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Is and Was

Poststructural Indians without Ancestry

> *But after all the only conclusion they made was that as we had so much to do with the sun and the rest of the planets whose motions we were constantly watching by day and night, and which we had informed them we were guided by on the ocean, we must either have come from thence, or be some other way particularly connected with those objects . . .*
>
> John Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*

"Let the Stars Bear Trouble"

In 1768 Captain James Cook sailed towards the Pacific islands of Tahiti, Aotearoa, and Australia on the good ship *Endeavor* in search of a southern continent and, perhaps more aspirationally, a way to map the universe. While there is debate as to what colonial contrivance provided the primal impetus to unfurl the sails of the *Endeavor,* Nicholas Thomas suggests that it was the Royal Society's desire to observe the transit of the planet Venus across the face of the sun that served as the primary motivation, at least initially, for the mission.[1] The transit of Venus is a rare occurrence—approximately every one hundred and twenty years, Venus will pass in front of the sun. A second transit occurs eight years later, and then it is another one hundred and twenty years before the paired transits reoccur. The eighteenth-century transit pair created a frenzy within the scientific circles of the European enlightenment. The 1761 transit sent over one hundred and twenty European astronomers to sixty-two sites around the globe, including the island of St. Helena, the Cape of Good Hope, Newfoundland, Siberia, and California, to observe the celestial event. Some of the participants included John Winthrop, professor of mathematics at Harvard; Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, who would later demarcate the eponymous boundary line between Pennsylvania and Maryland; and

Charles Green, who would later travel with Captain Cook into the Pacific. The 1769 transit sent one hundred and fifty-one observers to seventy-seven locations around the globe.[2]

The hope in the observation of the Venus transit was that it might help unlock the key to the universe's mapping and offer astronomers the ability to calculate distances between celestial bodies in earth's home galaxy. That this was the purpose, or cover, for what followed Cook reveals, I think, something telling about the nature of British and American colonialism and imperialism that remained allied even during the family squabble that was the American Revolution. The American colonists declared their independence from Britain; but Benjamin Franklin and several other U.S. founding fathers invested themselves and their future nation in Cook's Pacific voyages, going so far as to issue Cook an American passport in March 1779 that would allow him safe passage through the naval battles of the Atlantic. Not content with the boundaries imposed by gravity, oceans, or ice, Europeans sought possession of all their eyes could see. "This act of looking," Nicholas Thomas writes, "was the chief purpose of Cook's voyage."[3]

There were other purposes for Cook's Pacific voyages, which took place between 1768 and 1780. Launched under the auspices of scientific discoveries—whether preventing once and for all the scurvy that plagued sailors during the months-long voyages through the Pacific; mapping and filling in the void that disturbed the need for a *terra australis incognita* revealed; listening for evidence of polyphony within indigenous *mele, waiata,* and chants; or opening negotiations with indigenous peoples to initiate colonial acquisition of lands and markets to underwrite future commercial interests—Cook's initial mission to record the transit of Venus inaugurated a wave of Pacific invasions that would sweep missionaries, merchants, convicts, and military occupations into the lives and lands of the Pacific peoples. But before all that could happen, Captain Cook had to introduce in those indigenous worlds a restructuring that would reshape the land, law, and biopolitics to cater to and maintain the Barthean mythologies of white subjectivity that Geonpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson has identified as the rationalizing structures of governmentality and property ownership within the logics of settler colonialism.[4]

Within imperial critical, literary, and cultural productions, Cook has always been spectral. He is a haunted figure, deified by the Western mind and fore-shrouded by his death even at the beginning of his journey to chase after Venus in her sky. Debates in anthropology, historiography, and

cultural studies have overdetermined Cook's "apotheosis," his so-called ascension to god-like status in the eyes of the Hawaiians who reportedly identified him as Lono, to the extent that the secondary meaning of the word—to cross over into death—is forgotten or displaced in European attempts to anoint him a deity.[5] In addressing Cook's oft-debated apotheosis, Kanaka Maoli scholar Noenoe K. Silva reminds us that "the incommensurability of the two terms . . . could erase the debate over whether or not Cook was perceived as a god: that is, Cook may or may not have been perceived as the akua Lonoikamakahiki but this fact bears little relation to what English-language speakers of the time meant by 'god.'"[6] The one thing that remains constant in the slip between English and Hawaiian understandings of "god" and "akua," however, is that Cook's apotheosis, whether he was ever rendered a deity by Hawaiians or whether he just imagined himself to be so in his own mind, resides in his liminality between life and death.

Cook's expeditions haunt the nation-building logics of the age of Enlightenment, and although he is not usually considered to be tied to a particularly American project of imperialism, his voyages began as prelude to the Declaration of Independence and his death heralded a world transformed, in which "Indians," "savages," land, and possession would figure across Atlantic and Pacific worlds and constrain and figure how race, colonialism, and imperialism become the primary distinguishing features of settler imperialisms born out of and invested in multicultural liberal democracy. By tracing the mnemonic constellations that underwrite U.S. imperialism and twenty-first-century wars, I hope to consider the problem indigeneity poses to the analyses of a "postcolonial" and imperial United States and to the larger field of poststructuralist theory. Indigenous peoples, our ongoing colonization, and our historical dispossessions and genocide continue to be pushed toward a vanishing point within critical theory and diaspora studies at the same time that our presence calls into question, disturbingly so for some, progressivist politics that continue to produce race and equality as the primary sites for strategic engagement within participatory democracy.

Part of the problem is that empire in the United States is pushed to the vanishing point of the present. The United States sits on the precipice, where empire either is now manifested in a deterritorialized sovereignty or is on the verge of apocalyptic environmental collapse.[7] Indeed, the question of empire within U.S.-based cultural studies, and especially when that

question has intersected with American postcolonial studies, has had a pervasively conflicted provenance. After Edward Said published *Orientalism* in 1978, theories arose to confront the cultural legacies of racism and colonialism, especially within the cosmopole, and scholars also returned to question the demarcation of when, exactly, U.S. empire began. Or whether it ever really did. Or whether that empire, if it had indeed emerged, was such a bad thing after all. "Empire," Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri announce, "is materializing before our very eyes."[8]

While there has been much debate about how, where, and upon whose historical oppression to locate the rise of U.S. imperialism, most scholars point to the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the U.S. acquisition of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Guam; or perhaps they push along the edges of that date back to 1865 and the end of the Civil War; or maybe they identify 1846 and the Mexican-American War as the generally accepted historical moments when something significant shifted within U.S. cultures of dominance, though Alexis de Tocqueville had even before that framed the United States as exceptional in its project. What that shift entailed depends upon the lens through which one approaches the question and definition of empire. As postcolonial studies in the 1980s and 1990s challenged the colonialist historiographies, cultural dominance, and literary canons of the imperial centers, U.S.-based cultural studies began to locate colonialism and imperialism within the United States as it played out on the bodies of its citizens and those it excluded from citizenship, as metaphor and analogy for systemic oppressions at the site of exception. What emerged as a punctuating refrain, however, was the pervasive idea that the United States could be construed as imperialistic only at the moment it became interested in militarily violating the borders of other nation-states or acquiring overseas territories at the turn of the twentieth century. Simultaneously, and here inflected by the intellectual and philosophical works of prominent nonwhite, queer, and feminist thinkers, scholars began to point to the ways the United States transformed, albeit superficially at the end of the Civil War, into a sovereign that imperialistically dominated those who were now its own citizens.

While I am admittedly summarizing the debates about empire in the United States rather broadly, I do so to draw attention to the recurrent assumptions that inform discussions of imperialism and postcolonialism within U.S. academic centers. Along the way, especially during the Columbian quincentennial in the 1990s, a number of notable scholars have challenged the first iterations of American studies that naturalized U.S. exceptionalism, formed within the frontier logics of Frederick Jackson Turner and Theodore Roosevelt, as anything but colonization and empire. Amy Kaplan is perhaps the most cited for her analysis of how American exceptionalism functions within the nation to deny the reality of U.S. imperialism, if not to recast the nation as anti-imperialist altogether.[9] From without, postcolonial theory reproduces exceptionalism, according to Kaplan, by collapsing and reifying the United States into "the West" on the one hand or by treating the continental expansion of the United States "as an entirely separate phenomenon from European colonialism of the nineteenth century."[10] For Peter Hulme exceptionalism serves as a perpetual siting of the United States as future, new. The current preoccupations with the neocolonial power the United States maintains within its hemisphere of influence continue to inflect the place/non-place of the United States within the purview of postcolonial studies. However, debates about its inclusion into the field, according to Hulme, serve to challenge, trouble, and stretch definitions of colonialism and comparative studies.[11]

Though the preceding discussion captures some of the assumptions that have largely shaped the presence and absence of the United States within the domain of postcolonial studies, another refrain has emerged more recently to make empire a predominantly post–Cold War, postmodern phenomenon in what might properly be described as "the fierce urgency of now"—a phrase that originated with Martin Luther King Jr. and defined Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign.[12] As scholars articulate rising concerns about how sovereignty functions at the sites of the bio- and necropolitics that define the violences of late modernity, critiques of U.S. empire are tied increasingly to an urgent twenty-first-century present.[13] Embedded in the nation-state's ability to justify states of exception and global wars for democracy as well as to enact the security state against terror are debates about the logics of "civilization" against "savagery" and the limits of that same state to redress injury. As the war against terror continues unabated, the empire of the "now" is temporally tied to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, in part because the dénouement of this long century has seen the debates that emerged in Europe after World War I and II and the violences of totalitarianism that followed them, and it witnessed the dismantling of European imperial holdings. It has also been defined by antiracist, queer, and anticolonial scholarship and activism that linked the international struggles against imperialism to the domestic struggles for

social justice within the nation-state. The twenty-first century has opened with what Jasbir Puar has described as "a commitment to the global dominant ascendancy of whiteness that is implicated in the propagation of the United States as empire," a commitment that has underwritten post-9/11 affective homonationalist investment in the U.S. "war on terror."[14] Judith Butler figures the barbarism of civilization not as aberrant, "but rather the cruel and spectacular logic of U.S. imperial culture as it operates in the context of its current wars."[15] Paul Gilroy moves the discussion of imperialism further into an anticipated post-empire frame even as he emphasizes the necessity to continually refract how "the imperial and colonial past continues to shape political life in the overdeveloped-but-no-longer-imperial countries" in order to create a multiculture that resists what Gilroy terms the "race thinking" of imperialist regimes and moves toward planetary conviviality.[16]

It seems safe to say that this question of when has haunted postcolonial and American studies as much as the question of who and where and has often foreclosed indigenous peoples in the Americas, Caribbean, and Pacific as having already been acknowledged without actually making them active presences. I do not say this lightly, knowing that in fact most people who study imperialism remember Christopher Columbus's discovery, Robinson Crusoe's shipwreck, Caliban's swearing, and Captain Cook's apotheosis as inaugural narratives on the imperial world stage that set in motion the processes that underwrite current global politics. And yet, perhaps because these representational logics are multiply constitutive, indigenous peoples in Atlantic and Pacific new world geographies remain colonized as an ongoing lived experience that is not commensurable with the stories the postcolonial, pluralistic multiculture wants to tell of itself. In other words, indigenous peoples are located outside temporality and presence, even in the face of the very present and ongoing colonization of indigenous lands, resources, and lives.

Despite scholars' acknowledgments of the coterminous processes of imperialism and colonialism located along the axes of racism, capitalism, and territorial expansion, indigenous peoples, especially in lands now occupied by the United States, continue to serve primarily as signposts and grave markers along the roads of empire. At this point, the regrettable colonization and genocide of American Indians is a truth almost universally acknowledged within postcolonial and American studies, and simultaneously effaced and deferred, despite the work American Indian and indigenous scholars have done to change that fact. In the same essay that critiques exceptionalism and the absence of empire in American studies, Kaplan decenters Perry Miller's discussion of the errand into the American Indian "wilderness" to focus instead on the "jungles" in Africa that serve as Miller's crystallization of the meaning of America even as she notes how other scholars tend to erase Indians from their scope of inquiry altogether. And even as Peter Hulme argues for the inclusion of America within postcolonial studies because 1492 marked the advent of European settlement in the new world, he writes that "as a postcolonial nation, the United States continued to colonize North America, completing the genocide of the Native population begun by the Spanish and the British."[17] The teleological and eschatological narrative of postcolonial theory includes indigenous peoples as the ultimate deferral—that of wilderness as metonymy for indigenous presence on the one hand and that of past perfect completion and death on the other.

This chapter is my attempt to consider how and why that might be the case.

Between Chaos and the Untimely

Jacques Derrida begins *Writing and Difference* with a quotation from Gustave Flaubert: "'It might be that we are all tattooed savages since Sophocles. But there is more to Art than the straightness of lines and the perfection of surfaces. Plasticity of style is not as large as the entire idea. . . . We have too many things and not enough forms.'"[18] Derrida's concern with Flaubert in "Force and Signification" is a concern with "phantoms of energy, 'ideas' 'larger than the plasticity of style'" where Flaubert "is sighing, 'Alas! not enough forms'" to contain all the things for which there are not forms.[19] While Derrida is interested here in setting forth the interrelation between reading and writing, form and meaning, creativity and criticism as a means to push beyond structuralism's totality of form, which supposes meaning is found in the lines that are drawn structurally, he is also setting the stage for elaborating deconstruction as attention to enunciation and interpretation. "Meaning must await being said or written in order to inhabit itself, and in order to become, by differing from itself, what it is: meaning."[20] At the same time, he begins to consider how presence and absence function as acts of interpretation when he writes that "only *pure absence*—not the absence of this or that, but the absence of everything in which all presence

is announced—can *inspire*, in other words, can *work*, and then make one work."[21] It is this notion of work that Gayatri Spivak uses to pull deconstruction toward postcolonial critique as "the active resistance to the inexorable calculus of globalization."[22] To understand *difference* and *différance*, difference and deferral, within Derrida's riposte to structuralism is to understand that, according to Spivak, "the elaboration of a definition as a theme or an argument was a pushing away" of "all that is was not" even as that which was pushed away remains as trace or supplement.[23] In "Freud and the Scene of Writing," Derrida links the supplement to the symptomatic return of the repressed, defining it as what "seems to be added as a plentitude to a plentitude, is equally that which compensates for a lack (*qui supplée*)."[24] In order words, a surplus overcompensation.

But what of the "tattooed savages" that both Flaubert and Derrida announce but who remain unacknowledged throughout the rest of the text? How might we approach the present absence, the supplemental gap, of their signification? Derrida's body of work questions how Western thought and philosophy have privileged logocentrism and speech as the foundational principles of meaning—it is a system that, according to Derrida, has depended upon the assumption that *logos* is linear, stable, and reliant upon a master-signifier to order meaning. Derrida's critique of logocentrism at the heart of deconstruction opens for literary scholars instability, movement, doubling, and tension as it looks to how writing depends upon repression of "that which threatens presence and the mastering of absence."[25] The verb "to be" as the presence of the present within Western philosophy gestures, Derrida suggests, toward something else, something prior to the act of enunciation. That prior calls into tension the non-presence of that present and the absent Other, past and future, against whom the "present" aligns itself to come into Being. And it raises concerns about the stakes of all presence that depends always already upon that which is absent. The "tattooed savages" function as a prior to *Writing and Difference*, as an ancillary presence that is necessary to make Western philosophy a possible category of consideration. While tattooed savages may evoke and remain as the trace of Claude Lévi-Strauss's work that Derrida discusses later in the essay "Structure, Sign, and Play," as Gerald Vizenor observes, "the Indian," here in the guise of the tattooed savages, "is a mundane romance, the advertisement of the other in narratives."[26] As presence and absence, "tattooed savages" play on the edges of Derrida's text as signs of raw, primal irrationality, primitivism, and myths of dominance.

They might also be said, as savages, to signify the necessary supplement that continually haunts the edges of any evocation of civilization or Western thought, whose destiny, Derrida says in "Force and Signification," "is to extend its domains while the boundaries of the West are drawn back."[27] Alternatively, they might be said to serve, in Žižekian terms, as an element that is "in excess of the global meaning of the work . . . which do[es] not fit this meaning, although it is not clear what additional meaning they bring."[28] They stand at the site of lack. In other words, Derrida's "tattooed savages" (by way of Flaubert) remain as an "impossible utterance" that, much like saying "I am dead," is "foreclosed."[29] As David Kazanjian observes, within Western philosophy, and Kant in particular, indigenous peoples reside in the supplement, in the radical alterity of the deferred, continually evoked as counterpoint and difference to an Enlightenment that depends upon "natural man" and rights, speech and history to make meaning and to underwrite dominance and discovery. Characterizing the rhetorical consequence of Kant's evocation of the "Iroquois" in *The Critique of Judgment*, Kazanjian argues that the "verbal oscillation" of the text "forges a certain, provisional equality between the authorial voice and the examples of the cynic, the critic, and the utopian, with whom Kant deigns to identify if only fleetingly, and a certain, matter-of-fact hierarchy between that voice and the Iroquois sachem, in whose role the text's 'I' prefers not to imagine itself."[30]

At the borders between structuralism, poststructuralism, and deconstruction and in Derrida specifically, as Vizenor notes, "the simulation of the *indian* is the absence of the native, and that absence is a presence of the *other*, the eternal scapegoat, but not a native past; the native is a trace of presence."[31] It is then not insignificant that as signifier, the word "tattoo" entered European worlds and lexicons through Captain Cook's Pacific voyages that transliterated the Tahitian word into signification as "tattow."[32] As sign, "tattoo" bears its trace at the nexus between Western systems of knowledge production that seek to solidify its onto-epistemological meaning into "discovery," "mastery," and "savagery," and the Pacific ontologies of genealogy, kinship, and embodied relationships. Its evocation in Flaubert and Derrida is, to borrow from Aileen Moreton-Robinson, more about "western myth making" than Pacific ontologies.[33]

As traces within twenty-first-century articulations of U.S. empire even where they are always already foreclosed as already known, already completed, indigenous peoples serve a similar mythological function to cohere

through deferral the United States as a multicultural liberal democracy with anticolonial, anti-imperialist origins that continue on a smooth curve of perfecting inclusivity. In this same vein, as Giorgio Agamben, Lauren Berlant, Wendy Brown, Achille Mbembe, Elizabeth Povinelli, and Judith Butler articulate in their theorizations of the logics of sovereignty that enact and reproduce themselves through the exception, the camp, that dialectically links democracy and fascism, Flaubert, and Derrida by extension, are also gesturing toward an after to Sophocles, to *Antigone* and *Oedipus*, in which we might all be said to become savages now.[34] This notion of becoming savage is what I call the transit of empire, a site through which the United States, with ties to Enlightenment and Victorian colonialisms, propagates itself through a paradigmatic "Indianness" tied now to the global ascendency of liberalism. As indigenous scholars have argued, inclusion into the multicultural cosmopole, built on top of indigenous lands, does not solve colonialism: that inclusion is the very site of the colonization that feeds U.S. empire. But the function of the "tattooed savages after Sophocles" is more than just myth making and more than proof of the lie of inclusion. The presence of the quote at the beginning of Derrida's text signifies a priori the idea of the savage and the "Indian" that serves as the ground and pre-condition for structuralism and formalism, as well as their posts-. The "tattooed savage" and "Indian" supplements persist as trace, and become an undeconstructable core within critical theories that attempt to dismantle how knowledge, power, and language function.

Despite the interventions of scholars in American studies and American Indian studies, the American mythologies of a sequential narrative that traverses wilderness to frontier to plantation to emancipation to cosmopolitanism and finally to imperialism linger at the heart of other discursive and philosophic fields. Philip J. Deloria, the first American Indian scholar to become president of the American Studies Association, made this analogy in his 2008 address: "Mark Twain is to James Fenimore Cooper as Amy Kaplan is to Perry Miller (and by extension, 1940s and 1950s American studies)."[35] The sequential curve of progress where subsequent generations advance and reflect back upon the past performs a normative evolutionary progression, and yet within Deloria's analogy, a subtle critique lingers since each of the analogical pairs depends upon a reiteration of Indianness at its core within literary nationalism and academic critique. The historical narrative American studies repeats to itself is that of a journey into a wilderness defined by whiteness from which the nation emerges as a multicultural, multihistorical cosmopole where convergences and divergences against normativity feed nonrepresentational politics and resistances.

But in order to understand the foundational paradigmatic Indianness that circulates within the narratives U.S. empire tells itself, even as it strives to overcome and distance itself from such dependency, it is necessary to turn here to another poststructuralist movement that has become ascendant within diasporic and queer studies. In *A Thousand Plateaus,* Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari reframe Derrida's concern with the verb "to be" with the additional chain "and . . . and . . . and."[36] Their work maps out possibilities for rhizomatic movements, de/re/territorializations, and nomadic assemblages in flattening and smoothing plateaus that give way to new lines of flight and new nomadologies as a way to resist the arborescence of master-signifiers, *logos*-centered thought, and subjectified historiographies. Drawing upon Leslie Fiedler's *The Return of the Vanishing American,* they write:

> America is a special case. . . . directions in America are different: the search for arboresence and the return to the Old World occur in the East. But there is the rhizomatic West, with its Indians without ancestry, its ever-receding limit, its shifting and displaced frontiers. There is a whole American "map" in the West, where even the trees form rhizomes. America reversed the directions: it put its Orient in the West, as if it were precisely in America that the earth came full circle, its West is the edge of the East.[37]

America proceeds, they argue, by "internal exterminations and liquidations," in which capitalism is not just capitalism but "neocapitalism by nature," and capital flows in channels to reorient profit in ways that touch individuals no matter how they are invested in or divested of it. In the process, "it invents its eastern face and western face, and reshapes them both—all for the worst."[38]

To their delineation of a Janus America that is rhizomatic as it pushes westward and by supplement eastward, Amy Kaplan's work provides a necessary additive.[39] In her book analyzing the rise of U.S. imperialism, Kaplan attempts to provide a larger frame in which to contextualize U.S. empire along a similarly Deleuzian frontier between foreign and domestic, home assemblages and undifferentiated expanding horizons,

by reactivating black/white race relations and North/South axes as the foundational intimate sites for U.S. representational logics of empire. To focus on the westward march of the United States, according to Kaplan, is to risk performing a teleological narrative of empire that "overlooks how intimately the issues of slavery and emancipation and relations between blacks and whites were intertwined at each stage of U.S. imperial expansion."[40] Her discussion of U.S. imperialism explores instead "how the representations of U.S. imperialism were mapped not through a West/East axis of frontier symbols, but instead through a North/South axis around the issue of slavery, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow segregation."[41] The tensions between West/East, North/South, and East/West are instructive here, because they are, ultimately, U.S. national geographies demarcated by similar elisions and competing cacophonies of race, colonialism, and imperialism that enjamb settlers, arrivants, and natives into a competition for hegemonic signification.

Kaplan's West/East, North/South mapping is telling here as well. If she is read through Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, Muscogee Creek, and Seminole histories, it appears that Kaplan avoids considering that Indians inhabited those Southern lands in her attempts to move towards a Gramscian subaltern critique that transforms West/East (and note Kaplan uses that global construction rather than the East/West movement of U.S. colonial occupation of indigenous lands) into the North/South globalization that is the hallmark of postcolonial theory. In her attempts to circumvent the teleological trap of U.S. frontiers that elides, she claims, issues of race at the heart of U.S. empire, Kaplan runs the risk of replicating another teleology that affectively invests progressivism in the dialectics of race that supersede colonialism as the site of originary violence. Her argument that conquest "cannot be understood separately from the expansion of slavery and the struggle for freedom" is in its reverse also true, that slavery cannot be understood separately from the colonization and theft of indigenous lands that provided struggles for freedom their staging ground.[42] The distinction here is not so much that one prohibits the other or that framing the colonization of indigenous peoples as foundational to U.S. empire repeats a teleological narrative of Manifest Destiny and racial erasure; it is more that U.S. imperialism relied upon both horizontal and vertical axes of colonization, slavery, racism, North, South, East, and West to structure and suture itself to the notion that its very foundational democracy was antithetical to colonialism and imperialism, slavery and incarceration.

Deleuze and Guattari also formulate America, and its becoming-minor literatures, in surprisingly arborescent ways that reflect the narrative American studies still tells itself even as scholars critique the United States and decenter the processes of constructing and reconstructing the field of study. Drawing on the paradigmatic Indian wilderness to encapsulate an America in which arboresence becomes rhizomatic, *A Thousand Plateaus* performs a global, nomadic reframing in which the frontier becomes, again, Frederick Jackson Turner's site of transformation, possibility, and mapping.[43] As Michael J. Shapiro has noted, maps in their cartographic form "represent the modern state's persistent ontological project" that is by its very nature a violent encounter.[44] And while Deleuze and Guattari's thought requires what Shapiro describes as "uncommon sense" and, as a result, positions mapping and frontiers within the rhizome as the process through which to proliferate dominant and resistant overlapping deterritorializations and reterritorializations into motion, and ultimately smooth space out of striated hierarchical order, such processes, it must be acknowledged, are also colonialist even in non-cartographic form.[45] The maps of settler colonialism were always already proliferative, the nation-state's borders were always perforated, and the U.S. lines of flight across the treaties with indigenous nations were always rhizomatic and fluid rather than hierarchical, linear, and coherent, located not just in the nation-state but within the individual settlers and arrivants who saw indigenous lands as profit, fortune, and equality. In many ways, that is their point. Deleuze and Guattari re/deterritorialize America as the world, coming full circle to find its west in its east and its east in its west, a worlding anew, in Gayatri Spivak's terms, that decenters all static, grounded belongings and locates them instead in becomings: becoming-Indian, becoming-woman, becoming-America. At the least, it can be said that *A Thousand Plateaus* answers Cherokee, Choctaw, and Irish American scholar Louis Owens's concerns with the geographic homonym of "Indian" in his critique of postcolonial theory in "As If an Indian Were Really an Indian" with a "Yes they are!"[46]

But the matter of the rhizomatic American West's "Indians without ancestry" still lingers alongside Derrida's "tattooed savages." If they have no genealogy and exist sui generis, how might we account for the historical and colonialist traces that accompany their appearance in Deleuze and Guattarri's theory as sign, while retaining sympathy for the impulse to nonrepresentational philosophy that aligns in a multiplicity of regimes of signs? Elsewhere, Gilles Deleuze writes:

> The pharaoh's tomb, with its inert central chamber at the base of the pyramid, gives way to more dynamic models: from the drifting of continents to the migrations of peoples, these are all means through which the unconscious maps the universe. *The Indian model replaces the Egyptian:* the Indians pass into the thickness of the rocks themselves, where aesthetic form is no longer identified with the commemoration of a departure or an arrival, but with the creation of paths without memory.[47]

The Indian model, like the nomad, assembles for Deleuze the site of movement, escape, difference—it is a stateless war machine, existing outside of and rupturing the state. The rhizome, which is described as an orchid in relation with the wasp, their becomings and unbecomings, is transversal scramble, antigenealogical and always proceeding through re/deterritorializations by both the orchid and the wasp.[48] The rhizome, for Deleuze and Guattari, stands in Eastern, Oceanic counterpoint to the linear tree—arborescence—of descent, seed, and Western agriculture, and is short-term rather than long historical memory.[49] One must remember, though, that Gayatri Spivak's question "Can the Subaltern Speak?" was first posed as a critique of Deleuze and Michel Foucault, who seemed in their theorizations to suggest that the subaltern already was speaking through them, through the ventriloquism of the left intellectual.[50] In an aside about the "ferocious motif of 'deterritorialization' in Deleuze and Guattari," Spivak adds, "we have already spoken of the sanctioned ignorance that every critic of imperialism must chart."[51] The Indian model, which disappears into rocks and creates paths without memory, serves as an ontological trap within theorizations that follow those paths to articulate alternative spaces outside processes of recognitions and states, arrivals and departures. What we imagine to be outside of and rupturing to the state, through Deleuze, already depends upon a paradigmatic Indianness that arises from colonialist discourses justifying expropriation of lands through removals and genocide.

However, Deleuze and Guattari's "Indians without ancestry" and their "Indian model" move contradictorily as doubles, multiples along other lines of flight within their work and assemble, on the one hand, as nomads and war machines and serve, on the other, as examples of regulating and normativizing faciality within imperialist signifying regimes of signs. For instance, in Plateau 5 they evoke Robert Lowie's assessment of Crow and Hopi approaches to infidelity and Claude Lévi-Strauss's preface to Don Talayesva's

Sun Chief to discuss the paranoia of the circular, imperial despot-god who "brandishes the solar face that is his entire body, as the body of the signifier" that is the hallmark of what they term the *signifying* regime of the sign.[52] Existing in relation to the *primitive presignifying,* the *countersignifying,* and the *postsignifying* regimes (among others), the *signifying* regime is the site of the master-signifier, the priest or psychoanalyst, who uses faciality as masked deception and serves as the model for the surveillance of the imperial despotic regime that orders concentric circles around the same panoptic center of signification that reigns over "every domestic squabble, and in every State apparatus."[53] It is applicable "to all subjected, arborescent, hierarchical, centered groups: political parties, literary movements, psychoanalytic associations, families, conjugal units, etc."[54] It is the site of the spiral that is not, for Deleuze and Guattari, rhizomatic but regulated:

> The Hopi jump from one circle to another, or from one sign to another on a different spiral. One leaves the village or the city, only to return. The jumps may be regulated not only by presignifying rituals but also by a whole imperial bureaucracy passing judgment on their legitimacy. . . . Not only are they regulated, but some are prohibited: Do not overstep the outermost circle, do not approach the innermost circle . . .[55]

Christopher L. Miller has criticized Deleuze and Guattari for their ethnographic and representational authority here that allows them to speak as and for the Hopi "as if they . . . either were in total control of Hopi thought or were Hopi themselves. Through the power of anthropological borrowing, the authors have achieved a mind-meld with an alien people."[56] The Hopi (who became the site of a national affective investment in multicultural liberal democracy as the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign circulated the faux-Hopi prophecy "We are the ones we've been waiting for") are transformed into the logocentric imperial order that cannot tolerate any systemic line of flight.[57] As the logocentric regime, the Hopi can only exclude, scapegoat, curse, or put to flight that which threatens their structures.[58] In other words, the Hopi in this plane become the colonizing, imperial regime that sacrifices and expels. "Your only choice" in this system, according to Deleuze and Guattari, "will be between a goat's ass and the face of the god, between sorcerers and priests."[59]

Much can be made here of the ironies of the jumping Hopi who is made

to serve in Deleuzian thought as the example of the imperial, colonial panoptic order that is abjected back onto the Hopi in order for Deleuze and Guattari to provide a critique of Freud and the psychoanalytic mode of interpretation. Perversely, however, Deleuze and Guattari, in their suspect choice to frame the Hopi as an example of the imperial regime of signs, acknowledge something that the colonizing United States has not, in spite of the treaties and land holdings the Hopi have made and retained—they see the Hopi as a State. And certainly, Deleuze and Guattari's delineation here could be deployed to demonstrate the degree to which indigenous nationalisms depend upon signifying regimes, normativities, and assertions of sovereignty grounded in the ability to include/exclude that is found in the executive and juridical pronunciations of the state of emergency that Giorgio Agamben discusses in *Homo Sacer*.[60] But that is not the function of their Hopi example. Rather, the turn to the Hopi serves a structuralist move that stands in the breach of the real of their own colonialist discursive evocation.

The Hopi, though, are not fixed and static in Deleuze and Guattari but are found on other planes and in other assemblages that move among "Indians without ancestry," "the Indian model" that replaces the Egyptian one, and the "solar face" of the imperial *signifying regime* that tortures and expels. Returning to Leslie Fiedler, Deleuze and Guattari articulate "the poles of the American Dream: cornered between two nightmares, the genocide of the Indians and the slavery of the blacks, Americans constructed a psychically repressed image of the black as force of affect, of the multiplication of affects, but a socially repressed image of the Indian as subtlety of perception, perception made increasingly keen and more finely divided, infinitely slowed or accelerated."[61] This infinitely slowed or accelerated perception stems directly from their use of Carlos Castaneda for understanding the "socially repressed image of the Indian." Carlos Castaneda represents the becoming-Indian as a pathological colonizing condition of faux-Indian, a pathology that haunts any left intellectual who steps forward to ventriloquize the speaking Indian by transforming the becoming- into *replacing*-Indian. And yet, Deleuze and Guattari invest the fraudulent indigenous, drugged world of peyote and shamanism that is Castaneda with a presignifying real that has a curious ability.[62] They write:

> One of the many things of profound interest in Castaneda's books, under the influence of drugs, or other things, and of a change of atmosphere, is precisely that they show how the Indian manages to combat the mechanisms of interpretation and instill in the disciple a presignifying semiotic, or even an asignifying diagram: Stop! You're making me tired! Experiment, don't signify and interpret! Find your own places, territorialities, deterritorializations, regime, lines of flight! Semiotize yourself instead of rooting around in your prefab childhood and Western semiology.[63]

Further, the Indian has the ability to "'stop the world'... [as] an appropriate rendition of certain awareness in which the reality of everyday life is altered because the flow of interpretation, which ordinarily runs interruptedly, has been stopped by a set of circumstances alien to the flow."[64] Deleuze and Guattari's imagined "Indian" functions as a site of interruption through eruption, the introduction of schizophrenia into psychoanalyis. The "Indian" becomes an event, an "alien," instilling the presignifying semiotic into the despotic signifying regime. Despite its origins in the "primitivist" thought of Western philosophy, the presignifying regime serves in *A Thousand Plateaus* as the delineation of a system of signs characterized by polyvocality, dance, proximity to nature, and "a plurilinear, multidimensional semiotic that wards off any kind of signifying circularity."[65]

The Indian—as a threshold of past and future, regimes of signs, *alea*, becoming, and death—combats mechanisms of interpretation through an asignifying disruption that stops, alters, and redirects flow. This stopping of the world of signification is the same as Derrida's "tattooed savage" at the beginning of deconstruction. The Indian sign is the field through which poststructuralism makes its intervention, and as a result, this paradigmatic and pathological Indianness cannot be circumvented as a colonialist trace. In fact, this colonialist trace is exactly why "the Indian" is so disruptive to flow and to experimentation. Every time flow or a line of flight approaches, touches, or encounters Indianness, it also confronts the colonialist project that has made that flow possible. The choice is to either confront that colonialism or to deflect it. And not being prepared to disrupt the logics of settler colonialism necessary for the *terra nullius* through which to wander, the entire system either freezes or reboots.

It seems slightly ironic, then, that many who pick up Deleuze and Guattari's work use language similar to "Experiment, don't signify and interpret!" to describe the possibilities of reframing the world through affect and affective relationships that move toward the states of enchantment,

ecstasy, and the everyday. Brian Massumi's cultivation of deviation and contagion to foster radicalism at the crossroads between science, humanities, and cultural studies contains similar Castanedian staccato imperatives: "Let it. Then reconnect it to other concepts, drawn from other systems, until a whole new system of connection starts to form. Then, take another example. See what happens. Follow the new growth. You end up with many buds. Incipient systems."[66] In a gesture towards "a thousand tiny races" in which he provides an alternative future for race to that of Paul Gilroy's *After Race,* Arun Saldanha writes, "Race should not be eliminated, but *proliferated,* its many energies directed at multiplying racial differences so as to render them joyfully cacophonic."[67] Jasbir Puar's delineation of the biopolitics of the now in *Terrorist Assemblages* depends on

> A cacophony of informational flows, energetic intensities, bodies, and practices that undermine coherent identity and even queer anti-identity narratives . . . assemblages allow for complicities of privilege and the production of new normativities even as they cannot anticipate spaces and moments of resistance, resistance that is not primarily characterized by oppositional stances, but includes frictional forces, discomfiting encounters, and spurts of unsynchronized delinquency.[68]

Each of these cultural studies moments flow from the phrase "Experiment, don't signify and interpret!" that functions as a call for transformational new worlds of relation and relationship that move us toward a joyously cacophonic multiplicity and away from the lived colonial conditions of indigeneity within the postcolonizing settler society.[69]

This Deleuzian and Guattarian motif, even if it acknowledges all the divergent discourses that come into race, gender, sexual, and class assemblages, smoothes once again into uncultivated wilderness that allows any trajectory or cultivation to enter it, but not arise from it. By extension, and even if one cannot access how these evocations of "the Indian" function within the plateaus opened by Deleuze and Guattari, "the Indian" serves as an errant return of the repressed that spreads along its own line of infection once the theory is taken up.[70] For example, Jasbir Puar, by restricting her analysis to the biopolitics of the post-9/11 coming out of U.S. empire as "an event in the Deleuzian sense, privileging lines of flight, an assemblage of spatial and temporal intensities, coming together, dispersing, reconverging," can discuss as sui generis the monster-terrorist-fag that emerges in the twenty-first century as a new phenomenon, despite the Wanted posters in New York the week after 9/11 that compared Osama bin Laden to Geronimo.[71] Additionally, Puar discusses Jessica Lynch as a "heroic girl-next-door" in conversation with a "depraved, cigarette-toting, dark-haired, pregnant and unmarried, racialized" Lynndie England at Abu Ghraib. Puar does not even acknowledge Hopi Lori Piestewa, reportedly the first American Indian woman to die in combat while fighting *for* the United States. Piestewa died in the same attack in which Jessica Lynch was captured, and her absence is a telling amnesia within Puar's discussion of how "nostalgically mourning the loss of the liberal feminist subject" converges "white liberal feminists and white gay men" and "unwittingly reorganizes the Abu Ghraib tragedy around their desires" through the now racialized body of the no longer white Lynndie England.[72] Piestewa's absence is yet another deferral that vanishes the violences done to indigenous women, and those same indigenous soldiers' cathexis of U.S. nationalism and imperialism that signals an indigenationalism compatriot to the homonationalism that Puar defines as "the arrangements of U.S. sexual exceptionalisms [marked] explicitly in relation to the nation" that demobilize queer identities by normativizing certain bodies but not others within the enfranchisements of the state.[73]

To phrase this slightly differently, the Indian is simultaneously, multiply, a colonial, imperial referent that continues to produce knowledge about the indigenous as "primitive" and "savage" otherness within poststructuralist and postcolonial theory and philosophy. As a philosophical sign, the Indian is the transit, the field through which presignifying polyvocality is re/introduced into the signifying regime, and signs begin to proliferate through a series of becomings—becoming-animal, becoming-woman, becoming-Indian, becoming-multiplicity—that serves all regimes of signs. *And* the Indian is a ghost in the system, an errant or virus that disrupts the virtual flows by stopping them, redirecting them, or revealing them to be what they are and will have been all along: colonialist. The Indian, then, is a Deleuzian event within poststructuralism: "To the extent that events are actualized in us," Deleuze writes, "they wait for us and invite us in."[74] For Derrida, as he grieved and mourned the loss of his friend and colleague, and saw in that loss the passing of a generation of thought, the event in Deleuze's work becomes the Event, death, the paradox of humorous conformity of a leaping in place, an apotheosis of will. "'It is in this

sense that *Amor fati* is one with the struggle of free men,'" Derrida quotes from Deleuze.[75] Nietzsche's love of fate, the invitation inherent in the will of the event opposes the *ressentiment* of resignation to become the point "at which war is waged against war, the wound would be the living trace of all wounds, and death turned on itself would be willed against all death."[76]

On the threshold, then, of "the necessity with the aleatory, chaos and the *untimely*" that is both the work of Derrida's mourning of Deleuze and the *haksuba* of Southeastern cosmologies that Choctaw scholar LeAnne Howe defines in her work as headache, chaos, the collision of Upper and Lower Worlds initiated by colonialism, the Indian wills against the signifying system.[77] That the Indian represents the violent slamming of worlds in what might otherwise be fluidity and flow helps us frame the problem within a U.S. empire, with ties to Enlightenment liberalism, that continues to transit itself globally along lines put to flight by "the Indian without ancestry" that makes everyone its progeny. It is untimely as a site of the death of signification. That *haksuba* can additionally mean "to be stunned with noise, confused, deafened" signals the degree to which cacophony, whether joyous or colonialist, hinges upon the disruptions caused when "the Indian" collides with the racial, gendered, classed, and sexed normativities of an imperialism that has arisen out of an ongoing settler colonialism.[78] The Southeastern cosmologies of the Chickasaw and Choctaw imagine worlds with relational spirals and a center that does not so much hold as stretches, links, and ties everything within to worlds that look in all directions. It is an ontology that privileges balance, but understands that we are constant movement and exist simultaneously among Upper and Lower Worlds, this world and the next. In her poem "The Place the Musician Became a Bear," Mvskoke poet and musician Joy Harjo sings about how Southeastern Indians have always known "where to go to become ourselves again in the human comedy. / It's the how that baffles, the saxophone can complicate things."[79] Harjo reminds us that there is always a prior "becoming-human" within Southeastern worlds that links us to the complications and improvisations of stars, spirals, and jazz.

Much of the scholarship on U.S. imperialism and its possible postcoloniality sees it as enough to challenge the wilderness as anything but vacant; to list the annihilation of indigenous nations, cultures, and languages in a chain of –isms; and then still to relegate American Indians to the site of the already-doneness that begins to linger as unwelcome guest to the future. This last is particularly relevant to understanding how the United States propagates itself as empire transhemispherically and transoceanically, not just through whiteness, but through the continued settling and colonizing of indigenous peoples' lands, histories, identities, and very lives that implicate all arrivants and settlers regardless of their own experiences of race, class, gender, colonial, and imperial oppressions. My point in tracing the Deleuzian wilderness and the Indian deferred is to detail the ways in which "the Indian" is put to flight within Western philosophical traditions in order to understand how the United States transits itself globally as an imperial project. As Derrida and Deleuze are evoked within affect theories, the "Indian" and "tattooed savages" remain as traces. Any assemblage that arises from such horizons becomes a colonialist one, and it is the work of indigenous critical theory both to rearticulate indigenous phenomenologies and to provide (alter)native interpretative strategies through which to apprehend the colonialist nostalgias that continue to shape affective liberal democracy's investment in state sovereignty as a source of violence, remedy, memory, and grievability.

States of Enchantment

While in Hawaiʻi and standing on the edges of Kealakekua Bay in July 1866, Mark Twain twinned himself to Captain Cook in an attempt to imagine the violences and fear that "the great circumnavigator" must have felt "struggling in the midst of the multitude of exasperated savages."[80] Just shy of the one hundred year anniversary of Cook's death on February 14, 1778, and in the same month that the United States celebrated its ninetieth birthday—a birthday that had been threatened the last few years by the Civil War—Twain tried to imagine Cook facing down savages, trapped at the edge of the water. "—The," the sentence fragments. "But I discovered that I could not do it," he wrote in *Roughing It.* And though he protested too much his inability to imagine such a scene, given that he spends the next few paragraphs explaining how Kanaka Maoli must have interpreted the event, the fact that he cannot quite approach the violences done to the living Cook is transferred into a fascination with the cannibalistic apotheosis that occurred in Cook's liminality between life and death, man and so-called god: "Perceiving that the people took him for the long vanished and lamented god Lono, he encouraged them in the delusion for the sake of the limitless power it gave him," Twain writes. Once he betrayed "his earthly origin with a groan," Twain continued, the Hawaiians killed him and "his flesh was

stripped from the bones and burned (except nine pounds of it which were sent on board the ships)."[81] Cook, whose own name even bears out the trace of what Native Hawaiian poet Brandy Nālani McDougall plays as "to eat, to eat," exists as colonial specter throughout the Pacific and serves in life and death to inaugurate the touristic fascinations and nationalistic narratives that link the Pacific sea of islands to Atlantic imperial sites across an intervening continent that is itself rhizome, oceanic.[82] Cook's surname, then, gives rise to the cannibalistic fetish the Western mind evokes when it thinks of Pacific indigenous worlds.

Cook's expedition, according to Thomas, "was not just a rational plan to fill spaces on a map, but also a symptom of a state of enchantment."[83] The voyage, as well as the man himself, existed between the state of enchantment and the state of possession as a symptom and symptomatic contagion of that which served to first exalt the subjectivity of European nationalism and then project it into lands emptied of any subjectivity except the will of the European imperialist. This idea of enchantment is informed by Sunera Thobani, who explains that "exaltation thus endows ontological coherence and cohesion to the subject *in* its nationality, grounding an abstract humanity into particular governable forms."[84] As exalted subject within Western historiography, Cook's presence inaugurates, according to Aileen Moreton-Robinson, the state of possession dependent on British law to interpellate the exalted subject as the white possessing subject.[85] This state of possession, in which Cook's exalted subjectivity possesses land in the name of the British crown and possesses whiteness as preeminent ownership within the logics of capitalism, is the site of the dialectic of sovereignty that functions similarly to Agamben's state of exception where the state—in contradistinction to indigenous peoples' own ontologies of relationship and power—enacts sovereignty as ontological possession, delineating what is and is not possessed. As death omen and as dead man, Cook, in his state of enchantment as well as his state of possession, exemplified the magical thinking of European imperialism that sought to resurrect "discovered" lands into imperial ownership. The state of enchantment was ultimately the rational plan to empty lands of presence via the discourses of *terra nullius* in order to refill them with British imperial law.

Mark Twain, standing "on the flat rock pressed by Capt. Cook's feet when the blow was dealt which took away his life," becomes a similar exalted subject who enacts a state of nationalistic possession, this time not just through whiteness but through American enchantment.[86] In his account of Cook's death detailed in his letters from Hawai'i that serve as drafts to *Roughing It,* Twain turned not to the official accounts of Cook's death by James King and other British nationals who had accompanied the circumnavigator, but instead to two American sources for his Hawaiian history—John Ledyard's account of Cook's third voyage and James Jackson Jarves's *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands* (1843). Marine corporal Ledyard was from Connecticut, and before joining Captain Cook on his third voyage, he had attended Dartmouth in the hopes of becoming a missionary to Indians.[87] Often identified as the United States' first great explorer, Ledyard served as inspirational precursor to Thomas Jefferson's plans to send Lewis and Clark westward on the heels of the Louisiana Purchase. In fact, John Ledyard, who was the first Euroamerican to set foot in the Pacific Northwest as Cook made his passage through the region, had hoped to prove the Bering Strait theory shortly after he returned from Hawai'i after Cook's death (and in the process set up a lucrative fur trading business along the way) by walking across Russia, into Alaska, down into the Pacific Northwest, and then eastward across the continent.

For Thomas Jefferson, who sought to secure him permission for such traveling in 1786, Ledyard served as a West/East counterpoint to Lewis and Clark's later voyage East/West into the heart of the continent, a bidirectional Janus imperialism that reflects Deleuze and Guattari's description in *A Thousand Plateaus.*[88] Jefferson's plan would have worked, except that Catherine the Great withdrew her permission when Ledyard was 200 miles away from Kamschatka and had Ledyard deported from the Russian empire. Twain's evocation of Ledyard's accounts allows Twain to exalt and cohere U.S. nationalistic subjectivity at the beginning of white imperial contact with Hawai'i through Ledyard as proxy, and it naturalizes Hawai'i as destined for U.S. dominion in 1866. "Ledyard," Twain writes, was "a Yankee sailor, who was with Cook, and whose journal is considered the most just and reliable account of this eventful period of the voyage."[89] As he considers Ledyard most just and most reliable—read here most *American*—Twain assumes the mantle of American exceptionalism and imperialism through evocations of the impartial justice that is putatively the hallmark of the U.S. founding fathers' democratic vision. In the process, Twain becomes *the* literary personage who cathects U.S. imperialist investment in multiculturalism sited along a black/white continuum, one that erases indigenous colonization altogether.

Amy Kaplan has argued that Mark Twain's investment in Hawai'i caused

him to look eastward, and then southward across life and death to return to the uncanny plantations that haunted his childhood in slaveholding Missouri. "Hawaii in fact Americanized Mark Twain," she argues.[90] By allowing Twain to locate his Americanness in Hawai'i through a layering of racial expectation of Southern plantations and blackness into Hawai'i, Kaplan then argues that "Twain both displaced and discovered the origins of his own divided national identity at the intersecting global routes of slavery and empire."[91] Twain's ambivalent literary representations of the antebellum and post-reconstruction South serve as consonance and dissonance to his representations of Hawaiians, who stand as newly configured African Americans struggling with sovereignty, democratic inclusion, enslavement, and savagery. Through his re/constructions of race, Twain becomes the voice of an America struggling to reimagine itself as an inclusive democracy in which all are created equal. In response to Kaplan's discussion of Twain, Western Shoshone scholar Ned Blackhawk has suggested that Twain be read across another imperial transit still functioning alongside the enslaving and emancipatory visions that return to haunt Twain's America:

> "All right, then, I'll go to hell," Twain's most famous character, Huckleberry Finn, decides after deliberating on his friend Jim's continued enslavement; and generations have sought meaning in these hopeful, yearning sentiments. However, as with his portrait of Hawaiians, such visions of potential racial coexistence stand in contradistinction to the "nausea" that Clemens experienced upon encountering Goshute Shoshones. . . . Within a panoply of derisive labels, the most common has been "digger," a debasement of Shoshone gathering practices with strong homophonic resonance with America's most powerful racial epithet, "nigger."[92]

Twain's reference to the Goshute Shoshones—whom he labels "Goshoot Indians" in *Roughing It*—carries another homophone alongside "digger" through which Twain cajoles his readers to go and shoot Indians who stand in as the degraded real to James Fenimore Cooper's imagined literary "red man." "Whenever one finds an Indian tribe," Twain writes in *Roughing It* and in rejection of Cooper, "he has only found Goshoots more or less modified by circumstances and surroundings—but Goshoots, after all."[93] The racialized and genocidal homophones underscore the degree to which Mark Twain's imperial routes depended on a foundational Indianness to help transit them and inaugurate them around affectability achieved through inclusion and nausea cured by genocide.

At these intersections between postcolonial and U.S. imperial studies, Twain's attitudes towards African Americans and transnational routes of travel are well-acknowledged as ambivalent, and trace through most of his work. His deadpan humor and satirical sketches are typically read as self-reflective and critical of the then-contemporary U.S. discourses about "primitivism," race, and regionalism. What is striking, however, is that his affective response to Indians shifts only in relation to his critique of James Fenimore Cooper, whom he ridicules for investing U.S. literary nationalism in an inaccurate portrait of the "noble red man"—at great peril, too, as the plot to his unfinished *Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn among the Indians* attests. Although he was certainly anti-imperialist when it came to the question of the Philippines after the turn of the twentieth century, Twain often asserted that Hawai'i, like the North American continent, was destined for control by the United States. In part, this predestination had to do with an innate ability that linked Hawaiian people to American Indians—their ability to die.

Just as Twain felt that it was a service to put Indians out of their destitution through goshooting that would finally and fully trap them in a sanitized and distant past, he observed in the many lectures he gave on "Our Fellow Savages of the Sandwich Isles" that Kanakas "are an odd sort of people, too. They can die whenever they want to. That's a fact. They don't mind dying any more than a jilted Frenchman does. When they take a notion to die they die, and it don't make any difference whether there is anything the matter with them or not, and they can't be persuaded out of it."[94] Documenting the population decrease less than one hundred years after the moment of Cook's arrival, Twain observes: "It isn't the education or civilization that has settled them; it is the imported diseases, and they have all got the consumption and other reliable distempers, and to speak figuratively, they are retiring from business pretty fast. When they pick up and leave we will take possession as lawful heirs."[95] His satire was quick to point out how white civilization was not much different from the conditions of "savagery," and he acknowledged the impact missionaries and other settlers had on indigenous peoples. But in the end, the demise of native peoples was inevitable whether deserved or not, and as a result, lamentable, and necessarily sanitized of any violent intent—indigenous peoples

will have to retire from the business of living altogether so that Americans may take up the mantle of possession.

Though it is absolutely necessary to understand Twain through a refraction of southern black/white racial politics, his attitudes towards Indians and other "savages" exist alongside and inform his interpretations of U.S. colonial and imperial destinies. Approximately ninety years after Cook's arrival in Hawai'i, Mark Twain performs an important act of racial and imperial alchemy that transforms the stakes for the racial politics of whiteness within the United States. From 1768 to 1779, the British and American colonial travelers who voyaged through the Pacific sailed through a sea of islands inhabited by peoples they identified as Indians. In Cook's journals, the term "Indian" is used interchangeably with Tahitian, Māori, and Hawaiian. In John Ledyard's account of Cook's death, Indians attack and slay the circumnavigator:

> Acquainting Cook in the mean time of the danger of his situation, and that the Indians in a few minutes would attack him, that he had overheard the man whom he had just stopped from rushing in upon him say that our boats which were out in the harbour had just killed his brother and he would be revenged. Cook attended to what this man said, and desired him to shew him the Indian that had dared to attempt a combat with him, and as soon as he was pointed out Cook fired at him with a blank. The Indian perceived he received no damage from the fire rushed from without the croud a second time, and threatened any one that should oppose him. Cook perceiving this fired a ball, which entering the Indian's groin he fell and was drawn off by the rest.... Cook having at length reached the margin of the water between the fire of the boats waved his hat to cease firing and come in, and while he was doing this a chief from behind stabed him with one of our iron daggers just under the shoulder blade, and passed quite through his body. Cook fell with his face in the water and immediately expired.[96]

Ledyard, who was the first American settler to get a Polynesian tattoo and who penned the account of Cook's demise that Twain felt was the most accurate, wrote in his journal about a Pacific world filled with Indians in a signification process that either attests to the same geographical confusions that informed Christopher Columbus's narratives or speaks to a foundational concept of "Indianness" that aligns it with the savage other that functions as the constitutive rationale for imperial domination. I am inclined to read Cook's and Ledyard's "Indians" through the latter. The racial casting of Pacific Islanders as Indians within the British/American moment of possessive "discovery" serves as an intertextual signpost that is errant from the start. Within Amy Kaplan's North/South U.S. imperial mappings, then, there remains a prior supplement, an a priori and paradigmatic Indianness. As Kaplan argues against the masculinist paradigms of Richard Drinnon and Richard Slotkin, Perry Miller and Leslie Fiedler in order to reorient and engender empire along internal/external domesticities, American empire does not replicate itself through a detachable and remappable "frontier" or "wilderness." Rather, I am arguing as an additive here, it does so through the reproduction of Indianness that exists alongside racializing discourses that slip through the thresholds of whiteness and blackness, inclusion and exclusion, internal and external, that are the necessary conditions of settler colonial sovereignty.

As the night sky and stars themselves are remodeled into English-speaking phenomenologies as imperial and colonial constellations, evidenced in the imperial reconstellating of the Mississippian Starry Hand into Orion, it is fitting then to return to the transit of Venus that Cook set out to observe in 1769 in order to understand how "Indians" function as a transit within U.S. empire and how such an observation might serve to open up methodological approaches for theorizing current global politics sited through indigenous worlds.[97] Not only did Cook's observation of the planet's transit across the face of the sun initiate the Pacific's collision with the Enlightenment liberalisms defined by John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Hobbes, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson among other Thomases, but the twenty-first century has seen its first transit on June 8, 2004, with the second occurring on June 6, 2012, in a pattern of visibility and trajectory that twins the eighteenth century's imperial transits. Cook's 1769 transit was the second of that century and the last chance for those alive at the time to observe and record the event so they could develop the measurements necessary to map the night sky. The eighteenth-century transits also served to tie Europe to the Pacific Islands imaginatively by linking Europe geographically with Tahiti, Hawai'i, Aotearoa, and Australia through a shared cosmological telemetry and ideal viewing conditions. Cook's observation of the transit from Tahiti's Point Venus, which he named for the occasion, made the globe a world of shared European humanistic

and scientific endeavor by providing one of the points on the baseline of the earth necessary to calculate astronomical distances. It also inaugurated a second wave of new world imperialism that depended upon already well-established tropes of Indianness to facilitate the ordering of peoples into imperial landscapes that would be mapped and owned through the logics of colonialism. Mary Louise Pratt describes this type of Enlightenment travel as a process of developing a European "planetary consciousness," and the importance of Cook is that he marks the last formal voyage of external discovery and the shift to interiors.[98] However, those notions of interiority, especially on the North American continent, are inflected already by U.S. nationalistic mappings of lands that cohered and transformed external lands into internal domestic space that now seamlessly exists from the moment the American colonists declared their independence from England.

The Transit of Empire and the Planetary Parallax

As an astronomical event, the transit of Venus is marked by an effect that, given the limits of eighteenth-century astronomy, made it almost impossible to pinpoint the exact moment the transit began and ended. As Cook and others around the world observed together the moment Venus began its journey across the face of the sun, their notes reflected variations in time—differences of seconds to minutes even among viewers at the same location—that made precise calculations of astronomical units from the data difficult. This "black-drop effect," as it became known within those scientific communities, obscured the exact moment Venus fully entered into the sphere of the sun in a distortion that seemed to stretch the planet into a silhouetted band between its own edge and that of the sun. Many observers at the time, Cook included, assumed that the momentary merging and pulling of edges between the two bodies was visible evidence of Venus's atmosphere. However, the effect of Venus's trailing touch of the edge of the sun for moments after full ingress and again as it approaches the edge on egress also results from a distortion that makes silhouetted objects that are brightly backlit appear smaller than they are. The line between the edge of the sun and the edge of Venus, assumed to be the result of atmospheric disturbances and observed as a stretching of the darkened planet, is actually the true size of the planet lingering as a trace.[99] That silhouetted band that stretches between the two bodies, then, is a fraction of the planet made visible at the moment it fully enters into the space of the sun and the moment

before it begins the end of its transit. In the sticky stretch between sun and Venus, the trace of the actual Venus remains in spite of the overwhelming totality of the sun's encapsulating embrace.

The second effect, and the one most useful to astronomical observation, is that of parallax—a shift in an observer's perspective of a distant object based on a change in vantage point. By establishing a baseline whose length is known, the unknown length to a distant object can be triangulated based upon the angle of shift between two lines of sight on that known baseline.[100] Eighteenth-century astronomers hypothesized that they could calculate the distance between the earth and the sun by observing the transit of Venus from different points on the earth. Both the 1761 and 1769 transits became the occasion for a race around the globe to position European observers at key locations, in the hopes that the data collected would provide enough information to establish the angle of solar parallax across the earth's radius. Slavoj Žižek offers a different understanding of parallax in his magnum opus *The Parallax View*, defining it as "the illusion of being able to use the same language for phenomena which are mutually untranslatable and can be grasped only in a kind of parallax view, constantly shifting perspective between two points between which no synthesis or mediation is possible." The two points, Žižek emphasizes, are "*two sides* of the same phenomenon which, precisely as two sides, can never meet."[101] In other words, for Žižek parallax is similar to a Möbius strip, where there at first appear to be two sides, but as one traverses it, there is only one side that feeds back into itself.

This parallax differential creates certain dialectical shifts—or what Žižek terms parallax gaps. He structures his argument around three sites of parallax—ontological difference as ultimate parallax (which conditions our access to reality), scientific parallax (which accounts for the gap between phenomenology and scientific explanations), and political parallax (which hinders the creation of common ground through which to mobilize political resistances)—as the sites through which to interrogate biopolitics and class warfare.[102] In order to perceive the difference and to approach the Lacanian Real, Žižek argues that one has to shift perspective to alternate viewing locations and approximate the "Real" in the gap. "The 'truth,'" Žižek explains,

> Is not the "real" state of things, that is, the "direct" view of the object without perspectival distortion, but the very Real of the antagonism

> which causes perspectival distortion. The site of truth is not the way "things really are in themselves," beyond their perspectival distortions, but the very gap, passage, which separates one perspective from another, the gap . . . which makes the two perspectives radically *incommensurable.*[103]

The gap between two sides of the same phenomenon "allows us to discern its subversive core" that cuts across the cosmopolitan hybrid/nomad and acknowledges the lived conditions of violence, class, and oppression.[104] Multiple viewing locations of the Real are created, though no single one of them is capable of discerning the Real and there is no possibility of triangulating the Real by taking into consideration all perspectives. Instead, according to Jodi Dean, "the distortion among the differing views . . . indicates the Real of the event. The Realness of the event is what generates the multiplicity, the impossibility of its being encompassed."[105]

Though Žižek wants to recover dialectical materialism through such subversions and shifts, his own work bears a metonymical trace that ties him back to the transit of Venus in pursuit of empire that functions as an errant within the very structures of his own text and chapter headings that depend upon stellar, solar, and lunar parallaxes that emerged from Enlightenment colonialism to map, know, and own the earth and stars. It is here that theorizing the planetary parallax might serve as a useful additive to Žižek's discussion of how ontological and dialectical differences antagonize and oscillate between viewing locations in the gap of the Real. As we have seen in Venus's planetary parallax, the distortive parallactic effect created in the stretch between Venus and the sun serves to antagonize further the perspectival parallax by revealing a sticky edge of the Real, partial though it may be. And that distortive parallactic effect distorts even the distortion of the viewing locations by partially making visible that "Real" to be apprehended. Within the planetary parallax gap, colonialist discourse functions as a distortive effect within critical theory as it apprehends "Indianness," where shifts across space and location serve to distort further whatever trace of the Real lingers and make it even less likely to link such moments back to their discursive colonialist core. For instance, in *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce,* Žižek takes up the faux-Hopi prophecy that circulated in the 2008 U.S. presidential campaigns and proffers it as corrective to leftist intellectuals who "desperately await a new revolutionary agent capable of instigating the long-expected radical social transformation. It takes the form of the old Hopi saying, with a wonderful Hegelian twist from substance to subject: 'We are the ones we have been waiting for.' (This is a version of Gandhi's motto: 'Be yourself the change you want to see in the world.')"[106] The planetary parallax between Indians (Hopi and Gandhi) depends upon the faux-Hopi prophecy becoming the "old Hopi saying," a parallax transformation that shifts from fake to lived "Real" in an enunciation of colonialist desire for the inviting Indian event that is fillable and inhabitable by the European self. The consequences of this unexamined distortive effect within the parallax gap signals the colonialist affective need for Hopi wisdom that might radicalize leftist politics without having to make those politics accountable to and actionable for ending the colonization of the Hopi and other American Indian peoples.

My use of transit to discuss both the trajectory of empire dependent upon Indianness as well as indigeneity's challenge to critical theory is intended to be diagnostic. Though it would be tempting to develop a correlative theory that explains that Indians function as Venus or the sun and that the United States serves the vice versa other, such a correlation would miss the larger stakes of the parallax gap and its concomitant distortive effects. Venus, the sun, and the earth are all in motion during the astronomical event that is the transit of Venus. Each body pulls gravitationally upon the other to distort possible viewing locations and antagonizes any parallax angle to discern coequal or equivalent, static theories of how U.S. empire functions through its deployment of paradigmatic Indianness. Using a concept like transit that has its origins in Enlightenment imperialism at the dawning of Western "democracy," and examining how Indianness serves as the field through which lines of flight become possible as a mechanism of U.S. imperialism, necessitates deploying parallax views attuned to the miscalculations that the stretching of the real introduces into any attempt to apprehend a subversive core that might mobilize transformative politics. That distortive parallactic effect centers on the colonization of indigenous peoples and, at key moments within the ingress or egress of critical theory, reveals the colonialist discursive givens that continue to deny indigenous peoples full agency to theorize the world and have that theorization mobilize change. Within the scope of such transits, indigeneity as an ontological prior challenges postcolonial and critical theories because it serves as a significant parallax view—though certainly not the only one—along the baseline of colonialism through which to trouble the dialectical processes that underwrite colonialist hegemonies of racializations and normativities,

subjectivities and subjectifications. As radical alterity, indigeneity functions as a counterpoint that disrupts the fictions of multicultural settler enfranchisement and diasporic arrivals; as event and as horizon, indigeneity is temporal as well as spatial, structural as well as structuring. By detailing the constellations that underwrite U.S. imperialism and twenty-first century wars, it may be possible to show that within the logics that have ordered the United States out of indigenous lands, indigenous peoples can be apprehended through parallax within critical theory that demonstrates just how vital they are to any understanding of how difference orients U.S. bio- and necropolitics.

Is and Was

I want to give you two scenes to hold in your imagination. The first is from Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. In his eyewitness account of the Choctaw removal from their homelands to Indian Territory, he writes:

> At the end of the year 1831, whilst I was on the left bank of the Mississippi at a place named by Europeans, Memphis, there arrived a numerous band of Choctaws .... These savages had left their country, and were endeavoring to gain the right bank of the Mississippi, where they hoped to find an asylum which had been promised them by the American Government. It was then the middle of winter, and the cold was unusually severe; the snow had frozen hard upon the ground, and the river was drifting huge masses of ice. The Indians had their families with them; and they brought in their train the wounded and sick, with children newly born, and old men upon the verge of death. They possessed neither tents nor wagons, but only their arms and some provisions. I saw them embark to pass the mighty river, and never will that solemn spectacle fade from my remembrance. No cry, no sob was heard amongst the assembled crowd; all were silent. Their calamities were of ancient date, and they knew them to be irremediable. The Indians had all stepped into the bark which was to carry them across, but their dogs remained upon the bank. As soon as these animals perceived that their masters were finally leaving the shore, they set up a dismal howl, and, plunging all together into the icy waters of the Mississippi, they swam after the boat.[107]

The second is from Michelle Obama's May 16, 2009, commencement speech at the University of California–Merced as she recognizes and applauds the letter-writing campaigns the students used to get their campus built—and to persuade the First Lady to attend their graduation ceremony:

> This type of activism and optimism speaks volumes about the students here, the faculty, the staff, but also about the character and history of Merced—a town built by laborers and immigrants from all over the world: early settlers who came here as pioneers and trailblazers in the late 1800s as part of the Gold Rush and built the churches and businesses and schools that exist; African Americans who escaped slavery and the racism of the South to work on the railways and as truck drivers up and down Route 99; Mexican Americans who traveled north to find work on the farms and have since become the backbone of our agricultural industry—Asian Americans who arrived in San Francisco and have slowly branched out to become a part of the community in the San Joaquin Valley.[108]

The first scene speaks of a stoic desperation, dismal howls, ancient and irremediable calamities, and an endeavoring hope for asylum in what was once home; the second offers a celebration of the optimism of struggle, a linking of students' lives to the trailblazers who discovered gold, escaped slavery, traveled north, labored on farms, or spread across California valleys in the hope of making homes (with no mention here of the internments that facilitated that spread during the early 1940s, the struggles to end the inequities of the backbreaking work on those farms, or the originary genocide that resulted from the Gold Rush).

Though separated by more than 150 years, these two scenes taken together say something profound about the nature of multicultural liberal democracy and the conditions of empire at two distinct moments of transition for the United States. They are both about the foundational violences that created the towns and communities throughout the new world, and they are both about land, labor, journey, and displacement. Yet in the span between the two, a very significant elision occurs that, by the time First Lady Michelle Obama gives that speech to college students in California, naturalizes narratives of overcoming adversity and links them to the very pioneer spirit that drove the Chickasaw and Choctaw from their homelands.

Lauren Berlant tells us:

> "Cruel optimism" names a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility. What is cruel about these attachments, and not merely inconvenient or tragic, is that the subjects who have *x* in their lives might not well endure the loss of the object or scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being, because whatever the *content* of the attachment, the continuity of the form of it provides something of the continuity of the subject's sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world.[109]

And while one might be tempted to read the Choctaws' experiences of removal that Tocqueville witnesses as the basest form of optimism at its cruelest—the Choctaws Tocqueville describes have no hope—it seems to me that the actual cruel optimism that Berlant describes resides in the narrative of California history that Michelle Obama provides. Cruel optimism is, Berlant continues, "the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object *in advance* of its loss."[110] The loss to be had here is the surety of colonialist mastery, the wealthy promises of Manifest Destiny, and the possibility of confrontation with the history Tocqueville assures will never fade from his remembrance.

I am fairly confident, however, that Berlant does not mean that when she writes of cruel optimism and its role in forming and maintaining attachments in the face of the risks that come with "reproducing and surviving in zones of compromised ordinariness [that are part of the] impasse of living in the overwhelmingly present moment."[111] In fact, one might read her delineations of cruel optimism as symptomatic of the very conditions she critiques. What constitutes the ordinary life in the overwhelmingly present moment for Berlant? And further, who gets to live that life? Each of her textual examples provides what she sees as the "suspension of the reproduction of habituated or normative life," in which said life has the possibility to break from the conditions—be they homophobia, race and class oppressions that turn people and things into "exchange value," or sexual trauma—that produce the attachments to the promises of bourgeois normativity, wealth, and education, but that ultimately fail in doing so.[112]

Berlant is concerned with the processes of normativity and capitalism

that provide optimism in spite of lived conditions that are unlivable—what she has elsewhere described as slow death. And while I could focus on each of her examples and delineate the aesthetics and politics of cruel optimism as she explains them, for my purposes here, the best example is Geoff Ryman's *Was*, a novel that takes its name from L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz* and has as its four main characters Dorothy Gael as a historical figure living in 1880s Kansas, Judy Garland as she plays Dorothy Gale (like the wind) in the movie, a Midwestern mental health worker who encounters the real Dorothy in a mental home near the end of her life, and a gay man dying of AIDS who stars in a touring company of *The Wizard of Oz* while suffering from dementia. "All of these stories," Berlant writes, "are about the cruelty of optimism for people without control over the material conditions of their lives and whose relation to fantasy is all that protects them from being destroyed by other people and the nation."[113] Berlant focuses her essay on reading an exchange between the 1880s Dorothy Gael and Frank Baum, in which Baum as a substitute teacher becomes a substitute for home, caring, and desire for a Dorothy raped by her uncle and starved by her aunt. The fantasy here for Dorothy, as Berlant interprets it, is the thought that another person could care for her, and after she writes Baum a story in which she describes a happy home with her dog Toto, she has a breakdown in front of him and the rest of her classmates as she screams out her rape, torture, and the brutalization of her dog by her aunt, until she can no longer speak. "To protect her last iota of optimism," Berlant writes, "she goes crazy."[114] In return, Baum provides Dorothy a substitute life, a transplanted self who has family, friends, and Toto all with her as she wanders the roads of Oz.

Though Berlant ends her analysis here with the observation that for Dorothy "the optimism of attachment to another living being is itself the cruelest slap of all," she misses entirely the deeper attachment that provides Dorothy her one link to optimism throughout it all—Indians.[115] After her confrontation with Baum and her mental breakdown, the novel tells us, "she was invisible, like the Indians."[116] A few pages later, Ryman's narrative explains, "Dorothy no longer believed in Indians. Rather, she believed in the hopeless, flat, beardless faces wearing dirty white men's clothes, like her own. Dorothy wore britches and boots like a man."[117] Throughout her life, as things were falling apart, Dorothy held on to the hope that she could escape to the Territory, the Nation (Oklahoma), and become an Indian—she achieves it instead in her abjected state of insanity.[118] As she elaborates and

deepens the fantasy escape, Indians become invisible, live underground, represent all the play and possibility of the childhood, freedom, and hope that was stolen from her until finally, in the mental home near the end of her life, she explains, "'All of us here,' she whispered, 'are either Indians or fairies.'" Even the title of the novel is pulled into her fantasy of Indian optimism as Dorothy explains how Was is a place: "You can step in and out of it. Never goes away. Always there."[119]

Within Ryman's novel, Indians become a transit, not only of the frontier violences done to children as they are forced into the stolid, colonial lives that are unlivable under the weight of settler colonial responsibilities, but of the non-normative, queered lives that cross gendered borders and pair fairies—evoked as both ephemeral spirits and radical gay men—with an affective Indianness that functions alongside a subsuming of Indian identities. There is a final irony to explore. Where Berlant and Dorothy see Frank Baum as providing a healing balm offering a substitute for home and a better life, the historical author was full of U.S. genocidal normativity. After the Wounded Knee Massacre on December 29, 1890, Baum wrote two infamous editorials in a South Dakota newspaper, the *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer,* in which he asserted that it "was better that [Indians] die than live the miserable wretches that they are." He continues: "The nobility of the Redskin is extinguished, and what few are left are a pack of whining curs who lick the hand that smites them. . . . the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians."[120] To revise Berlant's earlier statement about fantasy within *Was,* then, the cruel optimism is that many of the characters' inner lives and identities revolve around an attachment to Indians as affective fantasy that will somehow protect them from the destruction the United States wreaked upon actual Indian lives. Their fantasy is constitutive of their nation, and the cruelest cut is that Ryman's children affectively grow into what they most despised adults for being in the novel—harsh, desperate people who inhabit and live through a cruelty towards Indians and otherness that can be escaped only through a radical breach with sanity and signification. What Dorothy experiences as she finally escapes her own oppression by running away from her Aunt Em and Uncle Gulch to Wichita is that she has become invisible like Indians as she moves in and out of Was on the transit of Indianness she has created in her own fantasy world.

In many ways, one might argue that this transit of Indianness is the condition of possibility that informs even Berlant's understanding of the

"slow death" of obesity that "refers to the physical wearing out of a population and the deterioration of people in that population that is very nearly a defining condition of their experience and historical existence."[121] Here, in the interstices of affect and queer theory, between Lauren Berlant and Judith Butler, I want to elaborate on what indigenous critical theory might offer to such understandings of "bare life." According to Butler and Berlant, the contemporary present is a necessary condition for affect and relation to draw lives into commensurable vulnerability and may, they hope, restructure governance and help make lives more livable. A core set of questions emerges for me as I read Berlant's discussions of "cruel optimism" and "slow death," and they revolve around her delineations of ordinary life. Judith Butler in *Precarious Life* and *Frames of War* takes up Berlant's concerns with the ordinary life in the overwhelmingly present moment and reframes them in the question "When is life grievable?" The concern for me is to consider whether indigenous peoples are understood to be a part of the present within liberal democracy and within the theories Butler and Berlant are articulating to provide possible reframings of relation to reconcile questions of citizenship, sovereignty, recognition, and nationalism. Do Indians live the ordinary life in the contemporary now? Are Indians part of the present tense? And finally, do Indians live grievable lives?

I may be begging the question here, given that Butler does not really consider Indians and that Berlant avoids indigeneity even when it is a thematic concern within the text, as her reading of *Was* indicates. But because their projects work to dismantle the normative state structures that also oppress indigenous peoples whether they actively involve indigenous peoples in their theorizations or not, here we can see how indigenous critical theory transforms queer theory and critical theory more broadly to intervene in the colonialist structures that continue to underwrite racialized and gendered oppressions despite every attempt to disrupt or refuse those structures. To return to Tocqueville and Michelle Obama, we can notice this problem with tenses present—and that Indians are not present at all in the case of the latter. As Tocqueville describes the Choctaw, "their calamities were of ancient date, and they knew them to be irremediable." Even in the present of their removal, the Choctaws are always already past perfect: they had left, they had stepped, they had been promised. According to Butler, in order for life to be grievable, it needs to be faceable; to exist, it needs to "cast a face, a life, in the tense of the future anterior" in what Barthes has described as the present absolute pastness of the photograph. Butler writes:

"The photograph relays less the present moment than the perspective, the pathos, of a time in which 'this will have been.'"[122] Even for Ryman's Dorothy, who perceives Indians in spite of their invisibility, Indians are "Was." So the most we can say, given the lack of possibility of an Indian future anteriority in which Indians will have been decolonized, is that Indians are lamentable, but not grievable. The dogs howl and throw themselves to their deaths in the frozen waters of the Mississippi, but the humanity of the scene is still: "No cry, no sob was heard amongst the assembled crowd; all were silent." The lamentable is pitiable, but not remediable. It is past and regrettable. Grieving, on the other hand, calls people to acknowledge, to see, and to grapple with lived lives and the commensurable suffering, and in Butler's frame apprehend—in the sense of both its definitions that include to understand and to stop—the policies creating unlivable, ungrievable conditions within the state-sponsored economies of slow death and letting die.

As the queer makes claims to an affective indigenous generosity that can welcome all arrivants in the hope that those moves, those approximations of traditional kinship sovereignties and tribal affiliations will transform the normative and transgress the dialectics of state sovereignty that conscript, expel, and police whose bodies and lives count as full citizens in the United States, the indigenous must be absent both from the contemporary now and from the spaces and tenses of grief. In order to transcend what many theorists engaged in confronting state-sponsored violence perceive as a retrograde return to nativism, claims of indigeneity are read as conservative neoliberal discourses of normativity rather than a reassertion of the basic fundamental principles of restorative justice in the face of colonization and genocide. Given the push toward kinship, affect, and futurity that queer theory troubles as a way to intervene within and through discourses of sovereignty, nationalism, and citizenship, it seems that indigenous strategies should not be just a return push that demonstrates difference—that move is anticipated and already silenced. Possible sites of intervention depend then on interrogating how the impulse to world is the setting-to-work of the colonizer, even if that work is to reconfigure the world so that it might be kinder and gentler and be a world more possible to live, and grieve, within. The future anterior of such a world that exists outside the cruel optimisms and violences constitutive of liberalism's very structures must also be a future in which indigenous peoples will have been and will remain decolonized, if there is to be any hope at all.

2

"This Island's Mine"

The Parallax Logics of Caliban's Cacophony

Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

But would this same captain be competent to sit in judgment upon Shakespeare's seamanship—considering the changes in ships and ship-talk that have necessarily taken place, unrecorded, unremembered, and lost to history in the last three hundred years? It is my conviction that Shakespeare's sailor-talk would be Choctaw to him.

Mark Twain, "Is Shakespeare Dead?"

How did the impulse to constellate the Americas into European colonial alignment come to depend upon the lamentable but ungrievable Indian? How do arrivants and other peoples forced to move through empire use indigeneity as a transit to redress, grieve, and fill the fractures and ruptures created through diaspora and exclusion? What happens to indigeneity within liberal multicultural settler societies when a multitude of historical experiences can each claim themselves as the real and autochthonous experience of originary violence and oppression in lands stolen from original inhabitants? And what happens to indigenous peoples and the stakes of sovereignty, land, and decolonization when conquest is reframed through the global historicities of race? Just as "the Indian" stops the Deleuzean world and redirects flow in a rhizomatic imperative, "Indianness," when located in U.S. empire, unspools within postcolonial and poststructuralist theories that seek from the outset to dismantle the colonial logics of territorializations, racializations, and discursive figurations that render some subject positions visible and heard, others absent and silent on the plateau