronouncing that imperialist spies do not exist "among Westerners." By separating the "real" threat (the Communist nun), from himself (who was easily understood as an imperial religious and national threat), Dillon/Jivaka's own religious appropriation and cultural imperialism is left problematically unexamined by the author. In a description of the event that mirrors later accusations and investigations in the Lok Sabha against Dillon/Jivaka's presence in a Kashmir Buddhist Vihara, Dillon/Jivaka reports:

...she was keenly obsessed by sex repressions and had started bringing all sorts of charges against various Sikkimese and Bhutanese monks and Lamas as well as influential laymen. She was also being used by certain Communist agents to obtain information from these areas. The rest of her

story is outside the scope of this one; it is well known to all in India since finally questions were asked about her in the Lok Sabha and Mr. Nehru had put an end to all things by saying he understood that she was a little unbalanced. Finally she went back to France and proceeded to write a book against Buddhism, so it is said."¹³⁰

The similarities between both events and accusations of imperial and communist spying post-colonial India and Communist China by European Buddhist converts are striking. Just as noticeable is Dillon/Jivaka's distancing of his political circumstances and religious motivations from that of the French ex-nun-turned-covert-Communist. Against the mentally "unbalanced" French woman writing screeds about sexually repressed Indian Buddhist monks, Dillon/Jivaka writes books and articles to spread Buddhism in "the west" as a well educated Englishman with the validation of the Indian Prime Minister. In Dillon/Jivaka's account of both events, the only logically way to situate the nun and Jivaka together is through a national phobia of possible undercover imperialists.

Conditional Chapters, Conditional Books: *Out of the Ordinary* and the Time of Publication

On the final paragraph of the memoir Dillon/Jivaka leaves the reader with another flood of frustrated feelings about a new round of confused printed newspaper stories beginning with the investigation started by the *Blitz* after Jivaka's article in the *Hindustan Times Sunday Weekly*. Recounting its similarity to the mistaken article printed when Dillon was aboard the *City of Bath* Dillon/Jivaka ends the memoir thus:

...there suddenly appeared, some months later, in a local Hindi newspaper some story of my having once been a lady-doctor who had changed her sex and had now become a Buddhist monk. Where it came from I do not know. Rumour pinned it on a Sarnath Indian bhishu but he denied it. Anyway the fact remained that they have been talking and it had leaked out. [...] In fact the English language papers would have been most

¹³⁰ *Out of the Ordinary*, 150.

embarrassed by it since it would mean that all their allegations about being a spy and Royal Naval officer must be wrong.¹³¹

Dillon/Jivaka spends the last moments of his authorial life trying to straighten out the record of his story from the noise around him, an act that we the readers have maddeningly read before several times. On the surface this repetition seems strange as concluding thoughts for an author who explicitly attempted to write a diachronic autobiography about conquering the mind and body. After all this was the "finished version" which arrived on the London desk of Jay Johnson, Dillon's editor, the week before Johnson received news of Dillon/Jivaka's death in Dalhousie, India.

However these final recursive trans-temporal moments and their resulting frustrated affects leave us with the feeling that perhaps the tabloids, stoppages and *Out of the Ordinary* itself are doomed to fail as purely progressive conquests from the beginning. Maybe the memoir itself is a warning of sorts against reading for Dillon/Jivaka within similar temporal frames. The pervasive power of progress in narrating time, contested by so many philosophers of subaltern historicism and temporality (Benjamin, Chakrabarty), remains one of the few ways those left out of progress's projections can make their appeals to those comfortably situated in the here-and-now. Imagining a future world and proving its necessity to those for whom the past is not understood as a vertical wreckage of violence may involve something no one concerned with social justice wants to hear: a meditation on waiting. After all, as demonstrated through the archives of Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, and now Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka, trans histories are never meant to be purely read and understandable in the cis-normative temporal registers through which they are

¹³¹ *Out of the Ordinary*, 156.

normatively articulated and come into view. Attempting to leave behind trans's imbrication with other legacies of conquest (war, colonialism, imperialism) means that returning to figures such as Dillon/Jivaka involves reading them between the times of those temporalities they reject (materialism, inheritance) and they somewhat problematically embrace (interpretations of "third sex" figures in Theravada and Mahyana Buddhism). Reading trans-temporally allows us to begin to separate out the fragments, oft competing desires and different temporal registers so that spiraling up instead of out becomes a means to stay the madness, when going forward is figuratively and literally impossible.

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Chapter 3
**Potholes of the Past: Incorporable Neoliberal Identities and Trans-Temporality's
effects in *Leche***

“And now it’s the dawn of the nineties and where is he? Right back where he started, in the Philippines, holding the First Daughter’s clammy hand, lipping a fragmented prayer, and wondering what the hell he got himself into, and how in the world is he able to recall the past and avoid potholes at the same time.” – R. Zamora Linmark, *Leche*

In R. Zamora Linmark’s 2011 novel *Leche*, in the midst of Vicente De Los Reyes’s return to the Philippines after a thirteen-year absence, the Mr. Pogi Pageant runner-up, finds himself escorting Kris Aquino, the president’s first daughter, in the annual Santacruzán festival parade. Part of a weeklong visit to Manila, Vicente’s participation in Santacruzán festivities involves connecting with the crème da la crème of Filipino cinema including leading lady Kris Aquino, the much beloved radical ex-nun Sister Marie and celebrated film director Bino Boca. In a moment of reflective realization, Vicente (who tells everyone to call him Vince due to the number of mispronunciations of his first name) finds himself in a kind of backward time warp, repeating long-forgotten Catholic gestures, posing as a heterosexual consort to Kris and disquietingly feeling-at-odds while navigating familiar territory. In R. Zamora Linmark’s *Leche*, the uneasiness of Vince’s return to the Philippines is an exercise in both “recall[ing] the past and avoid[ing] potholes at the same time.”¹³² While sometimes the potholes are literal in the novel, they are more often epistemological, playing out in discursive contestations over ethnic, sexual and national identity. These potholes belie a singular temporal experience placing the past-in-present and present-in-past. Pointing to larger legacies of U.S. militarism in the Philippines, the rise of neoliberal ideologies revamping transnational and local economies, and the emergence of queer and mixed

¹³² R. Zamora Linmark, *Leche*, (Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2011), 105.

race identities as neoliberal subjects par excellence, Linmark represents the convergence of these simultaneous timelines through Vince's navigation of metropolitan Manila's cultural scene, via his interactions with Sister Marie and Kris Aquino, crossreferences to his life back in Honolulu, and especially through the revelations of Vince's melancholic remembrances and nightmarish dreams of his deceased grandfather Don Alfonso. The often-contradictory historical discourses regulate Vince's mixed feelings towards his sexual, ethnic and national identities and subjectivities as a queer, mixed race thirteen year absent Balikbayan.

Part of a duology centered on the experiences of first and second generation queer Asian and Pacific Islander American boys growing up in Kalihi, Hawaii (a working-class immigrant section of Honolulu on the island of Oahu) *Leche* departs from its predecessor *Rolling the R's* by focusing on a single protagonist's (Vicente De Los Reyes) journey into his ancestral past. While readers do not need to be familiar with *Rolling the R's* in order to read *Leche*, a couple of side characters from *Rolling* appear in flashback remembrances, dream sequences and are the addressees of Vince's insomnia-fuelled postcard letters. In *Rolling*, racialized gender nonconformity, transgender women and queer sexuality are explicitly pitted against the strict disciplinary structures of 1970s elementary educational institutions; the book's title is derived from the repeated command "do not roll the r's" to first generation Filipino American students. In contrast, *Leche's* 1990's setting documents the rise of "straight appearing" educationally privileged gay subjects' folding into neoliberal ideologies in a transnational context. The later novel reveals how the spectral fetishization of light skinned mixed race Filipino American identity coupled with an assimilable (read respectable) queerness, merge with

trans temporal affects. By looking at Vince's affective breaks from the technologies of neoliberalism's pedagogies, I argue that the colonial conditions of forgetting and haunting that were appearing to Johnson in chapter one come back in a different form to the increasingly privileged queer and mixed race subject of late liberalism.

Cisnormativity-to-be-Incorporated?: The Fetish of Queer and Mixed Race's Flexibility in the late 20th Century's Neoliberal Logics

A slight departure from the previous two chapters, this chapter utilizes trans temporality to expand upon epistemological questions posed by the tracing of queer liberalism's rise at the end of the 20th Century and outlined in David Eng's methodology of queer diaspora discussed in *The Feeling of Kinship* (2010) by thinking about the mutual emergent discourses of (white) queer U.S. exceptionalism and enfoldment of mixed-race narratives into assimilationist, individualist logics. I see this discussion as part of looking at those subjects most recently enfolded into neoliberalism's anti-identity politics through what I think of as the fetish of poststructural flexibility. A deconstructivist turn in which signifier and signified were not placed in direct relationship lending credence to the realities of gendered and racialized subjects existing outside of essentialized bodily schemas, the embrace of poststructuralism was at its height in the academy during the 1990's.¹³³ Among the most prominent of the numerous projects spurred by the poststructuralist turn in the United States was the reclamation and

¹³³ See especially Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (1993).

theorization of queer and the celebratory redefinition of the racialized category hapa through discourses of multiculturalism.¹³⁴

While poststructuralism gave subjective space (both inside and outside the academy) to those abject figures of history, it also turned them into celebratory fetishes at the expense of longstanding if fraught coalitional solidarity. The popularization of these terms in praxis curiously grew up alongside each other but rarely crossed over dialogically. When disarticulated from a grounding in critiques of racial and economic capital, the cry for increasingly individualized and “owned” racialized and LGQ identities oddly merged with the logics of neoliberalism. As will be argued through this chapter, neoliberal logics play on a kind of historical amnesia in relation to settler colonial, economic and racial violence, mixed-race (especially hapa) and queer identity. As such, what were once abject subjectivities moved from the trans-temporal outsider to cisnormative time, to some of the prime salvific figures of national incorporation. Positioned as the peaceful endpoints of U.S. history, whitened mixed-race body and respectably homonormative queer subjects accrued an increasing cultural capital through neoliberal and neocolonial logics.

¹³⁴ A practicing clinical psychologist and one of the most well known authors on multicultural approaches to mixed race identity (particularly Filipino/a American identity) during the 1990’s, Maria P.P. Root’s work was widely quoted when the 2000 Census allowed mixed race people to check more than one box. In her article “Contemporary Mixed-Heritage Filipino Americans: Fighting Colonized Identities” Root gives this romanticized history of the term hapa: “...hapa, has transcended its original meaning. Originally connoting a mixture between Hawaiian and foreigner, usually white, hapa now generically refers to all phenotypic mixes in Hawai’i, even not of Hawaiian ancestry” (81). Making a gesture towards hapa’s increasing inclusivity and universality by “transcending” the anachronistic designations of “foreigner” and native Hawaiian, the discourse of multicultural flexibility is demonstrably coupled with a linear progress narrative dependent on disappearing the settler colonialist logics that gave rise to hapa. The necessity for Hawaiian ancestry is decoupled from an understanding of being Hawaiian, which the designation of hapa comes to cover (“all phenotypic mixes in Hawai’i”) as the new referent to an ultimately multicultural teleology. Moreover, taking out the implied referent of haole (or “white”) and discussing Euro-American colonizers as “foreigners” instead of white, further anachronizes indigenous Hawaiian definitions of hapa as unyieldingly rigid against a flexible “colorblind” politics.

I contend that it is these logics that especially at play on Vince's embodiment, written into his nightmares and waking remembrances of his grandfather, Don Alfonso and push against his sexual, racial and ethnic identity, through his interactions with Filipino historical and cultural figures and objects.

Vince's breakages with linear time, place the historical violence of colonialism and continuing U.S. imperialism into everyday context, and Linmark's multi-genre novel deploys several literary strategies to transport the reader temporally backwards and forwards simultaneously. By doing so Linmark often references the future-in-present and past-in-present, positing Vince's melancholic queerness and his unacknowledged desire for white incorporation as a condition of turn of the twentieth century mixed race identity and part and parcel of queer liberalism's rise. To study these processes as temporalities in compressed microform, I turn towards what Eng describes as "the racialization of intimacy" controlling queer liberalism.

Written before the June 2015 Supreme Court ruling on same-sex marriage that all but cemented the logics of what Eng calls queer liberalism, *The Feeling of Kinship* merges Eng's earlier work of partnering Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis and affect studies (a la Anne Cvetkovich, Lauren Berlant, and Eve Sedgwick), with temporal critique vis-à-vis Dipesh Chakrabarty, Walter Benjamin, and Fernand Braudel and Asian Americanist critique. In it, Eng describes his project of exploring further the relationship between U.S.-led globalization to what he calls the disappearing act of race "under the banner of liberal freedom and progress" by looking at kinship formations, especially the ways in which overturning anti-sodomy law in *Lawrence v. Texas* was discussed as the temporal endpoint of the (1967) *Loving v. Virginia* decision legalizing interracial

marriage.¹³⁵ Eng attributes queer liberalism's rise to the post-identity push during the late-1990's- 2000's which was ensconced in neoliberal multicultural politics of colorblindness, and characterized intersectional identity politics as anachronistic. He explains the necessity to turn towards the racialization of intimacy further:

Attention to the racialization of intimacy draws awareness to the ways in which racialized subjects and objects are reinscribed into a discourse of colorblindness. [...] an examination of the racialization of intimacy reveals the political, economic, and cultural processes by which race has been forgotten across a long history of colonial relations and imperial practices, disassociated from or subsumed by other axes of social difference, such that it can only return as a structure of feeling, as a melancholic trace demanding historical explanation. Finally, the racialization of intimacy indexes other ways of knowing and being in the world, alternative accounts of race as an affective life-world within but ultimately beyond the dictates of a liberal humanist tradition, eluding conventional analytic description and explanation.¹³⁶

To interpret the conditions in which racialized subjects are subsumed in discursive colorblindness under queer liberalism means to unpack the structures of feeling and melancholic traces within the political, economic, and cultural processes of the racialization of intimacy. Predicated on forgetting of the record of colonial relations and imperial practices endemic to queer liberalism's logics, the feeling and knowing of racialized kinship radically departs from the dictates and, I will argue, the times, of a liberal humanist tradition. The processes by which race is forgotten are foremost problems of historicism; requiring race's logical breakage from and absorption by "other axes of social difference" namely sexuality, gender and class. Operating outside of the semiotic or the visible logics of queer liberalism, piecing together disassociated readings of race creates an affective life-world "demanding historical explanation" by both

¹³⁵ David Eng, *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 11.

¹³⁶ Eng, 10.

haunting neoliberal subjects whose difference is most desired by states and pointing them elsewhere.

Eng takes the racialization of intimacy as his object through his methodology of queer diasporas which explores new forms of kinship and family's affective life-worlds under the political economy of globalization at the end of the 20th Century. For Eng, juxtaposing queer and diaspora means, "refusing to subsume sexuality within overarching narratives of national identity and racial belonging, or to incorporate these latter categories within a Western developmental narrative of capitalism and gay identity."¹³⁷ Instead queer diasporas "denaturalize heteronormative discourses of racial purity underwriting dominant nationalist as well as diasporic imaginaries...[they] complicate the homogenizing narratives of globalization that take for granted the totalizing logic of commodification, the inexorable march of economic development as the guiding beacon of (neo)liberal rights and freedoms" by "highlight[ing] the breaks, discontinuities, and differences, rather than the origins, continuities, and commonalities, of diaspora."¹³⁸ Getting Chakrabartian in his breakdown of the progress narratives of transnational political, social, and cultural economy, Eng describes the leaks in commodification's totalizing logic as a kind of history 2 to the history 1 of economic development's marriage with neoliberalism's promise of rights and freedoms. Taking a stab at John D'Emilio's classic piece "Capitalism and Gay Identity," Eng calls out histories of proto-queer diasporas predicated on a whitewashed western developmental narrative in praise

¹³⁷ Eng, 14.

¹³⁸ Eng, 15.

of capital.¹³⁹ Diaspora, already theorized as a critical positionality on national identity and ethnicity, is aptly suited to trans-temporality's method.

In Glen Mimura's opening chapter of *The Ghostlife of Third Cinema* he explains that diaspora "represents a hard-earned point of view with which to critically engage the transformative effects of globalization as well as the anxious consolidations of the nation-state."¹⁴⁰ Mimura points out that diaspora has been contrasted with immigration as a "unilateral process of migration."¹⁴¹ Going against the path of the immigrant, Shirley Lim is quoted in Mimura characterizing "diaspora as an open-ended process of continual displacement, instability, and fluidity-in essence implied as a metaphysical condition of postmodernism."¹⁴² Mimura counters both definitions as oppositional saying they "are mutually implicated."¹⁴³ Between the times of exile, immigration, naturalization, and diaspora, comes the question of balikbayan identity and affect, which Linmark leaves messy and contestably open in *Leche*. Placing Vince's diasporic immigrant Filipino subjectivity as the starting point for the desires and affects which draw him to and (dis)orient him in Manila, Linmark immediately immerses the reader in the "metaphysical condition of postmodernism" where personal memory is reinterpreted through anthropological discourse and returning home means feeling out-of-sorts with the melancholic traces demanding historical explanation.

¹³⁹ D'Emilio argues that capitalism's pull of men and women from pastoral heterosexual family units to homosocial spaces in industrialized urban port towns provided the conditions for the emergence of modern gay identity. Because of this the family unit became less tied to economic relations of survival and more a social institution of affect. Eng then argues that the relationship between late capitalism and gay identity, "organized the unequal distribution of social goods and human labor – indeed, human life and freedom – into a biopolitics of global capitalism, one in which an ascendant queer liberalism can be a (potentially) respectable rather than stigmatized social formation." See Eng, 26-34.

¹⁴⁰ Glen Mimura, "Diaspora, or Modernity's Other," *The Ghostlife of Third Cinema*, (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 13.

¹⁴¹ Mimura, 13.

¹⁴² --, 13.

¹⁴³ --, 13.

Cultural Memories Remixed in Postmodern Time

By the time we pick up with Vicente De Los Reyes in 1993-set *Leche* he is no longer a wile Filipino exile to-be-formed-into-normative-U.S.-subject. Instead, he is the exemplary subject: a fair skinned 23 year old with a newly earned BA in Film Studies and English Literature, filling out his colonial education with information from courses on Ethnic Literature taught by celebrated cultural anthropologist, Bonifacio Dumpit. The facts from Dumpit's *Decolonization for Beginners: A Filipino Glossary* pop up early in Linmark's text as translations to words such as "balikbayan" and "bangungut" for the reader, but also in Vince's memories of Dumpit's lectures which serve as reference points for his own cultural interpretation of his childhood memories growing up in the Philippines which he confronts over and over on his journey through Manila. Anthropological discourse is a primary cultural interpretive frame for the reader and Vince in *Leche*, often disrupting the linear flow of the novel's plot and forcibly reinterpreting Vince's experiences.

Before boarding a jeepney for the first time since childhood, Vince flashes back to Dumpit's lecture "How I traveled from the Rice Fields to the Moon," given to celebrate the 80 year anniversary of Filipinos arriving in Hawaii. During the lecture Dumpit explains the history of the popular 6-person ex-Army utility vehicle, the jeepney; a cheap, colorful and crowded means of Filipino public transportation which originated as the by-product of surplus American WWII transport vehicles. The first jeepney's were redecorated in kitschy décor and repurposed to house numerous passengers for transport around metro areas. In this memory, Vince recalls the feeling of reverence authenticating

the anthropologist's claim that "a Filipino is not a Filipino until he has climbed aboard a jeepney and paid his share of the ride."¹⁴⁴ Linmark explains further:

Dumpit concluded, pausing to make room for the silence that spread across the crowded room...A silence broken by gasps of astonishment: astonishment at how much truth was in Dumpit's definition of Filipino. Astonishment at how much one's identity could depend solely on a Technicolor ride Dumpit described as "part lounge, part church, part historical museum, part kisch, part kunsthaus, but purely Filipino. One hundred percent certified Pinoy."¹⁴⁵

As the professed "expert" on all cultural things Filipino, Dumpit's careful use of theatrics (at least in Vince's mind) confers the weight of his pronouncement. The gasps from the audience serve to establish Dumpit's positionality as cultural interpreter of "true" Filipino identity qua the experience of riding amongst the jeepney's conglomeration of cultural symbols. A layered space of cultural production and historical citation the church/museum/kisch/kunsthaus-in-motion lends Dumpit's reading of Filipino identity a postmodern sensibility.

Regulating Vince's own self understanding of being authentically Filipino, Dumpit's cultural translations of the jeepney couple with Vince's claustrophobic memory of his first (and last) ride. In contrast to Dumpit's smooth historical connections and polished prose, young Vince's nauseous experience of an "authentically Filipino" jeepney ride replicates in miniature his overall feelings since returning to the Philippines: an overwhelming sensorial experience of close quarter contact. Linmark describes the repulsion Vince experiences inside a jeepney during De Los Reyes family's sole trip to visit their maid's relatives in the Manila barrio. Vince recalls:

Boarding the jeepney from the back, they hunched their way into a tunnel of human sweat and breath. Throughout the entire trip, he tried to ignore the people who, sitting face to face, knee to knee, hip to hip, elbow to elbow, shoulder to

¹⁴⁴ Linmark, 152.

¹⁴⁵ --, 152.

shoulder, stared at him. [...] On the way back, he could smell traces of the barrio on him—its heat, dust, burning trash, and twigs and leaves. It made him so nauseous that, compounded by the bumpy ride and the claustrophobic feeling of being trapped inside a box reeking of perspiration, he dashed out of the jeepney the moment it stopped in front of their house and puked all over the bougainvilleas. After that, he refused to ride in one ever again.¹⁴⁶

Limmark's description of the cramped inside of the jeepney as a slick, moisture-filled "tunnel of human sweat and breath" conveys Vince's trapped, overwhelmed senses.

There is too much forced contact in Vince's vivid recollection of sight (the wall of shoulder to shoulder people staring at him), smell (the traces of burnt trash, heat, twigs and leaves from the barrio, also a space of too-close human contact compounded by poverty), touch (the bumpy ride of the "box reeking of perspiration"), taste (air tinged with human sweat and lingering human breath) and sound (his puking). Any semblance of Dumpit's culturally pastiche Technicolor jeepney ride is noticeably absent in Vince's remembrances. Instead what is left in place of the anthropologist's reading is condensed human misery, and a refusal of return.

While claiming Filipino identity through the common experience of riding a jeepney, Vince takes up Dumpit's reading and simultaneously downplays his aversion to its production of discomfort as a cheap means of public transportation. In the same way, Vince's experience of Manila in the present replicates his continuous inability to hold the apart the tenses of the term "balikbayan" from "babalikyan." Upon arrival to Manila Airport, Vince attempts to enter the line for national returnees but finds himself corrected by, "the immigration officer, a young black Amerasian named Whitney Latishamoreia Concepcion."¹⁴⁷ After being informed by Whitney that his blue passport designates him

¹⁴⁶ Linmark, 152-3.

¹⁴⁷ --, 44.

as a U.S. citizen and former Filipino, an exasperated Vince has the following enlightening exchange:

“What’s the difference between a returning Filipino and a bablikyan, anyway?” Whitney snickers, corrects him. “It’s ba-LIK-bayan,” she says. “Ba-ba-lik-yan is ‘I shall return...eventually.’ You know, as in Dugot Douglas MacArthur.” “Where on the sign does it say this line’s for returning Filipino nationals only? I don’t see the word ‘national’ on it,” Vince argues. “If you’re a true Filipino, Mr. Vicente De Los Reyes,” Whitney tells him, “you’d know that the sampaguita flower is our national flower.”¹⁴⁸

Noting Whitney’s ethnic identity, Linmark shows that the touch of American Imperialism is intimately bound to the racial, gendered economy of the Philippine national labor force. Despite Vince’s birth in the Philippines and racial identity as Filipino, he is schooled by a young black Amerasian woman, the outcome of American military intervention and continuing presence in the South Pacific, about true Filipino identity through the sampaguita flower, a national cultural symbol. Another gesture of Vince’s lack of current Filipino cultural knowledge is his cluelessness at babalikyan’s definition of indefinite delayed return (“I shall return...eventually”). While Vince thinks this means a Filipino who has returned home, Whitney likens the word to General Douglas MacArthur’s declaration during the United States’ conquest of the Pacific, aligning Vince’s position to the Philippines with American imperial subjectivity. Whitney then gives him the correct vernacular word to make his return both present and grounded in Filipino national identity, balikbayan. His first interface with differential national cultural reference points, Vince’s exchange with immigration at the airport is the beginning of the recurrent discovery that his very discourse is stuck in the past despite holding on to a (tenuous) balikbayan Filipino identity in the present.

¹⁴⁸ Linmark, 44-5.

Is Tagalog in the Heart? Fil-Am Identity and Light-Skinned Privilege and Mixed-Race(less) conversations

Never is the linguistic gap between Vince's knowledge and current cultural vocabulary more noticeable than in the exchanges he makes with Pinoywood's A-listers on Kris Aquino's television show. The space between Kris and Sister Marie's definition of Filipino returnee and Filipino American tourist is highly dependent on patriotism and speaking Tagalog. While the light-skinned conditions of Vince's tv worthiness are not directly discussed, interracial contact between white American GIs and native Filipinas does become a touchy topic of conversation.

Linmark's novel literally takes on the form of a film script when Vince appears on Kris Aquino's afternoon talk show *PM Talking with Yours Truly* complete with dialogue, action, transitions for camera operators, directions for the show's audience, and parenthetical notes for the characters' onscreen emotions. Making visible the levels of labor mediating national visibility on the small screen, Linmark calls attention to what is lacking for the reader, namely actually seeing the product being produced. The desire to see the action being read gives a heightened almost doubled sense of scrutiny on the subjects being discussed because we cannot read the affects and expressions of the characters. The film script format for the talk show also creates a pocket of completely linear time for the reader while simultaneously calling up an imagined national audience of viewers.¹⁴⁹ Like the viewers of Kris's popular talk show, we are tuning into a

¹⁴⁹ Linmark does this by having Kris call out to the audience at the beginning saying, "Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to another delightful afternoon of PM Talking with Yours Truly on ABS-CBN Studio, the only network in the country worth wasting your electricity on. That's why we're number one again." (217) At the end of the segment, Kris also solicits the imagined viewers' reactions to Vince's claims about being Filipino. She asks, "What do you think?...Does Vince have to live in the Philippines to be a true-blooded Pinoy? Must he give up his first-world privileges, U.S. citizenship, American slang? What does it

nationally staged live discussion of Balikbayan and Filipino American identity, mixed race genealogies, and uncontested beauty norms predicated on light-skinned privilege. What we get hints of in the parentheticals and dialogue but don't see are the volatile emotions around this discussion, which becomes progressively more heated. Linmark delays revealing the hinted-at discomfiting affects until after Vince is off the air and writing postcards back to Edgar and his family. This brings to the foreground the historical conditions that make Vince a highly desired and visible subject, including a family history full of interracial contact brought on by Spanish and American colonization and war.

While only hinted at in a celebratory fashion during his earlier interactions with Pinoywood's elite in the novel, Vince's family history and his Filipino identity becomes the focus of his discussion on the air with Kris and Sister Marie. Tellingly, Vince's marketability and suitability for television and movies is determined by his approximation to white heteronormative respectability. When Bino Boca gives Vince a rundown of the socialite rankings of the big and small name celebrities at Santacruzán, he remarks, "You know, you would be part of the A-list....You don't really need much. Fair skin; an accent, preferably Australian, British, or MTV;...with your tiso-y features, hijo, they'll welcome you..."¹⁵⁰ Kris echoes this sentiment when she learns Vince is her escort for the festival adding, "Last year's titleholder was not even half a head turner. Plus he was not a straight-acting gay."¹⁵¹ With an undercurrent of gestures towards gender conformity coupled with racial and sexual passing within their logics of visibility

take to be a true Filipino, anyway? Or, in Vince's case, can you return to being one? Send your comments to PM Talking with Yours Truly c/o ABS-CBN, Mother Ignacia Street, Quezon City, Philippines." (233-4)

¹⁵⁰ --, 94.

¹⁵¹ --, 95.

and beauty, Vince is confirmed as the neoliberal subject par excellence. Furthering this temporal bent towards incorporation of mixed-race and gender normative gay identity within national narratives of celebratory diversity, Kris goes on to urge Bino to cast Vince as an Amerasian hustler in the director's next film because Vince has "the right complexion" and Bino suggests that Vince appear on Kris's talk show.¹⁵²

However, the discussion around Vince's handsome mixed-race features turns from celebration to contestation when his family history comes out on national television. Kris first introduces Vince to the audience as the celebratory balikbayan subject, a "super guapo" and highly educated overseas Pinoy, "born in the town proper of San Vicente, Philippines, and moved to Hawaii in 1978. He completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where he graduated with highest honors."¹⁵³ She proceeds to have a conversation with Sister Marie about how similar Vince's "aura" is to Leonardo DiCaprio, reading him through a cinematic emblem of hegemonic white American masculinity.¹⁵⁴ That conversation around whiteness leads right into a discussion of Vince's ethnicity and mixed-race background. Linmark records:

Sister Marie: Where do you get your mestizo features from?

Vince: My mom is a quarter Spanish and my dad is a quarter American.

Sister Marie: No wonder you look like a Close-Up toothpaste commercial model. You should model, hijo. You have the right skin and the right height. Was your American grandfather in the military?

Vince: He fought during World War II and his father was a lieutenant in the Philippine-American War.

Kris: Of 1899?

Vince: Yes.

Sister Marie: Very interesting. You're a product of interracial marriages.

Kris: And a legacy of betrayals.

Sister Marie: And Mongrels.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Linmark, 96;99.

¹⁵³ --, 224.

¹⁵⁴ --, 225.

¹⁵⁵ --, 225.

As the mouthpieces of cultural, social, and political capital, through their Pinoywood stardom and governmental connections, Sister Marie and Kris Aquino start to push back on Vince's celebratory subjectivity precisely at the point when the racialization of intimacy and particularly Spanish colonialism and American militarization becomes visible through Vince's genealogy. Whiteness and American-ness discursively departs progressively from the positivity of the DiCaprio comment and adheres to the troubling figure of Don Alfonso (as the "American grandfather"). While Sister Marie attributes "the right skin and the right height" for modeling to the Spanish and (white) American parts of Vince's "mestizo features" (notably whiteness is presumed by the designation American), and not his Pinoy ones, her follow up question about Don Alfonso's enlistment in the Philippine military during World War II brings up the question of Vince's all white American great-grandfather and "a legacy of betrayals." The limit of celebration is breached when Vince connects Don Alfonso's military service to his white American father U.S. Lieutenant Lawrence Lewis, whose hand in the Philippine-American war of 1899 helped put the Philippines under the possession of the United States after the Spanish-American war freed the Philippines from Spanish control. While Lewis is a fictional character, Linmark is retelling the actual history of the Spanish-American War and its lingering effects on the Philippines.

It is when past historical violence is recalled by looking backwards, that the current moment of celebration is discursively sutured to social science and political narratives of miscegenation. With the invocation of U.S. possession in 1899 Sister Marie and Kris move from describing Vince's genealogy as that of "interracial marriages" (a normativizing liberal rights and freedom based acknowledgement of interracial

intimacies) to the more pointed “legacy of betrayals” from the U.S., and finally the stigmatizing and dehumanizing language of scientific racialization as “mongrels.” A melancholic trace of lingering injury is brought to the surface in Don Alfonso’s connection to Vince’s celebrated visage and it cannot be dropped for the rest of the interview. Even in the moment in which the project and medium of visibility most desires to claim Vince and reclaim Don Alfonso as symbols of Filipino progress and recovery from American and Spanish Imperialism and colonialism alternative historical hermeneutics temporally push away Don Alfonso from the times of Vince.

Colonial and American Imperialist logics resurface a little later in discussion of differences between acquiring cultural knowledge through cultural representation and the translation of that to Filipino and Filipino-American Identity. Central to this later discussion of ethnicity are the hairy questions of authenticity and proximity to cultural nationalist projects. When Kris and Sister Marie press Vince for an answer about why it took him thirteen years to return to the Philippines, he declares, “I didn’t feel the need to come back....We have our own mini-Manila, mini-Ilocos, mini-Davao in Hawaii.”¹⁵⁶ In response, Sister Marie declares, “I’ve visited these miniature Philippine versions in the U.S.- and they’re nothing but sanitized, trying-hard-to-copycat versions of the original. [...]They stand for nostalgia.”¹⁵⁷ Vince argues, “If nostalgia’s what it takes to bring Filipinos closer to the Philippines, then I don’t see anything wrong with that.”¹⁵⁸ For Vince, nostalgia is what he has based his Filipino identity on, although it is revealed that much of this nostalgia is for his relationship to Don Alfonso and not the Philippines itself. As Filipino communities on Hawaii are the cultural reference points that affectively draw

¹⁵⁶ Linmark, 228.

¹⁵⁷ --, 229.

¹⁵⁸ --, 229.

Vince “closer to the Philippines” it is less the inauthentic and Disneyland-like production of mini-Manilas and more the diasporic communal relations that bespeak Filipino identity to Vince. However, Americanized representation of the Philippines and the blurry lines between Filipino, Filipino American and Asian American becomes the foci of Vince’s remaining time on *PM Talking with Yours Truly*.

Vince becomes noticeably frustrated when his neoliberal discourse of individualized choice and identity runs up against Kris and Sister Marie’s definitions of Filipino predicated on speaking Tagalog and a desire to return and permanently live in the Philippines. The differential temporalities of declaring oneself a balikbayan and babalikbayan as defined by Whitney Latishamore Conception at the airport (“I shall return,” vs. “I shall return...eventually”) reopen through Kris and Sister Marie’s inscription of Vince’s ethnicity. Linmark writes:

Kris: Home? Do you still consider the Philippines your home, Vince?
Vince: No...well...yes...in a way...I guess. I mean, I was born here, but...no...Hawaii is where I spent most of my life.
Kris: I’ll make it simpler. Do you identify more as Asian American or Fil-Am?
Vince: Neither.
Kris: Then what?
Vince: Filipino.
Kris: Cannot be. You said you’ve lived most of your life in America.
Vince: Yes.
Kris: Do you speak Tagalog?
Vince: No. But I understand it. [...]
Sister Marie: But, hijo, is it in your heart to speak it? [...]
Sister Marie: Are you willing to give up your U.S. citizenship?
Vince: No.
Sister Marie: Then you’re not a Filipino. [...]
Vince: Isn’t your definition of Filipino too narrow, too specific, too literal?
Kris: Of course, otherwise it? wouldn’t be a definition, right?
Vince: I thought once a Filipino in the heart, always a Filipino in the heart.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ Linmark, 229-31.

Kris interprets Vince's hesitant conclusion that Hawaii is his home due to the amount of time he has spent there as indicative of his nationality and ethnic identity. Choosing the third option of Filipino rather than Asian American or Filipino-American, Vince positions his home as beyond the dictates of an immigrant narrative and within a purely diasporic time. In essence, he declares his return not as eventual but inevitable because he has chosen to reside within the more universal identity of Filipino. Sister Marie and Kris challenge the universality of Filipino, by reminding Vince of the historical conditions of his emergence (gaining and retaining U.S. citizenship, speaking only English, spending the majority of his life on Hawaii). At this challenge Vince gestures towards postmodern flexible subjectivity and neoliberal individuality ("Isn't your definition of Filipino too narrow, too specific, too literal?"), and posits Kris and Sister Marie's definition as structuralist and essentialist. He then turns the title of Carlos Bulosan's memoir *America is in the Heart*, often read as the quintessential representation of the Filipino American immigrant experience, into an argument for the essential universality his own Filipino identity. Jockeying for his identity through this redactive and dehistoricized reading, Vince enacts the logics of forgetting undergirding his Filipino identity and attempts to anachronize Sister Marie and Kris's Asian American and Filipino American identities. However, Kris and Sister Marie's challenge is made through the infinite delay of Vince's declaration of home mirroring his reluctance of return to the Philippines, and his declaration to Whitney that he is a *babalikbayan* ("I shall return...eventually"). The hanging temporality of infinite delay haunts Vince's deconstruction of Filipino identity as flexible yet universal.

While Vince's appearance on *PM Talking with Yours Truly* follows a linear temporality and keeps the reader in the present, Linmark utilizes several recurring literary strategies to break up the linearity of the plot, essentially stretching out the feeling of time in the novel. In doing so, Linmark immerses the reader in trans-temporal affect from Vince's positionality drawing out cis time's reliance on anthropological discourse as a still present controlling history.

The Anthropological Tourist Gaze of Allochronism: Tourist Tips, Postcards, and Signs of the Times

Linmark's text places Vince in the interstitial space between the assumed American reader and the Filipino National Cultural producers that populate his novel. Utilizing three different literary strategies to disrupt the main plot of the novel, Linmark provides an ur text couched in an Anthropological gaze that partners with Vince's imperial education at University of Hawaii to enhance the protagonist's disorienting affects of trans-temporal breakage. Through the use of "Tourist Tips," postcards home, and especially a section entitled "Signs of the Times" Linmark makes visible the conditions mediating Vince's understanding of himself as an American balikbayan returnee, navigating discourses couched in other temporalities.

Breaking up the plot of the novel with oft ridiculous "Tourist Tips" for the reader that recite tired stereotypes of Filipinos as loud, nosy and backward, and Manila as a polluted, vice-ridden "third world" city, Linmark humorously satirizes the anthropological discourse of travel literature. Partnered with Dumpit's *Decolonization for Beginners: A Filipino Glossary* Tourist Tips, humorously translate Filipino gestures,

words and everyday regimes of health to the imagined American tourist. Vince's disgust, frustration and ability to navigate Manila in light of these rules and suggestions (the text is never explicit about whether Vince has a book containing these tips, or if it is just a meta text through which Vince and/or an American tourist to the Philippines thinks of themselves as culturally competent) provides insight to the production of the tips as anthropological text.

Covering everything from weather, Filipino history, public health and disease, Tagalog and English phrases, to sex, intimacy and everyday gestures on the street, the Tourist Tips subsections provide orientation to Vince's overwhelming experiences but are simultaneously demonstratively unreliable narrative. Through obviously feigned objectivity, Linmark's writing mocks travel literature's usage of statistical facts to back essentialist ideologies of race, sexuality, and class. In the second set of Tourist Tips of the novel, while Vince is recovering from a nightmare on his plane ride to Manila, Linmark melds statistical facts on noise pollution with the humorously ridiculous. He writes:

The Philippines is a very loud country: bring earplugs.
"Pinoys," a nickname for Filipinos, is also spelled "P-Noise!"
Filipinos can meditate to heavy metal music.
Filipinos don't pray in silence; they ululate in tribes.
At wakes, they don't weep. Rather, they wail, screech, tear the roots of their hair, hold vigil-long monologues to the dead, complete with a live brass band on the patio.
According to the World Health Organization, one out of ten Filipinos is born with a hearing problem. Six will go legally deaf by age thirty.
Their hi-fi mating calls can be heard as far north as Taiwan and Borneo in the south.¹⁶⁰

While the first "tip" is practical and somewhat serious advice, and the second is an actual fact coupled with a pun, most of the rest are a satire of tourist literature and taxonomic discourse. Blending statistical facts from the World Health Organization on the

¹⁶⁰ Linmark, 23.

prevalence of hearing loss in the Philippines, with comments that frame Filipino sexual behavior like zoological facts of animal mating rituals and patterns the Tourist Tips relentlessly demonstrate the biased narration of travel literature's anthropological gaze. Describing Filipinos praying as "ululating in tribes" is dependent on anachronistic ideologies of pre-colonial kinship relations (tribes) and recall images of "primitive" pre-Christian religious practices. Clearly "praying in silence" is being understood as the civilized temporal endpoint of "ululating in tribes." By refusing to practice silence and respectable quietness, Filipinos are backwardly stuck in time. Johannes Fabian's critique of anthropological time's progress narrative aligns with the imagined Filipinos of Linmark's Tourist Tips.

In Fabian's temporal critique *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* the Dutch cultural anthropologist posits that for communication to occur between subjects the participants have to create a shared time (what he terms "coevalness"). Calling this time intersubjective, Fabian's study proves that classical anthropological discourse and ethnography is epistemologically build on the denial of coevalness, which results in making the other into a temporally distant object.¹⁶¹ Fabian clarifies his definition thus, "by that I mean *a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse.*"¹⁶² By re-reading the ethnographic encounter not as a meeting of times through shared communication, but instead through the devices (existential, rhetorical, political) of colonialism, Fabian pronounces that anthropological discourse is steeped in allochronism. Critical anthropological writing makes the process

¹⁶¹ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 31.

¹⁶² Fabian, 31.

of temporal distancing visible and unpacks the moments of shared communication to put pressure on allochronism. Linmark's Tourist Tips make visible the allochronistic nature of travel literature's cultural translations for the visiting tourist, merging practical, historical, scientific, sociological and cultural discourses with a wink and tongue-in-cheek wit. Humor throws simultaneous shade and light on the taxonomic and allochronistic nature of the quantitative and qualitative evidence provided to translate Filipino religiosity, geography, funereal practice, and deafness. While the reader is encouraged to begin reading the Tips as literal cultural points of reference to orient themselves in *Leche*'s narrative, they are often unravel into internally contradictory declarations of ethnic essentialism mirroring Vince's own sense of losing a center to an essential balikbayan Filipino identity.

However, Linmark consciously turns the genre of Tourist Tips on its head through his final self-aware set of tips, mimicking Vince's own journey to a more complex understanding of his mixed race Filipino-American ethnicity, diasporic status and queer desires. Rather than a gesture towards completion, and neat resolution and mastery over cultural and historical cues, the final tips reject universality and homogeneity, taking Manila as the stand-in for a kind of turn of the twentieth-century neoliberal mixed race queer subjectivity:

Manila is a never-ending, morphing city, constantly undergoing revisions and reversions.

Your Manila is only one of the hundreds of millions of versions.

Bring a balikbayan box full of open minds. Otherwise, Manila will kick you in the ass and trip your soul.

Keep tourist tips where they belong: at the International Date Line.

Remember: in Manila, contradictions are always welcome, including – and especially – yours.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Linmark, 316.

Both an invitation and a warning, the final set of tourist tips invite the reader to interpret Manila as a non-essential and individual experience of “revisions and reversions.” A city that operates on and through the tourist which will defy neat understanding and cannot be translated by allochronistic Tourist Tips, Manila invites internal contradictions and begs what was not questioned previously. A final revision of the genre of Tourist literature itself, Linmark’s last set of Tourist Tips actively works to discount everything that is previously posited as true facts. This simultaneous warning and invitation is reinforced by a point in the plot in which Vince is getting “kick(ed) in the ass and trip(ped) in the soul” from the recovery of his blurry memories around his grandfather’s mixed race genealogy, his early queer longings, and the mutually contradictory affects of both sets of memories’ historical ties to U.S. imperial interests in the Philippines.¹⁶⁴

Without the contradiction between Vince’s desire for an unproblematized and celebrated balikbayan and queer Filipino identity, and the continual reminders of the colonial conditions allowing his germination and emergence as a celebrated light-skinned neoliberal diasporic American subject (most symbolized by Don Alfonso’s adoption of the surname De Los Reyes and dropping of Lewis), *Leche*’s Manila would not exist. Between the moments of nightmarish nostalgia for his Filipino grandfather and his continuous refusal to accept his memoirs of Don Alfonso as queer melancholic desires for masculine whiteness, the “never-ending, morphing city, constantly undergoing revisions and reversions” of Linmark’s *Leche* pulls apart every visibly celebratory aspect of Vince’s identity and presents the subaltern historical conditions mediating his every wish for stable resolution.

¹⁶⁴ Linmark, 316.

Another literary strategy Linmark uses to disrupt the linear flow of *Leche's* plot are postcards Vince periodically sends back to his immediate family and Edgar usually connecting his current misery with Manila to past shared complaints about the Philippines. Switching narrative modes from third person limited to first person epistle, the postcards provide an intimate insight to Vince's closest relationships. Because we never see a reply from Edgar or any of Vince's family, the postcards also emphasize Vince's isolation from a community of balikbayans. He is clearly adrift in a sea of memories trying to make his exceptional experiences ordinary, pulling from communal memories to make sense of the present. These inquiries and one-way conversations seem to gesture towards irresolution in their expectation that the conversations will not take place until Vince returns from Hawaii. It is a future the reader (and Vince in the present) will not see, but points to other times operating on him simultaneously. As benchmarks of Vince's descent into the past, the postcards leave a record for future Vince to piece through in the midst of others who do not feel the same nostalgic pull towards Filipino nationalism.

A meta-text of Vince's misery complicating the celebratory mestizo narrative, the postcards addressed to his mother and Edgar immediately following his appearance on *PM Talking with Yours Truly*, demonstrates Vince's contentious presence as a simultaneous enactment and refusal of the continuing American military imperial presence through his discomfort and paranoia. After Kris Aquino ends her interview asking viewers to rule on the authenticity of Vince's Filipino identity, he retreats to a café inside Intramuros and angrily writes the following postcard to Carmen:

My tolerance for this city just hit subzero. Somebody has to do something with these UNICEF rejects. They won't leave me alone. "Joe! Joe!" "Who

the fuck is Joe?” And they answer with more “Joe! Joe!” Enough already. Go away. Shoo, shoo. Dengue, malaria, take them away.¹⁶⁵

Unknowingly grouped with the American GI’s the street children are referencing, Vince’s disgust with being called “Joe” is predicated on his visible similarities with members of the United States armed forces in Subic Bay. Feigning innocence in the interpellation of his embodied presence as American returnee/tourist with the simultaneous military presence that produced his subjectivity, the referenced chorus of children aligns Vince with the historical conditions of his appearance (Don Alfonso and his father’s participation in the Philippine-American War and capture by the Japanese Empire during WWII). Vince’s desire to silence the unrelenting children (through death by dengue fever and malaria) is discursively framed through the failure of first world benevolence. Characterizing them as unworthy of the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund, the children’s chorus rips a hole in Vince’s claim to Filipinoness and authenticity due to his simultaneous distancing and claimed ignorance of their citation of historical cries for money from American soldiers whose presence helped create and sustain such a chorus. Vince’s queerness does not mitigate his responsibility to nor his disgust at the children, instead it provides a differential lens to the claims of Filipino identity by Kris and Sister Marie (who hold an enormous amount of socio-political and economic capital), the children are unnamed and unremarkable, yet they are everywhere and set in time of stasis.

Following his lone postcard of complaint to Carmen with six paranoid ones to Edgar, Vince recounts his experience on *PM Talking with Yours Truly* by recounting his discussion of yellowface in Hollywood films with Kris Aquino and Sister Marie in order

¹⁶⁵ Linmark, 235.

to contest Kris and Marie's hard lines of Filipino ethnic authenticity. Using the popular spectacle of U.S. cinematic misrepresentation as a means of questioning who can claim and be recognized as Pinoy, Vince ensconces his self-defense through the same cultural logics of imperialism and whitewashing that allow Marie and Kris to be celebratory figures. He writes:

Marlon Brando is Okinawan in The Teahouse of the August Moon. Alec Guinness is Hindu in A Passage to India, Japanese in A Majority of One, an Arab in Lawrence of Arabia, a Jedi in Star Wars. Mickey Rooney is a bucktoothed Japanese in Breakfast at Tiffany's. Peter Sellers is Chinese in Fu Manchu. David Carradine is everybody's kung-fu-fighting Amerasian in Kung Fu. [...] Anthony Quinn is Italian in La Strada, Greek in Zorba, Gauguin in Lust for Life, and in Back to Bataan, the Filipino grandson of Andres Bonifacio, first president of the Philippine Republic. In The Year of Living Dangerously, Linda Hunt is a man. But I, Vince De Los Reyes, cannot be a Filipino? You got an explanation? Save it for when I come home. Tour's about to start.¹⁶⁶

Laying out a history of cinematic whitewashing Asian characters with white and whitened mixed-but-not-Asian actors, Vince's postcards to Edgar utilize the primary medium of cultural and social capital as an argument to undo Marie and Kris's agreements on ethnic and racial national authenticity. Listing the numerous Asian and Amerasian characters Euro-American actors from Marlon Brando and Alec Guinness to Linda Hunt have played in Hollywood films, Vince noticeably identifies the mixed Asian-white characters by their racialized difference (particularly Carradine's portrayal of Kwai Chang Caine, and Hunt's Billy Kwan) but only gives the ethnic identity of the other yellowface characters and lumps them together. Carradine's Caine is distinguished by "kung-fu-fighting" while Guinness's Obi-wan Kenobi is "a Jedi" in *Star Wars*, calling attention to the orientalism of the Jedi knights and names in George Lucas's trilogy (particularly the filmmakers liberal lifting of Guinness's character from the films of Akira

¹⁶⁶ Linmark, 240-1.

Kurosawa). The mark of racialized difference in Linda Hunt's portrayal of Billy Kwan a Chinese-white Australian is his emasculated masculinity (not to mention that Hunt's Kwan is a dwarf in the film). Linmark chooses to italicize the names and ethnicities flexibly applied to white actors in his postcard rather than the grammatically correct italicization of film titles, placing emphasis on the act of whitewashing and drawing a parallel to Vince's existential questions at the end of the series of postcards.

Thirdly, linear time is interrupted through a moment of trans-temporal affective shock melding global capital, and cultural (re)mixing via storefront signage in Manila's Intramuros district, the seat of government when the Philippines was under Spanish rule. Linmark portrays this by setting up a first person limited narration of Vince's surroundings in a previous section and then commenting on the surrounding environment entirely in Vince's head. This last strategy is most aptly demonstrated in the vignette "Signs of the Times," a list of all the storefronts Vince notices as he departs from dinner with Jonas, his final hopeful sexual conquest. Coupled with a postcard to his younger brother Alvin before Vince officially enters Leche, "Signs of the Times" demonstrates a level of ridiculous punning combining popular culture references from the 1970's and 80's with the business of everyday commercialism. Vince notes:

PETAL ATTRACTION is a florist. ELIZABETH TAYLORING is hiring experienced sewers. CULTURE SHACK specializes in native handicrafts. MANG DONALD'S makes the best PRINCE FRIES. The owners of KAREN'S CARPENTRY can't carry a tune, but they can make you a hand-carved four-poster bed in a week. [...] WALTER MART carries designer labels like CHRISTINE DIOR jeans and GEORGIO NOMANI t-shirts.¹⁶⁷

Recognizable corporate businesses and cultural name brands selling to a mass market such as McDonald's and Walmart from the United States are transformed into Mang

¹⁶⁷ Linmark, 267.

Donald's and Walter Mart through neoliberal logics. Ironically incorporating U.S. capital logics these signs take high culture brands such as Christian Dior and Giorgio Armani and recreate them as rip-off labels (Christine Dior and Giorgio Nomani respectively) for those who cannot afford Dior and Armani's extravagant prices. By doing so, Linmark cleverly displays the ways Filipino culture cites transnational neoliberal logics with a wink. Icons of U.S. popular culture from the 1970's actress Elizabeth Taylor and singer Karen Carpenter become incorporated into the humorous names of storefronts, alongside the movie *Fatal Attraction* and B-52's song "Love Shack." Reframing icons of immense U.S. social and cultural capital as practical and literal signs of Filipino/a economic capital, Vince's observations of these store markers adds to the "growing list of Manila signs that continue to bewilder and amuse him."¹⁶⁸ Symbols of American consumerism bridging high and low culture are reinscribed and rebranded as practical everyday pastiche. Lost in a meta commentary of scrambled transnational cultural history, Vince's increasingly complicated relationship to his queer, mixed race balikbayan identity is metaphorically replicated all around him. As multiple temporalities are explored through the sutured together literary devices Linmark employs in telling *Leche*, none has quite the same impact as that of structurally mirroring Vince's descent into his genealogical past as a metaphorical descent into hell. Linmark replicates the relationship between Vince and Don Alfonso as that between Dante and Virgil in Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* through suspended time of dreaming. Within Vince's nightmarish dreams of his deceased grandfather his queerness and mixed race background is remixed with Filipino and American culture which coalesces as affective traces pointing to an alternative interpretation to the failures of the neoliberal logics ensconced in Vince's queer diasporic

¹⁶⁸ Linmark, 266.

Filipino identity. In doing so, past conditions are brought into the present and the final gesture of the novel is actually the fulfillment of a premonition.

The Pain of (Re)Memory: Lost Queer objects and Trans-Temporal Affects

Drawing on the religious allegory of Dante's *Inferno*, Linmark models the text of *Leche* on the nine cantos of the first part of the *Divine Comedy*, with nine books that serve as chapters leading Vince on a metaphorical hell tour. While time in Dante's *Inferno* is suspended in a state of eternal repetition, the sinners Dante visits are aware that time is still progressing linearly for those still alive. Vince also finds himself in a state of suspended reanimation in *Leche*, knowing that life is still continuing in Honolulu back on Oahu and startled by how it has progressed in the Philippines during his physical absence. Beyond the simultaneous happenings in Manila and Honolulu, is the increasing invasion of Vince's lucid dreams filled with his ancestors on his psyche, and especially his guilt-ridden relationship to his dead grandfather, Don Alfonso.

The trans temporal space of dreamtime mediates Vince's shock at transnational capital's progression in and through Manila, and allows him to search for the lost queer objects of his boyhood in the Philippines. Vince's waking-dream filled remembrances and insomnia inducing nightmares reconnect him to his deceased grandfather, Don Alfonso, who symbolizes for Vince not only his melancholic attachment for Filipino identity, but the colonial conditions and desires shaping his mixed race and queer identities and their uneven affects. Linmark italicizes Vince's dreams subtitling them and writing in stage directions, giving them a surreal cinematic tone. These markers of dreamtime make the subsections temporally distinct from all the other literary styles

employed in the novel; the reader is watching Vince's subconscious contend with and search for the figure of Don Alfonso. By splicing various historical representations of orientalist colonial romances in with Vince's own proto-queer desires, Linmark makes the lucidity of Vince's dreamtime a haunted space of guidance by Don Alfonso's fraught figure.

Instead of the highly celebrated and visible Vince, who stands for the newly incorporated neoliberal subject par excellence, marked by exceptional queer and mixed difference and the poster boy of multicultural diversity's flexibility, Don Alfonso is the abject and invisibilized history that will not be buried. It is Vince's grandfather, representing forgotten history and foundational desires, who is the hidden subject and lost guide of Vince's descent into the past in *Leche*. Like Marsha P. Johnson's conversations with the ghosts of her husband, brother and father in Sylvia Rivera's *Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones*, a trans-temporal reading of Linmark's *Leche* unearths the dependency of historical amnesia, or perhaps more fittingly, melancholia, on those subjectivities reclaimed for celebration by poststructuralist suspicion of identitarian politics during 1990's neoliberalism. The continuous relationship to ghosts dwelling in the conditions of the past-in-present creates the grounds for unearthing immiscible temporalities permeating those most desired and newly readable by and within cisnormative time.

Linking his nonnormative balikbayan novel to the first part of Dante Alighieri's epic poem the *Divine Comedy* allows Linmark to have a question provoking ending that is more of a suggestive gesture towards the palimpsest of diasporic mixed race identity. Vince finds that his sleeping dreams and waking remembrances are increasingly overwritten with the traces of colonial and imperial violence stitched into the intimacies

of his family lines. This is evident from the first dream Vince has of Don Alfonso, entitled “Son of Brando,” which unfolds in a series of mini scenes during his first sweat filled night in Manila. A crosscutting and recasting of his family in Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now* Don Alfonso initially appears to Vince in a darkened cave where Vince’s grandfather “*begins talking...about forms and shadows*” and recites a T.S. Eliot poem.¹⁶⁹ Linmark writes, “*He is the shadow they pray to. They are his children. His jungle bastards.*”¹⁷⁰ While the text is purposefully unclear about Vince’s relationship to Don Alfonso or Don Alfonso’s relationship to the U.S. military, it does present Don Alfonso as a deity-like parental figure, and places Vince and his siblings into narratives of American paternalism in the Philippines. Imagined as a ghostly shadow haunting Vince, Alvin and Jing’s bloodlines, Don Alfonso is also understood as the patriarch of illegitimate mixed-race children.

Linmark follows Don Alfonso’s first creepy appearance with a lucid dream scene of Vince and Don Alfonso in the 1945 Bataan Death March. Linmark recounts:

*A dusty road. Bataan. 1945...A soldier in tattered fatigues and a bowler hat catches Vince’s attention. He is waddling to and fro between the G.I.s and guerrillas. Vince recognizes the matching paste-on mustache and brows, the cane in lieu of a rifle. “Lolo Al,” Vince calls out. “Get in line. Quick.” “But which one?” his grandfather asks. “Filipino or American?” “Doesn’t matter.” “Of course it does.” “Hurry, Lolo Al, hurry,” Vince says, his eye on the Japanese soldier running toward them, the blade of his bayonet glinting under the sun.*¹⁷¹

Replacing a Hollywood representation of war, and history of casting the-Philippines-as-Vietnam in American film, Vince moves into the horrors of his grandfather’s forced participation in the death-filled walk to Camp O’Donnell as a Filipino prisoner of war during World War II. Don Alfonso, dressed as both a soldier and Charlie Chaplin, is

¹⁶⁹ Linmark, 63.

¹⁷⁰ --, 63.

¹⁷¹ --, 65.

undecidedly wandering between the American officers and Filipino guerillas. The Chaplin reference calls back to the outdoor screenings of Chaplin's films Don Alfonso would take young Vince to in San Vicente during martial law. Vince's internal struggle between American and Filipino identity is enacted between himself and his grandfather. Opening up this question not just as a balikbayan and mixed race quandary, Linmark points to a longer history of discourses around interracial genealogies and forced national allegiances in the Pacific during World War II. The uneasy affect lingers from Vince's protestations that Don Alfonso should arbitrarily get in line to save his life, when his grandfather seems almost indifferent to the cost of death in the quandary of the question. It is a question that Vince cannot face or verbalize; it is the imperial legacy that has opened up to him at the cost of Don Alfonso.

While the novel linearly unfolds over the course of a week, the past increasingly starts breaking into Vince's present. In the *Inferno* the Roman poet Virgil serves as Dante Alighieri's tour guide of hell, and in *Leche* Don Alfonso serves the role of Virgil, although Linmark does not make this connection explicit until the final three books of *Leche*.¹⁷² Moving deeper through the nine circles of Filipino hell by gradually remembering his shattered relationship with the deceased Don Alfonso creates an upwelling of unsettling affect in at the points of Vince's identity simultaneously celebrated and contested by Sister Marie and Kris Aquino: the categories of mixed race, queer and balikbayan. Mapping the temporalities regulating these categories in Linmark's novel means a journey through "the hell...that memory makes of us. The inability to forget the trauma, the loss, the betrayal – and this is what is at the core of

¹⁷² Nine is a number of increasing significance to Vince's relationship with Don Alfonso throughout *Leche*. In the final book of the novel Vince admits, "In fact, earlier this month was the ninth anniversary [of Don Alfonso's death]." Linmark, 312.

Leche.¹⁷³ Navigating a past filled with sexual awakenings, denied feelings, and painfully repressed memories of the many roles that Don Alfonso played in young Vince's proto-diasporic, American, and queer subjectivity means to look at the ways Vince's dreams make visible and irresolvable the representations of the past making up Vince's postmodern identity. It means moving backwards from Vince's last place of departure from both his grandfather and the Philippines, Manila Airport, to his point of origin, San Vicente. Simultaneously, Vince's subconscious becomes increasingly populated with the ghosts of his colonial ancestors, the white American Lewises, the point of interracial contact symbolically spurring Vince's Filipino/American and queer identity crises.

At first, Vince's memories serves to unlock childhood nightmares ridden with anxieties of same-sex desire and interracial contact acquired by reading King Komiks' "Stories of the Unexpected" featuring white American businessman Mr. Smith. The favorite komik of young Vince, "Stories of the Unexpected" is framed around the *bangungut*, a shape shifting folk creature that hunts for healthy young men during the day and transforms into a cigar smoking monster choking his victims in their sleep and dragging them to hell. While rooted in actual Sudden Unexpected Death Syndrome that indiscriminately and disproportionately affects young Filipino men (in fact, Linmark introduces the both the disease and creature through an outbreak that occurred among Filipino plantation workers on Hawaii from 1937-1948), the *bangungut* of Vince's komiks pointedly "preyed on a new victim, usually crooks and greedy men like Mr. Smith, an American businessman who ran an illegal logging business on the island of

¹⁷³ Alyosha Robillos, "'Leche' author Linmark lives his own 'Manila Noir' days," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, July 1, 2013, <http://lifestyle.inquirer.net/111177/leche-author-linmark-lives-his-own-manila-noir-days>.

Leyte, where much of the virgin forest had been destroyed.”¹⁷⁴ Vince’s first idealized romantic attachment, the womanizing Mr. Smith is an obvious metaphor for exploitative U.S. imperialism, literally destroying “virgin” Philippine land. However, ignoring the komik’s straightforward pedagogical and historical message of anti-U.S. imperialism, young Vince becomes obsessed with Mr. Smith.

Linmark makes the literal incorporation of Mr. Smith part of Vince’s queer obsession, but he makes it clear that this is because Mr. Smith bears uncanny physical similarities to his grandfather, Don Alfonso. The markers of white inheritance on Don Alfonso’s body are the same ones that Linmark notes are desirable in Mr. Smith:

Vince could not keep his mind off Mr. Smith. He bore a striking physical resemblance to his grandfather, who was also very debonair. [...] Back then, both Mr. Smith and Don Alfonso pomaded their hair back, had pronounced widow’s peaks, wore khaki trousers and vintage Hawaiian shirts, and had slanted, blue eyes.¹⁷⁵

From his hairline and stylish dress to the telltale blue eyes Mr. Smith is the whiter version of mixed Don Alfonso, and Vince responds to Mr. Smith because the komik character incorporates elements of his grandfather. As the blend of both the whiteness of his main paternal figure and the racialized discourses of U.S. paternalism regulating the Filipino national identity, Vince longs to intimately incorporate Mr. Smith. He literally kisses the komik and imagines himself as Mr. Smith’s lover. When Vince later confesses his crush on Mr. Smith, Jing, Vince’s sister remarks, “It was so obvious. Your hot lips were all over the pages. [...] You should’ve eaten the damn story, shoved Mr. Smith and his bangungut nightmare down your throat.”¹⁷⁶ In an obvious sexual metaphor, when Vince

¹⁷⁴ Linmark, 20.

¹⁷⁵ --, 20.

¹⁷⁶ --, 20.

cannot ingest the komik creation that is Mr. Smith, he begins to suture himself into the komiks by becoming Cassandra, the disguise of Mr. Smith's bangungut, in his dreams.

Through a gender swapped dream body, Vince-as-Cassandra can take the white American object of his young proto-queer desire, until the Mr. Smith of his dreams becomes a literal bangungut and Vince-as-Cassandra becomes an almost asphyxiated victim. Switching the storyline from the komik, Vince's subconscious takes the lessons from "Stories" and gives it a necropolitical imperialist twist. Functioning mainly as a gendered and racialized national symbol of moralistic punishment, in the Mr. Smith issue the bangungut takes the form of Cassandra, "the young, dark beauty from Siquijor, a Visayan island known for its witchcraft."¹⁷⁷ The komik ends with Cassandra transforming into the "cigar-smoking beast, straddling [Mr. Smith] and stuffing his mouth with her cigar until he choked to death" on the night of their honeymoon.¹⁷⁸ Here Cassandra is nationalist symbol of enchanted nativist pride, she triumphs over the greedy and exploitative white American man in an intimate act of matricide. In a microcosmic study of the intimacies between charming-yet-empty neocolonial capitalism and exotified exploited feminized land, Mr. Smith and Cassandra's temporary state-recognized transnational union is the fronting of what is actually domesticated transnational violence and an abusive relationship. Choking Mr. Smith on her phallic cigar, Cassandra's bodily transformation into the bangungut injects the folkloric enchanted creature back into the time of capital, and the economically minded Mr. Smith who never suspects or believes in the bangungut is easily overcome. It upends the space of the marriage bed as sexual

¹⁷⁷ Linmark, 21.

¹⁷⁸ --, 21.

and heteropatriarchal consummation site and queers the sexual tourist overtones of the relationship between both characters as stand-ins for America and the Philippines.

However, in Vince's childhood nightmares when he becomes Cassandra, Vince/Cassandra's obsession with Mr. Smith transforms the white Wisconsin businessman into the *bangungut*. In dreamtime, Vince's hetero and disavowedly proto-homonormative desires rewrite the *komik's* story and put Cassandra/Vince in the place of death. Within Vince's dream, he accepts Mr. Smith's marriage proposal as Cassandra and begins kissing him only to find himself choking on Mr. Smith's tongue. The imitate lip lock, sets off a cinematic flash forward as increasingly bizzare heteronormative domestic scenes roll through Vince's imagination, moments that are centered around Mr. Smith and Cassandra/Vince's hybrid offspring. Linmark describes, "as [Mr. Smith] rolled his tongue inside Vince's mouth, Vince began imagining a sprawling mansion, a beachfront honeymoon resort, babies with slanted blue eyes and black hair."¹⁷⁹ Vince's first images are generic symbols of a heteronormative U.S. dream, owning expensive property, and a honeymoon at a Hawaii-like vacation spot. Only the children of Cassandra/Vince and Mr. Smith are described in detail; Vince taxonomically notes their slanted blue eyes (genetically obtained from Mr. Smith) and their black hair (Cassandra/Vince's genetic contribution).

After parsing out of the biracial children's physical features, Vince's subconscious mind devolves into miscegenated hybrid chaos, mirroring conversations about interracial relations and the mixed race body in *Leche*. Linmark elaborates:

But the longer they kissed, the weirder the images got: Vince pushing a stroller that had a blonde infant with the body of a zebra in it, then nursing

¹⁷⁹ Linmark, 21.

a baby with the snout of a giant anteater, then craving air as a tongue fat as a python slithered from Mr. Smith's mouth and down into his throat.¹⁸⁰

Filipino features move immediately from human to animal in Vince's nightmare. In the first scene a blonde infant head is coupled with the body of a zebra, with Vince singularly utilizing his body to feed and care for the hybrid child. Next all racialization is removed from humanoid parts of the infant's body replaced by an elongated animal face feeding from Vince's laboring body. Finally the elongated snout of the human-animal hybrid child becomes the desired object's asphyxiating tongue as Mr. Smith reveals himself and his promise of marital bliss as a literal *bangungut*, disguised to end Vince's life.

As the mixed race child becomes less white and more the degenerate half animal/racialized child of anthropological anxiety and scientific racism, the child depends more and more on Vince-as-Cassandra's body until extensions of Mr. Smith's own body become reptilian and take away Vince's ability to breathe. Placing Vince-as-Cassandra in the position of the laboring Filipina body s/he is caretaker for both white American husband and mixed child, the invisible labor holding up American business and exceptional subject to the point of death.¹⁸¹ While remembering how his younger self seized hold of the imperialist Asian war bride heterosexual fantasy that is Mr. Smith and Cassandra through the cultural education his grandfather instilled via *komik* reading, adult Vince is left with the mixed child-as-set-of-unsettling-historical-affects of repressed queer and American homonationalist desires. Through the unsettling aspects of mixed race and proto-queer historical affects whiteness is seen to be both temporally expansive,

¹⁸⁰ Linmark, 21.

¹⁸¹ See Neferti X.M. Tadiar, *Things Fall Away: Philippine Historical Experience and the Makings of Globalization*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009). And also Neferti X.M. Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production: Sexual Economies and Other Philippine Consequences for the New World Order*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004).

it envelopes what humanity is read off of the mixed child in the flashforward, and becomes the colonial desire that disappears Vince's brown laboring body. Vince's desire for both incorporating masculine whiteness and American capital become violently asphyxiating. It is only his siblings pulling him out of his nightmare that saves him from death at the hands of the bangungut/Mr. Smith.¹⁸² Through Vince's first nightmare-memory of sexual desire, neoliberal discourses of Asian-white mixed race identity and queer exceptionalism are contested by gesturing towards other temporal narratives.

Reading Vince's unsettling almost-death at the hands of Mr. Smith/bangungut through the hermeneutics of Asian American critique and not purely the discourses of mixed race in the 1990's, allows the trans-temporal affects of Vince's disquieting dream to surface. In her introduction to *Ends of Empire* (2010), Jodi Kim defines Asian American Critique as an unsettling hermeneutic which both "reads Asian American cultural politics against the grain of American exceptionalism and nationalist ontology" and "generates a new interpretive practice or analytic for reading Asian American cultural productions, the very formation of contemporary 'Asian America(n),' in new ways."¹⁸³ Even while Vince refuses Asian American as an identity formation, trans-temporal affect operating through his desires and dreams of his re-membered grandfather, with his genealogical ties to American imperialism and whiteness "generates a new interpretive practice or analytic for reading." By doing so Linmark's work rethinks "the very formation of contemporary 'Asian American(n)'" pointing backwards and forwards "in new ways."

¹⁸² Linmark, 21.

¹⁸³ Jodi Kim, *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 5.

Kim sees Asian American culture as participating in a “*politics of refusal*” which “situates culture and cultural forms as the site where knowledge and meaning are at once constituted and unraveled, where the officially unknowable reckons at once with the already known and the impossibility of knowing.”¹⁸⁴ At the end of authorized imperial knowledge, comes the affects of the already known but unspoken, a mobius strip of temporal looping. As in “Signs of the Times,” and “Tourist Tips,” affect’s temporal remix of Filipino and American cultural capital, meaning and knowledge dialectically cross the boundaries of time at once unraveling and reconstituting. This impasse of what can be spoken and consciously scripted into words, and what can only be felt in the unconscious and therefore politically refused appears through Don Alfonso’s gestures of ghosting and silence. It is Vince’s refusal to return to bury Don Alfonso, to pay respects to the dead, and his continuous avoidance of the racial, national, sexual, and diasporic narratives behind that refusal, that make him both the perfect neoliberal mixed queer Asian American subject, cis time’s poster child, but also demonstrative of the affective costs operating in cis time requires.

Vince avoids going back to San Vicente and paying his final respects to Don Alfonso until the end of the novel because of overwhelming guilt at refusing to return for his grandfather’s funeral due to a crush on Carl Yamagita in seventh grade. Revealed at the very end of the novel under the subheading “Thou Shalt Not Forget,” Vince chooses the ultimately false possibilities of capturing reciprocal love with his Japanese American best friend, and first sexual encounter, over his anger at his grandfather for sending him to live with his parents in Hawaii during the height of the Marcos Regime in 1978.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ Kim, 6.

¹⁸⁵ Linmark, 339.

While Vince has clung to his Filipino identity as a melancholic affect and attachment to keep the relationship to his grandfather close, this is read backwards “against the grain of American exceptionalism and nationalist ontology” through his final dream pointing Vince forward to his inevitable return to San Vicente, by the unsettling appearances of his colonial ancestors.

It is this simultaneous call and refusal of the untouchable past, its “return as a structure of feeling, as a melancholic trace demanding historical explanation” that coalesces in the figures and objects full of temporal affects in the Lewis-De Los Reyeses ancestral home.¹⁸⁶ In what is later understood as a premonition, Vince’s final dream of the novel (fittingly entitled “Coda”) places Vince as a silenced ghost haunting his great-grandfather, Thomasite great-aunt, and Don Alfonso. Time is both suspended and out-of-joint during the coda dream, in that Vince is in the place of the deceased, a predecessor to his own relatives, and cannot know them in the relational sense. Linmark writes:

A feast in the ancestral home of the Lewis-De Los Reyeses, San Vicente. Seated around the banquet table are the people who are in the photographs that cover the walls of the living room. They are wearing the same clothes that they wore in their portraits. Occupying one end of the table is a blond, blue-eyed man, square-jawed, broad shoulders, wide forehead, trimmed mustache, a pronounced widow’s peak. He is Vince’s great-grandfather, who went to the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century to fight the Filipino revolutionaries in the Philippine-American War. Beside him is his sister, wearing a Mother Hubbard gown with long sleeves and a high neck; Vince remembers her... because she was one of the first American teachers to arrive in the islands and introduce public education to the natives.¹⁸⁷

While bringing knowledge of his great-grandfather and great-aunt, through the officially knowable times of American institutions and intrusions in the Philippines (namely education and militarization), Vince comes up against the limits of the “officially

¹⁸⁶ Eng, 10.

¹⁸⁷ Linmark, 299.

unknowable” when he attempts to interact with these white American ancestors. They are revealed to be projections of what has been captured in the living room photographs, knowable through clothes and physical likenesses.¹⁸⁸ Ignoring ghost-Vince’s attempts to introduce himself and interrupt their conversation, “*they continue dining, talking, laughing, toasting, indifferent to Vince.*”¹⁸⁹ Already known yet impossible to know, the settler figures of the Thomasite teacher and U.S. Lieutenant of the Philippine-American War become the background conditions against which Vince recognizes his melancholic relationship to Don Alfonso.

Hearing voices upstairs, Vince ascends to witness Don Alfonso’s death, amidst the museum-like memorabilia of their relationship in Vince’s childhood room. A scene in which what Vince knows (the memoirs he created with his grandfather, and the postcards he sent during his first miserable year in Hawaii) merges with what Vince cannot and does not know (his grandfather’s last words and desires) becomes a temporal repository of affect, ending with Vince’s realization of the melancholy regulating his kinship to Don Alfonso. Linmark notes:

Vince enters his room, sees on his bookshelf all his books and komiks individually wrapped in plastic. On the walls are black-and-white posters of Charlie Chaplin’s movies and photographs of Vince and his siblings with their grandfather in the open-air cinema, at the plaza celebrating the annual fiesta, in the crowded cemetery during All Soul’s Day, at Vince’s first communion, at the Manila International Airport. ...thumbtacked to the wall are the postcards he’d sent to his grandfather during his first year in Hawaii. “Lolo Al, I don’t like it here. Everyone speaks funny but they’re the ones laughing at my English,” reads one.... “What about Vicente?” his grandfather asks.... “Vicente,” his grandfather sighs. “Yes?” Vince says.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ The great-grandfather’s blue eyes and pronounced widow’s peak are passed down to Don Alfonso and force Don Alfonso into hiding for his epidermal similarities to American GIs when the Japanese Imperial Army invades the Philippines during World War II. Linmark, 278.

¹⁸⁹ Linmark, 299.

¹⁹⁰ Linmark, 300.

Encoded in the cultural and material record of Vince's relationship to his grandfather (the books, komiks, movie posters, photographs and postcards) is an archive of affective attachments, of complex feelings regulated by Filipino and American cultural production. There is the Charlie Chaplin posters which appeared in his initial dream of Don Alfonso, the komiks of Mr. Smith and Cassandra purchased by Don Alfonso for Vince, the site of paternal abandonment at the Manila International Airport which opens Linmark's novel (and also the place in which Vince's diasporic identity begins). In the heart of the repository of melancholic affects are Vince's unanswered postcards to Don Alfonso, begging a return to the Philippines through the invocation of difference from American born children on Hawaii. When dying Don Alfonso asks after Vince, the invocation rouses Vince to the possibility of resolution through acknowledgment. In turning to face and touch the dying Don Alfonso rather than what he already knows and feels, Vince gestures towards putting history to rest.

The uncanny remainders within translated postcolonial (subaltern) histories in Chakrabarty's theory of heterotemporality, become what Lim calls the untranslatable. Lim understands the untranslatable uncanny as immiscible temporality; these times bear "that trace of containment and excess."¹⁹¹ Lim explains further, "Immiscibility - which, I am arguing, is both an epistemological problem disclosed by translation and an ontological property of plural times - belongs to the ontology of cinema as well."¹⁹² Immiscible temporality cannot be translated into an apocalyptic fulfillment narrative because they operate on their own terms even while they may coexist with present. As

¹⁹¹ Bliss Cua Lim, *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 431.

¹⁹² Lim, 433.

such there is also no present action of free will that is not determined by the past. But that does not mean time is cyclical. Change occurs, but not on a progressive horizontal or vertical axis. Perceiving traces of immiscibility replaces looking for adherence to narrative predictability.

But because he cannot touch the past, Vince can only feel the weight of its affects, which both breaks him and constitutes him simultaneously. The moment of Vince's awareness is the moment "the impossibility of knowing" also overwhelms him, and while Vince haunts Don Alfonso's (maybe) present, he is also thrown into Don Alfonso's material past. Linmark describes:

But Don Alfonso does not hear him. He does not see him walking toward him, sitting on the edge of his bed. He does not feel Vince's hand rubbing his, massaging it, trying to wake up its thin veins. He does not see Vince's finger tremble as it brushes his brows, touches the lids of his half-closed eyes, his lips. He does not feel Vince's breath when he bends to kiss his forehead, his hair. He does not hear Vince say, "I'm sorry." Nor does he offer his hand for Vince to grasp, the grasp that guided Vince throughout his childhood in San Vicente, the grasp that Vince could not live without. And now he could not let go.¹⁹³

Thick with descriptions of affect through touch, this final moment of physical connection between Vince and Don Alfonso in dream time is also one of profoundly aware disconnect. Linmark describes Vince's intention-filled actions through what Don Alfonso does not experience. Overwhelmed with a tone of loss and guilt, Vince's actions belie the acknowledgement of what-should-have-been. Even while Vince recognizes that Don Alfonso cannot hear, see, or feel his acts of comfort he continues hoping for acknowledgment, even to the point of hoping the dying Don Alfonso will offer his hand to Vince. As the ghost to Don Alfonso's moment of death, Vince belongs in the material

¹⁹³ Linmark, 300.

past, essentially swapping temporal places of the living and sleeping Vince. With this affective gesture Linmark makes Vince's dream a premonition of the novel's end, which replicates the same affects in linear cis normative time.

When Vince finally arrives at the Lewis-De Los Reyes home in his waking life, he expects and desires to find the material evidence of his relationship to Don Alfonso and his American ancestors, but instead is greeted by his dream's unsettling affects. Rather than a *déjà vu* moment acknowledging the conditions of the Lewises arrival to the Philippines, Vince is shocked with their complete material erasure. Looking around frantically for evidence of the past in his present, Vince's anxiety increases with each discovery of loss. Linmark writes:

What happened to the photographs that showed generation after generation of the Lewis clan? Where are the hand-painted photographs of turn-of-the-century relatives, one who came to the tropics as a soldier to fight the Filipinos and another to teach them? [...] He runs up the wooden staircase, heads straight for his room as if he's lived there all his life. It too is empty...Not one dusty shelf of books or issue of komiks...He took everything with him to his grave, Vince tells himself. He didn't want me to return and reclaim what was mine – my family history, objects from my childhood. [...] Why did Lolo Al do this-erase all the dust and dirt of my past? Why did he renounce everything? Nothing salvaged.¹⁹⁴

Haunted by what he already knows, that Don Alfonso and the rest of the Lewises are long gone, Vince's desire for some material trace of ancestral evidence is only met with material absence and the silent gesture that Vince "move on." The conditions on which Vince is acknowledged as an exceptional subject have been predicated on both of these mandates, the ideology of temporal and linear progress, and the simultaneous maintenance of historical erasure. With death as the final covering of any other narratives that could have been known, alternative life-worlds can only be felt; in the

¹⁹⁴ Linmark, 354.

glaring absences, in the inability to let go. While Vince blames Don Alfonso for the erasure of “dust and dirt” of his past, and renouncing that fraught and often violent history, (which places Vince as the triumphant endpoint of that American Imperialism in the Philippines), what he can only feel but cannot see are the ways in which Vince has inherited the affective life of those lost objects in his subjectivity.

And so, in the end, trans-temporality touches all of us; not only trans of color narratives, lives, and bodies. Even those seemingly cisnormative positionalities that been incorporated into global capital bear the melancholic temporal traces of other times and may at certain junctures be thrown back (or out-of-joint) with national discourses of neoliberal exceptionalism and individualism. In fact, as demonstrated through Linmark’s Vince de los Reyes, the most celebrated exceptional position of late capital belies a national melancholia predicated on forgetting colonial histories of racial and sexual abjection. This brings me to the task of merging the three affects I have traced in this dissertation: haunting, waiting and melancholia. As I draw this theoretical map of trans-temporality and cisnormative time to a close, I will put these three affects in conversation through a meditation on worldmaking while running out of time.

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Epilogue
Out of Time and Worldmaking: Where Trans and Cis Times Meet

We know time through the field of the affective, and affect is tightly bound to temporality. –Jose Esteban Munoz, *Cruising Utopia*

The main contribution of this dissertation to the field of Gender Studies, has been to argue for and outline trans-temporality as a method of reading and critiquing cisnormative time, it has done so by close reading a handful of trans-temporal moments when the trans body feels out of time. Each chapter in this project has been organized around a separate yet concurring set of affects understood as the effect of falling between the times of trans and cis. To come full circle from my introduction, I conclude this dissertation by connecting the three main affects this project maps out (haunting, waiting, and melancholy) to the importance of thinking and reading trans lives, narratives, and bodies beyond the progress-oriented “will to know,” an optic and linear epistemology. As I have been arguing in this dissertation, cisnormativity’s optic bent is comes from colonial and imperial epistemologies, while trans-temporality allows for trans bodies to exist somewhen on their own terms and in the midst of their own potential privileges and contradictions. The temporal place where cis and trans meet is often generated within the conditions that make trans bodies, lives, and narratives feel impossible, and literally run out of time.

I think of the privileges of whiteness that have accrued (or will accrue) to some of the trans narratives, lives, and bodies discussed here (particularly Dillon/Jivaka and Vicente de los Reyes) as conditional and contradictory, because while both figures find themselves out of time in both similar and different ways from Rivera and Johnson, their

visibility is also part of a project attempting to enfold them back into biopolitics due to a higher desirability to the British, American and Philippine states. There is an authorial tone of resignation in the introduction to *Out of the Ordinary* discussed in this dissertation; Dillon/Jivaka's visibility is produced by yellow journalist misreadings of his sex and gendered history, and so his writing is partially a project of recovery as well as making himself a legible national subject. As I have argued, he is a subject of national interest because he may become the next baronet of Lismullen, an inheritor of patriarchal privilege due to his trans-temporal masculinity under cis time.

Additionally, as an officer in the British Merchant Navy Dillon is also an agent transporting imperial capital by looking after the wounded bodies of both passengers (sometimes the literal cargo of the ships he served) and other agents of empire (the officers, merchants, and soldiers). Space afforded Dillon in the national imagination cannot be separated from his relative privileges within cis time, and the ways he did not register as nonnormative on the level of this visual. It is Dillon's sex and gender history that the numerous newspapers harped on, and the (re)citation of that which runs him out of cis time into a time of waiting/non-progress. Rivera and Johnson were never even allowed the space of the visual in present time since everyday ideologies white supremacy and anti-black policing are bound up with cisnormative ideologies of sex and gender.

Similarly to Dillon/Jivaka, as the protagonist of Linmark's fiction Vicente de los Reyes is afforded both the present and promised the future. This promise is repeated by everyone from the judges of the Mr. Pogi pageant to first daughter Kris Aquino as they remark on his mestizo beauty and educational achievement. However, Vince is haunted

by his lost grandfather and through melancholia, the trans-temporal past starts breaking through cis time's celebratory optic of visibility and reclamation. Here the "will to know" the mixed race body is shown to be intimately bound up with the times of colonization and American imperialism and militarization. Temporally disorienting, Linmark's Manila becomes an extension of the postmodern neoliberal condition where the cultural past is remixed and rebranded in the present as tomorrow's capital. Vince runs out of time with Don Alfonso not because he is the racial degenerate of the colonial science, but precisely because of the opposite; his racial and sexual identities are seen as markers of the US nation-state at its most progressive. He is the beautiful Asian American model minority immigrant mixing pot of gayness. The cost of being made legible in cis time is being read through a simplified narrative of individuality, one severed from the complication of ephemeral contingent community, the trans body, narrative, and life literally devoid of life giving touch from coalitional figures also understood as impossible within cis time.

As opposed to Vince and Dillon/Jivaka, Sylvia Rivera talks about how both she and Marsha P. Johnson are both haunted and haunting figures, utilizing ephemeral communal sistership to survive in the face of being existentially surplus. As her memorialization of Johnson in "Queens in Exile, the Forgotten Ones" demonstrates, Sylvia's narration of Johnson's perhaps syphilis induced discussions with her father at the Hudson piers points to cis time's long history of anti-blackness, rendering Johnson as both an impossible and disposable body and life. And yet in Rivera's descriptions of Marsha's conversations with her brother and father while walking down Christopher Street and in the waters by the Hudson Piers, there is also a reflection of attempting to

commune with those who lived and died in similar positions to state violence. A kind of waiting that the late queer of color performance theorist Jose Esteban Munoz describes at the end of his final monograph *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*.

Munoz writes:

There is something black about waiting. And there is something queer, Latino, and transgender about waiting. Furthermore, there is something disabled, Indigenous, Asian, poor, and so forth about waiting. Those who wait are those of us who are out of time in at least two ways. We have been cast out of straight time's rhythm, and we have made worlds in our temporal and spatial configurations. Certainly this would be the time of postcoloniality, but it is also crip time or, like the old joke we still use, CPT (colored people time). It seems like the other's time is always off. Often we are the first ones there and the last ones to leave. The essential point here is that our temporalities are different and outside. They are practiced failure and virtuosic.¹⁹⁵

When I began writing this dissertation I had just lost my PoPo (Cantonese grandmother) a first generation Chinese American who only three years prior unconditionally accepted my transmasculinity. She surprised my entire family with how quick she both accepted my transition and put me back to work around her house (which I very much appreciated). The time of grief is very much its own kind of trans-temporal affect, and during the summer of 2013 when I was conducting research into Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson's sistership grief and rage clung to the air. George Zimmerman was acquitted of the murder of Trayvon Martin, and I found that amidst my intense personal grief I was again thinking of who is allowed so much or little time, and how very vital it is to think beyond the temporalities of the state. I found myself flashing back to reading Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* on the floor of my PoPo's house during the winter we reunited after my father finally told her about my transition. It was between

¹⁹⁵ Jose Esteban Munoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, (New York: NYU Press, 2009), 182-3.

“talking stories” about PoPo’s experiences growing up selling newspapers in downtown Honolulu, and stuffing pineapple into cans at the Dole Factory to feed her family, and me helping her clean up her house, that I realized we were making a different world across time.

While the trans-temporalities of Johnson, Rivera, Martin, Dillon/Jivaka, and Vince are very different and outside that of the state’s cis time, the time each is allowed is highly dependent on making worlds with others operating outside of cis (or in Munoz’s words “straight”) time. For Rivera and Johnson they were sisters and lovers, for Dillon, lamas, gurus, and lifelong friend Gilbert Barrow, and finally for Vince, Don Alfonso and his ephemeral lovers. Some of these connections are practiced failures, and always temporally fleeting. Yet some are also beautifully creative and virtuosic. Never meant to last, and pointing elsewhere, the affects of trans-temporality are glimpses into the past, which point to another future, one that may outlive the limitations and narrations of the cisnormative present.

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