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With her photographic series *Character Recognition* (2006–2007) U.S. artist Myra Greene examines historical constructions of race and racist ways of looking from a perspective that undermines the assumed neutrality of photography. She transforms the old ambrotype technique and encourages to reflect on the power that visual technologies hold over the representation of race and identity. Greene recalls yet disobeys nineteenth-century ethnographic visual practices and looking instructions, creating a technical and metaphorical deferral of the past into the present and of the present into the past. Her photographic practice unveils the ongoing violent effects of nineteenth-century scientific racism on present-day bodies and embodied ways of looking. At the same time, *Character Recognition* gives new life to the archives of visual colonialism and experiments with photographic representation and body memory as tools for decolonial options of non-normative (visual) spaces.

Myra Greene (born 1975) is a black US photographer and associate professor of photography who uses a diverse artistic practice to explore questions of race and identity. Convinced that “the medium you use should complement the metaphorical meaning of the work,”¹ she changes her artistic technique whenever she comes to a new topic. Her artworks thus always include a reflection on visual technologies. In several occasions, Greene has emphasized the importance of a simultaneous transformation of content and form “to help people think about the power photography holds over the representation of identity.”²

On her website, Greene presents her artworks as projects, a notion that attends not only to the final product of artistic creation but to the more complex processes and technologies of production, presentation, and reception. In viewing Greene’s projects as artistic investigations, I consider them to take on the three moments of decolonial method as defined by Rolando Vázquez:

1) To show [the] genealogy [of certain concepts] in western modernity that allows us to transform the universal validity claims of western concepts and turn them into concepts historically situated; 2) To show their coloniality, that is how they have functioned to erase, silence, denigrate other ways of understanding and relating to the world; and finally 3) To build on this grounds the decolonial option, as a non-normative space, as a space open to the plurality of alternatives.³

To exemplify such an understanding of decolonial methods, in this article I focus on Greene’s project *Character Recognition* (2006–2007). The photographic series has been published as a book, displayed at several exhibitions, and some of the pictures are available at the artist’s website.⁴ Seventy pictures of Greene’s face, nose, mouth, eyes, and ears

compose this series. The fragmented self-portraits recall yet disobey the visual practice of French criminalist and anthropologist Alphonse Bertillon (1853-1914) who standardized police archiving systems and promoted a photographic mapping of criminalized bodies "according to a series of salient visual signs."⁵ Furthermore, Greene recurs to the photographic process of the ambrotype (or wet collodion) that was introduced in the 1850s. This technical decision underlines the deferral of the past into the present and of the present into the past that constitutes *Character Recognition*.

In order to fix a picture as an ambrotype, a transparent glass plate is covered with collodion, sensitized in silver nitrate, placed in a large format camera, exposed, and finally developed while the plate is still wet. The picture is made positive and visible when put onto a black (or at least a dark) background. Greene used this technique to transform her reflections on photography as a technology of race into material artifacts that undermine the often-assumed neutrality of photography. Technically speaking, the artist de-whitened the ambrotype by printing her unique self-portraits on black instead of transparent glass plates. With the results of this experiment, she demonstrates that photographic practices and processes have never merely been shaped by technical or chemical limitations but by whiteness as the cultural and technological norm.⁶

Greene's self-portraits quote the violent colonial construction of bodies as "black," as much as she liberates her own body from photographic fixation. "Because its substrate is black," and due to light exposure manipulations, the ambrotype "allows for a striking range of dark hues, from inky black to smoky grey to ghostly white."⁷ Here, the possible meanings and the affirmation of blackness in its plurality do not depend on white(s) but consciously resist racist structures and means of visual knowledge production. Still, scratches and smudgy chemicals in the pictures visualize photography as an event that leaves marks, and as a technology that operates upon people even as they operate it.⁸ Greene misaligns strict divisions between people and technology, past and present, theory and practice, art and science, body and look, discourse and materiality. That is why I consider that, in content and form, *Character Recognition* fits well with this issue's overall topic of decolonial deferrals.

The deferral that I want to highlight in this article is decoloniality's move from the colonial wound towards healing.⁹ I have not come to think and write about *Character Recognition* in this way through a mere analysis of the final photographic series. A change of my perception has been possible thanks to Greene's simultaneous activities in art and teaching, and thanks to other critics' interpretation of her work as an exploration of "historical trauma and dismemberment and the healing power of memory."¹⁰ This experience of mine is not to be hastily equated with the deduction that the visual always needs verbal contextualization in order to decolonize. It tells much more about the situated knowledge that spectators bring to their encounter with an artwork.

Years ago, I started to utilize the pictures of *Character Recognition* in my academic and community arts teaching projects as an example of visual methodologies that creatively approach the interrelated histories of photography and the scientific constructions of race. Yet I did so without discerning to the real-life experiences that had motivated a contemporary artist to create those pictures in the first place. My own white(washed) perspective had been so fixated on the historical analysis of visual constructions of race that it had long missed seeing the traumatic dimension in the ongoing effects that past centuries' scientific practices have on bodies and ways of looking in the present. Consequently, I overlooked Greene's unveiling of the colonial wound that is hidden behind Western rhetorics of photography, as well as the challenge to apprehend photography as a potentially traumatic event in which the violent effects of the colonial gaze constitute a transgenerational connection between people in the past and in the present.

During my prolonged encounter with *Character Recognition*, I was lucky to have access to a video recording of a presentation that Greene gave at Bucknell University in 2011.¹¹ In the following, I will refer to this conference as a creative strategy of testimony. Jennifer L. Griffiths introduces this analytic concept to approach African-American women's performances in their potential to transform the black female body from a passive site of cultural inscription into an active source for the production of different knowledge about racist pasts and presents.¹² Approaching Greene's visual and discursive work as a creative strategy of testimony means recognizing it as a decolonial move toward healing, attending both to the empowering effects for the photographer herself and the potential of her work to disrupt the spectator-listener's way of looking. It also means reflecting on myself in my role as witness to Greene's testimony. Looking, listening, and writing become "an integral part of the process of creating meaning from the chaos of trauma."¹³ With Griffiths, I suggest understanding the notion of trauma as "the impact that a real traumatic event has on the historical subject."¹⁴ Only in this way, so the author writes, will it be possible to attend to the "suffering caused by ... the material conditions of institutionalized racism,"¹⁵ including the employment of photographic practices and technologies.

For the rest of this article, I now want to *look with* the artist, rather than to solely *look at* the pictures that compose the final product of one of her projects. I include an extended discussion of Greene's creation process, which takes me to do a short digression into a particular archive of visual colonialism and to analyze a new picture that I (unconsciously) produced during my attempt to transform Greene's testimony into new meaning.

Looking Like a Slave

During the presentation of her work at Bucknell University, Greene located the starting point for *Character Recognition* at an ambrotype workshop that she attended in 2004. According to her narrative, she decided to participate in this workshop out of technical interest. Her very first experiments with the old photographic process, however, marked her body with the legacies of visual colonialism, changed the self-perception of her body, took her to explore historic visual practices and technologies of scientific racism, and initiated the process that resulted in the photographic series *Character Recognition*. Greene describes her first experience with the ambrotype as follows.

I sit for this portrait, it's a 30 second exposure ..., I go down to the basement, I start to process [the ambrotype], and what comes out is this image. And I freak out, like instantaneously. ... Oh my God, I look like a slave!¹⁶



Abb. 1
 screenshot of the video recording of
 Myra Greene's presentation at Bucknell University in 2011

Despite Yvette Louis's suggestion to reinvent the construction of the black female body through recuperating and reinterpreting the history of slavery,¹⁷ it was not Greene's intention to see how she was "visually 'made a slave.'"¹⁸ Her experience is an example of "the unpredictability of the manner in which the traumatic will emerge, invited or uninvited ... through an artistic practice. Some seek to touch it," Griselda Pollock writes, "others cannot help but be reclaimed by it. It is never known in advance what it will do even when seemingly contained in form of image, narrative, or words."¹⁹ While Greene describes the former perception of her body "as modern, as this expression of the twenty-first century," when looking at her ambrotype portrait, her own body image vanished in what Frantz Fanon called the historico-racial schema that overdetermines the black body from without.²⁰

Greene does not specify if any of the workshop participants took her picture or if it was a self-portrait. The external overdetermination of the meaning of her body does not seem to be the result of the intentions of the person behind the camera but to come from inside the picture. Nevertheless, her experience does not at all prove photography's assumed capacity to reveal the interior quality of people through capturing their exterior characteristics. The chosen photographic technique—popular in the United States from the 1850s to the 1880s—instead recalls a historic moment marked by colonialism, slavery, and visual practices that were meant to transform colonized bodies into inferior racial types.

Even though Greene had already investigated the racialized dimensions of her body in earlier projects, she explains how shocked she was when perceiving her body visually transferred to the middle of the nineteenth century. What Greene unveils with the recount of her experience is the wound of the colonial histories of photography. Here, the clinical index for trauma, the moment in which "memory is codified on a corporal level and reappears as possession" seems to be translatable to the chemical developing which codified Greene's body as black in its colonial meaning.²¹ Given that we recognize "a photo, and decipher its multiple meanings by putting it (consciously or not) in relation to other photographs,"²² Greene's look negotiated a whole past of photographic pictures structured by the codes and rules of the colonial gaze.

During her presentation at Bucknell University, Greene guided the listener-spectators to the particular pictures that she had related to in

the process of making meaning of her experience with the ambrotype. She referenced a series of photographs that in academic and artistic works on visual racism have repeatedly been called 'the slave daguerreotypes.' The fifteen preserved pictures of this series show the (partially) undressed bodies of two women and five men from front and profile, and in case of the men also the entire body from front and backside. The pictures were commissioned by Swiss natural scientist Louis Agassiz (1807-1873), then a specialist of Harvard University. Agassiz preselected the seven enslaved persons during his visit to several South Carolina plantations in 1850 but he did not act as photographer. Renty, Alfred, Jim, Jack, Drana, Fassana, and Delia were taken to the photographic studio of Joseph T. Zealy, "the best artist in the upper part of the country."²³ Instructed by Agassiz, Zealy staged the women and men according to an ethnographic aesthetics that, for the purpose of producing portraits of racial typification, insisted on the figures being undressed and on frontal/profile shots.²⁴

Agassiz intended to visually transform Renty, Alfred, Jim, Jack, Drana, Fassana, and Delia into representative types to produce a visual proof of his theory "that the various races of humanity are, in fact, separate [and unequal] species."²⁵ At a moment of abolitionist discourses, emancipation movements, and an uncertain continuity of slavery in the United States, this must have been a purpose of important implications. Yet, the daguerreotypes were apparently not published during the nineteenth century. They were first rediscovered at Harvard's Peabody Museum in 1976, and have since then been repeatedly analyzed and artistically reinterpreted. Molly Rogers (2010) dedicated an entire book to the daguerreotypes, titled *Delia's Tears*.²⁶ In her attempt to reconstruct Delia's experience at the photo studio, Rogers offers a fictitious short-story in which photography is a traumatic event marked by the racist alienation of a black woman who feels herself disappear during the photographic act.²⁷

Likewise, yet more than 150 years later, Myra Greene's self-image vanished under the legacy of racist visual practices when her body appeared on the photographic glass plate. Her experience may be seen as a transgenerational connection to all those traumatic photographic events previously lived by the bodies visually (and literally) stored in colonial archives. Her portrait, however, shows neither the pose nor the nakedness of nineteenth-century ethnographic conventions. It was the embodied colonial gaze that covered her ambrotype with the photographic memories of the typified racial portrait with its underlying ocular paradigm to adequately read character out of (that is, into) pictures of bodies. In her narrative, Greene jokes about the assumption that you can see if a person will be a poet or an idiot by measuring the size of their skull or the inclination of their chin. Despite her jocular approach to physiognomic and phrenological ideas, she talks very seriously about the change in the apprehension of her own body caused by the perception of her image as haunted by the colonial wound. The problem, she states, is judging; a judging look marked by the constant stereotyping of black people and the making invisible of a white supremacist looking regime.

Greene explains that with the changed image of her own body, and by questioning the way black bodies are looked at in general, she then had to confront the overtly racist media debates that surrounded hurricane Katrina in 2005. She remarks how benumbed she felt because of the violent commentaries and ways of looking that transposed nineteenth-century looking instructions for recognizing character into her everyday life in the twenty-first century. Finally, Greene departed from the "conscious embodiment of the colonial wound" to photographically engage with the coloniality of race as a visual system of power.²⁸ On this ground, she built a decolonial option through consciously employing the body, ways of looking, and photography as sites of resistance. This time, Greene exclaims, the pictures had to come from black.

As I have explained earlier, in order to see the picture, an ambrotype is put onto a black background. Greene decided to turn such dependence on blackness into a part of the infrastructure of her photographs through processing them on black glass plates. She combines her visual deferral

of Bertillon's photographic classification of body parts, with the blackening of a photographic process that had marked her own body as black in all its historicity. Greene "challenges 'dominant discourses that have pathologized the black body and represents a counternarrative of the black body as the source of abundance.'" ²⁹ Photographic representation is experienced as "haunting and frightening" but simultaneously built up as a non-normative decolonial option. ³⁰

Seeing a Slave in Greene's Ambrotype

In contrast to many of the visually archived bodies of the past, Greene's body was not separated from her voice when she saw herself disappear at the ambrotype workshop. She immediately shared her perception—"Oh my God, I look like a slave!"—but "quickly learned that this is not what you do in a room with eight white people, because they freak out." Even when she insisted—"Do you not understand the implications of what it means that I look like a slave?"—the reaction was negative.

The white participants' "not seeing a slave" could be due to the fact that "meaning does not only yield in the clear and dark tones of a photograph's surface, but in the eyes of the observer" ³¹ and that "the ability to find meaning in the image depends on our experience of other images and of a shared comprehension of what an image can mean." ³² Nevertheless, as a white spectator and witness to Greene's testimony, I cannot deduce that the only cause for such a reaction was the white participant's ignorance of the slave daguerreotypes. The denial to see a slave in Greene's picture also shows the non-neutrality of the intersubjective processes of testimony that are highly influenced by sociohistorical contexts in which the racialized marking of a body influences the transmission and interpretation of trauma and testimony. ³³

The attitude of not wanting to see Greene as a slave invokes Griffiths's analysis of the testimonial encounter as highly marked by differentially un/marked bodies and looks. Attempting to describe their experience, black women in the United States "must confront language itself and their position within a dominant sign system" that tries to preserve the hegemony of white supremacy, including the privilege to determine visual cultural memory. ³⁴ Greene's outcry, therefore, happened in a context that is characterized by a structured denial to remember certain events. In a public sphere that is pervaded by the idea of white supremacy, racism structures what can and cannot appear within the horizon of white perception. ³⁵ The problem is that through "the absence of an empathic listener, or more radically, the absence of an addressable other, an other who can hear the anguish of one's memories and thus affirm and recognize their realness," ³⁶ the story will be annihilated.

Griffiths describes such testimonial encounters as "landscapes of memory" that constitute "shifting terrains" open to change. ³⁷ She emphasizes that "testimony offers a public enactment of memory, and clearly, the cultural context and content work collaboratively to shape testimony." ³⁸ Given my previous knowledge of the daguerreotypes of Agassiz and Zealy, I easily followed Greene's way of looking at her ambrotype. I can, however, not say if I would have seen a slave in her portrait without the artist's verbal contextualization of her work. The conference represents a belated moment when Greene had already transformed her (post)traumatic encounter with photography into a creative strategy of testimony through which she made me to look with her and to see a slave in her ambrotype. While explaining where, when, and how the project *Character Recognition* began, Greene projected a digitalized version of her ambrotype portrait on a huge screen. This is the only context in which I have looked at the ambrotype. To conclude this article, I thus want to take a closer look at the screenshot that I have already reproduced above (see Abb. 1).

Sitting in front of my computer and distanced by years and thousands of kilometers from the original context, at some point I stopped the video and took a screenshot that made me see what I had not perceived the same way while watching the moving images. My (unconscious) inclusion of the video's timeline in this new picture reveals the time-space deferral from which I had been watching and listening. At the right side of the video

still, I see the amplified ambrotype portrait projected on a big screen that sums up half of the frame of my video capture. Out of a brownish but lighted visual space (compared to its darker surroundings), a black woman in a white T-shirt and probably blue jeans, sitting on a chair with her legs and hands crossed, looks at me with a serious facial expression. The slight blurring and the vignette of the ambrotype accentuate the sense I have of entering the past in looking at this picture. In the left half of the screenshot, shining in warm light, several small elements are arranged. I see a speaker's desk with two computer screens and a microphone in front of a blank chalkboard. Behind one of the screens, Greene supports herself on the high desk. Behind the photographer, without really claiming a presence of its own but still in sight, a U.S. flag has been stalled in the left corner.

What I start to see in the video capture when I think about the conference as a creative strategy of testimony is a visualization of the interdependent histories of photography, slavery, and the constitution of a nation. According to Coco Fusco, a crucial intention of creating photographs is to see ourselves, an activity which is not limited to the personal level, but which encompasses the representation of a self in a public dimension.³⁹ "Looking at images," she writes, "we imagine that we can know who we are and who we were."⁴⁰ The video capture represents those two dimensions as inseparable. In its frame, Greene is projected into the past, while the past is simultaneously transferred into the present. Given the difference in size of ,history' and ,present,' the staging of the conference places great importance to an individual and cultural photographic memory with material influence on the formation of bodies and looks in the present.

The video-still prompts me to repeat Fusco's question of "how racial images, in photographs of a lot of types have formed the understanding of what Americanness is and what Americans are."⁴¹ When and how is there a visual space for the simultaneity of "being black" and "being American"? Greene's visual and verbal articulation of a traumatic black existence within a U.S. national and cultural identity that has been traditionally constituted as white and pain-free, Greene threatens the mythic logic of "the American freedom."⁴² Looking at the screenshot, I recall Toni Morrison's statement that freedom "did not emerge in a vacuum. Nothing highlighted freedom—if it did not in fact create it—like slavery."⁴³ In *Playing in the Dark*, the author does not show herself surprised about the relation between the establishment of democracy and the system of slavery, or between the distorted representation of black bodies and the visual construction of a U.S. identity as white. What ostensibly surprises her is the denial to see this connection: "[It] requires hard work not to see it."⁴⁴

"To see it" is what I have tried to do with this article resulting from my prolonged and intertextual encounter with *Character Recognition*. Over the course of the last years, whiteness turned out to be the process and the product of my investigation. My situated knowledge neither allowed an immediate comprehension of "the bodily response accompanying [Greene's] struggle for a language to express the chaos of trauma"⁴⁵ nor gave me a direct understanding of the colonial wound as being the starting point for Greene's artistic investigations on photography, race, and identity.

It has been exclusively on the ground of looking with the artist and beyond the final product of her project that I have been able to venture a sensorial and theoretic approximation of the complexity of why the pictures composing *Character Recognition* had to come from black. To say it differently: only on this ground could I dare to produce new meaning from Greene's testimony. Precisely because photographic meaning is not the result of a static language inherent in photography, visual practices and creative strategies of testimony like those of Myra Greene can give new life to the archives of visual colonialism, transform the universal claim of photographic neutrality, show the coloniality of how (pictures of) bodies are looked at, and build decolonial options as non-normative (visual) spaces. However, a decolonial move towards healing will always also be the responsibility of the (white) spectator, the listener, the witness, the art critic. Or as performance artist Roberta Mc Cauley puts

it: „I am being a witness by choosing to remember. What’s important about witnessing is that the audience is doing it with me.“⁴⁶

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1 Quiana Mestrich, "Photographer Interview: Myra Greene," *Dodge & Burn: Diversity in Photography History, Digital Journal* (April 29, 2009). Last access: January 3, 2019, URL: <http://dodgeburn.blogspot.com.es/2009/04/photographer-interview-myra-greene.html>.

2 ibid.

3 Walter Mignolo and Rolando Vázquez, "Decolonial AestheSis: Colonial Wounds/Decolonial Healings," *Social Text Journal* (July 15, 2013). Last access: January 3, 2019, URL: http://socialtextjournal.org/periscope_article/decolonial-aestheSis-colonial-woundsdecolonial-healings/.

4 Myra Greene, *Character Recognition*, picture, URL: <http://www.myragreene.com/characterrecognition>. For future analysis, it would also be of much interest to approach Greene's work concerning Mignolo and Vázquez' (2013) analytic transformation of Western *aesthetics* to decolonial *aestheSis*.

5 Shawn Michelle Smith, *Taking Another Look at Race: Myra Greene & Carla Williams* (New York: Visual Studies Workshop, 2009), 8. Last access: January 3, 2019, URL: http://www.myragreene.com/Design_Files/Documents/SmithGreeneWilliams.pdf.

6 For different discussions of whiteness as a technological norm, see Coco Fusco, "Racial Time, Racial Marks, Racial Metaphors," *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography in association with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003), 13-49; Syreeta McFadden, "Teaching the Camera to See My Skin: Navigating Photography's Inherited Bias against Dark Skin," *Buzz Feed News* (April 2, 2014). Last access: January 3, 2019, URL: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/syreetamcfadden/teaching-the-camera-to-see-my-skin>; Tanya Sheehan, *Doctored: The Medicine of Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011); Lorna Roth, "The Colour Balance Project," URL: <http://www.colourbalance.lornaroth.com>.

7 Smith, *Taking Another Look at Race*, 11.

8 Ariella Azoulay, "Photography," *Mafte'akh: Lexical Review of Political Thought*, no. 2 (2011): 65-80, here 68 & 70.

9 Mignolo and Vázquez, "Decolonial AestheSis."

10 Deborah Jack, "Character Recognition by Myra Greene." Last access: January 3, 2019, URL: <http://www.myragreene.com/takinganotherlookatrace>.

11 The video was available at URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDegx0Gki9A> while I was writing my master's thesis in 2014. Unfortunately, it has since been removed.

12 Jennifer L. Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions: The Body and Memory in African American Women's Writing and Performance* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009).

13 ibid., 2.

14 ibid., 4.

15 ibid.

16 If not marked otherwise, all quotes of Greene are from the now unavailable online video recording of the conference at Bucknell University.

17 Yvette Louis, "Body Language: the Black Female Body and the Word in Suzanne Lori Parks's *The Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*," *Recovering the Black Female Body: Self-Representations by African American Women*, ed. Michael Bennett and Vanessa D. Dickerson (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2001), 146.

18 Smith, *Taking Another Look at Race*, 4.

19 Griselda Pollock, *After-affects | After-Images. Trauma and Aesthetic Transformation in the Virtual Feminist Museum* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), xxiii.

20 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove, 1967).

21 Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions*, 1.

- 22 Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photography on the Color Line: W.E.B. DuBois, Race, and Visual Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 10.
- 23 Harvey S. Teal, *Partners with the Sun: South Carolina Photographers 1840-1940* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 32.
- 24 For discussions of the multiple meanings of the undressed women in this daguerreotype series, see Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography* (New York: Zoone Books, 2008), 176-186; Deborah Willis and Carla Williams, *The Black Female Body. A Photographic History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 3-4 & 22-23.
- 25 Brian Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science: Louis Agassiz's Slave Daguerreotypes," *American Art* 9, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 40.
- 26 Molly Rogers, *Delia's Tears: Race, Science, and Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2010).
- 27 *ibid.*, 3-4.
- 28 Mignolo and Vázquez, "Decolonial AestheSis".
- 29 Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions*, 10.
- 30 Myra Greene, "Statements," URL: <https://www.myragreene.com/statements>.
- 31 Rogers, *Delia's Tears*, 246.
- 32 *ibid.*, 15.
- 33 Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions*.
- 34 *ibid.*, 5.
- 35 Judith Butler, "Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia," in *Reading Rodney King: Reading Urban Uprising*, ed. Robert Gooding-Williams (New York/London: Routledge, 1993), 15-16.
- 36 Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 59.
- 37 Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions*, 5.
- 38 *ibid.*
- 39 Fusco, "Racial Time," 13.
- 40 *ibid.*
- 41 *ibid.*, 26.
- 42 For the idea of an American identity as pain-free, see Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions*, 9.
- 43 Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Random House, 1992), Kindle, 28.
- 44 *ibid.*, 17.
- 45 Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions*, 2.
- 46 *ibid.*, 55.