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# From the End of History to Nostalgia: *The Manchurian Candidate*, Then and Now

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With the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, an “official” closure of a historical era was marked with a declaration that not only the cold war but History itself supposedly had come to an end. History as a single linear progress, proclaimed Francis Fukuyama, reached its final stage with the demise of communism, implicitly affirming “the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism” and “an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism.”<sup>1</sup> In claiming liberal capitalism as the only viable system to continue history, however, he reveals logical paradoxes in his apocalyptic triumphalism: for one thing, he displaces the philosophical concept of the Hegelian “End of History” as the self-realization of the Absolute Idea<sup>2</sup> with the concrete event in the social-historical realm; for another, he pronounces History as over only to reassert that history continues with the allegedly legitimate liberal capitalist system. Interestingly, a similar contradictory desire characterized the American cold war cultural climate of the 1950s. In the midst of the intensifying Red Scare from the Hollywood Ten (1947–1948) to Alger Hiss (1948–1950) to the Rosenbergs (1951–1953), from McCarthyism (1950–1954) to the Korean War (1950–1953), post–World War II America witnessed a radical break with the more progressive past decades of Popular Front and New Deal liberalism. Cold war liberals, disillusioned with the fascist world war and the totalitarian turn of Soviet communism, revolted against mass politics of any kind, labeling the public space as “totalitarian” and any political stance as “pathological,” while taking refuge in psychological registers as a private sanctuary of imagination and individual freedom.<sup>3</sup> The past era of “ideology” was declared as defunct and a new age of the “vital center” was hailed to coalesce both the right and the left into the liberal capitalist system.<sup>4</sup> Cold war liberal centrism was then premised upon contradictory impulses similar to those of the post–cold war “End of

History” thesis: it substituted psychology for social reality and it claimed historical continuity by simultaneously proclaiming a radical discontinuity with the past.

As such, selective amnesia, or a paradox of forgetting to remember, seems to inform both the cold war and post-cold war debates on historicity and historiography. History is a contradictory site where, as Walter Benjamin famously defined, “There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism.”<sup>5</sup> It is constituted by what Shoshana Felman calls “a double silence,” that is, “the silence of ‘the tradition of the oppressed,’ who are by definition deprived of voice and whose story (or whose narrative perspective) is always systematically reduced to silence” and “the silence of official history—the victor’s history—with respect to the tradition of the oppressed.”<sup>6</sup> History, in other words, is founded on what it excludes both by what is told and by what is silenced, by the official history of rational causality and progress and by repressed memories of discontinuities and traumatic interruptions, by the “presence of images” and by “the absence of images.”<sup>7</sup> As such, I wonder what specific memories of “barbarism” vie with those of “civilization” for a space in the mausoleum of cold war history, what stories are represented, and what absent presences these representations might entail. As a way to engage with these questions, this essay examines two cultural products from each historical period: John Frankenheimer’s 1962 film *The Manchurian Candidate* and Jonathan Demme’s 2004 remake of it. Whereas the original film is set against the Korean War in the atmosphere of the McCarthyite Red Scare, the remade version spans from the 1991 Gulf War into the current war on terrorism against the backdrop of post-cold war transnational capitalism. Set against specific historical events, both films make critical commentaries on particular social-political circumstances and deal with the subject of (un)making memories.

All the historical references notwithstanding, however, these films are not so much concerned with time and history per se as charged with a nostalgic longing for a lost place in a lost time: home. According to Fredric Jameson, nostalgia films are symptomatic of a postmodern society “incapable of dealing with time and history” and living out instead our own mental images of the past: unlike historical films that strive to represent and critique the past, they aim to recreate “the feel and shape” of the past, thereby to gratify a nostalgic desire to relive that older period.<sup>8</sup> Nostalgia, literally meaning “homesickness,” presupposes an absence that generates a desire for desire, a longing for an idealized past that seems to offer a sense of home and security set against a degraded present. In the Western epistemological tradition, nostalgia is regarded as a symptom of “ontological homelessness,”<sup>9</sup> a fundamental condition of human alienation due to human beings’ consciousness of their distance from their material environment and of their finite condition as beings. The nostalgic paradigm encompasses millenarianism and Western colonialism, the Abrahamic religious belief in “the Fall of humanity from union with God” and white colonial settler societies’ nostalgic longing for the “motherland,” an idealized “home” with a utopian dimension that is “free from the conflicts of multiculturalism, political

pluralism and ethnic conflict.”<sup>10</sup> Unable to deal with history, then, nostalgia films spatialize time into floating images of *nostos* in the timeless eternal present of the cinematic space. The idea of home is conjured as “the place of safety to which we return,”<sup>11</sup> but the desire to return home is an ambivalent site in which the familiar returns with the unfamiliar.

In this vein, both versions of *The Manchurian Candidate* may be read as nostalgia films. The historical events of the Korean War and the Gulf War, which provide narrative origins for the films, are mentioned only briefly in the openings and immediately forgotten as if the ensuing plot developments are non-sequiturs. The two places of war float as images, all-too-familiar pop images coined through movies, television, and other media representations: Korea as the sexualized/feminized Asian other in the images of US camptown military prostitutes, or *gijichon yanggongju*, and the Middle East as the vilified “enemy” embodied as mysterious Arab women in black hijabs and tattooed veils on their faces against an inferno-like backdrop of burning oil fields in the vast desert. Moreover, the films are political thrillers about particular historical phenomena such as the anticommunist panic in the early 1950s and the current politics of fear in the “borderless world”<sup>12</sup> of transnational capitalism. But their critical commentaries on social conditions seem “contained” within the eternal present of the perfectly managed diegetic space: in collapsing and ridiculing both McCarthyism and communism, the earlier film’s anti-ideology ends up reinvigorating the ideology of anticommunism, and the latter version’s critique of postmodern social administration reinforces the same regulative logic of fear as a means to manage the borderless world for political and corporate interests. In effect, specific histories from Korea to Iraq become silenced while simultaneously represented through all-too-familiar popular clichés and media images of Red Queens, Yellow Perils, and “fanatic” suicide bombers. And where histories are vacated, they are filled with nostalgia for home, for the mythic Virgin Land of the American national imaginary. But the millenarian dream of utopia is haunted by the anxiety about doom, as the desire for home stumbles upon repressed unhomely presences, upon the paradoxical impulse to remember by forgetting.

### ***The Manchurian Candidate* (1962): Longing for Home beyond the Cold War**

In post–World War II America, Hollywood played a vital role as a popular interpreter of US foreign policy by translating the US global imaginaries into affective, and thereby accessible, terms for the American people to live and practice in everyday realities. Considering that works of culture are always embedded in concrete material and social relations, Hollywood films, as one of the representative modes of postwar popular culture, can be regarded as crucial sites where cultural discourses intersected with the exercises of political, economic, and military power. It is in this cultural sphere of convergence that political-ideological effects emerge on the surface of cultural work, and “cultural texts perform a hegemonic function to the extent that

they legitimate a given distribution of power” by means of “education” and “participation,” as well as by developing “structures of feeling.”<sup>13</sup> In particular, cold war politics of “containment” were translated into a vernacular structure of feeling as “fear” in the cinematic time-space<sup>14</sup> of film noir. In its signature dark and anxiety-filled portrayals of contemporary America as charged with a sense of fear, whether it was about existential angst, unstable social conditions, the Bomb, or communism, postwar film noir offered a crucial cultural narrative about the cold war imaginary of containing a myriad of real or perceived threats. The well-established descriptions of the social contexts of noir recount transformations in all sectors of postwar society. As working women were reluctant to yield their wartime jobs to returning veterans and go back to home and hearth, and as African American and other ethnic minority veterans became increasingly impatient with the continuing legacies of racial segregation, a whole range of social relations from gender, race, class to masculinity were to be renegotiated and redefined under the changing peacetime production system.<sup>15</sup> The famous free-floating anxiety of noir was embedded in such volatile social conditions, which film noir interpreted onto the screen as a sense of fear about disintegrating boundaries, thereby advocating the necessity of a “bulwark”—the principal metaphor of the cold war—to differentiate “us” from “them” and to contain the other.<sup>16</sup>

The anxiety of noir was then a cinematic expression of “a primal anxiety over borders and boundaries that manifests itself in specific fears and phobias of race, sex, maternity, and national origin.”<sup>17</sup> In other words, the increased sense of insecurity in the face of postwar social volatility was premised upon the notion that the home as a key site of national defense and security was under siege by the external enemy. Underlying noir anxiety was the desire for the mythic home/land where radically “innocent” American Adams claimed their entitlement to the “virgin” soil. It was the longing for the home as “a re-membered idyllic national time-space of phenomenological integrity and plenitude,” a “lost time and place of national purpose, cohesion, and fulfillment.”<sup>18</sup> The home as the underlying assumption of phenomenal anxiety was in this sense a structuring mechanism of the cinematic representations of unhomey urban spaces of postwar film noir (156–57). Thus, film noir functioned as an interpretive cultural realm of the late forties and fifties, translating and displacing anxieties over borders and boundaries into affective terms as a fear of the unfamiliar and a longing for home, often finding its quintessential expressions in the battlefield of Korea or the home front during and after the war. The containment ideology was rendered as a fear of otherness, figured in the case of the film *The Manchurian Candidate* variously as communists, racial-ethnic minorities, women, and/or homosexuals, while the home front continued to occupy the imaginations of film-going audiences, feeding them with the national imaginary<sup>19</sup> of the US as a bounded nation-family and a coherent subject of history.

*The Manchurian Candidate* (dir. John Frankenheimer, MGM, 1962), set in post-Korean War America, offers a noirish time-space for contemporary American

anxieties about porous social boundaries. The film is apparently a psychological dramatization of American POWs' "brainwashing scare"<sup>20</sup> during the Korean War, but it is primarily intended as a double-edged criticism about both "extremes," McCarthyite anticommunists and communist sympathizers. But some critics find that the film "eschews politics, reveling in an 'anti-ideology'" by collapsing the two opposed ideologies.<sup>21</sup> Bosley Crowther points out that the communist operatives loom out of proportion to their counterpart, the McCarthyite senator, and as a result, a "chance of balanced satire and ironic point" in the "subtle equating of these two firebrands" is "lost."<sup>22</sup> For Michael Paul Rogin, "far from mocking the mentality it displays," the film "aims to reawaken a lethargic nation to the Communist menace."<sup>23</sup> As such, the film seems premised upon the contradictory desire to remember by forgetting, to claim historical legitimacy of the cold war social condition in fifties' America by silencing yet simultaneously representing contemporary events from the Korean War to McCarthyism. Stock images of Red Queens and Yellow Perils, lifted from historical contexts, dominate the noirish diegetic time-space of the film and stir up anxieties about the unfamiliar other allegedly infiltrating porous borders and boundaries. The anxieties over social relations are represented mainly as a crisis of masculinity, a feminist menace, and an infiltration of foreignness into the national body politic embodied in the mythic white masculinity of the American national imaginary.

*The Manchurian Candidate*, apparently a story of the Lost Patrol that was ambushed in Manchuria and brainwashed by Chinese psychiatrists during the Korean War, is in fact a cinematic enactment of the contemporary cultural anxiety about American national identity. The film projects cold war America as a nation in crisis, in which American (cold war liberal) sons strive to reclaim the nation supposedly derailed by absent fathers and threatening others. Raymond Shaw (Laurence Harvey), who has been brainwashed into an assassin in Manchuria, is the weak-kneed son with two opposing father figures, Senator Iselin (James Gregory), his stepfather and a McCarthyesque figure, and Senator Jordan (John McGiver), his fiancée Jocie's father. Senator Iselin is the "bad" father who brings the nation "down low," but he is more of a joke whose idiocy is blamed on the ultimate mastermind, Mrs. Iselin (Angela Lansbury), Raymond's overwhelming mother and a communist spy. Opposed to him is Senator Jordan, the "good" father as well as the good nurturing mother who fills the gap left by Raymond's phallic mother. Raymond kills his good father under hypnosis but regains his consciousness in the end and assassinates his bad father along with his mother.

Summarized in this way, the film turns out to be a Freudian drama of the Oedipal complex, in which cold war liberal sons struggle to obtain national-historical subjectivity but end up regressing to narcissism by splitting the idealized self-image from the intervening principle of reality. The "repetition compulsion," or the splitting of oneself into a double, as into the soul and the body, is the human instinct to deny death and preserve oneself. In E. T. A. Hoffmann's "The Sand-Man," Nathaniel's

narcissism, or the inborn instinct for self-preservation, is manifest in his love for Olympia, the automaton and the “double” of his ego. Olympia is Nathaniel’s “ideal ego,” a narcissistic construction of the idealized and projected image of himself, which functions as a mediator between his desires and the laws of the Father.<sup>24</sup> As Olympia, a lifeless machine, embodies Nathaniel’s narcissistic desire, the figure of Raymond is a neutral mechanism, upon which cold war intellectuals displace their castration anxiety, that is, their contradictory claim of legitimacy as the national subject entrusted to continue American history by simultaneously denying the legacies of the more politically committed past. Raymond is no more than a projected self-image of cold war liberals: intended to mediate between desires/political energies and external restrictions/political commitments, he is a “neutral” figure that mechanically repeats a given task and cannot remember his own doing, and therefore cannot have any guilt or conscience. As such, he epitomizes the paradox of cold war politics that celebrate individual freedom only to escape from freedom, history, and ethico-political responsibilities. Disguised as a “priest” in the last assassination scene, Raymond also evokes the image of a “prophet, messiah, and martyr,”<sup>25</sup> and in killing the Iselins, representative of ideological extremes, he is projected as a self-sacrificial mediator that redeems the derailed nation. Through his heroic self-sacrificial act, as it were, he claims his right to inherit the nation, and his legitimacy as the national-historical subject. Problematically, however, he attempts to reclaim history by repressing the past: narcissism entails repression, which is destined to return as the uncanny.

Moreover, Nathaniel’s narcissistic love, the Oedipal desire for mother, and his castration anxiety induced from the interruption by the father are split into two father-imagoes, the “good” nurturing father and the “bad” intervening Coppélius/Coppola, the “sand-man.” And his death wish against the bad father is expressed in the death of the good father. In refusing to recognize external restrictions or reality and fleeing instead into a narcissistic substitution, an imaginary construction in the psychic realm, Nathaniel ultimately breaks down and plunges into death in madness.<sup>26</sup> As in Nathaniel’s split father imagoes, Raymond’s desires and the castration anxiety are projected into two opposing figurations of “good” and “bad” fathers. Senator Jordan is the “good” father, the national father figure portrayed in the symbolic image of an American eagle. Interestingly, he is also represented as a good nurturing mother: he dies spilling white milk from his breast, or from a milk carton he happens to hold near his chest when Raymond shoots him. Opposed to the good father is the ridiculous bad father, Senator Iselin, who has hijacked the allegedly legitimate heritage of the national tradition to smear it with his farcical idiocy as he is symbolically depicted in contrast to the images of the good national father, Abraham Lincoln. Noticeably, the bad father is just a pathetic clown of the demonic mother, and the good father takes the place of the nurturing mother, replacing the overpowering presence of the bad phallic mother. Curiously, American national history is imagined as continuing through a patrilineal reproductive mechanism, an

androgenetic system in which fathers beget sons from Lincoln to Jordan to Raymond without the participation of mothers. Raymond's flight into the narcissistic ideal ego, away from the burden of reality, then amounts to the nostalgic desire for a lost national home, for that mythic land of "purity" and "innocence" promised for American Adams. Nostalgia for the mythological homeland, however, entails the return of the unfamiliar manifested in foreign bodies of sexualized and racialized otherness—the "unfamiliar" [*unheimlich*] resulting from an involuntary repetition of something "familiar" [*heimlich*] long alienated in the mind through the process of repression.

In *The Manchurian Candidate*, feminine sexuality is taken up as the primary locus of otherness to displace anxieties about national identity and to stage the crisis of masculinity against the noir convention of the femme fatale. The femme fatale in film noir is a fetish object devised as a defense against the threat of castration.<sup>27</sup> As a phallus substitute, her "phallic" presence denies man his possible castration, while simultaneously her sex appeal shores up his masculinity, protecting him from the possibility of castration. In the film, the femme fatale is split into two female characters, Mrs. Iselin and Jocie (Leslie Parrish), embodying the phallic mother and virginal/seductive female sexuality, respectively. Mrs. Iselin is the ultimate embodiment of Philip Wylie's vituperative "Momism," "the end of a long line of frustrated wives with weak-kneed husbands and smothered sons."<sup>28</sup> She is the puppet-master behind both far-right and far-left, manipulating Senator Iselin to initiate the infamous McCarthyite red-baiting while using her own son Raymond as a hypnotized communist assassin. A venomous presence behind both ideological extremes, she is Momism incarnate, the phallic femme fatale upon whose body the Manichean politics of the cold war are displaced and conveniently denounced. Jocie, on the other hand, embodies virginal female sexuality, reassuring Raymond's masculine virility: blond, feminine, and stripped half-naked to use her blouse as a tourniquet on Raymond's snake-bitten leg, she exudes sex appeal, giving a boost to Raymond's stifled masculinity. Moreover, her virginal sexuality is interchangeable with Mrs. Iselin's phallic image to complete the femme fatale: at the costume party, Mrs. Iselin is dressed as maidenly Little Bo Peep, while Jocie appears in an alluring outfit—a black cape, leotards, and a gigantic queen of diamonds strapped to her torso. Symbolically, Jocie takes over Raymond where Mrs. Iselin leaves off after hypnotizing him and revealing herself as his secret "American operator." As fetish objects to ward off the fear of castration, both Mrs. Iselin and Jocie represent the sexualized locus of cold war politics of paradox: the female body upon which communism is displaced; the private domain, which is politicized and thereby dissolved; and the source of "personal influence" depoliticizing politics.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the sexualized female bodies, cold war political anxieties are also displaced onto racialized bodies. Yen Lo (Khigh Dhiegh), the Chinese psychiatrist in charge of brainwashing the American patrol, is associated with Pavlov and Fu Manchu and portrayed in the stereotypical image of a "corrupt" and "duplicitous"



“Oriental.” Another Asian character is Chunjin (Henry Silva), a North Korean interpreter and communist spy who traps the patrol in a Russian ambush. He is a “treacherous” and “double-dealing” Asian “gook” who also fulfills the feminized role of the model minority: “I am tailor and mender. I am cook. I drive car. I’m cleaner and scrubber. I fix everything. I take message. I sleep at house of my cousin.” The yellow faces of Yen and Chunjin are particularly significant when compared with Allen Melvin (James Edwards), a black character whose nightmare of the brainwashing scene features the entire cast of black women, presumably reflecting a “black consciousness,” in contrast to Major Marco’s (Frank Sinatra) dream sequence. As Matthew Frye Jacobson and Gaspar González point out, “loving blacks” was an important trade-off for demonizing “Orientals,” balancing out the demands of the Civil Rights Movement from *Brown v. Board of Education* to the Montgomery bus boycott on the one hand, and the cold war business of dealing with the “loss” of China as well as anticolonial wars in Korea and Vietnam on the other: “Yen proves the importance of race in deciphering international enmities, while Melvin demonstrates that America is not racist.”<sup>30</sup> In this way, racialized bodies are deployed to displace and depoliticize politics, to silence the voice of the racialized other in the guise of representing it, and thereby to preserve the idealized vision of the homeland as nonracist and democratic.

As such, cold war anxieties over shifting social relations are displaced onto sexualized, racialized, and foreign bodies on the dark fear-filled screen of film noir only to invoke the mythic homeland as embodied in the white heterosexual couple, Marco and Rosie (Janet Leigh). Rosie, in particular, is the epitome of the nation itself and is central to the process of shoring up the national imaginary. In the train sequence, Rosie approaches troubled Marco and lights a cigarette for him, literally recuperating his imperiled phallus. They together summon the spirits of American tradition by geography and by history, mustering from Maryland to Delaware to Columbus, Ohio, and introducing Rosie as “one of the original Chinese workmen who laid the track on this stretch,” obviously signifying the temporal and spatial continuity of American history. Moreover, her full name is “Eugenie Rose,” reminiscent of a “eugenic rose,” “fragile” white heritage fortified by the sturdy frontier spirit of “brown soap and beer.” Then Rosie urges Marco to “remember” her address and phone number—“El Dorado-59970. Can you remember that?”—as if she is trying to replace Marco’s confused mind with a freshly conjured memory of “the Land of Gold.” Few critics find the role of Rosie convincing in her relationship to Marco or relevant to the overall thematic concerns of the film. It appears, however, that she epitomizes American tradition—the symbolic national goddess on the pedestal, or the Statue of Liberty—upon which the narrative itself is structured; she is a central pull around which cold war liberals such as Marco gravitate in an attempt to reclaim the American historical tradition.

In other words, symbolizing America located in that nostalgic time-space of the frontier past, Rosie brings the narrative of the film “home,” where she is

entrusted to lay a new cold war national foundation by forming a heterosexual nuclear family with Marco. Such a mythic recuperation of America is, however, premised upon the paradoxical (dis)claim of history and the concomitant desire to wipe out dissenting voices under the pretense of representing them. Both Rosie and Marco are characterized as “orphans” severed from the sickened parents of the recent past, but at the same time they are conferred a “pedigree” as legitimate descendents of American history and tradition. Also, the film is fundamentally invested in reconstituting America by reinventing a patrilineage of mythic white manhood from Lincoln to Jordan to Raymond to Marco. As a result, it reduces Rosie into a functional womb to produce sons, accounting for Rosie’s somewhat bewildering and apparently irrelevant presence in the narrative. “America” is engendered, it seems to suggest, by symbolic procreation along this “unambiguously masculine line,” while reducing female sexuality to the domain of reproduction.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, home is the structuring logic behind the densely packed noirish anxieties of this cold war film. The mythic homeland with a millenarian overtone informs the narrative backbone, conjured to national remembrance through selective amnesia or cultural brainwashing. Ironically, the film concludes with a self-referential brainwashing sequence, a self-conscious reenactment of brainwashing or willful forgetting in order to remember. Marco, who is the mouthpiece of the film’s politics and the gaze with which the spectator is to identify, attempts to erase and reinstall memories in Raymond: “You are to forget everything that happened at the senator’s house. Do you understand, Raymond? You’ll only remember it when I tell you so.” He wants to “unwire” Raymond with a forceful rhetoric as if he is casting a spell to exorcise “those uniquely American symptoms, guilt and fear”: “It’s over! The links, their beautifully conditioned links are smashed. They’re smashed as of now because we say so. . . . That’s an order.” The claim to historicity falters upon the contradictory denial of historical complexities in resorting instead to a psychic realm as the locus of national memory.

Significantly, throughout this process of eliding and rewriting memories, the Korean War is reduced to the palimpsest of an “official” cold war history, while the conditions and consequences of the war are completely obliterated from this filmic space of representation. The nostalgic home/homeland that Marco and Rosie are commissioned to reestablish is in fact built upon a dark subterranean “unhomely” space—a makeshift bar in a Manchurian battlefield of the Korean War, where Marco’s platoon is shown reveling with Korean military prostitutes in the beginning sequence of the film.<sup>32</sup> As Jacobson and González astutely point out, the opening sequence can be located in the literary tradition of the “captivity narrative,” which “reverses” the historical encounter, “casting the intruder as natural resident, the natural resident as invader”: “The opening sequence establishes the United States as invited, cheerfully entertained, very much belonging and at home—‘naturally’ (which is to say, *sexually*) matched to Korea.”<sup>33</sup> Is this a *déjà vu* of the American national imaginary in which the memory of nation-founding and empire-building violence is

elided in order to preserve the mythology of the Virgin Land? In this sense, Korea constitutes a site of “an imperial unconscious of national identity” through which the construction of “a coherent American identity” is represented.<sup>34</sup> The “home” of the American national-global imaginary is thus repeated in the cinematic time-space of the Korean War, bringing with it the long repressed “unhomely” to the surface.

Ironically, the Korean War is *remembered* as a “forgotten war,” a naming that inadvertently reveals the structuring of official memory upon what has been silenced. In fact, the war has been “identified in so many ways that it is possible to argue that it has never been identified at all”: it was called the “forgotten war,” “the war nobody wanted,” “Mr. Truman’s folly,” the “wrong war,” the “Communist war,” the “Asian war,” the “unknown war,” the “emphatic War,” the “war that never was,” the “war before Vietnam,” and “the ignored war.”<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, most of these are epithets of negation, betraying a certain subconscious acknowledgment of contradiction in the naming of the war. Paul M. Edwards suggests that it was the lack of a name—a “nonwar” definition—that paradoxically enabled the war: by identifying America’s military involvement in Korea as a “police action,” President Truman was able to deploy US troops to Korea without the approval of Congress and without declaring war (29). Hence, the Korean War was a war and at the same time not a war, whose historicity is made visible by virtue of being invisible, present in its marked erasure. The paradoxical denial-as-acknowledgment is symptomatic of contradictions in identifying the war. It was an international war involving China, Russia, the United States, and UN forces comprised of sixteen nations; simultaneously it was a civil war, a national liberation war, and a war of reunification for Korea, which was divided in 1945 as part of post-World War II settlements between the US and the Soviet Union. As a “proxy war” consolidating the cold war, it was hailed in America as a “good war” fought to defend “free” society, but soon it turned out as an “ugly war” where Korean civilians were held hostage by porous boundaries between the friend and the enemy, often reduced to the subhuman, and massacred. The war was represented as a moral crusade for containment of Soviet threats, but it was also an imperialist war of integrating Asia for American national interests.

### **The Return of *The Manchurian Candidate* (2004): An “Excess” of History in Post-Cold War Hyperreality**

As a post-historical mode of processing the past, nostalgia banishes the Real outside history, thereby celebrating an endless present as given, as always already existing and eternal. It informs the cold war paradoxical (dis)claim of history in silencing by simultaneously representing the historical condition of the early fifties, upholding in effect the cold war security state as necessary and normative. The remake of *The Manchurian Candidate* (dir. Jonathan Demme, Paramount, 2004) reveals a similar nostalgic impulse: like the original, the new version comes short of bringing the past

as lived realities into a historical perspective of the present. In recreating postmodern reality as “simulation” controlled by ubiquitous technologies of regulation, the film itself seems trapped within a simulated space uprooted from reality. As a result, it is unable to bring a concrete past event together with one in the present and to generate a creative collision for a new awareness and a possibility to intervene. Indeed, in the postmodern chronotope of the film, history seems to come to a stop as the particular historical referent, such as Iraq or the war on terrorism, is rendered “hyperreal” and “simulated,” as the self-referential copy of a copy, as the schizophrenic’s floating image disconnected from the syntax of the historical context.<sup>36</sup>

Jonathan Demme’s *The Manchurian Candidate* resorts to nostalgia as a way to escape from the all-pervasive postmodern simulacrum of US society. Set during the 1991 Gulf War, a US patrol is ambushed in Kuwait and brainwashed by Manchurian Global, a multinational conglomerate modeled on such energy corporate giants as Enron and Halliburton. Now, hi-tech brain implants and subcutaneous chips replace the Pavlovian conditioned reflex to brainwash, or rather to remote-control, the subject. Raymond Shaw (Liev Schreiber) is “groomed to be the first fully owned and operated vice-president in the US” by his power-greedy demagogue mother in alliance with the “virtually” omnipotent Manchurian Global. Ben Marco (Denzel Washington), like the original figure, strives to disentangle the rewired brain circuits but becomes another pawn of the grand mind-control scheme. In 2004, with the Soviet Union dissolved and the cold war “officially” closed, communism was no longer regarded as *the* enemy against which the US was to define itself. Indeed, history seemed to have come to a halt in the exhaustive media barrage clogging the screen, evaporating into the technological perfection of brainwashing, into the thickness of the referent itself. Inescapable from the perfect simulated world of its own creation, the film falls back on an ambiguous aspiration for *nostos*, a return to that familiar place of safety, to that lost origin.

Nostalgia, the longing for home as the space of safety, is premised upon a profound sense of insecurity, as indicated in the Freudian concept of the uncanny. Especially, the idea of “homeland security” in the post-9/11 US works by generating a sense of radical insecurity, a home in which “every facet of civilian life is subject to terrorist attack,” “a home in a continual state of emergency.”<sup>37</sup> *The Manchurian Candidate* imagines the home/homeland in 2004 as this space of radical insecurity permeated not only by terrorist threats lurking everywhere, but also by invasive media and technology, by the hyperreal simulation of excessive informational and technological sophistication. The film is supersaturated with “examples of the actual mind-control technology,” “the twenty-four-hour, 360-degree yammer of cable news shows and talk-radio programs.”<sup>38</sup> The ambient soundtrack is thick with TV commentaries and generalized warnings: “with the war on terror continuing into yet another year, no end in sight,” “the worries just continue to grow,” and American people are concerned with “family safety” and “economic security,” fearing jobs

increasingly “going overseas” or “being taken by illegal immigrants,” while “body bags are coming in from all over the world.” This sense of “homeland insecurity” is further intensified by “invasive” technology literally drilling into the brain. The platoon members are inculcated with manufactured memories, with memory chips implanted, wires and IV tubes snaking upward like the Medusa’s head, while watching animated Raymond Shaw hero footage on a plasma screen and constantly repeating and memorizing their scripts. The pervasive infiltration comes to completion with the technological perfection of the genomic project. The evil scientist Dr. Noyle tells us, “We really can reinvent ourselves by the remapping of the human genome, . . . broaden the very parameters of memory, to offset the ravages of dementia, . . . literally freeing them from the burden of their past.” And Marco’s scientist friend Delp (Bruno Ganz) confirms, “we’ve all been brainwashed. . . . Religion, advertising, television, politics. We accept what’s normal because we’re told it’s normal and we crave normalcy.”

Indeed, *The Manchurian Candidate* exists in such a perfect diegetic space of its own that its critical stance toward contemporary US politics gets diffused into the hyperspace of simulation where it seems to lose the gravitational force of all meaning, of the Real and history. In this hyperreal space, charged with the media onslaught of exhaustive information and literally controlled from a distance by “telematic power,” everyone is “a living satellite” orbiting in the quotidian universe of the simulation.<sup>39</sup> In this light, even Melvin’s nightmare seems precalculated as a clue for Marco and so is his notebook, fat with scribbles, drawings, newspaper clippings, and photographs—the bastion of individual memory. Likewise, Marco’s odyssey for the truth of his memory—to follow his troubled dreams, encounter Melvin, and finally decode the conspiracy—turns out preprogrammed as well. It appears that he fails his assassination mission not because he somehow regains his consciousness, but because he is induced by Raymond’s ambiguous and rather sentimental determination of self-sacrifice. Even Marco’s verbal decoration of Raymond with the Medal of Honor in the last sequence eerily echoes the voice of Dr. Noyle hypnotizing Marco to recommend it. Is Marco consciously recognizing Raymond’s heroism or is he acting out once again his given role? In this schizophrenic space of eternal present, where a stroke of computer-generated imagery can easily erase and alter Marco’s identity by literally “whitening” his black identity, no one seems capable of retaining his or her identity over time or making a commitment to history. No wonder that a dubious nostalgic flight seems the only logical resolution out of the apparently closed and technologically perfected simulation.

In this cinematic chronotope, where the depth of history is flattened into the eternal present of cybernetic images and pre-scripted actions, the structuring undercurrent reveals a nostalgic desire for that homely space of a mythic origin, the “Virgin Land” of primordial “purity” populated by radically “innocent” American Adams. As a structuring absence, however, nostalgia also attests to the constructed nature of that “homeland” in the American national imaginary and the concomitant

anxieties about America's nationness. These anxieties are dramatized here in a similar fashion to the original version—as anxieties about national borders and boundaries. Whereas the earlier film envisioned America in the white male bodies of Raymond Shaw and Ben Marco, the recent rendition seems to entrust the nation to the interracial bodies of both men, played by white and black actors, respectively. But this post-civil rights era obsession with the interracial male bond illustrates the symptomatic construction of the mythic white masculine subjectivity upon the elision of racial as well as female others. Masculinity as the national symbolic continues to be imagined as threatened by the sexualized female other, as literally “invaded” and manipulated by Raymond's demonic mother, Senator Eleanor Shaw (Meryl Streep). She is no longer just a puppeteer behind the scene but is amplified into a symbolic phallus of planetary proportions, now wielding political power herself and thereby threatening to castrate America's sons. She is ultimately to blame for a putative crisis of national masculinity as evinced by absent fathers in both conservative and liberal traditions: Eleanor's father, reminiscent of the masculine frontiersman, is dead, and so is her husband and Raymond's liberal father, Senator Jordan (Jon Voigt). Senator Jordan, the good father in Frankenheimer's version, is less impressive here and ultimately killed by Raymond.

Moreover, the interracial incorporation of the national symbolic is not so much a testimony to racial integration in American society as it is a symptomatic desire to subsume racial others into the white masculine national imaginary. Rosie (Kimberly Elise), the epitome of the mythic American tradition in the original rendition, is no longer an embodiment of America but reduced to a supporting role as a black female FBI agent helping Marco sort out his tangled memories. Also, Marco is not quite a conscious problem-solving agent and ultimate heir to the American nation. Although he plays the leading role to untangle twisted memories and save the mired nation, it turns out that he himself is part of the grand scheme, a mere tool whose programmed memory is *supposed* to leak in order to have him unravel the plot and ultimately serve as assassin. Rather, it is Raymond who seems the only figure to regain his consciousness and save the nation by willingly entering martyrdom. Although duped and manipulated by infiltrating foreign power, he somehow retains his consciousness once he finds out the deceptive design, sheds tears of sympathy for Marco's ultimate fate, and knowingly sacrifices himself by inducing Marco to shoot him and his mother. As such, Raymond's heroic white male body is in the final instance reinserted as the only legitimate symbolic body of the American nation, sacrificed in building and correcting the derailed nation. Marco, by contrast, carries out the actual deeds unconsciously and as initiated by Raymond, but he becomes deprived of his self-identity: he is literally whitened and obliterated into the official discourse of white men's history. “America” thereby recuperated is once again invested with the nostalgia of Anglo-American males, “returning forever to the singularity of the mirror.”<sup>40</sup>

In fact, the structure of *The Manchurian Candidate* resembles a linear modern-

day odyssey from the state of fall in the hellish battlefield of Kuwait to the water as the mythical origin of beings. The film begins with a desert scene with burning oil wells against the night sky and ends with Marco revisiting the brainwashing site by the ocean under the azure sky, its ruins of white stone walls and scaffolding structures strangely reminiscent of an ancient Greek village. It is toward the water that Marco “remembers” himself running to escape from the brainwashing, thinking, “if I can just get to the water, everything will be okay.” It is in the water that he washes away the picture of his lost platoon along with Raymond’s Medal of Honor. Marco’s visit to the primal site is introduced by the camera panning forward with an aerial shot that shows nothing but water on the screen. Unable to penetrate the closed system of simulation, the film is left only with the nostalgic longing for an imagined beginning, the desire to return to the uncorrupt origin and begin anew from “ground zero.”

The term “Ground Zero,” as Amy Kaplan traces its genealogy, both “evokes and eclipses the prior historical reference,” “using it as a yardstick of terror . . . while at the same time consigning the prior reference to historical amnesia.”<sup>41</sup> Evoked to characterize the horror of 9/11, the expression “Ground Zero” is used as an analogy to Pearl Harbor, eclipsing its original historical referent—the atom bomb strikes on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Underlying this double working of history is “an oft-told story of America’s fall from innocence,” of America as “not guilty” and “naively trusting,” of American exceptionalism (83). Then, is this desire for a new beginning predicated upon the desire to wipe out all the traumatic memories of American national history? Is this nostalgia, this impulse to restore the lost “origin,” this craving for “normalcy,” simultaneously a symptom of what is elided and washed away by the water? Despite its intended critical intervention into the current state of society, *The Manchurian Candidate* settles with an escapist desire for an ur-historical beginning, simultaneously evoking while eclipsing prior historical references from the current war on terrorism to the Gulf War, from Vietnam to Korea. In it, reality is indeed inseparable from simulation, saturated with omnipresent technologies of government from the state to transnational corporations, from the media to literal brain implants. In effect, the film ends up reconfirming that our social space is thoroughly seeped with this “telematic” power of postindustrial capitalist rationality—that it is supposedly inescapable, unchangeable, and eternal—thereby inadvertently closing off the possibilities of intervention and human agency.

## **Conclusion**

We live in the era of the so-called “post-cold war”—a temporal marker that simultaneously expunges and implies what is deemed as the cold war, a term that “contains” the preceding historical period in a dual sense of the word. The demise of the Soviet Union following the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall was celebrated not just as the “end of the cold war” but as the “End of History,” as an epochal milestone that

arguably confirmed the triumph of capitalism and the verity of liberalism. The past two decades, however, have witnessed anything but an apocalyptic arrival of a new millennium, a mythical epoch of affluence and liberty spread across the world. Rather, the official closure of the era was ironically met with a reinvigoration of residual cold war conflicts as the dissolution of the USSR coincided with the US invasion of Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War—an ongoing legacy of the violent cold war history in the Middle East. The specter of the cold war proved once again alive and well when President George W. Bush named North Korea, along with Iran and Iraq, as the “axis of evil” in the 2002 State of the Union address. Indeed, we seem to cohabit with ghostly presences of the cold war that persistently reemerge as memories of adversity and violence, sometimes getting deliberately recalled so as to configure and warrant current states of things. For example, the term “axis of evil” frames Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the archenemies of the post-cold war world while inadvertently unearthing a string of tangled cold war histories; at the same time, it is conjured from the traces of the World War II Axis Powers and Ronald Reagan’s “Evil Empire,” only to be recast as the premise of the “State of the Union” in the year 2002.

The cold war and post-cold war (dis)claim of history harbors the paradoxical desire to remember by forgetting, to reclaim a national history of mythic “purity” and “innocence” by repressing the violent memories of others, whose absent presences return to haunt into the new century. North Korea, a product of the cold war, is blatantly evoked into the forefront of world attention as a nuclear-power-aspiring megalomaniac, but the Korean War, from which stems the complex history of North Korean nuclear developments, is eclipsed into selective amnesia under the convenient epithet of a “forgotten” war. The Afghan and Iraq Wars were followed by the permanent state of emergency against terrorism, while vilified media images of Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein silence the historical contexts that reveal that they are in fact products of US cold war political maneuvers in the Middle East and that 9/11 was “blowback” from the CIA covert operation of arming Afghan freedom fighters [*mujahideen*] to wage a proxy war against the Soviet Union in the 1980s.<sup>42</sup> In “the United States of Amnesia,”<sup>43</sup> memories beyond that fateful Monday morning are still frequently relegated to the exteriority of history as “impure” and “expungible,” but these “excessive” memories are always already inside, haunting the edges of “official” history and rupturing the American narrative of Manifest Destiny.<sup>44</sup> They are the “ghosts of a surviving past,” coexisting with “the new in everyday life” as uneven temporalities, haunting and disturbing the stable boundaries of past and present, self and other, domestic and foreign.<sup>45</sup> The specters of the cold war, from Korea to Iraq, are “the shadows of another life” that “constantly act upon and are acted upon by the ever new, the modern” (49). They are the absent presences of silenced history, which constantly return as “the presence of the now” in our “moment of danger” so as to reawaken us to the “pile of debris” hurled by the storm of history.<sup>46</sup>



## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *National Interest* 16 (1989): 3.

<sup>2</sup> See G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). Hegel translates the dialectic of the subject into world history as the arena of the dialectic of the (world) spirit, in which the content of the ultimate end of the spirit is realized. World history "belongs to the realm of the spirit," whose ultimate end—variously called the hidden "intention," "God" or "the divine will," "reason" or "the Idea"—is worked out in and actualized by man and "by dint of arduous labours" (85). The ultimate end of self-realization of the Idea is a thing in the realm of philosophy beyond human history, of the Absolute Idea beyond its manifestations in the objective world. The collapse of communism testifies at best not so much to the final actualization of the idea of freedom as to another dialectical process of negation and sublation.

<sup>3</sup> Regarding psychologizing effects of cold war liberalism, see Donald E. Pease, "Leslie Fiedler, the Rosenberg Trial, and the Formulation of an American Canon," *boundary 2* 17, no. 2 (1990): 155–98. In constructing a "Cold War mentality," as well as a "Cultural Imaginary" under the rubric of an American literary "canon," cold war liberals transported politically charged materials into the realm of a cultural preconscious. Unable to be translated into civic liberties and stored instead within the cultural preconscious for preservation, "these displaced representations, these residual political energies," remained "unrelated to the Realpolitik of the Cold War era" (184).

<sup>4</sup> See Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1949). The book was a manifestation of emerging postwar "new liberalism." It strongly renounced the socialist radicalism of the thirties and reconfigured its political standpoint toward the "center." In conflating and repudiating fascism and communism as totalitarianism of extreme far rights and lefts, it switched its rhetoric from socialist realism/naturalism to moralism/psychologism.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1968), 256.

<sup>6</sup> Shoshana Felman, "Benjamin's Silence," *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 2 (1999): 213.

<sup>7</sup> Marita Sturken, "Absent Images of Memory: Remembering and Reenacting the Japanese Internment," *positions* 5, no. 3 (1997): 690.

<sup>8</sup> Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (New York: New Press, 1998), 133–35.

<sup>9</sup> John Frow, "Tourism and Semiotics of Nostalgia," *October* 57 (1991): 135.

<sup>10</sup> Bryan S. Turner, "A Note on Nostalgia," *Theory, Culture & Society* 4, no. 1 (1987): 150, 154.

<sup>11</sup> Frow, "Tourism," 135.

<sup>12</sup> Transnational corporations are no longer tied to nations of origin but are mobile to regions with cheap labor forces, low taxes, low civil rights, etc., prompting a global division of labor among denationalized and "flexible" individuals. See Masao Miyoshi, "A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State," *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 4 (1993): 726–51.

<sup>13</sup> Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 7. Put another way, this essay approaches culture in terms of Raymond Williams's concept of "a structure of feeling," defined as "practical consciousness" that is "actually being lived" and different from "official consciousness" or "what it is thought is being lived." Raymond Williams, "Structures of Feeling," in *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 131.

<sup>14</sup> I borrowed the term "time-space" from Vivian Sobchack's use of Mikhail Bakhtin's concept "chronotope" as the spatio-temporal matrix of narratives. See Vivian Sobchack, "Lounge Time: Postwar Crises and the Chronotope of Film Noir," in *Refiguring American Film Genres: History and Theory*, ed. Nick Browne (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 133.

<sup>15</sup> See Thomas Schatz, "World War II and the Hollywood 'War Film,'" in Browne, *Refiguring American Film Genres*, 89–110.

<sup>16</sup> Klein argues that US cold war foreign policy was as much about "containing" communist threat as about "integrating" the Third World into the US-sponsored realm of the so-called "free world." She suggests that the two cold war global imaginaries of containment and integration were developed and proliferated as affective structures of "fear" and "a sentimental sense of self-in-relation," respectively (Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 19, 60). I see film noir as the representative cinematic/cultural expression that translates the policy of containment into a sense of "fear" as the postwar structure of feeling.

<sup>17</sup> Kelly Oliver and Benigno Trigo, *Noir Anxiety* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), xiv.

<sup>18</sup> Sobchack, "Lounge Time," 133.

<sup>19</sup> I use the term national/global "imaginary" to mean an ideological mapping of the world, which defines the relations among peoples, nations, and regions in certain ways that make the complex world look comprehensible. More specifically, I have in mind what Fredric Jameson has called a "cognitive map"—"that mental map of the social and global totality we all carry in our heads in variously garbled forms." As the "spatial analogue" of Louis Althusser's notion of ideology, it indicates the subject's "imaginary" beliefs in relation to his

or her “real” conditions. See Fredric Jameson, “Cognitive Mapping,” in *Poetics/Politics: Radical Aesthetics for the Classroom*, ed. Amitava Kumar (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 155–67.

<sup>20</sup> Regarding the fear of communist brainwashing during the Korean War, see Louis Menand, “Brainwashed,” *New Yorker*, September 15, 2003, [http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2003/09/15/030915crat\\_atlarge](http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2003/09/15/030915crat_atlarge); and Charles S. Young, “Missing Action: POW Films, Brainwashing and the Korean War, 1954–1968,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 18, no. 1 (1998): 49–74.

<sup>21</sup> Susan L. Carruthers, “‘The Manchurian Candidate’ (1962) and the Cold War Brainwashing Scare,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 18, no. 1 (1998): 84.

<sup>22</sup> Bosley Crowther, review of *The Manchurian Candidate*, directed by John Frankenheimer, *New York Times*, October 25, 1962, <http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9E03EFDC113AE53BA15756C2A9669D946391D6CF>.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Paul Rogin, *Ronald Reagan, the Movie and Other Episodes in Political Demonology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 252.

<sup>24</sup> See Sigmund Freud, “The Uncanny,” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 17, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), 217–56.

<sup>25</sup> Bruce Krajewski, “Rhetorical Conditioning: The Manchurian Candidate,” in *The Terministic Screen: Rhetorical Perspectives on Film*, ed. David Blakesley (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003), 222.

<sup>26</sup> Freud, “Uncanny,” 233–49.

<sup>27</sup> According to Oliver and Trigo, fetishism is a “dual denial-recognition” of the castration anxiety in that man substitutes a fetish for the missing maternal phallus in order to both “deny” and “protect” his possibility of castration (Oliver and Trigo, *Noir Anxiety*, xxviii).

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Doherty, “A Second Look,” *Cineaste* 16, no. 4 (1988): 31.

<sup>29</sup> Rogin, *Ronald Reagan*, 245.

<sup>30</sup> Matthew Frye Jacobson and Gaspar González, *What Have They Built You to Do? The Manchurian Candidate and Cold War America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 124.

<sup>31</sup> See Robyn Wiegman, *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 150–58.

<sup>32</sup> Following Sobchack’s definition of “lounge time” in film noir, the Korean War can be included as one such chronotope of American cold war imperialism as well: “I designate the life-world (both cultural and narrative) spatialized from nightclubs, cocktail lounges, bars, anonymous hotel or motel rooms, boardinghouses, cheap roadhouses, and diners as constituting the temporalization of what I call *lounge time*. The spatiotemporal structures and smaller chronotopic unity (or motifs) like the cocktail lounges or the hotel room that

constitute lounge time emerge in their historical coherence as threats to the traditional function, continuity, and contiguity, and security of domestic space and time. They substitute for and fragment into 'broken' status the nurturant functions of another and more felicitous chronotope discussed earlier: the home" (Sobchack, "Lounge Time," 156–57).

<sup>33</sup> Jacobson and González, *What Have They Built You to Do*, 116, emphasis original.

<sup>34</sup> Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>35</sup> Paul M. Edwards, *To Acknowledge a War: The Korean War in American Memory* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 28.

<sup>36</sup> See Jean Baudrillard, "The Ecstasy of Communication," in Foster, *Anti-Aesthetic*, 145–54.

<sup>37</sup> Amy Kaplan, "Homeland Insecurities: Reflections on Language and Space," *Radical History Review* 85 (2003): 90.

<sup>38</sup> Stuart Klawans, "Bad Brains," *The Nation*, August 30, 2004, <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20040830/klawans>.

<sup>39</sup> Baudrillard, "Ecstasy of Communication," 147–48.

<sup>40</sup> Wiegman, *American Anatomies*, 158.

<sup>41</sup> Kaplan, "Homeland Insecurities," 84.

<sup>42</sup> On the blowback in relation to 9/11, see Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, 2nd ed. (New York: Henry Holt, 2004), xii–xiv. He introduces the term "blowback" as CIA "shorthand for the unintended consequences of covert operations" overseas (xii).

<sup>43</sup> See Gore Vidal quoted in the documentary film about the rise and maintenance of the US military-industrial complex: *Why We Fight*, VOD, directed by Eugene Jarecki (Culver City, CA: Sony Pictures, 2005), <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=9219858826421983682#>.

<sup>44</sup> The excess memories constitute the "abject," "something rejected from which one does not part." Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 4.

<sup>45</sup> Harry Harootunian, "Ghostly Comparisons," in *Impacts of Modernities*, ed. Thomas Lamarre and Kang Nae-hui (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004), 47.

<sup>46</sup> Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 255, 258, 261.