Theatres of Difference: The Film 'Hair', Otherness, Alterity, Subjectivity and Lessons for Identity Politics

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What do Martin Buber, Emmanuel Levinas, Edward Said, Timothy Mitchell, and the 1979 American musical film, "Hair," share in common? They all provide us with lessons – in the case of the scholars, a few conditioned by circumstances in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) – that may be useful in considering the issues of identity politics that confront us today in the public sphere with movements such as Black Lives Matter taking center stage in our political discourses, if not in our developing thoughts and ideas. Martin Buber's I-Thou; Levinas' ethical concern for self-preservation in the relational moment; observations from Edward Said and MENA; and the sort of profound and brave self-critiques of one's own cultural centers and their cultural, political, and historical relationship(s) with Others such as seen in the work of Timothy Mitchell, are prescient to issues of identity in domestic politics and culture, at the theoretical level, in the U.S. today. Drawing upon the film adaptation of the musical, "Hair," I suggest an approach to it as a cultural text[1] – that is, film as an ethnographic material-cultural source[2] – read through the insights of these Jewish, Middle Eastern, European, and American thinkers in order to highlight some issues of identity politics, and to relate them to the contemporary hour. I suggest that Buber, Levinas, Said, Mitchell, and others may offer a way out of ephemeral and fleeting experiences of solidarity across usually hardened divisions to more sustained engagement with appropriate boundaries regarding appreciating the other as Thou/Subject with subjectivity and self-contained, legitimate, and important difference to be respected for its autonomy (as culture and as heritage), and protecting ourselves as I/Subjects with subjectivity as well – even in the relational moment.

I-Thou, I-it, alterity, subjectivity, and evolving from the post-colonial moment

In the early 20th century, Martin Buber tells us that, in encountering the other, we have a choice. We may encounter the other as an "It" with all of the trappings of not-quite-inanimate object, including limited consciousness attributed to the other,[3] limited feeling or sympathy for the other, and seeing the self and others as something akin to a semi-conscious machine.[4] The I in the I-It relationship can think in terms of duality (or, perhaps an "absence of duality") but not in terms of *unity* for Buber.[5] Or, we can encounter the other as a "Thou" with all that we, today, tend to associate with subject: humanness, consciousness, sympathy, and what we might now call immanence[6] or the recognition of what Buber calls the *world-spirit* in both I and Thou.[7] Buber uses the word subject slightly differently, differentiating subject and subjectivity, where subjectivity reflects full personhoodas noted in the following. If we choose the I-It relationship, we become subjects conscious of the self in Buber's terms (e.g., *individuals* aware of the self as subject and aware of the exterior, where subject means "experiencing and using"),[8] but lacking our own full subjectivity in our unwillingness to recognize the full subjectivity of the other. If we choose the latter, the I-Thou relationship, we become more than subjects and gain full subjectivity ourselves (e.g., we become full *persons*). That is, it is in the relational moment, in recognizing the full subjectivity of the other as a *Thou*, that we gain full subjectivity ourselves as *persons*. Buber explains:

Individuality makes its appearance by being differentiated from other individualities.
A person makes his appearance by entering into relation with other persons.
The one is the spiritual form of natural detachment, the other is the spiritual form of natural solidarity and connexion.[9] [sic]

In choosing to remain with the I-It relationship rather than the I-Thou, we live as something close to a semi-conscious *machine*, unaware of the potential subjectivity of both self and other. Indeed, the *I* holding on to the I-It relationship treats himself or herself as an *It* as well. For Buber, Napoleon (and to some extent the modern individual) vaguely represents this archetype.[10] Buber suggests that in the world of humanity no one is pure *individual* (I-It, subject with no subjectivity), and no one is pure *person* (I-Thou with full subjectivity). Indeed, "True history is decided in the field between these two poles."[11] The *I* of the *individual* wends contradiction and conflict; the *I* of the *person* brings meaningful interaction and appropriate dignity to the *world–spirit* in each/all of us.[12] I would go even further to suggest that, at least theoretically, by implication, many of the worlds of war and social conflict are fought in the battle between Buber's two poles: *individuals* holding on to the I-It relationship; and full *persons* engaged in I-Thou relationship among subjectivities and resulting in solidarity and connection. It is by now an old adage that it is difficult to dehumanize an Other who you have since humanized in your approach to him, her, or them. All the more, it would be difficult to dehumanize and strip the subjectivity from those with whom one has built relationships of solidarity and connection through a mutual recognition of the subjectivity of, and *world-spirit* in, each, as inherent in the I-Thou relationship. To do so, one would have to devolve to the I-It relationship, and, thus, strip the self of its subjectivity as well – for however long the dehumanizing lasts. For Buber, the I-It is an inherent refusal to recognize the *world-spirit* in the other. That is, it is not only a developmental stage; it is a failing at the level of spirit.

For Emmanuel Levinas, the other is both proximal and what he calls a radical Alterity.[13] That is, the other lives in proximity to I, the Subject, requiring attention and thought, and, yet, it is always radically apart and different from the I-Subject. So, he uses the language slightly differently than does Buber; and he engages Buber directly in suggesting that the moment of encounter between I, as Subject, and the other, as radical Alterity, holds within it an ethical problem: encountering the other as Subject brings with it peril.[14] For Levinas, the effort *to be* is a sort of first principle in philosophical terms.[15] And humans are "nostalgic" for the other in as much as we are transcendental *I* s. Levinas begins with the love relationship, which is sometimes implied in Buber as well. That is, for both, the male-female relationship sometimes stands in for, or is a prime example of, the relationship between I-Subject and other as Alterity:

Behind the arrival of the human there is already the vigilance for the other. The transcendental I in its nakedness comes from the awakening by and for the other.[16]

Thus, the move to relation with the other as subjectivity (in Buber's terms, as a Thou) implies a de-centering of self that takes one away from the first principle, the effort *to be*, for Levinas (which includes self-preservation). And, approaching the other as an I/Subject, as Buber demands of us, assumes that the other will behave ethically and return the favor, treating I, myself, in a similarly humane way that accounts for and respects my (humanity and) subjectivity. Levinas warns that this assumption cannot be made, *a priori*. It is a false assumption. Therefore, extending the self (I/Subject) to the other (radical Alterity) holds inherent dangers until the other's willingness to reciprocity is observed.[17] Moreover, Levinas argues that the I-Thou relationship in Buber assumes that we are all equals, another assumption with which Levinas argues we cannot begin. Levinas suggests that the relationship with the other implies responsibility, (almost commercial) exchange (of good behavior), and obligation; add to that a third party, then these issues become still more complicated and begin to include questions of justice – who is more prior as other?[18] In the cases of both scholars, there is reason to believe that not only gender, as mentioned above, but also the Arab-Israeli conflict was a backdrop to at least some of the thinking of each on otherness.[19]

The *problematique* raised by Levinas taken under advisement, we turn to Edward Said, perhaps most famous outside the academic world for his political policy stances on Palestinian identity and freedoms.[20] He brought into stark relief some of the dangers of persisting in treating the other as a radical alterity within scholarship and in popular imagination (e.g., representations). He provides a rich historiography of research on the Middle East (e.g., then called the Orient, broadly) as conducted by European scholars over the course of a few centuries. He highlights, among other issues, problems with vantage derived from the lack of experience in the field (e.g., in locale) necessary to gain direct material and cultural knowledge, as well as that regarding, precisely, the subjectivity of the other; and ways in which lack of appropriate peer review process can lead to significant misconstructions of a whole region in accounts from the scholarly to arts, music, and theatre.[21]

Those misconstructions, Said avers, were reproduced in representations that drew, at times, upon their antecedents to support one misconstrual after the other. And, he argues, more controversially, that some historical Europeans created a shadow self in the Orient through (mis-)representation to foster a grand European identity via representations of a denuded, conquered, and exotic Orient (e.g., MENA).[22] Scholars such as Timothy Mitchell take this work still further, in self-critique (e.g., critique of one's own cultural center), to analyze 19th century representation, exhibition, spectacle, and the Western "gaze" upon the Middle East.[23] For example, some European visitors to MENA responded with horror when they found the real place not exhibiting the characteristics they had seen at World Fairs and the like in Europe.[24] And, indeed, some (including parts of the colonial apparatus) sought to re-order the region to fit their prior representations.[25] Such specific examples of cross-cultural mis-comprehension are one of the controversial – and also most powerfully important – components of such post-colonial theories in aiding us to avoid similar cross-cultural blunders today, either at home or abroad.

Such debacles should not mean that we give up in our endeavor to understand the other. To the contrary, if we begin with Buber's elevated aspiration to approach the transcendental though the I-Thou engagement with the other; and we add to that, perhaps, a correction for self-preservation as found in Levinas; we find that the other is always in proximity to the I-Subject. That is, we live in a multicultural society and a multicultural world. There is no avoiding the other. The only question is how to engage one another in a productive – or possibly even a sincerely warm and engaging – manner. The discussion of "Hair," below, outlines some of the lines of otherness, between and among communities, within the American context at least historically.

Of note, the Middle East, like most regions, has its own others, divides, and debates across sub-communities, including those between religious and secular; rich and poor; traditional and modern; settled and nomadic (even today, although less so than before the mid-19th century); gender; religion; and a variety of political preferences. The religious-secular divide, in my view, is one of the most important and drives many other political and social debates in the region, where secularism was experienced for much of the 20th century in MENA as secular authoritarianism rather than as an open conference table for a free marketplace of ideas.[26] The traditional/modern divide corresponds, at the least, with tensions between those engaged in traditional, nomadic, agricultural-, or small-market based enterprises by contrast with those who do their work in modern professions with internet connections, behind glass, and in high-rises in contemporary cities. The distinction between the Berbers of the Atlas Mountains and the tech haven of Dubai well marks the range of differences in this spectrum.[27] Such differences do rise to conflicts, some of which the average reader knows well (for example, Sayyid Qutb's critique of modern, secular Egypt under Nasser, as well as of Western Christianity, communism, and capitalism);[28] while others are more obscured to us, either because they are expressed at the micro-level, or because they come to the fore through circuitous routes and are worked out on tangential or even arbitrary issues.

The film, "Hair," as material-cultural-historical text: uplifting, appalling, unifying lessons & gaffes

Lines of difference as experienced in the West also range significantly on religious-secular issues; rich and poor; traditional and modern; gender; and – civil/military. With these lines of difference noted, some of our own sub-cultures emerge more clearly. Add to and within them issues of race and ethnicity; a propensity toward anti-monarchism as an operating (and, in my view, unfortunate) principle; and, together with traditional and modern comes the rural-urban divide. These categories reflect some of our more uncomfortable differences, which we have a tendency to keep opaque even to ourselves. What is at stake in them? Have we hidden the validity of such differences in a hegemony of an imagined center; or, perhaps more, a hegemony of urban cultures? "Hair" (dir. Milos Forman, 1979),[29] the film, highlights many of these in the tumultuous years of the late 1960s and early 1970s (the film is a reproduction of the 1968 stage production, which topically centered upon the 1960s).

The film addresses a period worth remembering for its enthusiasm, exuberant and successful social mobilization, claims to righteousness, as well as for its seediness, ugliness, and depravity. The film is a material, ethnographic record of American society in this period; and, while it plays somewhat like a graphic novel in caricatures of each character, one after the other, it is nonetheless a disturbing but accurate portrayal of differences in American society in that time. Parts of it are violently obscene (such as a song advocating pedophilia). And, yet, it remains rated at PG, which is surprising to sensibilities of 2021. That rating may reflect the extent to which those extremely seedy

parts of the musical film were widely accepted as part of popular culture at the time. Other parts are wonderful and would likely read as uplifting to many Americans. Throughout, pieces of a range of American sub-cultures are detailed, as is a radical divide between them. It helps to view the film with subtitles so that none of the dialogue or lyrics are missed. Indeed, the film can be read as a cultural text drawing from the methods of textual and cultural analysis.[30] Likewise, it is suggested here that, where archaeology approaches material culture in archaeological finds as text, film can also be approached as a cultural text representing certain aspects of our (especially micro-level) political culture(s), pervading ideas, and/or debates.[31]

The traditional/modern and rural/urban divides are represented as one man (John Savage's elegantly delivered character, Claude) comes from the mid-West to the Big Apple – New York City – to find himself drawn into a small community of free-loving Hippies engaged in all manner of drugs, crime, and lascivious activities. If the reader has not viewed the film in some time, my characterization may sound too conservative; I have to recommend viewing it again, as it may, indeed, be shocking to current sensibilities given our now deep concerns regarding issues of sexual harassment, real criminal activity, drugs, our lack of patience for public nuisance behaviors, and the like. Likewise, a divide between rich and poor is displayed, handily, along with what can only be described as a significant class divide. Again, the viewer today may see these reenactments of social and political acting-out with less of a rosy gloss than did fans in decades past. Treat Williams' resplendent rendition of his character, Berger, is horrifying and constitutes a symbolic and material (as film) reminder of what some people went through in the period. That is, his character is a reminder of the extremes of that era. Berger is, at once, predator and villain – overtly – and also a victim at some level.

Nonetheless, the film displays, visually and musically, anger, angst, worry, rectitude, and civil strife on the streets. All of it is related to race, ethnicity, demands for changing gender roles and identities, haves and have-nots, and class struggles that are tied to battles amongst the standing cultural hegemonies of the moment. Mid-West Claude most likely should have married the pregnant girl who offers to do so rather than waiting for the glossy-eyed debutante who only has eyes for Berger. The song, "An Old Fashioned Melody," dramatizes these issues.[32]

Instead, Claude follows Berger down the proverbial rabbit hole without which there would be no movie musical. Berger remarks of Claude, "It's his first day in America. He just got off the boat," as though the mid-West were so far away from Hippie-Central-NYC that it might as well be "Manchester, England, England!"[33] As an historical marker, the film's cast includes many African Americans, as well as many other peoples of color. Songs such as, "Colored Spade,"[34] give expression to African American material and cultural frustrations, as well as much mainstream Euro-American disregard of the same issues at the time. The song begins as a list of epithets and job titles commonly used against African Americans, and limiting their professional achievement, including, "Cottin pickin'…junk man, shoeshine boy, elevator operator, table cleaner at Horn & Hardart…."[35] The song succeeds in re-appropriating these terms as empowerment for those in the scene, and, hopefully, for African American society more broadly. The epithets are hard, callous, and easily remembered.[36] That is, the critiques seen in the Black Lives Matter movement today are echoes of experiences expressed publicly already forty years ago (and, of course, earlier than that). In the denouement of the song, Dorsey Wright's radiant and courageous character, Lafayette/Hud, presents himself as, "Resident of Harlem, and President of the United States of Love!"[37] And, he asserts, "If you ask this man to dinner, you're going to have to feed him!"[38] That is, he will not be assumed to be a servant. The song proceeds to make a list of culinary items, including hominy grits, collard greens, and black-eyed peas;[39] basic access to sufficient healthy foods is highlighted as a continuing issue for African Americans at the time. The song is a musical enactment expressing African American umbrage and reasons for it. Moreover, it is presented in some ways in the scene as verbal expression of complaint taking the place of rumble; expression appears to make potential and posturing violent conflict unnecessary.

"Ain't Got No"[40] raises these issues of haves and have-nots with an introduction of, "I'm black, I'm black" (Hud); "I'm pink, I'm pink" (Don Dacus, Woof); "I'm Rinso white" (Berger); and Claude from the rural farming mid-West sings, "I'm invisible…."[41] It speaks of black-white issues as well as class issues, including the term, "white trash," all in the same moment with a cast unified across these lines (unlike the wider society). The unity may be limited to an ephemeral moment of conjoined dance/ballet, however. That is, while some characters openly use drugs in the film, some members of the chorus sing that they do not even have enough money for the drugs that the Hippies value

so highly for their trips (e.g., "Ain't got no grass; can't take no trip. Ain't got no acid; can't blow my mind").[42] With a rousing call to faith (or plea to God), the song ends, "Ain't got no faith. Ain't got no God!"[43]

On the contrary, "Black Boys"[44] is used in the film to poke fun at the military and at the draft – one of the major themes of the musical. The song's subtext in the film, but primary content in terms of words and topic, relate to Black pride (rather than umbrage, as in the songs mentioned above). The song employs counter-stereotypes of both "black boys" and "white boys" in ways that seek, before their time, to address intersectionality[45] in some way; however, it is jarring due to its use of stereotyping language. Nonetheless, the song and scene also raise (and skirt a detailed discussion of the gender issues involved in) a subject treated as subtext in the film: homosexuality. The man with red painted toenails, and male nudity, are the first signals of this subtext in the staging, as is the male military panel singing in the song.[46] The content is highly sexualized and is surprising, again, for achieving a PG rating by contrast to our cultural sensibilities today. While the film takes on issues of race, color, sexual identity, and power politics, it often does so by staging songs in ways that make them appear to be about social critique of something else, such as the draft. It is a common strategy in the film that appears to allow it to unmask deeper social and cultural conflicts at the micro-level, which may otherwise have been too controversial. It is worth situating this 1979 film in socio-cultural context; it was released the same year as: *The Amityville Horror; Rocky 2; Apocalypse Now; The Muppet Movie; Star Trek: The Motion Picture; The Jerk; Moonraker;* and *Alien*.[47] The stage production may have addressed these issues more significantly.[48] Indeed, the Don Dacus character, "Woof," is used as a foil for the question, which is left as a question rather than being answered. While no one accuses Berger of the same for his long hair, when Woof refuses to have his long golden locks shorn, a prison counselor asks if he likes men. It is made a key topic in his case.

The brilliance, idealism, and shining hope of the musical's opening song, "The Age of Aquarius,"[49] gives way immediately to the debased. The song, "Sodomy,"[50] which follows immediately, can be read as young people throwing out words that they have heard and sound interesting to them, and about which they do not know. Or, it can be read as making public the extent to which the sorts of terms bandied about by the young men in the song – such as, "pederasty" – were salient to the characters' life experience, perhaps explaining controversy at the time of the stage production's first appearance.[51] That is, the film offers an historical testament to the (veiled) cultural prevalence of sexual misuse of girls and women, and also of boys and young men in that era. It is Woof who, in the film, sings the deeply disturbing song; the word, "pederasty," appears almost as an afterthought – which it clearly is not. In that sense, it can be read as artists and writers acting out and publicizing the broad parameters as well as micro-level dynamics in society around them. And, indeed, 1979 in some ways marked the end of the Hippies and the beginning of a more culturally conservative (one might say, more moderate) society with regard to these issues.[52]

The debutante young woman who is tired of restrictions, rules of politesse, locked windows, and tight laces raises important gender and class issues in the film. She is enamored of the grimy and wild Berger, while Claude – who would take her away from it all for a legitimate and stable life – stands by and tries to court her. The cultural conflict between Hippies and mid-West is highlighted in the relationship between Claude and Berger. It is the class conflict in which the Hippie movement is involved that is displayed in Berger's vulgar (and charismatic) burlesque atop the 5th Avenue dining table of Beverly D'Angelo's brilliantly played (and mindless)[53] debutante character, Sheila, in "I've Got Life."[54] That theme pervades throughout the movie and is usually displayed in a Hippie vs. 5th Avenue encounter rather than one between Claude's mid-West traditionalism and 5th Avenue modernist (for that contemporary moment) affluence. The latter is a theme that remains undeveloped.

The post-colonial message is overt.[55] For example, at a demonstration in Central Park, a movement leader says: "The draft is white people sending black people to make war on the yellow people to defend land they stole from the red people."[56] Of course, the reified and in some ways openly racist nature of some of these color-terms is not questioned by the speakers (e.g., "the yellow" people and "the red" people, in particular, do not necessarily self-identify in this way). The Hindu and Eastern Religions movement arrives, as historically accurate, in song periodically. The film culminates with the anti-Vietnam war message, which is obvious with several anti-war songs and with Claude coming to New York in the first instance to respond to his draft notice; he ultimately joins the military, marking another divide in our society – civil/military. On the other hand, Cheryl Barnes' character, Lafayette/Hud's

fiancée, arrives to provide her own critique of the Hippie movement for its abiding concern for social justice and caring for "strangers" while ignoring the traditional responsibilities of home and family, which remain, nonetheless, still present.[57] The free-love message is both adulated (with "Good Morning Starshine,"[58] for example) and criticized in its seedy irresponsibility. The finale, "Let the Sunshine," [59] is a haunting and powerful statement of the humanity of military personnel and what they sacrifice. At the same time, it entreats our society to consider paths other than sending our (young) men (and women) to fight.

Concluding remarks

The film is an historical document reminding us of divides long present in our society; its many sub-communities with their sometimes strongly varied cultural orientations at the micro-level; a few divisions that we have at least partially overcome; as well as those movements that come along now and then to join us together across these lines. It reminds us that we have experienced this multiplicity of issues for a long time. And, we have learned a great deal in the forty or so years since the film was released (and fifty since the stage musical production) regarding identities; intersectionality;[60] and how to draw appropriate lines between respecting the other as a human/Thou/Subject with subjectivity and protecting ourselves as I/Subjects with subjectivity as well – even in the relational moment. For those of us who were raised on the film presented in most adulated form, the message of the humanity of all persons – soldiers included – is inspiring. By contrast, the seedy underside of our cultural debates of the 1960s and 1970s is unsettling, particularly related to issues of sexuality, permissiveness, and a tendency not to protect young people and people not in positions of power and authority. Perhaps we have become more sensitive and sensible about those issues. And perhaps we can look thoroughly at our social and cultural rifts today and find a way to solidarity rather than the sectarianism that newly threatens our generational moment. The key may be to find ways to formulate our overcoming of difference – our treatment of one another as I/Subjects (in humane conscience) rather than It/Others (in radical alterity) – in ways that are sustained and do not reflect only an ephemeral, momentary, or superficial act of dance or theatre troubled by deeper fissures left opaque and yet to be unraveled.

Notes

[1]See, for example, Mark Schneider, "Culture-as-Text in the Work of Clifford Geertz" in *Theory and Society* 16 (1987): 809-839. See further brief discussion below, especially n30 and n31.

[2] On material culture as text in the study of archaeology, see Ian Hodder, "This is Not an Article about Material Culture as Text" in *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 8:2 (1989): 250-269.

[3]Limited consciousness in conventional terms today; Buber defines it as a form of consciousness without subjectivity. Martin Buber, *I and Thou*. Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith with a post-script by the author. Second Edition. London and New York: Continuum, 2004 (translation of the German edition, Martin Buber, *Ich und Du*. Berlin: Schocken Verlag, 1923), 55.

[4]Ibid., 40, 55.

[5]Ibid., 70.

[6]While claiming no special knowledge of either, I note here that Brigham Henry Roberts in 1912 cites the likes of philosophers and theologians including John Fiske and Joseph Le Conte in defining immanence in terms of Christian theology. See, Brigham Henry Roberts, *The Seventy's Course in Theology, Fifth Year, Divine Immanence and The Holy Ghost*. Salt Lake City: The Desert News Press, 1912, 28; see also, 2, 17, 63, particularly with relation to discussion of immanence in terms of divine and human persons on earth, as well as judgement. Discussing immanence as implying a sort of universal pantheism, which he rejects; or as implying a pure anthropomorphism, which he also rejects, see: Joseph Le Conte, *Evolution and its Relation to Religious Thought*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1888, 314; and, viewing as the highest form of culture an approach that sees a sort of personal will of immanence (e.g., monotheism) as imbued in nature, 321. See also, John Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy Based on the Doctrine of Evolution with Criticisms of the Positive Philosophy* . London: MacMillan and Company,

1874, 376-377, whereby divine immanence and the existence of God is the starting point of his philosophy of the Cosmos. Later works coming out of semiotics and postmodern thought in France are less concerned with the questions of God as human on earth, polytheism, monotheism, or anthropomorphism and more with questions of explaining: experience in ontological terms [Smith discussing these works]; what is it that transcends (e.g., history, divine, spirit, etc.) [Derrida]; and to achieve immanence of life (experience) that is not imbued in or of something else but is pure and separated from the field of time (and consciousness?) [Deleuze]. See, for example, Daniel W. Smith, "Deleuze and Derrida, Immanence and Transcendence: Two Directions in Recent French Thought" in*Contemporary Philosophy* 11 (2007): 123-130. Derrida discusses transcendence in relation to Levinas, Eckhart, Heidegger, and Husserl in Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, 117, 146, 142, 124, respectively. Gilles Deleuze, on the other hand, grapples with the relationships between empiricism; subject; object; the transcendent; transcendentalism; the *hors champs* or out-field (e.g., margins, marginality, out-of-the-box, off-screen, or being outside the field/view/range), as well as the transcendental field; and immanence as a sort of "pure plane of existence" not *in* or *to* any other thing, and not belonging to either a subject or object: Gilles Deleuze, "Immanence: A Life…" in *Theory, Culture & Society* 14:2 (1997): 3-4.

[7]Buber does not seem to offer a simple definition of *world-spirit* in the text, *I and Thou*. In context, it appears to stand for an immanence deriving from God, which should not be reduced to a more generalized spirituality (he invokes the word spirituality similarly to the way that we employ the word superstition). Buber, *I and Thou*, 53.

[8]Buber, *I and Thou*, 51. See also 29: for Buber, the Iof the I-It relationship seeks exclusively to possess and to use. (That is, it is a relationship of exploitation; and, in as much as it reflects two *I*s treating one another as *It*s, it is a relationship of mutual exploitation.) In some ways, it reflects what we might today call the colonial impulse, *possession*, *use*, extract. Buber argues that the I of the I-It relationship *objectifies*, engages in *peering observation* with a *magnifying glass*, excludes, *isolates*, etc. Indeed, the I of the I-It relationship gains consciousness of being an I/Subject through engaging in (efforts at) such domination. See also 70, whereby the subject (the I in the I-It relationship) is dependent upon the object (the It) of its thought for the maintenance of the subject's reality.

[9]Ibid., 51.

[10]Ibid., 55.

[11]Ibid., 53.

[12]Ibid., 53-54.

[13]Levinas, *Alterity and Transcendence*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, 24.

[14]Ibid., 93-94, 99-103.

[15]Ibid., 97.

[16]Ibid., 98.

[17]Levinas has been criticized precisely in regard to this point for predicting that post-colonial theory would lead to an overly grand rejection of Western civilizational and cultural heritage(s) of value. See, for example, Louis Blond, "Identity, Alterity, and Radical Difference in Levinas" in Raphael Winkler, ed.,*Identity and Difference: Contemporary Debates on the Self*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 262, 277-279, 260. Nonetheless, I am treating Levinas, in the current analysis, as reasonable in both that warning and in his reminder of preservation of self as an inherent value in his response to Buber. For my purposes, Levinas' analysis provides an effective caution in regard to: (1) tendencies of over-reaction to colonial dehumanization and violence (e.g., throwing out what is of value of Western civilization in response to real historical transgression / violation of prior generations); and (2) the laudable Buberian effort to achieve the transcendental I-Thou relation in mutual subjectivity – which, as Levinas reminds us, is only safe under some conditions. That is, while Buber is primarily concerned with the transcendentalism to be found

in I-Thou inter-subjectivity (as we would now call it), Levinas is cognizant of exogenous material constraints on the same even in the context of engagement of inter-subjectivity.

[18]Levinas, *Alterity and Difference*,100-103.

[19] See, Maurice S. Feldman, *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue.* London: Routledge, 2002; Martin Buber, *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs* , edited and commentary by Paul Mendes-Flohr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983. On conditions in MENA as a partial backdrop to at least some of Levinas' thinking, see, for example, Howard Caygill, *Levinas and the Political*. London: Routledge, 2002; Marinos Diamantides, *Levinas, Law, and Politics*. London: Routledge, 2007.

[20]Edward Said, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969-1994.* New York: Random House, 1994. See also, for example, Edward Said, "On Palestinian Identity: A Conversation with Salman Rushdie" in *The New Left Review* 160 (1986): 63-80.

[21]Edward Said, *Orientalism*, see especially chapters 1 and 2.

[22]Ibid., see for example, 208, 286.

[23]Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, 2, 21-22, 26.

[24] Ibid., 30-33.

[25]Ibid., for example, 126, 130-131. Regarding symbolic violence, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Juridical Field" in *Hastings Law Journal* 38 (1987): 805-853.

[26]See, Patricia J. Woods (e.g., Sohn) and Haluk Karadağ, "Rights or Riots? Regional Institutional and Cultural Legacies in the MENA Region, and the Case of Turkey" in *Journal of Power, Politics, and Governance* 3(1) (June 2015): 63-79; and Haluk Karadağ and Patricia J. Woods, "Default Power in the MENA Region: Turkey as a Pragmatic Solution to the Post-Arab Spring Era" in *International Relations and Foreign Policy* 3:2 (December 2015): 1-11.

[27]Yasser Elsheshtawy, "From Dubai to Cairo: Competing Global Cities, Models, and Shifting Centers of Influence?" in *Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture, and Urban Space in the Globalized Middle East* , edited by Diane Singerman and Paul Amar. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2006; see also Mona Abaza, "Egyptianizing the American Dream: Nasr City's Shopping Malls, Public Order, and the Privatized Military" in*Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture, and Urban Space in the Globalized Middle East* , edited by Diane Singerman and Paul Amar. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2006; and David M. Hart, *Tribe and Society in Rural Morocco*. New York: Routledge Press, 2014.

[28]Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*. Oneonta, NY: Islamic Publications International, 2000. See also, Fawaz A. Gerges, *Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash that Shaped the Middle East* . Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018.

[29]"Hair," directed by Milos Forman. MGM Studios. Berlin: CIP Filmproduktion GmbH, 2016 (1979), 121 minutes. (U.S. movie theater distribution by United Artists), see, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0079261/.

[30]See, for example, Mark Schneider, "Culture-as-Text in the Work of Clifford Geertz." On text and culture, see also, Peter Brunette and David Wills, *Screen/Play: Derrida and Film Theory*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016, 21, 27-28, 65; and on film and cultural capital, see, John Blewitt, "Film, Ideology and Bourdieu's Critique of Public Taste" in *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 33:4 (1993): 367-372.

[31]See Ian Hodder, "This is Not an Article about Material Culture as Text." Regarding film, see for example, Errol

Vieth, *Screening Science: Contexts, Texts, and Science in Fifties Science Fiction Film* . Landham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001; and Seth Graham, "*Chernukha* and Russian Film" in *Studies in Slavic Cultures* 1 (January 2000): 9-27. Regarding film and political theory see, John S. Nelson, *Politics in Popular Movies: Rhetorical Takes on Horror, War, Thriller, and SciFi Film*s. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers (Taylor & Francis), 2015.

[32]"Hair," directed by Milos Forman. See film reel around 48:15:00.

[33]Ibid., 18:58:00.

[34]Ibid., 17:10:00.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., for example, "jungle bunny, jigaboo coon, pickaninny, mau, Uncle Tom, Aunt Jemima, little black Sambo…swamp guiney…slave voodoo, Zombie, Ubangi lipped, flat-nose," to name just a few, 17:26:00.

[37]Ibid., 17:52:00.

[38]Ibid., 18:04:00.

[39]Ibid., 18:08:00.

[40]Ibid., 21:06:00.

[41]Ibid., 20:44:00.

[42]Ibid., 21:44:00

[43]Ibid., 22:29:00.

[44]Ibid., 68:07:00.

[45]Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimiatnion Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics" in *University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1989): 145, 148-50, 152, 166; and Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color" in *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1991): 1241–1299.

[46]"Hair," directed by Milos Forman, 67:50:00.

[47]See, "Annual Movie Chart – 1979" in *The Numbers; Where Data and the Movie Business Meet/Market Charts/1979*, https://www.the-numbers.com/market/1979/top-grossing-movies. "Hair" is ranked 41st, nationally, by this source in terms of gross proceeds in that year.

[48]See, Mary Rizzo, "An Obscure Form of Protest: Politicized Pleasure, Gay Liberation and*Hair: The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical*" in *American Studies* 59:1 (2020): 5-26.

[49]"Hair," directed by Milos Forman, 3:34:00. The notion of an Age of Aquarius as bringing peace and love, made popular by the song, has been reflected in pop culture in various ways. See, even, Andrew Schoenfeld and Christopher Bono, "Spine Care in the Age of Healthcare Reform: An Age of Aquarius or an Age of Mars?" in *Seminars in Spine Surgery* 31 (2019): 1. Likewise, the impact of these changes in American culture in specific contexts are discussed in, for example, Yaacov Ariel, "Hasidism in the Age of Aquarius: The House of Love and Prayer in San Francisco, 1967–1977" in *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 13:2 (2003): 139-165; see also, on gender dynamics in the same, Judy Kutulas,*After Aquarius Dawned: How the Revolutions of*

the Sixties became the Popular Culture of the Seventies. Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

[50]"Hair," directed by Milos Forman, 10:30:00.

[51]Regarding its stage format, see, Mary Rizzo, "An Obscure Form of Protest."

[52]Kevin Mattson, "Did Punk Matter? Analyzing the Practices of a Youth Subculture During the 1980s" in*American Studies* 42:1 (Spring 2001): 69-97.

[53]The debutante's mindless, wide-eyed innocence is a stereotypical gender (and class) presentation, particularly given the expectation otherwise that she would be more highly educated and worldly, in terms of formal education as well as cross-cultural and global experience, than Berger and his friends.

[54]Ibid., 32:44:00.

[55]On post-colonialism in other contexts, see, for example, Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox, with commentaries by Jean-Paul Sartre and Homi Bhabha. New York: Grove Press, 2004; and Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad, "Colonial Rule and Cultural Sabir" in *Ethnography* 5:4 (2004): 445-486.

[56]"Hair," directed by Milos Forman. See film reel around 46:52:00.

[57]Ibid., 80:18:00.

[58]Ibid., 92:26:00.

[59]Ibid., 111:55:00.

[60]Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex"; and Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins."

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