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From Sand Creek To Somalia: Black Bodies In Denver's Post-Industrial Urban Cultural Re-Imagination

Webster Matjaka
University of New Mexico

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Dr. Alex Lubin, Chairperson

Dr. Alyosha Goldstein

Dr. Kirsten Buick

Dr. Michael Trujillo

FROM SAND CREEK TO SOMALIA: BLACK BODIES IN DENVER'S POST-INDUSTRIAL URBAN CULTURAL RE-IMAGINATION

By

Webster Matjaka

B.A., Communications, Waldorf College, 1998
M.A., Communication Studies, University of Northern Iowa, 2001
M.S., Political Science, University of Oregon, 2006

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy
American Studies**

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May, 2017

Dedication

For my late mother, Asia Matjaka and my late father, John Matjaka. Who were both very instrumental to my achievements. They made it appear very easy for a young man like myself to travel all the way from Africa to America to embark on the projects I did to be where I am at the moment. This included finances and parting with loved ones to go to a foreign land as I did. Their love and encouragement gave me the strength and courage to be where I am and do all I did to achieve my PhD. I LOVE YOU Mum and Dad for making me the man I am today.

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ABSTRACT

In this research project I situate black experience in the mid-sized post-industrial city of Denver, Colorado within the city's colonial history in order to highlight some broader historical, global as well as local and national developments that, although seemingly unconnected, have a significant impact on urban social life today, in the case at hand, black urban experience. As people who have been displaced by the main axis of modern European global capitalist expansion: colonialism and slave trade, Native Americans, African Americans and recent African immigrants in Denver occupy a globalized socio-historical space of Euro-American socio-political domination that, in complex ways, stretches from Sand Creek, the scene of the 1864 Massacre of hundreds of peaceful Native American inhabitants of Greater Denver region by U.S. Federal troops, to Africa where African Natives were also violently colonized and displaced by modern European global capitalist expansion and, through the transatlantic slave trade, forcibly transported to the Americas.

Drawing on the concept of the "colonial present" I show how U.S. settler colonialism and the related chattel slavery cannot be regarded merely as events of the past, but as

marking the enactment of Euro-American structures of domination that continue to shape sociality in present. It is within the frame of Denver's colonial present that I argue that the colonial disdain and hostility that led to the violent displacement of Natives of Greater Denver region centuries earlier as represented by the Sand Massacre of 1864, cannot be separated from the current brutal treatment of black youth by the city's law enforcement as well as, the equally devastating displacement of economically vulnerable black Americans and African immigrants by Denver's urban renewal projects, as illustrated by the city's downtown plan that is curved out of historically neglected black downtown neighborhoods.

It is within this colonial history of violence against Native American and a long history of racial discrimination against blacks that Denver has the problem in representing itself as a culturally diverse and welcoming city (cultural hub of the Rocky Mountain West) which is an economic necessity for post-industrial cities world-wide. Focusing on three sites that can be significantly linked to the cultural construction of Denver's modern image or identity: the historic Five Points; the Denver Downtown Plan & the Denver Art Museum (DAM), this research focuses on how dominant Euro-American intellectual discourses, in the case at hand, the global market-oriented urbanist discourses are mobilized to politically contain the past and present presence of blacks and indigenous people through the cultural construction of the modern image of Denver as a culturally diverse, socially stable and, therefore, culturally unique landscape. Such dominant discourses and, therefore, the modern image of Denver, is inevitably contested by uncomfortable and potentially destabilizing colonial histories of the place and, consequently, the social instability and identity crisis characteristic of globalized post-industrial urban social spaces.

Denver is selected for this study because of its colonial legacy of violence against Native Americans as well as a long history of racial discrimination of African Americans and, more recently, the hostility that has greeted the arrival of new African immigrants to the city. Denver also has a noticeable ambition and robust cultural projects that aim at constructing the city's modern image as a global city. The highly visible and evocative image the newly redeveloped Hamilton Building of the Denver Arts Museum that was designed by a world-renowned architect, Daniel Libeskind and opened to the public in 2006, is one of the city's most visible global market-oriented flagship cultural projects.

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Introduction

The mid-size post-industrial city of Denver, Colorado celebrated turning 150 years old in 2008, a very youthful age compared to other major cities in the region like Santa Fe, New Mexico (399th). In fact, most of Denver's history has been referred to as recent memory since the entire story of the city equates to two human lifetimes and many Denverites have been privileged to have parents and grandparents who knew people who were present when the city was founded.[1] It is, therefore, due mostly to the imaginative power and unbridled ambition of the city's leaders to build a great city that could explain Denver's rapid rise from its humble beginning as a mining camp of few hundred in 1858 to a major regional metropolis of more than 600,000 and more than 2.5 million in the metropolitan area today.[2]

However, it is in representing itself as a cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West" and, therefore, a historical and culturally significant place that Denver has a problem. To present an image of a culturally diverse and welcoming city, an economic necessity for post-industrial cities worldwide, Denver has to do so in the historical context of colonial violence and displacement of indigenous Native American inhabitants of Greater Denver region as well as, a long history of racial discrimination against African American residents. More recently, the arrival of African immigrants and the social marginalization that has also marked the experience of this newest form of indigenous population to the city highlights the continuing colonial disdain and hostility the city harbors towards blacks and indigenous populations.

Denver, therefore, must straddle its past and present, employing, indigeneity as a cultural category that represents the city's modernity, while politically containing the past and present presence of blacks and indigenous people who historically have been displaced

world-wide by the very modern European capitalist enterprise that the city embodies. Focusing specifically on the continuing marginalization of the city's black residents, I argue in this study, that Denver's colonial legacy of violent dispossession of indigenous Native Americans and the current politics of social exclusion can be studied through a series of ideological sites linked to the cultural construction of the city's global market-oriented modern identity—where violent colonial histories and continuing racial social inequalities could be made absent when the meaning of cultural indigeneity (which is inherently entangled with colonial histories of places) as well as, the proud but highly segregated history of the city's black residents is uncritically conceived by the city's dominant urban discourses as part of the cultural construction and celebration of the image of the city as culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape.

Nevertheless, this study also shows that with the impact of current globalization forces (cultures of circulation) historically conditioned by two main axis of European modern capitalist expansion and the consequent displacement of African Americans and indigenous populations: Colonialism and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, thereby bringing back to the city's doorsteps its colonial past, Denver cannot escape the contradictions of the city that wants to celebrate black and indigenous history and culture, but disdains black and indigenous bodies.

Within an increasingly globalizing economic environment, and especially since the well-publicized success of a culture-led economic regeneration of the post-industrial city of Bilbao in Spain, many post-industrial cities around the globe have scrambled to come up with their own signature cultural projects aimed at enhancing their image and visibility in a competitive global environment for potential investors and cultural tourism visitors.[3] In the

face of such growing need for differentiation from others, city leaders tap into the design skills of urban planners and architects with global reputations to not only enhance the image and position of the city in the global community, but also to effect meaningful and lasting societal transformations that draw upon the potential of local histories, cultures and places.

Blacks in Denver

The current designation and global marketing of Denver's historically black downtown neighborhood of Five Points as one the most significant historic and cultural districts in the city, is contradicted by the city's long history of racial discrimination against black residents. As highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, African Americans, whose presence in the city dates back to the time of its founding in the 19th century, have contributed significantly to the social and cultural development of Denver. Yet, from the beginning, blacks were not welcomed by the city's dominant White community and were subjected to the Jim Crow racial segregationist policies that ironically had confined them to this now celebrated historically black neighborhood of Five Points. Today, albeit in more covert forms of racism and racial segregation characteristic of the post-civil rights era, African Americans in the city continue to be subjected to various forms of social exclusion as illustrated by the politics surrounding the city's current urban economic renewal projects, specifically, the controversial downtown plan that curves out historically black downtown neighborhoods thereby displacing the historically marginalized and economically vulnerable long-term black residents of these neighborhoods.

However, if studied in isolation the cases of Five Points and the city's controversial downtown plan, cannot attend to the significant impact of broader historical, national and global developments that shape today's Denver black experience. It is when situated within

the broader material history of Denver which, as already indicated, is defined by the colonial violence against and displacement of indigenous Native American inhabitants of the place, that the story of Five Points and the city's controversial downtown plan could offer a critical window for understanding the current experiences and social status of blacks in Denver, including that of recent African immigrants to the city. Within the broader historical context of Denver's colonial history, the contradiction surrounding the current celebration and showcasing of African American history and culture in the global marketing of the city's urban landscape can be understood as a reflection of a much more broader contradiction incited by Denver's employment of indigeneity as a cultural category that represents its modernity in a historical context of the colonial violence and displacement of indigenous Native American inhabitants of the Greater Denver region over a century ago and, more recently, within the context of the influx of African immigrants and the hostility and social exclusion that has also greeted the arrival of this new form of indigenous population to the city.

Recent African immigrants. As representatives of African indigenous identity, recent African immigrants in Denver automatically occupy the socio-historical space inhabited by indigenous Native Americans of the greater Denver region who, like native African populations on the African continent, have historically been displaced by European colonial and modern capitalist expansion. As black and African, recent African immigrants in Denver are also automatically confronted by the stereotypes and racial hostility and social exclusion experienced by African Americans, who like indigenous Native Americans and Africans, have also historically been displaced by European colonial and modern capitalist expansion, specifically the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

As highlighted in chapter 2 of this study, the acculturation or assimilation challenges faced by recent African immigrants to the United States emanate not only from the negative and devaluing stereotypes of Africa and Africans that has been generated for decades by the Euro-American centric media coverage of the continent, but also by the legacy of racism and violence against blacks in American society that does not distinguish between African Americans and African immigrants. Indeed, as would be illustrated in detail in subsequent sections of this study, Denver's urban renewal projects and more specifically, the city's elitist downtown plan has represented the unemployed and poverty stricken African American and African immigrant youth in historically neglected downtown neighborhoods as "an intimidating moat" or "a physical and psychological barrier" whose removal/displacement by implication made the city's downtown area an "attractive," "safe" and "walkable" environment.[4]

Therefore, although African American residents in Denver and in the United States in general, cannot be classified as an indigenous population, they share with indigenous Native Americans, including the recent African immigrants to the city, the experience of being displaced by European colonialism and modern capitalist expansion and, therefore, occupy the same socio-historical space occupied by colonized indigenous populations world-wide, including specifically in Denver.

Denver's Colonial Present

Although representing itself as rooted in cultural indigeneity and, therefore, an authentic, unique and autonomous landscape (the cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West,") as an American city, Denver cannot disassociate itself from the American history of systematic racism that has been characterized by deliberate "efforts from the colonial times

to the present to create a possessive investment in whiteness for European Americans."[5] What is significant in this study is the fact that the colonial and early-national legal systems that initiated the institutionalization of structures encouraging the possessive investment in whiteness simultaneously authorized the systematic exclusion of all those who were considered to be non-white which included African Americans and Native Americans.[6] The authorization of atrocities against Native Americans which also included the appropriation of their lands, as well as, the legitimated racialized chattel slavery that promoted the exploitation of African American labor were, therefore, intricately connected to the institutionalization of structures encouraging the possessive investment in whiteness under colonial and early-national legal systems in the United States.[7]

While the end of slavery and "Jim Crow" segregationist policies (most notably following the nation's landmark civil rights legislations in the 1950s and 60s) that had openly and visibly institutionalized possessive investment in whiteness have been hailed as progress in the eradication of racial discrimination and its social effects, scholarship in the history of racial formation in the United States highlight the fact that there have been "elaborate interactions of largely covert public and private decisions during and after the days of slavery and segregation"[8] that have ensured that structures promoting possessive investment in whiteness for European Americans ("racialization of experience, opportunities and rewards"[9]) that were established from the start by European settler colonialism) and no less systematic, have remained embedded in American social life.

Therefore, it is within the context of such institutionalization of structures encouraging possessive investment in whiteness from the colonial time to the present that this study introduces the concept of the "colonial present" to explain why although European

colonialism and transatlantic slave trade (including legalized chattel slavery and exploitation of slave labor in America's early legal systems) could be viewed merely as events of the past, they instead, mark the establishment of structures that promote Euro-American economic and political domination and that continue to shape social life today, including the current social status of blacks and indigenous populations.   In this study, the significance of conceptualizing European colonialism as a structure and not merely an event of the past,[10] is that not only does it highlight how colonial structures of Euro-American domination continue to structure Denver's sociality in the present, but also helps highlights the shared experience of Native Americans, African Americans and recent African immigrants as people who have been displaced by European colonialism and modern capitalist expansion even if such displacement and domination takes place at different historical eras, geographic locations and through different political events.

When understood within the context of its colonial present, Denver is not a unique and autonomous landscape when it comes to the treatment of blacks and indigenous populations. Instead, when analyzed from this perspective, Denver's colonial history could actually be viewed as a mirror image of America's colonial history of violent displacement of Native American populations as well as, a long history of racial discrimination against African Americans and other ethnic and racial minorities. Also when understood within Denver's colonial present, the colonial violence and displacement of Native Americans of Greater Denver region (most vividly represented in this study by the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864), although having taken place over a century ago, cannot be separated from today's equally devastating displacement of economically vulnerable African-American and African immigrants by the city's current urban renewal projects, represented in this case by the

Denver Downtown Plan. In the same vein the hostility that led to the Sand Creek Massacre is reflected in some well-documented recent accidents of police brutality against black youth in the city which also mirrors the national trend. In this way, this dissertation engages ways in which Denver's colonial present is manifest in the legacy of indigenous displacement in the Rocky Mountain West, as well as the present social exclusion of African Americans and recent African immigrants.

The irony or contradiction in Denver's employment of cultural indigeneity in authenticating or legitimizing its modern identity is further heightened by the fact that the "Wild West" (the construction of the idea of the "West" which has been portrayed as representing the American character) and the core of Denver's pride in its history and legacy as a Western Frontier city, the "Rocky Mountain West" has featured significantly in cultural practices involved in the creation of "whiteness" in the United States thereby playing a crucial role in presenting and preserving the structures that encourage possessive investment in "whiteness" or colonial domination:

American economic and political life gave different racial groups unequal access to citizenship and property [possessive investment in whiteness], while cultural practices including the "wild west" shows, minstrel shows, racist images in advertising, and Hollywood films institutionalized racism by uniting ethnically diverse European-American audiences into an imagined community—one called into being through inscribed appeals to solidarity of white supremacy[11]. … From colonial days to the present, successful political coalitions serving dominant interests have often relied on exclusionary concepts of whiteness to fuse unity among otherwise antagonistic individuals and groups.[12]

Therefore, what has changed today is not the economic and political institutions providing unequal access to opportunities or property (structures encouraging possessive investment in whiteness) but the explicitly racist language and images in the cultural practices that play a significant role in presenting and preserve the colonial era structures promoting possessive investment in whiteness.[13] In other words, when appropriated by dominant Euro-American discourses in the depoliticization or cultural legitimation of colonial era structures serving the dominant interests or possessive investment in whiteness, cultural indigeneity, just like the fiction of "whiteness," could be equally effective in preserving the structures or political coalitions serving dominant interests or possessive investment in whiteness.

Presently, Denver's pride in its Western history and identity, the "Rocky Mountain West" (which is characterized by colonial violence against indigenous populations) is politically contained, legitimatized or authenticated by the city's employment of indigeneity in the cultural construction of its modern identity or image as highlighted by the prominent display of indigenous art by one of its most visible or flagship urban cultural projects, the Denver Art Museum (DAM). It is also within this broader historical context that the politics surrounding the current designation and global marketing of Denver's historically black downtown neighborhood of Five Points as one the most significant historic and cultural districts in the city could be understood.

False binarism of tradition versus modernity. The goal of this study is to highlight how the primordial attachments to indigenous culture as representing that which is original, unchanging and, therefore, authentic has meant that the politically acceptable or recognized form of the "other" (Native Americans, Africans etc.) is one that is fundamentally fictitious

or false (fixed in some historical past) and, therefore, out of context or irrelevant to the socio-political realities of the day. From this construction, the African reality is represented as: "traditional rather than modern; rural rather than urban; tribal and collective rather individual and subjective; black rather than hybrid; and timeless rather than contingent."[14]

I argue in this study that it is within this fundamentally false binarism of tradition versus modernity that indigenous history and culture (one that is out of context, unrealistic or romanticized) is currently exploited in the cultural construction of the modern identity of post-industrial cities, including Denver. When its meaning is thus uncritically conceived, the symbol value of indigenous history and culture draws on its primordial attachments in representing these cities as authentic, unique and autonomous landscapes.

As would highlighted in more details in subsequent sections of this study when analyzing the politics of "essantialized difference", the notion of "authenticity" associated with indigenous art and culture allows modern ideological institutions like museums and, hence, the dominant intellectual discourses and, in the case at hand, dominant global-market-oriented urbanist discourses to politically contain (mainly by representing as inauthentic) threatening local colonial histories and social conflicts. By privileging the authentic other that is elsewhere as far away as Africa or one that is fixed in some historic past (pre-modern or precolonial African culture and identity) Denver's modern image has the impact of politically containing the threatening presence of the disenfranchised or socially excluded African Americans and African immigrants.

In this study, the politics of the false binaries of tradition versus modernity can be traced in their varied form across ideological sites that can be linked to the cultural construction of Denver's modern image. Within the false dichotomy of tradition versus

modernity (past versus present) the celebration, mainly within dominant discourses, of the

history and culture of the people who historically have been displaced by European modern

capitalism posts a positive image of progress being archived in cross cultural relations,

including the social inclusion of the historically marginalized populations.

Therefore, in this study, the ideological sites linked to the cultural construction of

Denver's modern image are studied within the context of Denver's colonial present (which

conceives colonialism and other forms domination not simple historical events, but as

marking the enactment of Euro-American structures of domination that shapes Denver's

sociality in the present) to highlight to explore how both the uncomfortable colonial histories

and current racialized structural social inequalities are depoliticized or erased when the

current recognition and celebration of the history and culture of historically marginalized

population is merely for the cultural construction of the city as a culturally diverse and

socially inclusion landscape.

I also highlight, in subsequent sections of this study, how the current forces of

globalization (cultures of circulation) that are historically conditions by the two main axis in

the domination and displacement of Africans by the European modern capitalist expansion:

colonialism and slave trade, have globalized the presence of blacks in Denver in complex

ways historically, culturally and socially. I show how, when historicized by colonialism and

slave trade, cultures of circulation can be drawn upon to contest the essentialization of the

notion place as frozen in time and comprising of a singular identity or story rather than

multiple identities and contesting stories about the place. Therefore, when historicized by

colonialism and slave trade, cultures of circulation contest the cultural construction of

Denver's modern identity as an autonomous and identifiable landscape in which the

experience of black people or how Denver sees black people can be understood. Rather, in understanding black experience in Denver, historicized cultures of circulation (globalization) conceptualizes Denver as a globalized and complex socio-historical space that stretches from Denver (Sand Creek) to Somali (Africa). In other words, they show how the current experience of blacks in Denver cannot be understood in isolation from Denver's colonial history that is represented by the Sand Creek Massacre and how that massacre is recalled today.

Therefore, as a way of studying how Denver sees black people, I identify three sites that could be linked to the cultural construction of Denver's modern identity. Conceptualizing these four select sites as sites of significant cultural, economic, political and ideological investment in the transformation of the post-industrial city of Denver into a historical and culturally significant place, I draw from the Foucaultian Critical Discourse Analysis approach to highlight the ways in which the potentially inclusive narratives of art, history and culture and public debates and, therefore, the democratizing potential offered by these public sites is ultimately defeated by the city's dominant global oriented urbanist discourses that ideologically seek to enframe an attractive post-industrial image of the city as a culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape.

In other words, how these three sites engage with Denver's uncomfortable colonial history of violence and displacement of the Native populations provides a critical window for analyzing the social status, challenges and opportunities for social inclusion for black residents.

Five Points Neighborhood. In this study I describe Denver's downtown as the current frontier in which the city's continuing colonial displacement of the historically

marginalized groups, in the case at hand, the black residents can be studied. Although not as explicitly violent as the colonial violence experienced by the indigenous Native American population of Greater Denver region over a century ago, the current displacement of economically vulnerable African American and African immigrants by the city's urban redevelopment programs shows how colonial displacement of the historically marginalized groups has continued in the present.

Second, the critical recollection of the story of Five Points helps situate within the historical contexts of racism and segregation, the current urban renewal projects that are currently represented as inherently positive by the elitist Denver Downtown Plan. In so doing, the story of Five Points provides a humanistic view of the downtown neighborhoods, thereby providing a significant counter point to the elite driven downtown plan.

The Denver downtown plan. Unlike the other cases, the downtown plan is directly or more explicitly an elitist document, having been written by the Denver's elite and, therefore, can be directly associated with the dominant urban discourses. The Foucaultian reading of the downtown plan, therefore, provides an insight on how dominant discourses are mobilized to politically contain threatening local colonial histories and current social inequalities and conflicts.

The Denver Art Museum. In this study, the Denver art Museum is analyzed both as part of the dominant and stabilizing global market-oriented urbanist discourses and as part of the cultures of circulation or contesting narratives or stories about Denver.

Although the city-wide ambitions of DAM were already conceived at its founding in 1893, the museum's integration into wider cultural regeneration projects of the post-industrial city of Denver became more noticeable with the hiring of one of the world

renowned architect, Daniel Libeskind who added a new highly expressive architectural structure, the 146, 000 square-foot Fredric C. Hamilton building that opened to the public on October 7, 2006. The evocative nature of the building's image could be viewed as reflecting the desire to not only house the museum artifacts, but also to inspire and open the city's residents to the possibilities of social change.

DAM houses diverse permanent and traveling art exhibitions that include American Indian, Spanish Colonial, pre-Columbian, Asian, Oceanic, African, western American and modern and contemporary art. What is significant about the collection and exhibition of such historically and culturally diverse artifacts is that it provides an opportunity for the museum to not only reflect the cultural diversity or heterogeneity of its audience, but also the possibility to innovatively reconfigure the meaning of place by allowing the museum audiences to create and experience new affiliations between traditionally closed up historical and cultural boundaries. Since art museums can construct new identities or meanings of place in ways that are historically and culturally meaningful, their exhibitionary narratives can often inspire universal consensus, allowing museums to play an important symbolic role in urban re-imagination and regeneration.

I introduce the concept of city branding which is associated with global cultural projects of post-industrial urban re-imagination and regeneration to highlight how major contemporary art museums have become more global or cosmopolitan orientated often at the expense of mediating divisive local colonial histories and social conflicts characteristic of post-industrial cities. While the concept of "branding" is normally associated with the field of business and the advertisement of consumer products, it is used extensively in this study to describe the current place or city branding strategies that combine the effect of spectacular

museum building structures and innovative exhibition of art in order to inspire and open their audience and city residents to the possibilities of social change. Utilizing the messaging strategies used typically in selling consumer products, including media images, place branding strategies draw upon the meaningful ties people have to local histories, cultures and natural landscapes in reinventing and reimagining post-industrial cities as historical and culturally significant, unique and, therefore, good places to live or visit.

DAM can also be associated with cultures of circulation or the globalized post-industrial urban social space or as part of cultures of circulation. This is reflected by innovative art exhibition techniques that aim at introducing more inclusive narratives of art, history and culture to reflect the heterogeneity of the city and the museum's global audience, has the potential to expand the social, cultural and historical contexts within which the meaning of indigenous art and culture could be experienced. Such innovative exhibition techniques have, in other words, the potential to reflect the everyday-life-experiences of the globalized post-industrial urban space.

I illustrate in this study, how such a democratizing potential or the museum's egalitarian goal of promoting cross-cultural exchange is simultaneously and unwittingly defeated by stabilizing intellectual discourses that aim at enhancing the image and visibility of the city (in the face of a competitive global environment for potential investors and cultural tourism visitors) as a historical and culturally significant place and, therefore, a unique global cultural tourism destination.

Research Questions

This dissertation addresses the following questions: 1) What is the colonial legacy of Denver? 2) How does Denver's colonial legacy of violence and displacement of Native

Americans manifest in the current experience and the current status of black people in Denver. 3) How is the meaning of the relocated African colonial history entangled with African art juxtaposed and conceptualized in relation to the history of the colonization of Native Americans in Colorado? 4) What are the ironies and contradictions that are incited by the juxtaposition of colonized Indian and African art in DAM's exhibitionary narratives? 5) In what ways are the potentially inclusive and democratizing tendencies of the museum's new innovative exhibition techniques that aim at introducing more inclusive narratives of art, history and culture ultimately defeated by stabilizing intellectual discourses that ideologically seek to enframe an attractive post-industrial image of the city as a culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape?

Denver as a Globalized Socio-historical Space

When understood within broader American history, the presence and experience of African Americans and recent African immigrants in a US city is shaped in complex ways by the long history of United States' involvement in the integration of the African continent and its people into the European dominated global capitalist system, beginning with the transatlantic slave trade to the colonial domination of the African continent and the current neoliberal economic globalization. What is significant in this study about this long historic relationship is that it globalizes Denver's post-industrial urban social space in highly complex ways (historical, cultural and socio-political).

While colonialism marked the encompassment of Native American and African people, cultures and societies into the European dominated global capitalist system, the related Transatlantic Slave Trade in which millions of Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas as slaves also integrated African Americans and their interaction with their

ancestral African continental homeland into the European dominated global capitalist system.

Since current globalization forces (cultures of circulation) tend to be historically conditioned

by the trajectories of European colonial and modern capitalist expansion, they have been

conceived as "the successor of colonialism and other historical forms of domination"[15] since

the process also involves the encompassment of others, mostly, the historically colonized or

marginalized peoples, cultures and societies.

When approached through the Marxian understanding of global capitalist domination,

it is within the axis of colonialism and the Transatlantic Slave Trade that globalization (past

and present forms of domination) places Native Americans of greater Denver region, African

Americans and African immigrants in Denver within a transnational socio-historical space

that highlights conditions of their shared experience under Euro-American global capitalist

domination.

As would be highlighted in more detail in subsequent sections of this study, the

complexity of the globalized post-industrial urban social space of an American city (which,

in the case of Denver, is conceived as the complex socio-historical space that conceptually

accommodates the displaced Native Americans of Greater Denver region over a century ago,

African Americans and recent African immigrants —and stretches from Denver to Africa:

"From Sand Creek to Somali") is illustrated by an example of a recent exchange which,

although on the surface could appear antagonistic, could, when situated within the broader

Euro-American global capitalist domination , actually point to conditions of shared

experience between an African protestor and an African American counter-protestor as they

clashed on the street in New York city when the later said to the former: "the same people

who are oppressing you over there [in Africa] are also oppressing us over here [in America]."[16] (For details on the context of this exchange, see chapter 5 of this dissertation).

Globalization & cultures of circulation. The prevailing global economic environment is one in which post-industrial cities like Denver are undergoing profound social, cultural and economic transformation related to the transition from production- based to circulation-based capitalism.[17] Circulation-based capitalism which is characterized by "cultures of circulation," essentially refers to the current forces of globalization in which unimpeded "circulations of people via immigration, tourism, business travel … [as well as] the circulation of capital and financial instruments, goods and services of every type etc.,"[18] has resulted in post-industrial cities becoming globalized social spaces or "sites for, and products of, circulations"[19] and, therefore, socially and culturally unstable landscapes.

Therefore, when current globalization forces are conceptualized as "cultures of circulation," they could be drawn upon by those arguing against essentialized or static notions of "places" as frozen in time and, therefore, comprising of single identities. In explaining the impact of globalization, social theorists highlight how current technological innovations in communication, travel and economics have, through the phenomenon known as "time-space compression," condensed spatial and temporal distances thereby altering the ways we perceive realty as well as, our ideas about the nature and identity of places.

In her writings about the impact of globalization on cultures and societies, Doreen Massey (1991), for example, draws on the effects of time-space compression to explain how cultures and communities get merged or fused into complex layers of histories and stories thereby shifting our notions of places as comprising of, among other factors, single identities rather than multiple ones or as frozen in time rather than as processes.[20]

In her interview with Social Science Bites Podcast (February 1, 2013), Massey

elaborates on her idea of a physical space:

> A lot of what I have been trying to do over the all too many years when I have been writing about space is to bring space alive, to dynamize it, and make it relevant, to emphasize how important space is in the lives in which we live, and in the organization of societies in which we live. Most obviously, I would say that space is not a flat surface across which we walk. Raymond Williams talked about this. When you are taking a train across the landscape, you are not travelling across a dead, flat surface that is space. You are cutting across a myriad of ongoing stories. So instead of space being this flat surface, its more like a pincushion of a million of stories. If you stop at any point in that journey, there will be a story.[21]

Although Denver can legitimately represent itself as a culturally unique landscape

since every place is unique according to Massey,[22] as an American city, Denver, nevertheless

cannot claim to be as autonomous landscape when situated with the critical conception of

what constitute the nature and identity of places. As an American city with a local and

national history characterized by colonial violence, the representation of Denver's modern

identity as an autonomous and socially stable landscape is, therefore, contested or politically

destabilized by cultures of circulation (globalization forces) that would support those arguing

against such essentialized notion of places in the cultural construction of the modern identity

of Denver. When conceptualized through cultures of circulation, Denver's colonial past gets

enlivened or becomes part of "a myriad of ongoing stories." From this perspective, Denver

becomes, in other words, a globalized space of multiple identities and, contesting stories

rather than a singular dominant narratives and identity. In so doing, therefore, globalization

(cultures of circulation) have the impact of bringing back to the city's doorsteps its

uncomfortable local and national colonial histories and social conflicts.

Therefore, in this study the essentialization of the notion of places is associated with

the dominant Euro-American discourses, represented in this case, by the global market-

oriented urbanist discourses that draw on the essentialized notion of authenticity associated with cultural indigeneity to authenticate (essentialize, freeze or make static) and, therefore, legitimize and stabilize the modern identity of Denver, thereby erasing the politically threatening or destabilizing colonial histories of the place. While, on the other hand, the contesting discourses or narratives of the place would draw on the complex layers of histories and stories about the place to conceive Denver as globalized socio-historical space that is characterized by complex and multiple identities and ongoing and contesting stories about the place.

Why Indigenous Art?

Despite the tendency to have their meaning essentialized or uncritically conceived, often by dominant intellectual discourses (for the purpose of politically containing threatening and potentially destabilizing colonial histories and social conflicts inherently entangled with them), indigenous artifacts on display in many American art museums actually have complex layers of meaning that draw upon the complex contexts of their production, original use as well as, their collection and publication histories. This, therefore, means that similar to the way we develop our ideas of what the nature and identity of places should be, the meaning of indigenous artifacts could be essentialized as representing static or frozen identities of places or cultures of their origin and, therefore, not affected by outside influence. When thus uncritically conceived, indigenous artifacts derive their symbolic capital or value from the notions of "authenticity" and "uniqueness" associated with indigenous art in the cultural construction of the modern image of post-industrial cities.

Nevertheless, like places, indigenous artifacts are conceptualized in this study as having complex layers of meaning, histories or stories and, in their case, such complex

meanings and stories draw upon the complex contexts of their production, original use as well as, their collection and publication histories. These complex layers of meaning of indigenous art tend to be invigorated by broadened social and cultural environments of exhibition, allowing them to interface with different cultures, histories and social contexts in radically re-articulating the meaning of place in cultural construction of new urban imaginaries.

The broadened and invigorated meaning of indigenous art is conceptualized in this study as reflecting the production of a globalized post-industrial urban social space that is characterized by a heterogeneous circulation of people (immigration, tourism, business travel, etc.), including the circulation of capital, goods as well as, different ideologies, images, histories and stories all of which have been referred to as "cultures of circulation."[23]

It is within this contexts that the Denver Art Museum, as one of Denver's most visible urban flagship cultural projects that foregrounds the display of indigenous Native American and African art, is one of the focal points in this study to explore the generative tension between the complex, temporal, transversal, deterritorialized and, therefore, highly unstable cultures of circulation and the stabilizing intellectual discourses (dominant global market-oriented urbanist discourses) that ideologically seek to enframe the modern image of the post-industrial city of Denver as a self-contained, stable and territorialized landscape made out of a cultural plurality of permanently identifiable and fixed racialized ethnic groups - in the case at hand, an attractive image of culturally diverse and socially inclusive city.

In this study, the generative tension between stabilizing intellectual discourses (in the case in at hand, the global market-oriented urbanist discourses) and cultures of circulation or globalization forces is studied by analyzing DAM's exhibitionary narratives both as part of

the city's urban cultural projects, specifically, the downtown plan (in which the museum's

exhibitionary narratives would be subsumed by the dominant intellectual discourses) and as

part of the museum's innovative exhibition techniques that aim at introducing more inclusive

narratives of art, history and culture to reflect the heterogeneity of the city and the museum's

global audience (reflecting cultures of circulation or the social and cultural complexity of the

city's globalized post-industrial urban social space).

I also undertake to illustrate in this project how the ideology of racialized ethnicity

(which is another necessary ideological grounding for the construction of a stable, fixed and

territorialized urban imaginary[24]) is constructed in DAM's exhibitionary narratives as

illustrated by the marketing of the experience of historical and cultural truths and authenticity

associated with tribal/indigenous art. As would be highlighted in greater detail in subsequent

sections of this project, when uncritically conceived and co-opted by dominant global

market-oriented urbanist discourses that aim at constructing the image of the city as a

culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape, the notion of authenticity within the

contexts of museum exhibits draws from the modernist trop for identity construction that

promotes primordial cultural attachments to the concept of race, thereby, making race an

irreducible and permanent marker of cultural diversity among people.[25]

While within the historical context of colonialism, such an ideology of racialized

ethnicity was constructed to naturalize racialized hierarchies of difference (promotion of

white supremacist notions) and, therefore, justify the colonial domination of indigenous

populations (whose racialized cultural identity was represented in complex museum

exhibitionary narratives as "outmoded" and "degenerate," or "primitive"), within the current

environment of post-industrial urban cultural re-imagination, the meaning of such racialized

ethnicity and cultural difference is re-articulated and used as part of the aesthetic enhancement of the city as a multicultural or culturally diverse and inclusive landscape.

What is significant about such racialized notion of ethnicity or cultural difference and hence, the notion of multiculturalism or cultural diversity, is the fact that it oversimplifies (stabilizes) what is essentially a more complex socio-historical, fluid, transversal, deterritorialized and globalized post-industrial urban so space and, thereby, politically contain the continuing colonial era racialized social inequalities and conflicts. More specifically, in the context of Denver's post-industrial urban cultural projects, namely the downtown plan (which is marked by the continuing colonial dispossession or displacement of the historically marginalized populations, including blacks) the essentialized or racialized notion of blackness or Africanness conceived through the uncritical conception of the meaning of indigenous art and, specifically African art) has the impact of delegitimizing or representing as inauthentic local blacks (both African Americans and African immigrants) who are currently being displaced by the city's urban economic regeneration projects by privileging the blackness or Africanness that is confined in some historic past or as far of places as Africa. This can be better understood by illustrating the ideological link between indigenous art and the "politics of essentialized difference."

Indigenous art and the politics of essentialized difference. Moreover, the notion of authenticity associated with indigenous art gives us the opportunity to critically reflect on the following questions about the role of art museums and the exhibition of indigenous art: Should an art object be valued as an autonomous event or as integral to a series of works? Is it possible to elevate or admire one piece of the past without ignoring or devaluing countless others? Do art objects have intrinsic value and meaning without the intervention of curators

or exhibition makers? What is the relationship between authenticity and authority, and do objects have authority or people do? Could artists freely express their aspirations through their work independent of their perceived geographic origin or group identity? Finally, should African art or artists be viewed as standard bearers of African/Black contemporaneity?

The questions above point to the inherent ambiguity and ideological implications for the notion of authenticity when deriving from the essences or properties that they are perceived to possess (essences that are original and cannot change over time) museum artifacts, especially indigenous artifacts could be considered authentic, belonging to pre-colonial indigenous/tribal cultures and uncontaminated by modern Western culture. What makes this notion of authenticity significant for this study is the fact that though now questioned by many critical scholars for its hegemonic colonial origin and despite contemporary global contexts of decolonization and the recognition of previously marginalized indigenous art and cultures, it continues to be defined in terms of the Western collectors' taste and, therefore, ensures the continuation of the oppressive and exploitative colonial influence in collection and appropriation of the meaning of indigenous art.[26]

The authority to define what is "authentic" and what is "inauthentic" has enabled modern Western ideological institutions like museums and hence, the dominant intellectual discourses to politically contain (mainly by representing as inauthentic) threatening local colonial histories and social conflicts. Drawing from this notion of authenticity, modern American cities have been able to exploit indigenous art and culture (for the symbolic capital that derives value from the characteristic of uniqueness and authenticity associated with

indigenous art) while at the same time harboring disdain or hostility towards the presence of indigenous bodies.

The goal of this research project is to highlight the contradiction or disconnect between the foregrounding of indigenous art in the production of Denver's global brand or image as a cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West" and the troubling local colonial history of violent displacement of Indigenous Native tribes which is reconstituted in the current hostility and disdain the city harbors against the presence of colonized bodies in form of Blacks, including new African immigrants. More broadly, this research undertakes to explore how the notion of authenticity (modern conception of racial biology or black racial essentialism) associated with the exhibition of indigenous art, including African art, is conceived in relation to complexity of a globalized post-industrial urban social space characteristic of American post-industrial cities, including Denver.

The goal is to highlight how the primordial conception of indigenous identity and culture as original and unchanging, in other words, as authentic has meant that the politically acceptable or recognized form of the "other" (indigenous Africans and Native Americans) is one that is fundamentally fictitious or false (fixed in some historical past) and, therefore, out of context or irrelevant to the socio-political realities of the day. From this construction, the African reality is represented as: "traditional rather than modern; rural rather than urban; tribal and collective rather individual and subjective; black rather than hybrid; and timeless rather than contingent."[27]

I argue that it is within these fundamentally false binarisms of tradition versus modernity in the conceptions of indigenous identity and culture (one that is out of context, unrealistic or romanticized) that the concept of indigeneity is currently exploited in the

cultural construction of new images (symbolic capital) of post-industrial cities as unique, authentic and autonomous landscapes. Analyzed from this critical standpoint, the notion of authenticity conceived in the exhibition of indigenous has the impact of depoliticizing or masking the continuing colonial oppression or social exclusion of racial and ethnic minorities, mainly by oversimplifying, through uncritical conception of indigenous art, the globalized, highly complex and unstable post-industrial urban social spaces in which contemporary art museums are located.

The main argument of this research project is that by relying on the notion of essentialized difference conceived in the exhibition of indigenous art and culture (which privileges the authentic other that is from elsewhere or one that is fixed in some historical past), the construction of Denver's new global oriented identity or image has the impact of suppressing or depoliticizing as fundamentally inauthentic the troubling and potentially destabilizing local colonial history of violence, entrenched racial inequalities and social prejudices that are being exacerbated by globalization as highlighted by the conflicts and hostility surrounding the influx of new African immigrants to the city.

Metropolitanism versus nationhood & localism. Drawing mostly from highly visible signature cultural projects for symbolic capital that in most cases involve highly expressive architectural structures of museum buildings, the Guggenheim Museum Building in Bilbao, Spain being the best known global brand, cities "have replaced nations as the organizing principle for considering international artworks."[28] What is significant about the substitution of metropolitanism for nationhood is that it enables these cities, in promoting their image as autonomous landscapes (regional cultural hubs) to avoid engaging threatening or potentially destabilizing local colonial histories and social conflicts, and in the case of the

United States, the historically troubling question of race and racial inequalities, social conflicts and prejudices that have historically articulated with such racial hierarchies.[29] Within this contexts, art museums (that have become sites of significant symbolic and ideological investment in the transformation of post-industrial cities into historical and culturally significant places) have drawn on the "notion of essentialized difference to disenfranchise local difference"[30] or politically contain threatening local colonial histories and the hostility and disdain towards indigenous populations by privileging the authentic other from elsewhere such as Africa or a fixed historic past. The authentic other in this case is always elsewhere because "while difference from outside can be fixed, managed, controlled, and isolated, difference at home is altogether more slippery, evasive, and threatening."[31]

As already highlighted, there are some clear signs that Denver could also be drawing on this notion of essentialized difference in representing itself as a historical and culturally significant place, namely the cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West." Represented most visibly by the evocative image of DAM's new Fredric C. Hamilton building designed by a well-known global "starchitect," Daniel Libeskind and boasting to possess "one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of world art between Chicago and the West Coast [as well as being] internationally known for its holding of American Indian art,"[32] DAM symbolizes Denver's cosmopolitan image that is packaged in cultural indigeneity from which it derives qualities of uniqueness and authenticity and, therefore, the appearance of being autonomous and socially stable.

However, as already indicated in this introduction chapter, the construction of the new global brand or image of late modern cities as authentic, unique, stable and autonomous

landscapes is always contested by the reality of increasing heterogeneity (global circulation of people, languages, practices, ideologies and goods) triggered by forces of globalization and resulting in these cities becoming socially unstable and globalized post-industrial urban social spaces or "floating signifiers of different geographical and historical moments."[33]

Contrary to the representation of these late modern cities as unique and autonomous landscapes, they are not immune or isolated from the complexity of contemporary global processes and the potentially destabilizing local or national colonial histories and, in the case of the U.S., the historically troubling issue of race and racial inequalities "that [have] both constituted and been constituted by global flows and social transformations:

> Because globalization today is facilitated by the transmission and reproduction of deeply embedded social prejudices rooted in a past characterized by territorial concepts of belonging that both generated and were generated by racial inequalities, the contemporary redistribution of wealth has exacerbated historically entrenched racial hierarchies. These are hierarchies that also articulate with ideas about ethnic, gendered, and cultural difference.[34]

Analyzed within the complexity of contemporary global processes, Denver, like many modern American cities cannot isolate itself or avoid the troubling national question of race and historically entrenched racial hierarchies and social prejudices shaped historically by the enslavement of Africans and the violent colonial displacement of Native Americans which is reconstituted today in the hostility towards the presence of recent African immigrants.

As indicated in greater detail in chapter 2 of this study, blacks in Denver, like in many American cities, have historically faced housing and residential discrimination because "from the start, European settlers in North America established structures encouraging possessive investment in whiteness."[35] In representing itself as a culturally significant, diverse and,

hence, welcoming city, Denver must, therefore, politically contain the past and present

hostility and exclusion of blacks and indigenous populations.

The notion of authenticity (essentialized difference) associated with the exhibition of

indigenous art, therefore, lies in the heart of contemporary dominant discourses and strategies

for the exploitation and oppression of indigenous communities and cultures. Within its

dominant frame, the meaning of indigenous art and culture is uncritically conceived and

exploited by late modern or post-industrial cities in the cultural constructing their global

brand or new urban identities that simultaneously have the ideological impact of avoiding or

politically containing threatening and potentially destabilizing local colonial histories and

related social conflicts. The dominant notion of authenticity or the uncritical conception of

the meaning of indigenous art and culture (racialized/essentialized notion of ethnicity or

cultural difference) has the political impact of oversimplifying or stabilizing what is

essentially a socio-historically complex, fluid, transversal, deterritorialized and globalized

post-industrial urban social spaces shaping the everyday social realities and hence, significant

and meaningful identities for people of Africans descent.

Authenticity, Black Racial Essentialism & the Notion of the "Colonial Present"

As part understanding how Denver politically contains the past and present presence

of black people, I also deploy in this dissertation the notion of the "colonial present" to

understand how as an element of the dominant ethnocentric discourse of race, the notion of

authenticity, specifically the doctrine of black racial essentialism, has ideologically

maintained the social structure rooted in colonialism and the promotion of white supremacy

(institutional arrangements and social outcomes which perpetuate the exploitation and

subordination of the black community's social and cultural life) by being "blind to the

complexity of the modern map of African social reality [and] … the multiplicity of identities forged in the crucible of colonization, globalization, diaspora, and the postcolonial social transformation."[36]

Although often highlighted in implicit form (discourse analysis), the causal relationship between the essentialist attributes of the notion authenticity associated with the exhibition of indigenous art and racial ideology has long been established. As an element of the dominant ethnocentric discourses of race and racial identity, the notion of authenticity gets extended to the doctrine of racial essentialism, that humans are characterized by essential or immutable traits that define and shape the nature of their being,[37] a phenomenon that makes it possible to divide humans into biologically discrete races or racial categorization. Black racial essentialism, for example, which is an extension of essentialist notion of racial identity, asserts that all black people share the same essential attributes that define and shape the nature of their being. More significantly, black racial essentialism leads to the belief that based on the essential attributes that they share, all black people should also be ideologically aligned.[38]

As would be highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, current identity politics associated with the essentialist notion of racial identity and, in this case black racial essentialism, centers around the fact that the notion of a pure, essentialized, fixed or unchanging difference is more fictional than real and, therefore, ignores the fragmented nature of black identity in the post-modern era, namely the growing class divisions, sexism and the dislocations of the black identity.[39] While the original black racial essentialism has been constructed to oppress the black community (mainly by ignoring the multiplicity of black identities and complex social realities thereby confining black identities and experience

within the structure rooted in white supremacy), the reessentialization of blackness by blacks is ironically guided by the same notion of racial essentialism that has been constructed by the colonial oppressor and, therefore, is no less oppressive than the initial racial essentialism.[40]

By analyzing the interaction between DAM and African immigrants within the context of the colonial present (highlighted by the conflicts surrounding Sand Creek Memorial and the current hostility towards indigenous African bodies in the City) I undertake to construct a more critical analytical frame, one that conceptualizes the globalized post-industrial urban social space of Denver into a complex, transnational, heterogeneous and unstable socio-historical social space stretching from Denver (Sand Creek) to Somalia (Africa) in which I am able to analyze the daily social experiences, struggles and identity constructions of colonized cultures in the post-industrial city of Denver.

The notion of the "colonial present" provides a critical theoretical frame for analyzing how despite the new museology rhetoric of inclusivity and diversity or the contemporary global contexts of decolonization, the notion of authenticity associated with the museum exhibition of indigenous art continues to be rooted in colonial ideologies and practices and, therefore, perpetuate the colonial legacy of oppression, exploitation and social exclusion of the black community by continuing to structure contemporary debates surrounding race and ethnicity.

The African Diaspora

To deploy the notion of the "colonial present" as a theoretical frame for understanding the link between authenticity (essential attributes) and racial ideology, I undertake to situate the current exploitation of African indigeneity in cultural construction of the identity of a modern American city within the broader contemporary debates surrounding

the conceptualization of the African diaspora notion. Current critical debates in African diaspora studies advances this study in the following ways:

First, Current critical debates in African diaspora studies center on the challenges of theorizing a Black Community/Identity in the face of the fragmented post-modern era, including the challenges of growing class divisions and consequent dislocations of Black identity. It is within this critical theoretical frame that the connection between the notion of authenticity associated indigenous art and dominant racial discourses could be established. More specifically, critical debates in African diaspora studies highlight the pitfalls or oppressive nature of an essentialist notion of racial identity (the racial essentialization and reessentialization of Black identity.)

Second, the concept of African diaspora as an analytical frame help link the current hostility or disdain towards blacks in Denver, including recent African immigrants in Denver to the legacy of colonial displacement and violence against Native Americans. As representatives of African indigenous identity, recent African immigrants in Denver automatically occupy the socio-historical space inhabited by other indigenous bodies in the form of Native Americans and African Americans and are automatically confronted by the stereotypes and colonial domination experienced by Native Americans and African Americans. Analyzed within African diaspora frame, the experience of new African immigrants in Denver demonstrates that the colonial history of Denver is not merely in the past, but is a structuring aspect of Denver's sociality in the present. Scholarship on U.S. forms of colonialism help link the legacy of colonial displacement and violence and an ongoing structuring aspect of contemporary debates surrounding race and ethnicity.

Finally, current critical scholarship in African diaspora studies challenges the representation of African reality in mere geographic/spatial or racial terms by illustrating how Africa is much a reality as it is a construct whose boundaries—geographical, historical, and cultural constantly shift in response to global contexts. Within this critical frame, one can situate the experience of recent African immigrants to the US city of Denver within a broader historical analysis on how Africa has been integrated into the global economy dominated by the US starting with colonialism and the enslavement of Africans to the current neo-liberal economic globalization. Within African diaspora critical analytical frame, African immigrants in Denver occupy globalized post-industrial urban social space that is characterized by social and racial inequalities and attendant social stereotypes and conflicts. In other words, critical African diaspora analytical frame helps deconstruct the representation of post-industrial cities like Denver as unique and autonomous landscapes by highlighting the globalized or transnational nature of post-industrial urban social spaces. Within African diaspora critical frame, Denver is transformed into a complex, transnational, heterogeneous and unstable socio-historical social space stretching from Denver (Sand Creek) to Africa (Somalia).

Archives

The following are sites of my archival research in Denver:

1) DAM; 2) Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site; 3) Colorado History Archive;

4) Center for the American West (University of Colorado); 5) Colorado Africa Organization;

6) Somali Community Center; 7) and library/online archives of major newspapers in Denver.

Significance of the Study

Critical scholarship highlighting the continuing colonial influence in the representation of the meaning of African art and culture and hence, the meaning of Africaness/Blackness has already been prominent in traditional fields like anthropology and art history. This study undertakes to not only expand, but also freshen the existing critical scholarship in this area by deploying the notion of the "colonial present" within whose theoretical frame the analysis of race as structure rooted in white supremacy can be illustrated in more concrete and contemporary terms across an intersecting multiplicity of environments responsible for the displacement and dislocations of the Black/African community: colonization, transatlantic slave trade and globalization. This is creatively achieved by focusing on the growing popularity of the exploitation of indigenous art, including African art that ironically is being used to promote the image of late modern cities as culturally significant and autonomous landscapes, deriving their value from the characteristics of uniqueness and authenticity associated with indigenous art and cultures, all in the face of the reality of increasing heterogeneity and consequently, local social instability and conflicts triggered by globalization forces.

As already highlighted, the significant social, economic and cultural transition experienced by post-industrial cities opens up an opportunity for interdisciplinary approaches in deconstructing how dominant discourses are mobilized to make sense of and effectively manage the identity crisis (both real and imagined), instability and uncertainty currently experienced by cities worldwide. This study contributes to American Studies and Cultural Studies in general by highlighting the interdisciplinary approach needed (architecture; urban planning; history; art history; geography; critical race theory; discourse analysis; marketing

and globalization) to provide a more holistic and in-depth analysis of the significant impact art museums and other local heritage sites have on the everyday lives of the post-industrial urban public. With the expanding influence world-wide of the cultural tourism industry in post-industrial urban development era, private and public urban spaces, local histories, cultures and social activities are increasingly being materially and symbolically remade for global cultural tourism consumption. Such culturization of society and urban spaces has resulted in art museums and other local historical and cultural heritage sites assuming an important symbolic and ideological role in urban planning and development. Yet this mainly subtle but ideologically potent linkage between the symbolic function of art museums and post-industrial urban planning and development represents an area that remains understudied in both cultural studies and urban development studies.

Chapter 1: The Sand Creek Massacre and Denver's Colonial Present

Introduction

In order to understand contradictions of a city that wants to exhibit indigenous art, but disdains indigenous bodies, and more specific within this context, in order understand the contradiction in current recognition and celebration of the history and culture of the historically marginalized African American residents, we have to understand the history of dislocation, fragmentations and dispossession that shapes Denver's colonial present beginning with the Sand Creek massacre. Such contradictions can be understood by situating the current historical and cultural re-imagination and regeneration of the city within broader European colonial expansionist tradition in which white colonial settlers have always exploited indigenous history and culture for their own cultural authentication or legitimation while simultaneous pursuing exclusionary policies, including violent displacement of indigenous bodies as exemplified by the Sand Creek Massacre.

Having been resurrected as a modern event in contemporary public discourses, the Sand Creek Massacre in which hundreds of peaceful and defenseless American Natives were slaughtered by United States federal troops in Greater Denver region in 1864 has become a more significant national event in public discourses and consciousness in the present than when it originally occurred.[41] The recalling (memorialization) of this event in late modernity is more closely related to and shaped by the politics and identities in the present than the past: "contemporary concerns inflect how history is recalled … as people engage in the process of memorialization envision their projects with eyes cast towards the present and future as well as the past."[42] As would be highlighted in more detail in subsequent sections of this chapter, federal and state officials who gave speeches at the opening ceremony of the

Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site in 2007 were influenced by the current anxieties and concerns of their political constituents in arguing that the memorialization of the massacre should keep the past and present separate.[43] As modern Americans of European descent, influential federal and state officials and their constituents feel a sense of kinship with Sand Creek sponsors and perpetrators and, therefore, feel a conflicting sense of self-indictment when the remembrance of the Massacre recenters Native Americans as victims of not only the past but also the present.[44] European Americans, in other words, feel redeemed when the massacre is remembered within the dominant European American ideological frame which while presently recentering European Americans in the local cultural histories of conquered places, simultaneously decenters American Natives as victims of the past and thereby highlighting the progress that has been achieved in cultural diversity and understanding.[45] This celebratory vector in the commemoration of the massacre is vehemently rejected by the descendants of Sand Creek's victims and survivors who insist that the recalling of Sand Creek should engage the anger and pain that is "persistent, real and intensely present" to Native Americans today.[46]

Nevertheless, it is within this colonial logic of "remembering to forget"[47] reflected the commemoration of the Sand Creek Massacre that the city that exhibits of indigenous African art as well as, designate, celebrate and globally market the historically black neighborhood of Five Points as the city's most historic cultural district—and doing so in a socio-economic environment in which the black bodies themselves are disdainfully excluded, could be understood.

The cultural and economic development of the city of Denver has historically been shaped by anxiety over its relative short history (having been founded in 1858 as a mining

camp of just few hundreds) and competing regional cities which not only threatened the very

survival of the city especially during its early years, but also presented a major challenge to

its metropolitan ambitions.[48] What is it then that could explain the rapid rise of such a young

city of few hundred in 1858 to a mile-high metropolis of more than 600, 000 and more than

2.5 million in the metropolitan area today? More significantly, how has such a young city

with such humble beginning succeed in representing itself as a cultural hub of the Rocky

Mountain West?

Through a Foucaultian reading of public memorials and city museums, critical

scholars have highlighted how within European colonial expansionist tradition, such modern

cultural institutions and heritage sites have been symbolically used to reconfigure colonial

pasts through showing and telling of stories about conquered places within the dominant

frame of imported European imperial narratives.[49] What makes such institutions

ideologically potent when understood from a Foucaultian perspective is that while

traditionally they have rarely been divorced from politics they, nevertheless, continue to offer

federal and state officials a seemingly neutral and legitimate platform to appeal for unity,

often at the expense of highly divisive and contested histories and contemporary issues.[50]

Since the imported colonial settler histories do not have a long historic connection to

conquered places, they often rely on the appropriation of indigenous histories and cultures to

naturalize or authenticate their colonial occupation of Native lands. Broadly described as the

"logic of elimination,"[51] settler colonialism assumes several strategies to exploit indigenous

cultures and histories while simultaneously displacing indigenous bodies. These strategies

range from the use of violence as illustrated by the Sand Creek Massacre to seemingly

peaceful but equally violent displacement of indigenous peoples through appropriation of indigenous histories and cultures and assimilation of indigenous bodies.

The current museum exhibition of indigenous art and culture as part of broader cultural projects of post-industrial urban re-imagination could, therefore, be deemed as following the colonial "logic of elimination" if such display of indigenous art and culture does not engage with the colonial present. In other words does the desirability of Indigenous art and culture correspond with the acceptance and social inclusion of Indigenous bodies? In this study, I undertake to illustrate how the colonial "logic of elimination" could offer critical lenses for understanding the disconnect between the central role played by Indigenous art in Denver Arts Museum's exhibitionary narratives and the city's history of disdain and hostility towards blacks and the newest form of Indigenous bodies in the city in the shape of the recent African immigrant community in the city.

In its attempt to represent itself as a historical and culturally significant place, the City of Denver does not only face the contradictions arising from its relatively short history, but also the violent displacement of the indigenous inhabitants of Greater Denver region, namely the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes who have occupied the land since the prehistoric times and whose history, culture and art has ironically been central in the exhibitionary narratives aimed at branding the city as a cultural hub of the Rocky Mountain West. The colonial violence against Indigenous Indian tribes is nationally remembered today through the public commemoration of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes by the US federal troops under the command of Colonel John Chivington. What makes Sand Creek a unique historical event and an entangling factor in national politics and the politics of Colorado statehood is the fact that it is one of the few memorial sites in which

the US government is directly implicated in the massacre of the citizens. This goes against the traditional celebratory vector of the federally sponsored American public memory projects, especially with regards to Native Americans whose inclusion in such commemorations is normally with the purpose of using them as "benchmarks for national progress."[52] In these assimilationist commemoration projects, Native Americans are normally included as objects rather than subjects. Therefore, the insistence that the commemoration site tell the story of the massacre from the perspective of the Natives directly affected by its tragedy is fraught with political sensibilities, expediencies and perils, especially given the current demographic factor in Eads, the small rural town in which the massacre site is located which is today 98% white.[53]

The current conflicts stimulated by the commemoration of Sand Creek provides a critical analytical context that places the violence and disdain shown towards Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes at Sand Creek more than hundred years ago and the current hostility shown towards blacks and recent African immigrants to the city in the same continuing circle of colonial violence and hostility towards black and indigenous bodies (the colonial present).

The Massacre

Despite the Fort Laramie treaty of 1851 that recognized the right of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indigenous tribes to hunt and live on off their traditional land, the discovery of Gold in the Rockies in 1858 led to the influx of White settlers whose "appetite for land and gold" led to their desire to eliminate the local Indians from the land despite the determination and efforts by the later to live peacefully with the encroaching White settlers.[54] At dawn on November 29, 1864 more than 700 U.S. volunteer soldiers commanded by Colonel John M. Chivington and under auspices of the United States government and governor John Evans of

Colorado attacked a village of about 500 Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians along

Sand Creek in Southern Colorado territory. The Cheyenne and Arapaho residents had

surrendered most of their weapons to a nearby fort earlier and moved to Sand Creek at the

request of the regional authorities in Colorado. The tribes had been given a white flag of

surrender and an American flag of protection to signify their willingness to cooperate. Those

killed were mostly women, children and the elderly. The massacre which lasted between one

and two days killed an estimated 160 with Chivington, however, boasting to have killed as

many as 500.[55]

File Photo, Courtesy of Mariel Rodriguez-McGill, Rocky Mountain PBS.

Figure 1. Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site in Southeast Colorado.

The unresolved clash in perspectives and values between Native Americans and

European colonial capitalist expansionism is symbolically illustrated today by the stark

contrast between the iconic, highly expressive and personable architectural structure of the

Denver Arts Museum building complex and the simplicity, emptiness, quietness and

peacefulness of the landscape marking the memorial site of the Sand Creek Massacre. While

the former regards land resources, people and cultures as objects for rational control,

commodification and exploitation,[56] the later takes a holistic view of nature that recognizes

the intricate connection between people, land and its resources.[57]

It is, therefore, fitting that the Sand Creek Massacre National Historical Site that was

opened in April 28, 2007 by the National Parks Service (NPS) consists of simply a vast, open

landscape that is bereft of many traditional trappings of national memorials such as iconic

building structures or stone monuments, including visitor centers.[58] The visitors to the site

are instead, greeted by an open field that is defined by pervasive emptiness and quietness.

Yet this quiet and peaceful setting "belies the terror, violence, chaos, and pain that constitute

its history."[59] The massacre site, which is located in southeastern corner of Colorado near

the small town of Eads, population of 567 in Kiowa County, has been referred to as marking

the site of one of the most tragic event in North American history.[60]

The memorialization of Sand Creek Massacre is significant to this study for two main

reasons:

1) Even if the actual massacre took place over hundred years ago, contemporary

social concerns and conflicts (both local and national) shape how this national

historic event is recalled. When analyzed in the light of contemporary issues and

conflicts, Sand Creek not only exposes the colonial injustices and violent disdain

towards Indigenous bodies in the past, but more significantly, it offers critical

lenses for analyzing the continuing circles of the colonial disdain towards

Indigenous bodies (the colonial present), mainly in form of the current hostilities

directed towards African immigrants in the city that ironically displays Indigenous art and culture to remake itself as historical and culturally significant place. The conflicts and contradictions highlighted in the public commemoration of the Sand Creek Massacre, therefore, provides an important contexts for analyzing the current interaction between DAM and the African immigrant community in Denver.

2) As a symbol of persistent injustice against American Indians, the Sand Creek National Historic Site stands as a significant counterpoint to the more prominent and highly expressive architectural structure of DAM. As already indicated, the dominant cultural conception of the history of the place in DAM's exhibitionary narratives is currently grounded on the Western European tradition that is characterized by a celebratory vector of the progress that has been made in cultural diversity and pluralism thereby representing the city of Denver as a culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape.

It is this celebratory vector of cultural diversity and progress that has been coopted by the global cultural projects of post-industrial urban re-imagination and regeneration whose goal is to represent the place or city as a historical and culturally significant place (city or place-branding) and, therefore, a desirable global destination for cultural tourists. As already indicated in this study, this phenomenon commonly referred to as place or city branding tend to be more global or cosmopolitan orientated resulting in museum curatorial practices that tend to attract and promote cultural exchange between international elites often at the expense of racialized local conflicts among working and lower middle classes.

There is, therefore, a genuine concern among critical analysts as well as, the Native skeptics that the socially inclusive and democratizing potential of the debates surrounding the commemoration of Sand Creek would inevitably be defeated or subsumed by the ideologically dominant and stabilizing European-American centered discourses that aim at depoliticizing the colonial histories of places. The Sand Creek Massacre memorialization site, therefore, provides an instructive analytical comparison to DAM.

Conflicts Surrounding the Commemoration of Sand Creek

The opening ceremony of the Sand Creek National Historic Site on April 28, 2007 by the National Park Service (NPS) near Eads, a small rural town with the population of 567 in Kiowa County in the southeastern corner Colorado could be characterized as a political event than a neutral commemoration of a national historical event (see Figure 1). In attendance to this opening ceremony were the tribal chairmen; chiefs; spiritual leaders; U.S. senators; members of congress; governors; NPS officials and politicians from surrounding communities. By cheer diversity of its attendees, the opening ceremony had the potential to ignite meaningful conversation about highly divisive contemporary issues, especially those relating to the historic grievances of Native Americans.

However, most speakers at the ceremony catered for the political concerns of their constituents in outlining their visions for what the historic site and the commemoration of the massacre should accomplish.[61]

What became apparent in the opening ceremony of this site was that most of the federal and state officials who spoke at the ceremony and who represented the mostly White American constituents struck an optimistic tone in outlining their vision of what the historic site should accomplish.[62] Their speeches focused on honoring the memories of the actual

victims killed during the massacre and expressed their hope that the memorialization process would initiate the long and awaited process of "healing to the affected tribes."[63] As already indicated in this study, this perspective follows the blueprint of the dominant European American colonial "logic of elimination" which decenters Native Americans by relegating them as victims of the past and thereby denying them the agency to shape how the such tragic historic events should be recalled in the present: "victims, by definition, have no power and cannot be central agents in a historical construction of the event. As long as the Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples are victims in the contemporary constructions of Sand Creek, they cannot control the reconstitution of the Sand Creek event in contemporary culture."[64]

Of note among the speakers at the opening ceremony was the Kiowa County commissioner Donald Oswald who was the first to speak: What became noticeable was that his speech mostly highlighted the commercial benefits of the historic site, expressing the hope that the visitors would enjoy the experience and consider returning to the site in the future.[65] What was conspicuously absent from his speech was the mention of the word "massacre" during his speech. As already highlighted in this study, the commemoration of Sand Creek is the first national memorialization site in which the U.S. army is indicted in the massacre of American citizens. The mention of the word "massacre" alongside the U.S. army being the perpetrator of that particular massacre would have stimulated some negative political sentiments from the mostly white demographic constituent of Kiowa County that Oswald represents.[66] To his mostly White political constituent, who mostly identify more with the perpetrator of the massacre, colonel Chivington who was also White, the association of the U.S. army with a "massacre" in their own backyard was not only too negative and

personal, but also bound to create an "anti-American" sentiment which they considered unhelpful to the nation overall.

This sentiment contrasts sharply with that of native communities especially the descendants of the victims of the massacre, the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes who advocate that the commemoration of the massacre should engage not only the past injustices visited upon Natives, but also the present injustices that are still being visited upon them (the colonial present). Calhoun, (2012) quotes a tribesman, William Walks who urges the tribes "to continue to fight to have the wrongs committed against them righted …[pointing] to the 1865 treaty in which the Federal Government promised reparations for what happened at Sand Creek [and yet] to date, none have been made."[67] Writing for the Denver Rocky Mountain Newspaper, Deborah Frazier, also in Calhoun (2012), quotes Steve Brady, a Northern Cheyenne who points out that "the Sand Creek Massacre isn't something that is an archaic history … it is very much alive."[68] Also quoted by Frazier is Colleen Cometsevah, a Southern Cheyenne woman and a direct descendent of Chief Black Kettle, (Chief Black Kettle was one of the Cheyenne leaders present at the attack of Sand Creek) who notes that "it started at Sand Creek, but it is still going on … The original people of this country are still not respected yet today."[69]

The continuing colonial injustice against Native Americans is also expressed by the renowned Native Scholar, Ned Blackhawk in his recent New York Times OP-ED, Nov. 27, 2014, in which he elects to define the Sand Creek Massacre and other historic campaigns against Native populations in terms he believes would be used today to describe such atrocities: he uses terms like "ethnic cleansing;" "settler colonial genocide;" "crimes against humanity" and notes that these were campaigns that attempted the eradication and

dispossession of the entire indigenous population.[70] Besides lack of compensation for the victims of the massacre, Blackhawk also points to the fact that despite being found culpable for the massacre, Governor Evans and colonel Chivington were only forced to resign from their posts but neither of them faced any criminal charges. Although he foresaw the horrific massacre at Sand Creek, Governor Evans, as pointed out by Blackhawk, has cities, monuments and plaques in his honor, including Colorado's Mount Evans "home of the highest paved road in North America."[71]

In what should again highlight an on-going conflict between the Native perspective and the more dominant US narratives in the contemporary construction of the Sand Creek Massacre, calls for the removal of Evan's name from the Colorado mountain are, nevertheless, overruled by many articles and editorials in mainstream US media sources in which writers insists that the memorialization of Sand Creek should keep the past and the present separate including, more symbolically, one by Scott Moore, the great-great-great grandson of the implicated late Governor Evans in which he defends his great-great-great-grandfather's role in Sand Creek by insisting that focus should not be on blaming individuals in history but rather on "[understanding] the cost of failing to achieve peace … that all societies have a select moral vision that can be seen from the future as blinding them to injustices … build the Sand Creek monument. Leave Mount Evans as it is. Teach our children about the past."[72]

The Civil War and American Territorial Westward Expansion

Situating Sand Creek within mainstream American history, Blackhawk (2014) reasons that the continuing circles of colonial domination of Native people can be attributed, in large part, to the failure to place the rapid expansion of American territory westward and

the consequent colonial settler genocide of Native Americans within the historical narratives of the Civil War in which the fate of Western tribes were intricately entangled. The consequence of leaving out America's Indian wars from this important period in American history, according to Blackhawk (2014), is that up to this day the American public knows very little about the historical struggle of Native Americans and continued colonial injustices being visited upon them by US states and Federal government.

Without the wartime expansion, large-scale campaigns and violence against Native Americans, especially in the Western Frontier would not have been possible.[73] To defeat powerful Western Native tribes like the Shoshone, Cheyenne, Lakota and Comanche, territorial leaders like Evans needed more military resources and political leverage to negotiate with or fight against these tribes. The environment of the war, namely the looming Southern secession which resulted in a powerful impetus to expand American territory westward meant that western territorial leaders like Evans and Union Army generals Connor and colonel Chivington got some political and military freehand from Washington to confront the local Native population as they saw fit.[74] This not only highlights the violent destruction the Civil War and the Union Army had on the lives of the Natives but also how the perpetrators of atrocities against Native Americans could have operated with impunity because their activities helped attain the vision of the US government on how to incorporate the Western Frontier to the Union.

Although few atrocities committed against Indians could match the Sand Creek massacre in terms of sheer horror, Blackhawk (2014) indicates that Sand Creek was just one of the many assault on Native Americans during the Civil War period. He gives an example of another massacre on January 29, 1863 of the Shoshone villagers along the Idaho-Utah

border at Bear River in which the known perpetrator of the massacre, Union Army general,

Patrick Edward Connor, like Governor Evans and Colonel Chivington, never faced trial for

the atrocities instead has cities, monuments and plagues in his honor. Blackhawk (2014) also

points to the atrocities committed against the Navajo tribe also during the Civil War period,

in 1864 in which thousands faced forced removal and incarceration in what became known as

the Long Walk.

Blackhawk (2014) explains that the colonial expansion into Native lands and the

atrocities against Native people did not end when the war ended instead, spurred on by a

revived American economy and a new sense of national pride, European Americans

continued to conquer more Native land, mainly through the violation of treaties signed with

Native tribes through various federal and state apparatus.

Denver's Agrarian Promotions and the Extermination of Local Natives

Although the discovery of gold was the main factor that led to the development of

Denver city, from the earliest days the city's builders were convinced that minerals alone

would not sustain the development and prosperity of the city.[75] The city's hinterland and its

potential to support a viable agricultural sector for a diversified, competitive and autonomous

economy led to clashes with Native Americans who already occupied the land. Denver's

builders gave full backing to Colorado Governor John Evans' atrocities against the local

Native population, namely the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes whom they viewed as an

obstacle to the agrarian development of the city's hinterland.[76] William N. Byers, the city's

most influential early booster who has been described as the "center of early Denver's power

elite"[77] played a leading role in advocating for the extermination of Native tribes from the

region. Byers' influence derived mainly from the newspaper he founded, the "Rocky

Mountain News" that became the most popular newspaper in the region.[78] The newspaper

which he used to boost the city and its hinterland to attract new settlers, also became

influential in representing the Native tribes as dangerous by nature and hostile towards White

settlers and, therefore, needed to be exterminated.[79] By 1864, the anticipation of a large

influx of farmers, which also coincided with the wartime military expansion, created a

conducive atmosphere for such extermination efforts resulting in Sand Creek Massacre.

Relying on the nineteenth century racialized scientific ideologies that promoted the

belief in innate human variations, the rhetoric against the local Natives spawned mainly by

Denver's newspapers were able to place peaceful local Colorado Indians (Cheyenne,

Arapahos and others) in the same racial category with hostile Indians in any part of the

region and beyond. In agitating for the extermination of all Natives from the territory,

Denver papers conflated stories about Indian violence or uprisings in distant places with

isolated local hostilities involving Indians to characterize Natives as violent by nature.[80] For

example, the 1862 Sioux uprising in Minnesota and nearby in New Mexico, the confrontation

with Pueblo Indians as well as, the refusal of the Utes to sign a new treaty were all given

substantial attention by Denver papers in representing the peaceful local Cheyennes and

Arapahos as part of "a dissolute, vagabondish, brutal and ungrateful race [that] ought to be

wiped from the face of the earth."[81]

In what significantly places Native Americans and Africans in the same subordinate

group as colonized Indigenous bodies, ethnological studies used to agitate the place in the

nation for African Americans "spilled into the ethnological study of Indians."[82] The very

scientists who popularized scientific racisms which concluded that Caucasians and Blacks

were distinct species, with Caucasians at the pinnacle and Blacks at the lowest point in the

descending order of humanity and intelligence (racial hierarchies), Charles Caldwell, a professor of natural history, and Samuel George Morton, a physician, "contended that Indians' biological deficiencies marked them for extinction."[83] So when the influential Denverite, William Byers argued that "while Colorado's Indians remained on friendly terms, those best acquainted with Indian character do not guarantee [their] amity and goodwill"[84] he was deriving from prevalent racist ideologies that advocates that race could be used to predict character, in this case, that Indians as nonwhites, are by nature inclined to violence and, therefore, could be justifiably exterminated.

Meanwhile the Cheyennes and Arapahos themselves, like other Native people everywhere, were worried about increasing influx of new emigrants who not only "showed no interest in forging socioeconomic bonds with the Indians"[85] but were also depleting their hunting game preserves that the Natives had traditionally depended on for food. Despite its treaty obligations, the government hardly provided any food supply to rescue the cornered Natives from starvation. The neglect of Natives is summed up by the report by Major Scott Anthony, commander of Fort Lyon when Indians expressed that they needed to hunt in order to live: "The Indians are all very destitute this season and the government will be compelled to subsist them to a greater extent, or allow them to starve to death, which would probably be the easier way of disposing them."[86]

Starving Indians had no choice but to resort to occasional theft and sometimes raided wagon trains and White local farmers for food.[87] In what could be one of the final incidents that set up the Sand Creek Massacre, in June 1864, four members of the Arapahos tribe went overboard with their brutality, murdering a well-known local White farmer, Ellen Hungate, her husband Nathan, and their four young daughters on a ranch 25 miles southeast of

Denver.[88] As would be expected, the brutality received substantial attention from the city's papers. Panic swept through the city that was ready to believe the rumors that the local Indian tribes were readying for a full-scale war with Whites. It was within this tense atmosphere of imminent war, that Governor Evans was able in August 1864 to raise the "Third Colorado Regiment" commanded by colonel John Chivington, tasked with controlling the perceived hostile Indians whom they finally attacked at Sand Creek on November 29, 1864. Chivington and his men returned to Denver to a hero's welcome after the Massacre and as reported in the Rocky Mountain News "All acquitted themselves well, and Colorado solders once again covered themselves in glory."[89]

Treaties with Native Tribes and the Continuing Struggle over Colonial Rule

While the Sand Creek Massacre became a well-publicized violent approach Governor Evans took to remove Natives from their traditional land in Colorado territory, the other less publicized but equally devastating approach he used to achieve the same goal was through enforcing treaties signed between United States and Native tribes that nullified Native land titles.[90] For example, despite the fact that not all Plains Indians agreed with the provisions of the 1861 Fort Wise Treaty which gave the United States control of the Denver area and most of northeastern Colorado, Governor Evans was keen to enforce the treaty because it "extinguished the Indians' title to all land except for a small triangular-shaped reservation between the Arkansas River and Sand Creek."[91] The flawed treaty had led some Indians to believe that its provisions allowed them to keep their traditional hunting grounds but only to realize that they had been cheated out of their traditional land and, therefore, an important source of their livelihood by the US government.[92]

Nevertheless, the vision for the expansion of Denver's hinterland had no room for local Native tribes who lived there and their traditional use of the land: "Denverites permanently altered the human landscape of the plains, facilitating the entrance of agriculturalists whose crops and livestock changed native ecosystems and linked the plains to distant markets."[93] Through the agitation of Governor Evans, local Plain Indians were forced to move into the designated reservation where they would be taught how to farm. However, without proper farming tools, seeds, skills and above all, interest in farming, some tribal chiefs did not agree to move to the reservation which they also thought was too small and deprived them of access to sufficient game.[94] Through his influence on papers, Evans, nevertheless, pointed to the refusal by some tribes to negotiate the treaty as a sign of the hostility Native tribes have towards Whites in lobbying Washington for military support to fight the Natives.[95]

In this way, Governor Evans and Denver's builders were following the blueprint of the broader "colonial logic of elimination" employed against the Native population in which through a series of treaties, millions of acres of land were ceded to the U.S. government by Native tribes in return for protection, health care, education and other services to be offered by the US government. However, despite the fact that treaties are the supreme law of the land as stipulated in the US constitutions, all the 377 treaties entered to with the Natives have since been broken by the US government.[96]

The presence of and struggle over colonial rule by Natives tribes in modern American political system can be attributed, in large part, to the continuous misunderstanding by the general public of the concept Indigenous/tribal sovereignty which, in turn, has allowed state governments to continuous undermine and sometime challenge the power and authority

granted to tribes, especially when it comes to upholding the treaties entered with tribal nations more than hundred years ago.[97] Since 1778 when the first treaty was signed with the tribes, tribal sovereignty was established in which a government-to-government relationship was established between the US government and Native tribes.[98] Complications arise, however, when Native tribes try to uphold the rights granted by century-old treaties within the modern American political system. The concept of national sovereignty in its modern interpretation requires clear "spatial boundaries around territory and legal and political institutions and temporal boundaries around the narratives of economic and political development, cultural progress, and modernity."[99] Within the constraining spatial and temporal boundaries as defined within the modern American political system native tribes are asked to explain whether they are "part of or not part of the United States –as inside or outside"[100] when they attempt to uphold their sovereign rights.

The ambiguous nature of tribal sovereignty within the modern American political system is best illustrated by the reaction of the then Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura in 1999 to the U.S. Supreme Court case of "Minnesota v. Mille Lacs Band." The Mille Lacs Band which is part of the Chippewa nation wanted the court to uphold the 1837 treaty that guaranteed the tribe the rights to hunt and fish in central Minnesota which was part of their compensation for ceding part of their land to the federal government.[101] Reacting to this court case while the Supreme Court decision was still pending, Governor Ventura invoked the spatial and temporal boundaries of modern American political system to question the validity of such a case. He queried why indigenous tribes would be able to claim sovereignty when at the same time they don't find it problematic to appeal for assistance from the federal government: "They want to be sovereign, and on the other hand they don't. …Are you part of

the United States or you are a sovereign nation? If you are your own sovereign nation, then take care of yourself, and it should not fall on us."[102] Governor Ventura also challenged the validity of upholding the Chippewa's rights hunt and fish today given that the treaty was signed in 1837: "If those rules apply, then they ought to be back in birch-bark canoes instead of 200-horse power Yamaha engines with fish finders."[103]

Governor Ventura's assertion reflects two prevent ways in which "tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, indigenous identity, and indigenous political expression"[104] are being constrained under modern American politics, namely through the spatial and temporal boundaries. First, by questioning "Are you part of the United States or are you a sovereign nation,?" Ventura employs a spatial boundary concept which invokes the sentiment that since the form of sovereignty that indigenous tribes are claiming is unclear and cannot be "easily located inside or outside the United States,"[105] it should be invalid or unreasonable claim. In this particular case, if the Mille Lacs Band, are to have a valid claim for indigenous sovereignty, they should "define its political status in relation to the spatial boundaries of the American political system."[106] The spatial logic, therefore, oversimplifies the complex historical relationship between native tribes and the United States in challenging the claim for native sovereignty, in this case the Mille Lacs Band, by simply stating that: "if the tribe is part of the United States, it is not sovereign, but if it is to be sovereign, it cannot be part of and thus make demands on the United States."[107]

Governor Ventura also employs a temporal boundary logic in challenging the treaty rights claimed by the Mille Lacs Band. The temporarily defined choice invokes the sentiment that "the treaty-secured rights of indigenous tribes stem from an archaic political time that cannot assume a modern form."[108] From the temporal boundary logic, Governor

Ventura is able to argue that the only way the Mille Lacs Band can reasonably be allowed to enjoy their treaty rights to fish is that they have to "do so only in the birch-bark canoes used by peoples of the bygone era, not boats with 200-horsepower Yamaha engines used by modern fishermen."[109] The invocation of the temporary boundary simply constrains the development Chippewa tribal sovereignty into modern form by representing it as a concept of the past and, therefore, not compatible with the present-day American political system.

In response, Marge Anderson, chief executive of the Mille Lacs Band, issued a public letter to governor Ventura in which she points out that Indigenous tribes straddle the temporal and spatial boundaries of American politics and that his arguments in challenging the Chippewa tribal sovereignty reflects the continuing struggle of native tribes against the temporal and spatial impositions of colonialism. She particularly challenges him for equating sovereignty with "self-sufficiency" with respect to Native tribes who she asserts have been oppressed and denied the opportunity to be self-sufficient for centuries:

> To become totally self-sufficient—and that is our goal—the Mille Lacs Band and other American Indians must overcome centuries of neglect and out-right abuse. Please understand that sovereignty is not a gift from the federal government, and it is not a gift from the state of Minnesota. Sovereignty is the inherent right of every American Indian tribal government. It is a reflection of the indisputable fact that we lived on this land and governed ourselves hundreds of years before Europeans arrived.[110]

In expressing the fact that sovereignty is an "inherent" right of native tribes, Anderson is able to shed light on the restrictive colonial boundaries (spatial and temporal) that have historically prevented native tribes from attaining self-sufficiency, and that to be able to achieve self-sufficiency, they need to be "able to express sovereignty beyond narrow, restrictive boundaries"[111]of colonialism.

Anderson's argument can be illustrated by pointing to the impact of the 1861 Fort Wise Treaty which, as already indicated in this study, deprived the local Plains Indians of their ability to be self-sufficient when their traditional hunting ground was ceded to the United State while confining the tribes to a small reservation where, despite lack of know-how and equipment, they were forced to practice farming. What is significant for the research goals of this study, is the fact that while facilitating the agrarian development of Denver's hinterland and, hence, the city's ability to achieve "self-sufficiency," the 1861 treaty of Fort Wise was simultaneously depriving local natives, namely the Cheyennes and Arapahos, of their ability to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency when the natives were forced to cede their traditional land which becomes the city's hinterland. This sets up the ground for irony and contradiction when native art and culture is then used to represent the city as culturally diverse and socially inclusive.

Native Americans Are Not People of the Past

Although uttered in jest, Governor Ventura's assertion that if members of the Chippewa tribal nation were to be allowed to enjoy their treaty rights to fish, they had to do so only "in birch-bark canoes" used by peoples of the bygone era "instead of 200-horsepower Yamaha engines with fish finders" used by modern fishermen, he is actually exposing a significant fact about the historic relationship between mainstream American society and Native Americans, that the only acceptable form of indigenous people in the present, is when they are frozen in the past and not as part of the fabric of American society today. This is illustrated by the desire for indigenous art and culture, especially in cultural construction of post-industrial cities as historical and culturally significant places, while simultaneously indigenous people themselves are met with disdain as exemplified by the current hostility

towards African immigrants in Denver. Closely related to this approach, the dominant

construction of the Sand Creek Massacre is that of an event that represents violence against

indigenous people in the past and not the present, thus representing the benchmark of social

and cultural progress that has been achieved. This has the impact of oversimplifying and

depoliticizing the complex and continuous processes of colonial domination of Native

Americans.

As already indicated in this study, the cosmopolitan oriented museum curatorial

practices that aim at constructing stable brand images of post-industrial cities as historical

and culturally significant places and carter for the growing global cultural tourism industry at

the expense local social conflicts and social inequalities, mainly among the underclass, play a

significant symbolic role in freezing Native tribes and their culture as static and belonging to

the past. When analyzed within the broader historical contexts of post-industrial urban re-

imagination, the new meaning of indigenous art and culture (which is inherently entangled

with the colonial histories of places) is uncritically conceived and used merely as part the

beautification or celebration of the new attractive image of the city (city branding). It is this

aestheticization of indigenous art that deprives it of its complex socio-political meaning

thereby preventing it from becoming part of the critical urban discourse.

Nevertheless, despite centuries of violence and marginalization, Native Americans

nations and their cultures have not only survived but have also re-emerged to utilize the

passage of major legislation to reclaim their rights. Among others, legislations like:

American Indian Tribal College Act (1971); Indian Education Act (1972); Indian Education

and Self-determination Act (1975); American Indian Health Care Improvement Act (1976);

Indian Child Welfare Act (1978); American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978); Indian

Gaming Regulatory Act (1988); Native American Graves Preservation and Repatriation Act (1990)--- have each enabled Native American tribal nations and individuals to exercise some important facets of their sovereign rights.[112]

In utilizing these major legislations Indian tribes have been able to establish tribal schools and colleges and thus assume control over their children's education. Assuming the power over their children's education means that Native history and culture is emphasized in school curriculum, ensuring the survival indigenous culture. Also taking control of their own development, Native tribes with gaming revenue have been able raise their standard of living by improving housing, schools, health clinics and other social services.[113]

As they attempt to assume more control over their own developmental affairs as well as, exercise more facets of their sovereignty and treaty rights, Native tribes have come to clash more often with federal, state and local governments as well as, private individuals. However, with more access to legal channels, including the ability to afford attorneys to protect their rights, Native tribes have been to fight back and resist the continuing circles of colonial domination. In other words, Native Americans are no longer people of the past but part and parcel of contemporary American social fiber.

Chapter 2: Black Immigrants in Denver:

From the 1859 Pikes Peak Gold Rush to the 21st Century

Introduction

Although largely excluded from the Hollywood imagery of rugged bravado that has exclusively involved pioneering white men conquering the rugged nature of the "Wild West," African-Americans have a long and important historical presence in the American West, having migrated to different parts of the Great Plains both before and after the Civil War.[114] While it was not till after the end of the Civil War and the end of the Reconstruction that African Americans migrated in their thousands to Western regions of the U.S. (mainly to escape the "socio-economic and political oppression of the South"[115]) there had always been a steady Westward migration of individual African Americans and their families throughout the early decades of the 19th century.[116] Having been there "in the early years of exploration, through the conflicts over slavery in Kansas, on the cattle drives, the celebrated black frontier regiments [and as part of the homesteading communities in the Great Plains],"[117] African Americans have made a lasting impact and contributed to shaping the early history of the American West.

Among the notable, but relatively unknown black pioneers to the American West was an African slave referred to simply as Esteban (Estevanico) who in as early as the 1530s "was a member of the ill-fated expedition of Cabeza de Vaca across the Texas plains."[118] Another black slave also known simply as York and was William Clark's slave "was part of the celebrated Lewis and Clark expedition [1804 to 1806] from St. Louis to the Pacific and back."[119] More relevant to this study is the story of "Aunt" Clara Brown who, only two years after buying her freedom from slavery in Kentucky in 1857, joined a wagon train of

gold prospectors to Denver where she became a pioneer of one of the first black communities

on the Plains.[120] Brown played an instrumental role in bringing other African Americans to

Denver, including her own daughter Eliza Jane who had been sold away from her. After

earning enough money, Brown was able to search for her daughter and successfully located

her in 1882 and brought her to Colorado.[121] Fondly referred to as "Aunt" because of her

"kindness to families who needed food or place to stay,"[122] Clara Brown represents the

determination and entrepreneurial spirit of pioneering African Americans in the Western

Frontier. From working at a bakery store she was able to open a laundry and "made a good

living doing laundry and cooking for the miners."[123]

The recent recognition of the historical importance of African American stories in the

West, especially the unacknowledged enormous impacts of small rural black homesteading

communities, is part of the current scholastic debate and criticism of the persistently

dominant Euro-American-Centered idea of the "frontier." Within the dominant historical

narratives of the settlement of the West, which is essentially a romanticized idea of the

"frontier" and presented as representing the American character, the dominant pictures are

that of pioneering white "settlers traveling long distances, leading wagons and family to

homestead in a land of open, endless prairie, rolling hills, and grass."[124] It is not surprising,

therefore, that the historical contributions and lasting impact of the black homesteading

communities in the Great Plains states like Kansas, Oklahoma and Colorado that dates back

to the 19th century have largely been unacknowledged or effaced from the history of the

American West. The stories of black homesteading communities in the Great Plains do not fit

with the romanticized "ethnocentric, sexist, environmentally insensitive and unduly

celebratory [imagery of the 'frontier.'"[125] Yet if acknowledged or brought to the forefront,

they portray the "West as much more complex, varied, multi-vocal and multi-racial than popular myths portray."[126] More significant to this study, the recollections of black homesteading experiences (which "seem to indicate a large measure of mutuality among community members and a relaxation of culturally determined barriers, including gender and [especially] racial barriers"[127]) could serve as a historical counterpoint to race relations in late modern American cities in the region like Denver that historically has been characterized by racial discrimination and rigidly segregated black enclaves.

From the early decades of the 19th century and especially following the end of the Civil War and the end of Reconstruction, African Americans, who were eager to escape the socio-economic and political oppression in the Old South, took advantage of the advertised bountiful farming lands in Western states, namely the "Homestead Act" of 1862 and later, its amended version, the "Enlarged Homestead Act" of 1909 that allowed land prospectors, regardless of race, to purchase farming land cheaply as long as they were willing to improve the quality of the land over a certain period of time.[128] In a movement known as the "Exodusters," thousands of African Americans migrated to Western states, mainly Kansas and Oklahoma and few to Colorado where they acquired land, developed homesteads, and started a number of all-black towns, the most famous of which is Nicodemus (Kansas) which "came to represent the pinnacle of black political, economic, and social success."[129]

Although most of these all-black towns in the West eventually declined, the reason for their decline was not a reflection of the failure of independence or self-governing abilities of African American settlers, rather, it was due to harsh elements of farming in the Wild West. As rural agricultural towns, most succumbed to the dry and desolate conditions characterized by the unpredictability of rainfall. Also bypassed by the railroads in most cases,

the sustainability of these small towns became extremely difficult forcing "many settlers to flee the small towns and relocate to larger and more viable communities."[130] While farming land was important in the early days, the growth of cities and the consequent availability of industrial jobs saw many homesteaders and small town dwellers, especially the children of the first generation of "Exodusters," falling for the bright lights of cities where they, nevertheless, would soon be disillusioned by racial discrimination and the socio-economic and political oppression reminiscent of that which they sought to escape from in the Old South.

It must be pointed out, therefore, that the failure of most African Americans to find the political and economic independence and prosperity (their "El Dorado") that they sought in the West was, as already indicated, the harsh farming conditions of the West in earlier days and, as highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this chapter by the case of Denver, the hostility and racial discrimination that they would find in Western cities in later years. In other words, despite the courage and determination of African American individuals and families "who braved the harsh realities to move West and establish communities that still impact us today,"[131] they still could not escape the oppressive Jim Crow racial ideology in the Old South which, as it turned out, reflected a national problem of race and racial discrimination which no American city would be able to escape or isolate itself from. More significant to this study, the important history and stories of courage, triumph as well as, the failures or struggles faced by black communities in the West (due mainly to the tragedy of racism) are made absent or effaced by the dominant and unduly celebratory and romanticized popular imagery of the Western "frontier."

One could, therefore, conclude that the unduly celebratory, romanticism and myth making surrounding the concept of the "frontier" which erases the history and stories of black communities or more diverse narratives of the West, represents the historical backdrop or template for the current urban cultural projects in the construction of the global brand image of post-industrial cities in the region and beyond. Just like the myth making surrounding the idea or concept of the "frontier," the global brand image of post-industrial cities (that draw their symbolic capital from the qualities of "authenticity" and 'uniqueness" associated with colonized indigenous cultures) is "unduly celebratory" because it ideologically functions to erase the alternative narratives about the place, mainly from the marginalized voices and, as already indicated in the case of Denver, the potentially threatening and uncomfortable local colonial histories and the disdain or hostility these post-industrial cities tend to harbor against the historically marginalized indigenous populations.

Drawing on the notion of the "colonial present," this study highlights how the construction of the global image of the post-industrial city of Denver as cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West" (which ignores or politically contains the long history of racial discrimination and hostility towards black immigrants and, as illustrated in chapter one of this study, the colonial violence and displacement of indigenous Native American inhabitants of the region, represented most vividly by the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864) is part of the continuous mechanism of colonial domination, exploitation, violence and displacement of indigenous populations and draws broadly and historically from the construction of the Western "frontier." The celebratory image or myths surrounding the construction of Denver as the cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West," and more broadly, part of the Western "frontier," is highly contested by the unacknowledged or hidden local histories and stories of

the marginalized communities as illustrated in this case by the unacknowledged stories and the enormous impact of black homesteading communities in the West.

Humanistic Counter-Narratives, "The Dry"

Since the westward migration of African Americans was a rational response to the oppressive conditions in the South rather than driven by blind faith towards a better place, they were able, through their effort and determination to "[transform] their lives, the region and the nation as a whole"[132] even if many did not always find the political and economic freedom and prosperity they sought. After visiting Boley, one of the famous all-black towns in Oklahoma territory in 1908, Booker T. Washington described the town as a "striking evidence [that] … the Westward movement of the negro people has brought into these new lands, not a helpless and ignorant horde of black people, but land-seekers and home-builders, men who have come prepared to build up the country."[133]

Although in relatively smaller numbers compared to other states in the region, the migration of African Americans to the Rocky Mountain West, Colorado, which began before the Civil War, has "made enormous impacts that still exist today."[134] Yet the history and stories surrounding the settlement of African Americans in the state, especially the homesteading communities has largely been unacknowledged. While some African Americans, like the afore-mentioned "Aunt" Clara Brown, came to Colorado as part of the Gold Rush, other black families were attracted by the advertised bountiful farming land, namely the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 that allowed them to acquire land and develop homestead communities whose social and cultural impact continues even today.[135]

"The Dry," situated in southern Colorado and 8 miles south of Manzanola typifies black homestead communities in the West. Despite being a small rural town and largely

unacknowledged, it has enormously contributed to our understanding of the history of the settlement of the West. Known as "The Dry" because of its "arid climate and stark landscape" and also described as being "in the middle of nowhere" since it was surrounded by miles of dry open rural Colorado landscape (representing the harsh realities of farming in the Wild West), "The Dry" was one of the destinations of African American families who sought to transform their lives and escape racial discrimination in the South. With the first group of settlers arriving in 1915, the rural homestead soon grew to be home for about 50 black families. Although by 1923 it had become apparent that the farming dreams of these families had become impossible when a major dam collapsed, forcing some homesteaders to leave the area, the resilience of some of the families saw them remain and adjusting to raising cattle for milk and butter production and some getting jobs on the railroad in nearby cities.[136] As a result of such resiliency and determination, it was not till the mid-1970s that the homestead was completely disserted.

However, it is the story left behind by the black residents of this tiny town in the "middle of nowhere" that has "opened a window into the daily lives of those in the African American homesteading community"[137] and in so doing also brought to the forefront the marginalized voices or narratives about the West that challenge the western "frontier" myth.[138] Through the excavation of artifacts related to domestic life (conducted at the cite between 2010 and 2012 by M. Dores Cruz, an anthropology professor at the University of Denver) which were paired with interviews with and information provided by descendants of settlers of "The Dry," Cruz contributes, for example, to our understanding of the historically important and hitherto, unknown information about race relations as well as, gender and identity construction among homesteading communities in the American West.[139] As

highlighted by this archaeological research and the accompanying oral information, the homestead environment enhanced the female status and autonomy since women had to share some responsibilities that freed them from traditional gender restrictions: "At The Dry it was not unusual for women to hold deeds, to be mentioned as pillars of the family, and to have central roles in maintaining local social networks."[140] The recollection of such important social status and role played by women within the family and the homestead communities counters the popular imagery of homesteading communities and, in general, the settlement of the West as "primarily a masculine enterprise."[141]

With more direct implications to this study, is the "relaxed relations" black, white and Hispanic neighbors were able to maintain in the rural homesteading communities in Manzanola.[142] When brought to the forefront, the rejection of racial differences among these homesteading communities serves as an effective historical counterpoint to the rigidly segregated black neighborhoods in urban environments most famously exemplified by "The Five Points" black neighborhood community in Denver which, for a long period in history represented one of black communities in the city that has been "forced to live behind the barbed wire of prejudice."[143] Partly because African Americans were a very small minority in relation to the overall population and partly due to the harsh realities of the "Dry" rural environment and the need for collective effort to survive, Black and White homesteaders co-existed harmoniously with each other.[144] As one of the descendants of homesteaders and a resident of the homestead community herself till the 1950s, Mrs. Alice McDonald recalled about the racial harmony of homestead community: "we were all very poor and had to help each other to survive."[145]

The Denver Downtown "Frontier"

As already highlighted throughout this study, Denver's pride in its history and legacy as a western frontier city, the "Rocky Mountain West" lies at the heart of its constructed global brand image or identity. Inherently contradictory in the construction of this identity is the foregrounding of indigenous art and culture to authenticate it given the displacement and marginalization of indigenous voices in the representation of the history of the West. To politically contain the past and present disdain and hostility the city harbors towards blacks and indigenous bodies, Denver seems to draw from the very template used to shape the dominant construction of the idea of the West which marginalizes the history, experience and the voices of indigenous communities. It is within this broader context that this study locates the downtown part of Denver, especially the politics surrounding the city's blue print urban renewal agenda that is packaged in the "Downtown Plan," as the frontier where the contradictions of the city's global brand image could be more vividly illustrated.

Denver has been described as one of the fastest gentrifying cities in the country, a phenomenon that is catalyzed by the city's robust urban renewal projects originally packaged in the "Downtown Plan of 1986" and later repackaged in the new "Downtown Plan of 2007."[146] The urban renewal projects are two-pronged in their displacement of the economically vulnerable ethnic/racial minorities, including African immigrants from low-come houses in Denver's poor downtown neighborhoods. First, urban renewal projects result in the demolition of homes and businesses belonging to these poor and vulnerable residents that lay on the path of a series of public works planned for the neighborhoods such as the construction or expansion of interstate highways. Second, the improvement of local infrastructure often stimulates gentrification which in most cases is correlated with the

displacement of vulnerable residents due to the rise in property values and consequently, the costs of living in the neighborhood.

As defined by Merriam-Webster, gentrification is "the process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces poorer residents."[147] In current critical urban discourse, the racial component of displacement is perceived as integral to this definition since the poorer residents often displaced by the renewal projects are ethnic or racial minorities. Indeed, in Denver as in most cities with massive urban renewal projects, the shift from lower-income to higher-income households has often meant a shift in racial and ethnic makeup of these neighborhoods when the mostly poor ethnic/racial minority residents are forced out while the wealthy or higher-income, mostly white households move in.[148] To highlight the perceived racial bias and devastating impact on poor ethnic/racial minorities, urban renewal projects have been characterized as a form of "ethnic cleansing" when whites come to dominate in formerly non-white communities: "There [has been] a real sense on the ground that urban renewal projects, by catalyzing gentrification through massive subsidies for luxury projects in poor neighborhoods, were provoking what could be called an 'ethnic cleansing' of these communities: pushing out the poor, mostly minority residents, and subsidizing wealthy whites to move in."[149] As highlighted in greater details in subsequent sections of this chapter, a historically and predominantly black neighborhood of "Five Points" now with the Caucasian population of over 50% (56.95%) according to the U.S. census carried out in 2010 exhibits clear evidence of racial demographic change brought by gentrification.[150]

What is significant in this study is the fact that urban renewal projects and subsequently, the process of gentrification do not only result in the physical displacement of

poor ethnic and racial minorities in downtown neighborhoods, rather, such physical displacement of these poor, often marginalized residents is often accompanied by an equally devastating eraser of their stories, history and culture when their historic neighborhoods are authoritatively remapped and transformed by the urban renewal programs (that are often global and consumption-oriented) and used as a key component of the city's cultural re-imagination and economic revitalization.

Like most post-industrial cities, Denver's downtown area (an older, deteriorating urban core abandoned by industry) is geographically an area of concentrated poverty among the highly segregated ethnic groups. Not surprisingly, historic black neighborhoods in Denver are clustered around the downtown part of the city due to decades of racial segregation against this group. As highlighted in subsequent sections of this study, the downtown neighborhoods that are characterized by "poor housing condition, below average school quality, high crime and low levels of capital investment"[151] are also experiencing the largest influx of new immigrants, mostly poor ethnic minorities who hope to find affordable housing in these poor neighborhoods. They also include African immigrants, especially those with low levels of education, most of them having been admitted into the country as refugees fleeing horrendous wars in African countries like Somalia and Sudan.

When analyzed within the broader context of the construction of history of the West and drawing on the notion of the "colonial present," Denver's urban renewal projects packaged in the Downtown Plan lie at the heart of current forms of post-racial or "color-blind" racial segregation and, therefore, the hostility towards indigenous bodies in the city, including the new African immigrants. This study illustrates how the authoritative remapping and transformation of Denver's downtown neighborhoods as part of the construction and

celebration of its western history and image, the city's urban renewal projects do not only represent the displacement of indigenous bodies, but have also an equally devastating impact of erasing the history and stories of these historically marginalized groups and, therefore, represent a continuation of colonial capitalist domination of indigenous communities. Within the broader history of the construction of the West, the analysis of the continuing hostility towards indigenous bodies as illustrated by the impact of the Denver Downtown Plan on racial/ethnic minorities, including African immigrants transcends the limitations of time and place. More specifically, it critically expands the "frontier" of Denver downtown to include the violent displacement of Native Americans (represented by Sand Creek Massacre) thereby expanding the downtown Denver frontier from Sand Creek to Somali (Africa).

Elitist Authoritative Mapping of Downtown Denver, a Foucaultian View

As is typical with most elite authored and state or corporate sponsored large scale urban renewal projects, the downtown plan (which is presented as blueprint to the city's development needs) is characterized by highly positivistic and technically neutral language that is used to describe the profound social and economic transformation and hence, much needed development that urban renewal projects bring to the deteriorating downtown neighborhoods and the city as a whole. The plan derives its authority or legitimacy from the technical neutrality of large GIS-designed mapping to visibly and effectively highlighted the deteriorating and, therefore, out of control and dangerous (blighted and crime infested) downtown neighborhoods that require transformation and economic revitalization or renewal.

Alongside, the technologically aided, exceptionally visualizing and highly precise fashion of GIS mapping, the Denver downtown plan is further legitimized and authenticated by the appeal to people's connection to local history and culture through the representation of

these "deteriorating" neighborhoods as historic neighborhoods that are in serious need of

"face-lifting." Such appeal to local culture and history is highlighted by the

prominence/visibility and highly symbolic role played by the Denver Arts Museum (DAM)

which is located in the downtown neighborhoods, effectively transforming them into

significant cultural districts and consequently, one of the city's "hot spots" for global cultural

tourism. As illustrated in more details in Chapter 4 of this study, on the city's promotional

materials (namely, the representation of the city as a significant global cultural tourism

destination) as well as, on the marketing websites and brochures of local luxury and world-

class hotels that aim to attract global cultural tourists, these downtown cultural districts are

seamlessly merged with the retail/commercial districts centered around the city's historically

famous and global brand, the 16th Street Mall.

However, as illustrated by the hidden stories left behind by the homesteading

community of "The Dry," the maps that remain unmade and the stories that remain untold or

read represents the marginalized voices of the impoverished and racially segregated blacks

whose neighborhoods are experiencing the devastating impact of gentrification. Yet it is

these marginalized stories that, if brought to the forefront, could expose how the blueprint

and elite authored Denver Downtown Plan (which has been landed legitimacy by the

powerful GIS or technologically aided maps) is in fact a controversial plan, characterized by

selective mapping and racially biased: "What would be the implication of a map of accidental

police shootings/killings that reveal all shootings occurred in neighborhoods more than 80%

non-white?"[152] As would be highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study,

such a map would speak from the perspective of the many that are marginalized or excluded.

More practically, it would force us to consider the actual impact of gentrification on the less

affluent or those that are being forced to move and the poor, mostly minority or black communities that they are forced to move to, the consequent spatial concentration of poverty and the associated social ills such as school drop-outs, drug use, crime and, consequently, heavy police patrols and racial tension.

Indeed, what is left out of the maps in representing the downtown neighborhoods as blighted and crime ridden areas that require transformation is the devastating impact of gentrification or displacement of low income residents of these neighborhoods comprising mostly of historically marginalized blacks and recent immigrants, including African immigrants. The new neighborhoods that have been authoritatively mapped and transformed by the New Downtown Plan, for example, have been curved out of existing historic neighborhoods like "Capital Hills," "Curtis Park," and "Five Points," with long-time residents who, although poor and socially vulnerable, had a lot of pride and strong connection with their neighborhoods and, therefore, get devastated when they are forced out by gentrification.[153]

What also remains "shrouded under the veil of silence by the Downtown Plan and its Maps …. [is the new restrictions] what kind of people and uses would be welcome in the newly mapped communities."[154] Before the massive urban renewal projects these poor neighborhoods were more accessible to the general public as highlighted by the availability of low-income housing or affordable rents, including homeless shelters and other social services that catered for the poor and low income families that resided in these neighborhoods. However, these mostly non-economic old uses combined with the decaying and poor general infrastructure were perceived by the downtown planners as hindrance for the development of the downtown area. To incentivize economic development in the

downtown, social services, shelters, rentals and less productive light industry has been

replaced by activity and recreational centers that aim to maximize these location by creating

jobs and influencing private investment, all of which has the impact of increasing property

values and life-styles that the poor residents cannot afford. The newly mapped

neighborhoods, characterized mostly by mixed-use developments, are intricately connected

to downtown activity centers such as the Denver Center for Performing Arts, Art Museum,

library and Retail District to the Mall and waterways.[155]

One could conclude, therefore, that in essence, the urban renewal projects results in

the fundamental transformation of the downtown neighborhoods, one that is characterized by

restrictions and privatization of the urban public spaces. Although represented as unique, the

post-industrial city of Denver is not unique from other post-industrial cities in the U.S.,

especially with regards to its pursuance of controversial urban renewal projects that

everywhere seem to facilitate the social exclusion or the disenfranchisement of historically

marginalized ethnic and racial communities. In his critique of the "everyday life," Henri

Lefebvre (1930s) explains how everyday life can be colonized and turned into a zone of

sheer Consumption. As is the case with other post-industrial cities in the U.S. and around the

world, Denver's urban renewal projects could be viewed as having an impact on the very-

day-life for having facilitated: 1) the increasing involvement of the private sector in design,

management and control of public spaces; 2) increasing restrictions on the social accessibility

of public spaces through surveillance and other controls measures to improve security and

promote "good" or "sanitized" images; 3) the tendency for such public spaces to promote

gentrification, social exclusion, and stratification; and 4) the creation of new urban forms

which significantly favor private interests over community needs.[156]

In this study I undertake to illustrate how Denver's Downtown Plan, especially the city's massive urban renewal projects are at the heart of the city's global oriented cultural re-imagination that involves the colonial domination and exploitation of indigenous history and culture and, ironically, simultaneously facilitates the social and cultural exclusion and hence, the hostility and disdain towards indigenous bodies, mainly in form of poor or low-income black families, including the economically vulnerable new African immigrants to the city.

The main hypothesis in this study is that a close reading (Foucaultian Discourse Analysis) of planning documents produced by the city (e.g. the Denver Downtown Plan) and the Denver Arts Museum (DAM) will reveal a common front, the dominant elitist, positivist, global and consumption-oriented representation of Denver's history and image which, nevertheless, is unduly celebratory when analyzed within the colonial history of the place (violent displacement of indigenous Native Americans) and the continuing marginalization and colonial capitalist domination of indigenous bodies in form of African Americans and African immigrants in the city. More specifically, how these elite authored documents while promoting the construction of Denver's consumption-oriented global image, live out some critical information about the impact of the urban renewal projects, specifically, the stories or voices of the marginalized indigenous residents of the city.

All in all, by situating the experience of African Americans and recent African immigrants in Denver within the broader history of the myth making of the Western "frontier," and more specifically, the city's legacy and pride in its Western history and brand image of the "Rocky Mountain West," this study effectively draws on the notion of the "colonial present" in order to highlight the fact that the current hostility towards and social exclusion of new African immigrants in the city is part of the long history of the colonial

domination of the indigenous bodies by European Americans. Moreover, how the dominant

Euro-American discourses of the "frontier," that are almost always unduly celebratory, have

always been highly contested by the counter narratives (black and indigenous experiences)

that they sought to efface: from Sand Creek through black homesteading communities in the

West and finally the low-income and poverty stricken African American and African

immigrants in downtown Denver (Denver Downtown Frontier) who are currently being

displaced or socially excluded by the city's urban renewal projects, specifically through

gentrification and whose experience of displacement is shrouded under a veil of silence by

the racially biased and yet authoritative Denver Downtown Plan.

Through the Foucaultian reading of the Denver Downtown Plan alongside other

related official documents and promotional materials produced by the city and a consortiums

of downtown Denver's business partnerships and the Denver Art Museum, I undertake to

place the colonial exploitation of the indigenous history and culture and the disdainful

exclusion of blacks and indigenous bodies (African-Americans and African immigrant

communities) in downtown Denver within the long history of the dominant narratives of the

West.

Denver Immigrants: A Historical Overview

As the site of the Pike's Peak Gold Rush that began in 1858, Denver predates the

proclamation of Colorado statehood in 1876 and, therefore, has been the main pull of

immigrants into present day Colorado. Immigration into Denver tended to closely mirror the

national immigration pattern and the Pike's Peak Gold Rush occurred "in the midst of the so-

called Century of Immigration" into the United States.[157] The early immigrants into the

United States (old immigrants arriving around 1812) were people from northwestern Europe

and comprised most notably of the British, Irish, Germans and Scandinavians. Except for the Irish who were largely Catholic and very poor and most having survived the notorious potato famine of the 1840s, the early immigrants from northwest Europe were English-speaking Protestants and because of their general wealth were able to succeed in agriculture and other businesses.[158] In Colorado and around the nation, these member of "old migration" from northwestern European attained the native status and occupied the upper echelon of society. The Irish on the other hand, because they were too poor to succeed in business and, hence, to break into the upper echelon of society had to find work in new industries. In major northeast industrial cities, the Irish "formed the basis of the new industrial working class" in the United States.[159]

The Irish immigrants were later joined in the poor and working class by the "new immigrants," a phrase used to describe the European immigrants who arrived in the United States in the second half of the 19th century mainly from eastern and southeastern Europe.[160] Like the Irish, the "new immigrants" were very poor, the majority could not speak English and were Catholics but also included members of Jewish and Orthodox Church. Besides people who came from Italy, Greece and few from the Middle East, these new immigrants comprised of people from the Russian, German, Austrian and Ottoman empires and ethnically they comprised of Poles, Austrians and Slaves.[161] As already indicated in this chapter, these poor immigrants from eastern and southeastern Europe came to make up ethnic communities that were famously associated with eastern industrial cities of the United States like Detroit.[162] As an industrial city and also a destination for some of these mostly poor eastern and southeastern European immigrants, Denver had its own share of specific ethnic communities the most famous being "Globeville" that was home for the Slavic people.[163]

What is significant for this study about the history of ethnic European immigrants to the U.S. is the fact that they did not initially enjoy the privileges accorded to "whiteness" because they were not yet considered "White." In Colorado, for example, the Ku Klux Klan organization whose flourishing membership numbers in the state in the early-to-mid-1920s manifested opposition to the influx of these ethnic European immigrants were actually more opposed to Catholic and Jewish communities than to the relatively small black population in the city.[164] By the early 20th century, ethnic European immigrants who made up "new immigration" including the Irish, faced the wrath of anti-immigration sentiments that swept through the nation. They were the subject of hatred equivalent to racism mostly from the "old immigrants" (older stock of residents mostly from the northwestern Europe) who noted that members of this group "resisted learning English, sent money home, perpetuated their own culture instead of becoming Americans, and had no interest in assimilation into the larger culture."[165]

What is ironic is the fact that such nation-wide hostility shown towards "new immigrants" from Europe in the early 20th century, especially the perception that they resisted assimilation into the larger American society and culture, was to be replicated a century later (early 21st century) but now against non-White or people from non-European origin, most significant for this study, African immigrants and most noticeably, the Somali immigrant community whose religion happens to be Muslim. The current hostility and constant suspicions surrounding the Somali immigrants in Denver and other U.S. cities owes as much to them being Africans as it is about them belonging to a Muslim religion whose followers are currently perceived as representing a national security threat. Following the now infamous September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. soil by the mostly Muslim

extremists from the Middle-East, the presence of Muslims on U.S. soil currently evokes the deepest hostility and nativist sentiments among a large segment of the U.S. population, including some Denverites who have recently witnessed an influx into their state of a large number of mostly Muslim Somali immigrants.

The association of unwanted immigrants with potential threat to the security of the nation, thereby justifying calls for stricter immigration laws is not a new phenomenon in the long and complicated history of U.S. immigration debate. If the most recent September 11, 2001 terrorists attacks, mostly by radical Muslims have stimulated hostility and calls for immigration restrictions, targeting among others, Muslim, in the early 20th century it was "the 1917 Russian Revolution, coupled with radical-inspired bombings in the United States, [that] led to the Red Scare of the 1919-1920."[166] While across the country federal agents detained about 5, 000 people on suspicion of radicalism, Denver did not escape the hysteria as those perceived to be Communists and foreign-born were also arrested in Denver: "locally, the hysteria netted a meager catch of foreign-born Communists---a house-wife, a seamstress, a waiter, a stonecutter, a cook's helper. The biggest fish of all, Panagio G. Panagoupoulous, an official of the Industrial Workers of the World, was found with a trunk full of un-American literature."[167]

The language used in newspapers to report the arrests of those suspected to have ties with the Red Scare was laden with hostility and prejudice. Although it was to express doubt if these suspected sympathizers of the Red Scare were capable of overthrowing the U.S. government, the language used in the *Denver Express* to describe such individuals left no doubt about the general disdain and racial prejudice against such individuals: "a few thousand ignorant and foolish lunatics and degenerates are about to overthrow this

government."[168] The targets for such hostility in Denver in the early 20th century were the usual suspects: the Roman Catholics, Jews and African Americans:

> The Red Scare passed. Still, many Denverites continued to fret. They worried about both Jews and Roman Catholics, many of whom were foreign-born. They worried about African Americans, few of whom were immigrants but, like immigrants, formed a group apart. Natives talked about limiting the inflow. Even some of the foreign-born thought that the United States should lock the gates. Most feared job competition, few had special reasons.[169]

The issue of immigration in the United States, therefore, reflects one of the great paradoxes of the American society in that despite this being "a nation comprised entirely of immigrants or descendants of some, immigration has always been a controversial issue."[170] With a long history of immigration both from within and outside of the United States (From the 1859 Pikes Peak Gold Rush to the 21st Century), Denver, therefore, has long been a land of ethnic and racial diversity and complexity.

Stimulated by the end of the cold war, general prosperity, educational opportunities and better life in the United States, the new wave of immigration in the 21st century has rivalled the so called "Century of Immigration."[171] Among the new wave of immigrants, some of whom migrated to Colorado and Denver, were black people from Africa and the Caribbean who unlike African Americans who came to the United States by force in slavery, have come to the United States voluntarily. Among African immigrants arriving in Denver were Ethiopians and other nationalities who were "escapees from modern slavery, an institution that has not ended in the world."[172] A large population of Somalian African refugee immigrants escaping the current civil war in their homeland have also made Denver their new home. By the early 21st century, one in every ten people in Colorado was an immigrant.[173]

However, despite such long history of diversity, current immigrants in Colorado have "sparked another wave of nativism similar to that which had confronted the 'new immigration' a century before."[174] To effectively respond to its local and national civic duties, the Denver Arts Museum, therefore, must focus on promoting cross-cultural dialogue among the local population, including among the poor and working-class. This would involve redressing the exclusivity and centralized authority of the traditional museum by promoting increased access to, and recognition of, the culture of working class communities and migrant communities, among others. Unfortunately such local and national civic duties tend to be overlooked by the cosmopolitan oriented curatorial practices of contemporary art museums that are more focused on promoting a positive global brand or image of the city as culturally diverse and socially inclusive.

The Experience of African Americans in Denver

In order to understand the current hostility or tension directed towards African immigrants in Denver, it is imperative to understand the hostility directed towards the other forms of indigenous bodies in previous centuries and in this case, towards their most immediate predecessors in form of African Americans or native-born blacks. While the presence of Native Americans, especially the Cheyenne and Arapahoes in Greater Denver Area preceded the arrival of Europeans to the area, native-born blacks (African Americans) arrived in Denver as part of the steady wave of immigration into the area triggered by the Pike's Peak Gold Rush which began in 1858.

As already indicated in this chapter, although ethnic Europeans initially faced barriers to assimilation and accumulation of wealth, unlike blacks, they benefited from the nationwide projects from the colonial era to the present that have aimed at institutionalizing

white group identity through the creation of "a possessive investment in whiteness for European Americans."[175] As was the case throughout the nation, ethnic Europeans were able to leave ethnic neighborhoods of Denver and move to new suburbs where they became "White" and accorded with all the privileges of whiteness: "World War II broke down ethnocentrism and some racial segregation in Colorado. The American-born children of the 'new immigration,' often brought up in ethnic communities found themselves sent everywhere in the world side by side with members of the old groups. When they returned home to postwar prosperity, they often left the ethnic neighborhoods of Denver … and other communities to find a better place to live in the new suburbia."[176] As already highlighted, the postwar period, especially the 1950s and 1960s, were marked by major urban renewal projects that led to the construction of the new "White" identity that rested on residential segregation and shared access to federal housing loans and other benefits from which Blacks and other people of color were systematically excluded.

While Denver is known for its long history of boosterism, a campaign to attract settlers and potential investors to the city, from the onset "it was clear that blacks were not welcome" with city leaders openly voicing their opposition to the arrival of blacks to the city, as well as passing laws like the 1895 law to legalize the segregation of black children to poor schools.[177] Denver City leaders like the founder and editor of Rocky Mountain News, William Byers; U.S. senator Thomas Patterson and Governor John Evans showed their disdain for blacks, for example, when they objected to a conference call by local black leaders to raise money to help finance the resettlement in Colorado of southern blacks who were jobless and without money to enable them to move to Colorado from Kansas.[178] They noted that blacks would face prejudice in Colorado similar to one they were subjected to in

the South.[179] Another leading white Denver politician was more blunt in voicing his hostility towards blacks: When Henry O. Wagoner, the son of Denver's leading civil rights advocate made a remark that "if emigration to Colorado was good for whites, he could not understand why it would not be good for blacks," he interjected: "Colorado would not be an inviting field to the blacks."[180]   More reflective of the hostile environment towards blacks in Denver in the early 1920s was the fact that the Ku Klux Klan organization, known nationally for its hostility and violence traditionally against blacks, was a mainstream organization during that period and boasted among its ranks very influential state and city leaders. Most notable were Mayor Benjamin Stapleton, Governor Clarence Morley and Colorado's U.S. senator Rice Means who were all Klansmen by early 1925. Mayor Benjamin Stapleton vowed: "I will work with the Klan and for the Klan in the coming election, heart and soul."[181]

The attitude of white Denverites towards blacks was shaped by the prevailing racial ideology in the United States that viewed blacks as "inferior to native and foreign-born whites in intelligence and propensity to achieve."[182] From this standpoint, the leading Denverites who objected to aiding the immigration of blacks from the South to Denver viewed blacks as suited for agricultural work (which could be seen as implying that blacks were only suited for traditional slave labor) and, therefore, could not be absorbed into the industrializing economy of Denver.[183]

The racist rhetoric of city leaders and the discriminatory laws they passed in 19th and early 20th century allowed white Denver residents to openly and violently discriminate against blacks. Like many cities in the U.S., residential segregation was "clearly etched on the map"[184]of Denver from the 19th century to well into the 20th century through a combination of restrictive real estate covenants and simply violence against blacks that dared

move into white residential areas. In the 1880s and 1890s black settlements were in downtown areas, mainly to the northeast along Larimer and Blake streets, and shifting further to the northeast by 1920s to an area known as Five Points. In what was described more vividly as being "forced to live behind the barbed wire of prejudice,"[185] black residential neighborhoods could only expand to areas where white residents would permit them: "the black residential neighborhood extended east from Five Points for about a mile, but whites in east-central Denver used custom, pressure, and restrictive real estate covenants to keep African-Americans west of Race Street."[186]

Hostility and violence visited upon those black residents who ventured into white neighborhoods either to buy a home or for simply recreational purposes. An example of such violence took place in the afternoon of August 1932 when African-Americans defied the warning of Parks Manager Walter Lowery and went swimming in an overwhelmingly white section of the Washington Park's bathing beach. The white residents who had quickly left the water when blacks entered, attacked the fleeing black "intruders" with sticks and stones while thousands on onlookers watched. When the police arrived, they "arrested 17 people – 10 African-Americans and 7 whites who had encouraged the blacks to assert their rights."[187] What these African-Americans leant from the confrontation was that they were not regarded as citizens by white residents and, therefore, could not be guaranteed liberty and justice. When they defied the warnings of Parks Manager Walter Lowry and Safety Manager Carl Milliken who had warned them: "if you go into the lake you will be acting at your own peril'…The blacks [had] responded, 'We are citizens, have your cops protect us."[188] Well, they were wrong because "still in the shadow of its Klan days of the 1920s, [and before that, the Sand Creek Massacre], Denver was not ready to guarantee liberty and justice for all,"[189]

certainly not to indigenous bodies. In reporting the accident, the Denver Post newspaper accused the black victims of this violence for working with the "Communists" to sow chaos and cause property damage: "the Communist menace in this country is underestimated by many people … agitators can foment riots and cause other disturbances resulting in human injury and property damage."[190]

The Washington Park's bathing beach violence was just one small example or symbolic of the widespread black-white tensions in Denver which at one point was described as "a fractured city of 'theirs or ours' [and which] suffered from divisions old and poorly understood, deep and difficult to heal."[191] The depth of this tension could be understood in the description of racial segregation in Denver by the 1920s which resembled the Jim Crow South:

> The color line was everywhere. At the Tabor and other theaters, blacks were ordered to sit in the balcony. When African-American soldiers were stationed at Fort Logan south of town, nearby merchants objected. When a crime was committed, the police sometimes jailed all blacks in the vicinity. Blacks were expected to eat in black restaurants and swim separately from whites at the Curtis Park pool, which was open to African-Americans only twice a week.[192]

As the Supreme Court of the United States, largely in response to the agitations of the Civil Rights Movements, passed landmark legislations outlawing segregation, white Denverites like others throughout the nation continuously found informal ways to continue racial segregation against blacks. With respect to residential segregation, George Lipsitz (1994) observed how defenders of white neighborhoods responded to residential integration pressures at national level: "the refusal first to pass, then to enforce, fair housing laws, has enabled realtors, buyers, and sellers to profit from racist collusion against minorities without fear of legal retribution."[193] In Denver when the restrictive covenants in property deeds that

they had relied on for decades to segregate against blacks and other minorities could no longer be enforced after the 1948 Supreme Court ruling that made such deeds unenforceable, defenders of white neighborhoods collaborated with banks to refuse to lend to blacks, while real estate agents were pressurized to refuse to show black home-buyers homes in white areas.[194] As one would be black home-buyer, George Brown found out in 1954 when he tried to buy a house in a white neighborhood, the salesman explained to him: "I can't sell you this house, .. I have no objections myself. I really wish I could sell it to you, but I would lose my broker's license if I did."[195]

After 1959 the state of Colorado toughened its antidiscrimination laws and again "after 1965 when the state strengthened its fair-housing statutes in response to the national civil rights movement" many white Denverites resorted to leaving their neighborhoods when the fair housing law opened options for blacks to move into white neighborhoods. A phenomenon famously known as "white flight" and associated with large northern cities like Detroit, the Park Hill white neighborhood of Denver is one example of such neighborhood that experienced the exodus of some of its residents when blacks moved in.[196] However, the process of integration was not a smooth one since many black families encountered difficulties when they moved into white neighborhoods, with many facing intimidation and mistreatment. At the end: "custom, economics, and ethnocentricity proved powerful barriers against integration. …predominantly black neighborhoods persisted, whether within Denver or in other counties."[197]

All in all, although to a smaller scale compared to major eastern and northern cities like Detroit, Denver, therefore, has not been isolated from recent history of the hostility shown towards native black new comers to previously all-white suburbs in U.S. cities. What

is significant for this study is the fact that racial discrimination was a national issue and that the hostility of the white population to the influx of blacks into their neighborhoods has been a direct consequence of the long history of racial formation or race making in the U.S. Such reality or the problematic national issue of race and racism is made absent or politically contained by "cosmopolitan oriented" image of Denver as a unique and autonomous landscape or the cultural hub of the "Rocky Mountain West."

It is, therefore, within the contexts of the troubling national issue of race and a long history of residential segregation and hostility towards blacks that Denver has to avoid the contradictions of representing itself as a culturally significant, unique and autonomous landscape and employing indigeneity, including African indigenous art as a cultural category to represent its modernity.

African Immigrants

As the newest form of indigenous bodies to arrive at this U.S. city, recent African immigrants in Denver automatically occupy the socio-historical space that has already been inhabited by other indigenous bodies in the form of Native Americans and Native-born Blacks (African Americans) who have been involved from the start and whose lives have been profoundly shaped by the development of the city and yet, their stories have largely been marginalized and their presence greeted with disdain if not hostility.[198] The stereotypes and hostility, first directed towards Native Americans as highlighted by the "Sand Creek Massacre" and later African Americans gets projected towards the most recent form of indigenous bodies to the city, the African immigrants.

A recent "Literature Review for Evaluators of Recent Immigrant and Refugee Service Programs in Colorado," prepared for the Colorado Trust by REFT Institute, Inc. (March,

2002) has noted that the acculturation process for recent African immigrants and refugees escaping war and violence from the continent is hampered not only by the negative and devaluing stereotypes of Africa and Africans spurned for decades by the media coverage, but also by the legacy of racism and oppression in American society when stereotypes of African Americans get projected onto African immigrants.[199]

The experience of African immigrants in Denver is not unique, but a reflection of the status of race relations in the country as a whole. Despite the lack of formal and effective political alliance between African Americans and African immigrants post African liberation struggles and Civil Rights Movements in the U.S. that led to the formation of Pan-Africanism and Negritude movements (see chapter 5 for details), "the status of African immigrants [in the U.S. today]… is directly related to the issue of race, and the political status of Black Americans."[200] Indeed, African immigrants today do not have to deal with overt and legalized forms of racism on regular bases, thanks to the political strides, namely the civil rights achievements of African Americans: "let's face it. Had it not been for the civil rights struggles of the older Black American generation, Africans would have gotten called the "N" word as soon as they stepped off the plane. Eritreans would be riding on the back of the bus and Ghanaians would be looked down upon as just another 'Negro.'[201]

Nevertheless, the civil rights legislations did not fundamentally alter the prevailing racial ideology and attitudes towards blacks. Some high profile killings and brutal treatment of African immigrants in the hands of police, the now infamous murder of Guinean Amadou Diallo in the hands of New York Police Department in February, 1999 coming on the heels of the killing in Denver of a Senegalese immigrant Omar Dia by a white supremacist and the police brutal treatment of Haitian Abner Louima in 1997, all of which echo the fate met by

many African-American young men in their clashes with police, has proven that when it comes to the treatment of black people, America "makes no distinctions of cultural or national origins when dishing out pain to African People."[202]

As illustrated by the devastating impact of Denver's urban renewal projects on mostly low-income blacks, including African immigrants, the hostility or racial discrimination faced by African immigrants today is facilitated mainly through the so called "color-blind" policies and projects that, nonetheless ensure continued racial segregation (mainly economic segregation) which restricts opportunities for blacks and other racial minorities.

Demographics. African immigrants in Denver are not a monolithic group, but are divided by social class (which in most cases is related to their immigration status) and country of origin. About 53 African countries with different cultures and languages are represented by immigrants in Denver and these include Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, Ghana, Mauritania and Congo.[203] It is due to such differences in social class and country of origin that African immigrants don't live in one known neighborhood, but can be found in every neighborhood in Denver.[204] However, due to the problem of race and racial discrimination and the characteristic lower educational levels (especially among the refugee population) and hence low income, the settlement pattern of African immigrants in Denver is highly predictable, many find themselves in isolated enclaves of concentrated poverty with high crime rates, police brutality and poor social services and schools. As highlighted in subsequent sections of this chapter, even educated African immigrants in with better paying jobs also experience political and economic tension or segregation which restricts their opportunities to effectively integrate and participate in shaping the future of fellow African immigrants to the city.

The majority of African immigrants in Denver today have "enormous needs," many having immigrated into the state in recent years as refugees fleeing horrendous wars and conditions in countries like Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea. First, all immigrants, regardless of their country of origin and the circumstances surrounding their emigration, are vulnerable and rely heavily on the host nation for positive adjustment to the new country: "immigration itself is a stressor and may significantly contribute to adjustment problems as pressure is placed on families, including displacement, culture clash, family dysfunction, economic strain and various forms of discrimination."[205]

Added to such general stress of immigration and the trauma of war in the case of African refugee immigrants, a significant number of African in Denver are from rural communities and with very little, if any education, and, therefore, face enormous barriers to adjusting to an American city life. A brief history of Somalia where many refugee immigrants in Denver come from attests to the challenges they face in their new environment:

> Somalia is a rural nation in Eastern Africa. Most of its people (80%) are farmers, raise sheep, goats, cattle or camels. A revolt against the Somali government began in 1988 and a full-scale civil war broke out in 1991. As a result of this domestic conflict approximately 400, 000 Somalis were killed and nearly half-a-million more fled their homeland, many of whom were severely traumatized. The United States has accepted thousands of these refugees inside its borders. The first Somalis who settled in the U.S. were wealthy and well educated, while later refugees have come primarily from middle- and lower-class backgrounds. An important part of the Somali national identity is that they are predominantly Sunni Muslims.[206]

While racial tension or hostility towards African immigrants cuts across class differences, the racial hostility and lack of adequate services and programs for successful integration for African immigrants is most visible among the low-income and mostly the refugees that have been brought to the U.S. from different Africa with the help of the United

States government and often in collaboration with the United Nations. It is this group ("that tend to do low-paying and unskilled jobs due to language barriers and lack of education"[207]) that comprise the largest group of the African immigrants in Denver. It is this group that ends up mostly in areas of the city or its suburbs that are characterized by geographically/spatial isolated and concentrated poverty, high crime rates, poor public services, including school system.

Although refugee resettlement comprise only 10% of legal immigration into the United States, Colorado has in recent years taken in a disproportionately higher number of African refugees. Between 1980 – 2015 Colorado received 11,535 African refugees and among those, the majority were from two African countries that have recently been engulfed in a brutal civil war, Somalia (4, 111) and Sudan (1, 177).[208] Denver, which was once ranked 24th in the number of refugees resettled from 1983 to 2004, has become the home of the majority of African refugees.[209]

White dominated mainstream immigration and refugee services in Denver have a blueprint approach to aiding immigrants work towards becoming independent and self-sufficient. Like the afore-mentioned urban renewal projects that rely on positivistic and highly technical GIS mapping tools in planning the city's neighborhood redevelopment programs, the plan outlined to help new immigrants to adjust to American life sounds highly positivistic. For example, individual immigrant and his or her family are handled as "cases" and each immigrant family is offered 8 months of government financial assistance when they first arrive so that they could use this period to adjust to new life and find a job. On the surface, this seems to be a generous and helpful policy or approach.

However, like the blueprint urban renewal programs, the blue print approach to assisting immigrants tends to be irrelevant to the humanistic concerns and social struggles of the day that are faced by individual immigrants and refugees. First, the immigrant/refugees' family gets taken off the government help as soon as one member of the family gets a job. This does not take into consideration the type of job or whether the family member is able to earn enough money to support his or her family. According to Frederick Jayweh, Executive Director of the Center for Immigrants & Immigration Services, in general, no refugee has gone for the full 8 months of support since almost all immigrants get jobs within the first 8 months of their arrival. As already highlighted, problem is that most of these African refugees are former villagers or have very little education. They can only get low paying jobs and since the whole family gets taken out of government help once one member of the family gets a job, most of these refugees are struggling to provide basic necessities for their family. They normally do not have the ability to become citizens because it is a very expensive process, requiring about $680 per adult applicant. As a result, they continuously have to renew their green cards. All in all, these people will always be in need and almost always end up living in areas of concentrated poverty, which, as would be highlighted in subsequent sections of this study, are characterized by many social ills, namely poor public services, drug use and crime, and consequently frequent police patrols. As already indicated in this study, when it comes to their disdain or hostility towards the black youths, the police do no draw distinctions between African and African Americans.

Meanwhile, since the refugee settlement is on a case by case basis, at State and Federal level, the process of refugee settlement is considered a success once a family member gets a job and the case gets closed. By reducing people to "cases," the mainstream

immigration services is, therefore, divorced from the socio-economic environment of the African immigrants that they are supposed to be serving. The mainstream approach, in other words, does not engage useful social and humanistic questions regarding African immigrants, e.g., the challenges that they face in their day-to-day life, what type of help they need to enable them to provide for their families, what their aspirations or goals are and what type of help they need to reach those goals? By reducing all these humanistic questions to cases, the white-dominated mainstream approach to African immigration settlement, just like the positivist, fact-driven GIS technological tools for downtown Denver's mapmaking, African immigrants/refugees get mapped out of existences by immigration settlement cases. In this study, the impact of erasing or marginalizing the social and humanistic concerns of African immigrants can be conceptualized as reflecting the hostility or disdain the city harbors towards Africans or indigenous bodies.

Economic segregation and concentrated poverty among blacks. Denver has been found to have one of the highest residential segregation by income (economic segregation) in the nation and second only "to New York in the share of households earning less than $40,000 who live in the majority low income Census tract."[210] What significantly accompany this finding is that out of the 49, 000 residents who lived in Denver's extreme poverty neighborhoods in 2014, two-thirds of that population (64%) comprised of racial/ethnic minorities.[211] The prevalence of concentrated poverty among blacks and other ethnic minorities in Denver can, therefore, be seen as the strongest evidence of the continuation of racial discrimination against blacks. It is only when paired with racial discrimination that income inequality could result in geographically concentrated poverty among blacks and other ethnic minorities:

> High income inequality paired with high levels of racial or ethnic segregation result in geographically concentrated poverty, because poverty is localized in a small number of densely settled, racially homogeneous, … had segregation not been in place, the heightened poverty would be distributed widely throughout the metropolitan area.[212]

Since African immigrants (most of whom have recently arrived as refugees) and other ethnic immigrants comprise the low-income bracket, they tend to settle in poor African American neighborhoods whether in downtown areas (where segregated ethnic minorities and new immigrants traditionally reside) or in the outer-rings of suburbs in search for affordable housing and other social services for the poor. This is explained by the fact that African Americans in general "tend to live in systematically disadvantaged neighborhoods, even within suburbs"[213] and it is in these poor neighborhoods that affordable low-income housing is likely to found. This phenomenon has resulted in spatial concentrations of poverty or enclaves among blacks and other segregated ethnic minorities that are clustered around the city. In Denver as is the case in other post-industrial cities in the country, such neighborhoods with high concentration of poverty are characterized by related social ills such poor schools and social services, high crime rates and police raids.

In a post-racial era in which overt or Jim Crow forms of racism are no longer practiced, the continued prevalence of geographic concentrated poverty among blacks and its social consequences, although often represented as a color-blind processes, are in fact evidence of continued racism and hostility against blacks since the youth growing up in such neighborhoods are guaranteed to fail in life:

> The quantitative evidence … suggests that any process that concentrates poverty within racially isolated neighborhoods will simultaneously increase the odds of socioeconomic failure within the segregated group. The people who grow up and live in environments of concentrated poverty and social isolation are more likely to

become teenage parents, drop out of school, achieve low educations, earn lower adult incomes, and become involved with crime—either as perpetrator or victim.[214]

This point is highlighted in a TV interview exchange between the Fox News host, Mr. Bill O'Reilly and a prominent African American scholar and Harvard Professor, Henry Louis Gates on a segment entitled "Race and Politics in America" (April 01, 2016):

Fox News Host, Bill O'Reilly: "I believe that the collapse of the African American family unit, traditional collapse, the out of wedlock birth rate, the absence of fathers among black boys, that is what drives down the economic profile of African Americans – am I wrong?"

Professor Henry Louis Gates: "There is a wealthy, aspiring prosperous community, well-educated – but the problem is the cut back on affirmative action."

Fox News Host, Bill O'Reilly: "I am not opposed to affirmative action as long as it is based on economics and not skin color. That is the way I would do affirmative action, but I really admire your success because l know where you come from, but I want the message to get out to other African American leaders and the folks – that its education, but this country would afford you an opportunity if you seize it, its harder if you are black, but if you seize it, its there."

Professor Henry Louis Gates: "I have absolutely no disagreement with you about that – but I think because of what William Joyce Wilson calls 'concentrated poverty' in the inner city – that the odds of a kid like you or a kid like me ending up where you and I have ended – from that environment, for all the reasons that you laid out, those odds are stalked against those kids and we have to do something about it."[215]

Indeed a report on Denver murders by race and ethnicity in 2015 indicates that blacks are disproportionately affected. Out of the 50 homicides in 2015 in Denver (not including those committed by police) 28 were black, 12 Latino and 10 were white. This indicates racial disparity given that as of 2014, Denver was 53.4% non-Hispanic white, 30.8% Hispanic and 10.4% black (with the reminder consisting of Asians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska Natives, Native Americans and mixed race individuals).[216] The murder rate per 100, 000 people by race in the city highlights the following: Non-Hispanic white 2.82; Latino 5.87 and Blacks 41.35. Although not included in the murder rate, the murders by police further highlights the racial disparity: Of the 7 killed by police, 4 were Hispanic, 2 were black and 1 was Native American. [217]

In what should be considered a damning statistic for Denver, the murder rate experienced by blacks in Denver is found to be roughly the same as that of Detroit: 83% black and 8% non-Hispanic white. A number of important factors makes such parity with Detroit unflattering for Denver: Detroit police department is known for being extremely understaffed; Detroit also has 28% of its housing units abandoned and currently unoccupied, attracting high rates of crime to these areas; more significant, as a former heavy weight industrial city, Detroit has been one of the cities hardest hit by de-industrialization and, therefore, has undergone decades of economic decline.[218]

Denver on the other hand, is a city that has been experiencing rapid economic growth in the last few years. In 2015, the same year the damning statistic about black murders were recorded in the city, 2, 000 new businesses had opened in the city and 40, 000 new jobs created in the previous four years, dropping unemployment from 9.1% to 4.4%. [219] What is interesting and very significant to this study is what the mayor of Denver, Michael Hancock

attributed to such rapid economic growth for his city. Responding to the question by MSNBC Morning Joe hosts: What's behind Denver's booming economy? Besides other factors like the good environment for investment the city has created, Mayor Hancock highlighted the ability of the city to attract and keep a large number of the Millennial generation who, obviously are more educated and, therefore, part of the innovative and creative class directly responsible for rapid economic growth in Denver.

As highlighted in greater detail by the case of the historically black neighborhood of Five Points, the millennial generation as comprising of mostly the educated affluent whites is directly linked to the racial controversy surrounding the process of gentrification. The economic benefits of gentrification could be easy to point out, namely the transformation of once blighted and crime-ridden neighborhood areas into economically viable places that tend to attract investment into the community. The controversy surrounding this process, however, is when we take into consideration the often unspoken issues surrounding the impact the process of gentrification has on other communities, where the less affluent, mainly blacks and other economically vulnerable low income minorities are forced to go to. In the historically black neighborhood of Five Points, for example, the new affluent demographic that tend to replace the long-term black residents of the neighborhood are described as: "the new faces [that] are lighter, wealthier and younger, with smaller families."[220]   What this means is that the long-term black residents of Five Points who are mostly low occupy the low income bracket are replaced by the young educated affluent, mostly white residents described in MSNBC Interview by the Denver of Denver as responsible for the city's economic boom.

It could be inferred, therefore, that on the other side of Denver's current feel-good story of economic prosperity is the marginalization of poor blacks, whose displacements

results in geographically concentrated pockets of poverty and its associated social ills such as high murder rates and heavy police patrol in other areas of the city. It is from this perspective of marginalization or excluded poor black communities that we could understand why despite the recent economic growth and prosperity, Denver's murder rate among the blacks is equal to that of Detroit, the city that for decades has been experiencing rapid economic decline. It is also from this vintage point of Denver that we could make sense of why "the racial makeup of a geographic areas is the single best first order predictor of its murder rate when compared to comparable geographic areas (e.g. states, cities to cities, etc.)."[221]

As already highlighted, the black youth experiencing racial profiling and heavy police raids in Denver comprise of both African American and African immigrants (Ethiopian, Sudanese and Nigerians) reflecting that the two groups share the same geographic space and socio-economic status and more significantly, that Denver, through law enforcement sees no distinction between the two since they both represent indigenous bodies.

Why discrimination persists in Denver. Meanwhile, despite the fact that the Fair Housing Act was passed more than 40 years ago to end discrimination in housing, data shows that housing discrimination persists in Denver. As gathered from the complaint data, race is the most common reason for discrimination and remains a significant barrier for African Americans renters.[222] Given that 40 years has passed since the signing of the Housing Act, the finding that Denver had 622 fair housing complaints between 2006 and 2013 is a staggering, along the fact that "African Americans encountered discrimination 67% of the time …when searching for housing for housing in predominantly white areas."[223]

The persistence of discrimination in housing in Denver is also reflected on a national level when in 2015 the President of the United States, Barack Obama came up with new rules aimed at toughening or reinforcing the Fair Housing Act. The new rules stipulates that the government money can now only be used to fund new housing projects that demonstrate effort to further the cause of integrating the cities' neighborhoods, with penalties imposed on those projects that violet this policy.[224]

Cited in the same Op-ed, the Housing Secretary of the United States, Julian Castro attributed the persistence of housing discrimination to the fact that for many years since its inception, the Housing Act was "never adequately defined or enforced."[225] Equating the reinforcement of the Housing Act with a the fight against poverty, Mr. Castro vowed that his "department will ensure areas of poverty aren't ignored [by] giving towns and cities access to demographic data, so they can plan housing better."[226]

That Denver is one of the cities that does not adequately enforce the Fair Housing Act, could at the surface appear ironic since the city has been a pioneer in passing some landmark Civil Rights laws in the country and has always made a concerted effort to construct a global image of a culturally diverse and socially inclusive city:

> The Denver region developed later than many areas of the country and, as such, grew at a time when racial and ethnic discrimination was beginning to be addressed nationally through activism and legislation. Prior this period, Colorado and the City of Denver were pioneers on many civil rights fronts. In 1959, Colorado passed one of earliest state civil rights laws in the country. In 1947, Denver's mayor established one of the nations' first civil rights commissions. The City and County of Denver's current goal to be a "world class city where everyone matters" demonstrates continued commitment to equity.[227]

In this study I address Denver's contradictions by highlighting that Denver from the beginning and drawing especially from its long tradition of boosterism aimed at building a

world class city, has always been obsessed with the construction of a positive global image that, nonetheless, has always been contradicted by the local colonial history of the place as well as, the related social inequalities and conflicts. The main goal of this dissertation is to highlight how the city has always exploited indigenous history and culture, especially the qualities of authenticity and uniqueness for the purpose of enhancing its image and visibility (differentiation) in a competitive economic global environment. How the city draws on the notion of authenticity or essentialized difference associated with indigenous culture and history in order to disenfranchise local difference[228]or politically contain threatening local colonial histories and the hostility and disdain the city has always harbored towards indigenous populations. In other words, how the global image of cultural diversity and social inclusion closely associated with the construction of Denver as a "world class city" has never actually translated into local efforts of racial integration or social inclusion.

"Rocking the Boat." Like their fellow Africans immigrants in the lower-echelon of society (working class and refugees), African professional elites and businessmen in Denver, as elsewhere in the U.S., also face racial barriers in their day-to-day life, especially in their effort to bring about broader socio-economic transformation that could help the poor and economically vulnerable African immigrants.

The efforts of the Denver-based African lawyer Mr. Frederick Jayweh provides a good example. Upon noticing the deficiencies in the mainstream white dominated immigration and refugee agencies in Colorado, namely the impersonal or detached way they dealt with the most socially and economically vulnerable African immigrants, the refugees, Mr. Jayweh helped found a more refugee centered agency, the "Center For Immigrants & Immigration Services" in 2009. With Mr. Frederick Jayweh as the Executive Director, the

agency's leadership comprised of "former survivors of torture, refugees and community leaders, with the goal to utilize their vast experience working with refugees, including first-hand experience as refugees and survivors of torture, to "help meet the human needs of victims of torture and families."

The background information for the agency reflects an effective departure from the mainstream elitist, impersonal and blueprint federal and state immigration approach to working with African refugees:

> Center for Immigrants and Immigration Services was established on 1ˢᵗ October 2009 by former survivors of torture, refugees, community leaders. … We have knowledge and expertise in holistically screening, assessing, evaluating, and routinely reaching out to a variety of communities in Colorado in order to help meet the comprehensive and basic human needs of victims and survivors of torture desirous to resettle in Colorado. The Center for Immigrants is the only torture treatment and rehabilitation Center in Colorado. We work collaboratively with other community-based organizations to help meet the human needs of victims of torture and families.[229]

Besides being the first immigration agency of this nature to be headed by an African, the agency also successfully applied for a significant Federal Grant in June 2015. However, before the funds were finally disbursed to the agency, it came to light that this agency was headed by an African, which was the first time in the United States that such an agency in the United States was headed by an African. Upon the discovery that he was an African, the approved grant was not disbursed to the agency and no clear explanation was given to the executive director of the agency, Mr. Jayweh. The only feedback he got related to this matter, according to him, was the threat of a legal action by a white woman who was associated with Colorado State's immigration service who told Mr. Jayweh that as an African immigrant himself, he was not qualified to run the type of agency he was running and that only U.S. citizens could do so. It became apparent that the money was not forwarded because the Mr.

Jayweh is an African/black and by that virtue was not qualified to head such an agency. He, in fact, was entering a space that was not meant for indigenous bodies. He noted that "African immigrants are viewed as people who are here to be served and not to participate in rocking the boat."

Connecting the African diaspora. The development of Five Points neighborhood (see chapter 3) into a thriving residential, commercial and cultural community for African Americans in Denver in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s offer some critical insights into the opportunities as well as, the challenges faced by recent African immigrants to the city, especially the African elite in their attempt to contribute towards the broad and positive transformation of the socio-economic environment for African immigrants in the city. Marginalized and confined to Five Points by racial segregation, African Americans, most of whom were recent immigrants from the South and who, like the current African immigrants, were looking to better their lives in the new city, had found themselves in an ambivalent position of political isolation and with no support from the city's public institutions during the early decades of the 20th century that marked the height of racial segregation. They, instead, had to rely on group economics and cultural wealth to build a thriving black community that was bounded by a hostile environment of racial segregation.

In Denver today, African immigrants, especially the professional elites albeit being scattered around the city, find themselves in a similar ambivalent position of political isolation that African Americans in Five Points neighborhood found themselves in at the height of racial segregation in the early decades of the 20th century. Although African immigrants in the United States today are said to comprise the most educated immigrant group in the United States and also are "economically savvy, they do not yet have the same

political voice and clout that African Americans [currently] do."[230] In Denver, the recent rise into prominence in Colorado state politics of Joseph Neguse and Naquetta Ricks has been part of what is reported in the media as "African immigrants in Colorado are finding their political voice." Such headlines serve to highlight that for a while African immigrants in the state were not interested in local politics or did not think the political climate in the state offered a pathway for African immigrants to succeed or effectively serve.

Joseph Neguse, who is the son of immigrant parents from Eritrea in Northeast Africa, is an attorney based in Denver and was elected as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado, Boulder in 2008. Once a Democratic candidate for Secretary of State in Colorado, Neguse was also presented the "Rising Star" Award by the Democratic Party in 2010. Also rising in Colorado politics is Naquetta Ricks, a longtime resident of Aurora and whose family emigrated from Liberia when she was a child. Among many high profile local leadership roles she has taken, Ricks served on the board of directors for the Aurora School Education Foundation and is currently a Democratic candidate for Colorado House District 42 in the 2016 general elections.

Despite the transformative potential of a shared political agenda or unity between African immigrants and African Americans and, despite the two groups seeing themselves as united "in terms of racial discrimination and especially their relation to the American system of justice"[231] that is currently characterized by frequent accidents of police killings of both African immigrants and African Americans, the intra-racial relations between African immigrants and African Americans remains ambivalent, mainly due to the negative stereotypes each group has for each other.

Without any meaningful political unity or political cooperation with their native-born

African-American counterparts and also faced with racial discrimination from the wider

society, African immigrants in Denver (namely, the professional elites and businessmen)

have been quietly building economic and cultural wealth by pursuing strategies adopted

earlier by African American immigrants when they first arrived in Denver's segregated Five

Points neighborhood and managed to build a thriving economic and cultural community:

> Little did we know, African buying power has been growing and thriving right beneath our noses. From the Ethiopian restaurants, to Freedom Cab, to your corner liquor store, a few 7-Elevens, to the African Bar and Grill restaurant chain, and now, the prestigious Afrikmall project, African clout is large and growing. African immigrants in Colorado have been practicing the type of group economics and cultural wealth circulation that we thought Black people had long abandoned.[232]

It is within this context that the perception has developed that the shared political and

economic agenda between African immigrants and African Americans, especially the elite

who have made great political strides since the era of the civil rights movements, could help

positively transform the socio-economic conditions for blacks in general:

> Imagine African economic savvy combined with Black American political clout. Would our politicians have to answer to corporate forces anymore if we had a business district of our own to speak for us? It is an idea worth building upon and investigating. If you are going to play this American game, play to win. Group power beats individualism in capitalism, so don't be fooled. Africa has come to Colorado, and it is here to stay. Open your arms as wide as the Atlantic, and let's build some bridges. [233]

Since the era of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, African Americans

nationally, have made great strides in achieving political influence as highlighted by the

growing influence of the Congressional Black Caucus in U.S. congress who have great

influence on U.S foreign policy towards Africa and on whose political agitation the U.S.

immigration policy towards Africans has become more accommodating in the last few

decades.[234] In Denver, despite the black population of only 10%, the current mayor Michael

Hancock who is an African American is not the first black mayor of the city, Wellington

Webb who is also African American retired from his mayoral position in 2003 after serving

the limit of three terms. The election of African Americans to such an influential position in

the city is something that would not have been predicted by African Americans in segregated

Five Points neighborhood in the early decades of the 20th century. More significantly, it is the

position of influence that the African American professional elite and businessmen would

ideally have tapped into in their effort to bring about positive socio-economic transformation

for their fellow African Americans, especially the poor and economically vulnerable

members of the black community in Five Points. Instead, local black churches and the

generosity of local businesses as well as, the philanthropic efforts of black professional elites

helped sustain the poor African Americans in Five Points neighborhood during the height of

racial segregation.

So there are important questions that needs to be addressed: 1) Why should a city that

in recent years has elected two successive black mayors remain essentially a hostile

environment for both African immigrants and African Americans, especially towards the

most economically vulnerable? 2) Why can't recent African immigrants to the city tap into

the political strides achieved by African Americans, as highlighted by the election of two

mayors in recent years, to improve their socio-economic status in the city? In other words,

why is there no well-defined political agenda between recent African Immigrants and African

Americans given the shared African heritage and the racial hostility that the two groups

continue to face as exemplified by the frequent accidents police shooting of African and

African American youths? 3) Finally, why is the city that celebrates African history and

culture, as exemplified by the annual Five Points Jazz Festival and the Juneteenth celebration (see chapter 3 for details) continue to exhibit hostility towards blacks?

In this study I address these questions by highlighting the centrality of the notion of "authenticity," which when represented through the uncritical conception of the meaning of indigenous history and culture has the impact of depoliticizing or disguising both the historical and continuing forms of racial discrimination against indigenous communities (Native Americans, African Americans & recent African immigrants).

As highlighted in greater details in chapter 5 of this study, I deploying the notion of the "colonial present" in this study in order to understand how as an element of the dominant ethnocentric discourse of race, the notion of authenticity, specifically the doctrine of black racial essentialism, has ideologically maintained the social structure rooted in colonialism and the promotion of white supremacy (institutional arrangements and social outcomes which perpetuate the exploitation and subordination of the black community's social and cultural life) by being "blind to the complexity of the modern map of African social reality [and] … the multiplicity of identities forged in the crucible of colonization, globalization, diaspora, and the postcolonial social transformation."[235]

Indeed, what prevents critical dialogue and shared political agenda between African Americans and African immigrants is the negative stereotypes that the two group have of each other that are created by white dominated sensational media representations of both groups:

> African American stereotypes of Africans evoke negative bodily images while African stereotypes of African Americans evoke negative behavioral images. The bodies of African blacks are despised for their color and alleged ugliness, while African Americans are detested for their alleged propensity to violence and criminality.[236]

Such stereotypes held by African Americans and Africans about each other serve to naturalize the ever dominant presence of whiteness or structures supporting white supremacy, thereby preventing critical dialogue and transformative political engagement between Africans and African Americans. Therefore, the challenges of political coalition between African and African Americans, reflects the struggles over identity in America's highly racialized imaginary dominated by white supremacy as illustrated by blacks stereotypes of each other. This also shapes the struggle over access to resources as exemplified by the current tensions between African and African American students and faculty over access to limited resources at Universities and especially "the limited social capital of affirmative action, which was originally intended to mitigate the centuries-long deprivations of slavery and segregation that the historic African American diaspora experienced, but which has greatly benefited recent professional African immigrants and their children, as well as other racial and ethnic minorities and white women."[237]

What is crucial is the need for the realization among both the African and African American elite that the negative stereotypes, especially those relating to the propensity for violence and criminality are currently used to represent both the African and African American youth in poor neighborhoods to justify their killings by police. As already indicated in this study, in their brutal treatment of blacks, police do not differentiate between African and African Americans and this also applies to law enforcement in Denver:

> Sadly, America has a way of reminding us that Black is Black, no matter what side of the Atlantic you're from. The killing of Senegalese immigrant Omar Dia in 1997 at the hands of a white supremacist right here in Denver made it all too clear that America sees us as one people even if we don't. I have Ethiopian, Sudanese and Nigerian friends who have all experienced old-fashion racial profiling at the hands of

law enforcement. …[proves] that the powers that be make no distinction of cultural or national origins when dishing out pain to African people.[238]

The negative stereotypes of violence and criminality among the black youth, especially in poor ethnic neighborhoods are also utilized by the urban renewal projects in representing, among other poor ethnic neighborhoods, historic black neighborhoods as blighted zones of violence and deteriorating social structures and city infrastructure, thereby justifying them being mapped out of existence and replaced by economically productive neighborhoods with new affluent resident, mostly white.

Chapter 3: Historicizing Denver's Urban Renewal Projects:

The Case of Five Points Neighborhood

Introduction

Photo: Courtesy of Colorado Encyclopedia

Figure 2. The iconic Rossonian Hotel was synonymous with the thriving Jazz culture in the neighborhood in the 1920s through the 1950s.
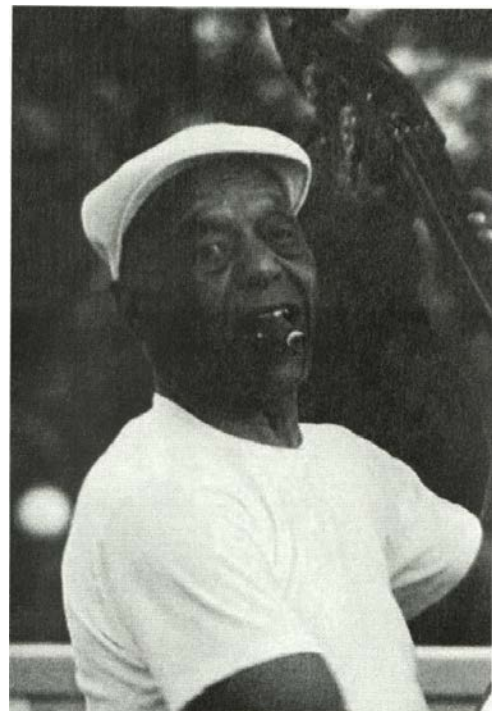
Photo: Courtesy of Mitch Handelsman

Figure 3. Charlie Burrell, his bass, and a Cigar.

The story of Denver's historically black neighborhood of Five Points reflects what Booker T. Washington observed in 1908 about the Westward migration of the Negro people, as men and women who were determined to build homes and ultimately, contribute to building up the country. Located on the northeastern edge of Downtown, what makes the story of Five Points an extraordinary story is the resilience and determination demonstrated

by its African American residents who managed during the 1920s through the late 1950s to build a flourishing cultural center for jazz and black entrepreneurship in the face of a hostile environment of pervasive racism and segregation.

While currently recalled as part of the dominant Euro-American cultural construction and celebration of the image of Denver as a culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape, if critically conceived, the recollection of Five Points' proud but highly segregated past could help bring into focus, the uncomfortable colonial history of displacement and segregation of blacks and indigenous populations that has been and continues to be an integral part of the development of the city. As such, the story of Five Points offers a critical window into the current social status of the city's historically marginalized ethnic and racial minorities – in the case at hand, black residents who (albeit overt forms of racism and segregation characteristic of the Jim Crow era) continue to be marginalized or socially excluded by the city's urban public policies.

Adding to its storied past as one of the nation's most significant African American cultural centers for jazz and black business is the neighborhood's downtown location, which, although in the decades between the 1960s and the 90s brought the misfortunes of many inner-city neighborhoods (poverty, drugs, crime and the departure of businesses) is now perceived as a convenient location near to the urban center and has placed the neighborhood on the path of new urban policies for economic regeneration and, therefore, a prime target for gentrification.[239] The gentrification phenomenon (which, as already indicated, has become synonymous with the influx of affluent residents, mostly white, into historically deprived and deteriorating downtown neighborhoods and the simultaneous displacement of economically vulnerable long-term residents, mostly blacks) has been identified as "the leading residential

edge of a much larger endeavor: the class remake of the central urban landscape [and has] direct connection to fundamental processes of urban economic, political and geographical restructuring."[240]

What is missing from the remark associating gentrification with the class remake of the urban landscape, is the racial element which historically has been integral to how cities have been built in the United States. As would be highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, both the creation of the suburbia in the 1960s and now the renewed interest in the urban core beginning in the 1990s have been characterized by the racial hostility towards, and marginalization of black residents.

Drawing on the concept of the colonial present, this study has already set out arguments for a renewed sense of history in analyzing the social impact of Denver's current urban renewal projects on the historically marginalized populations, in this particular case, the African Americans and new African immigrants to the city. From this perspective, the study conceives the social impact and politics surrounding the city's urban renewal projects and associated process of gentrification on historically deprived downtown neighborhoods (inhabited mostly by blacks and other ethnic minorities) as currently the most visible frontier for a much broader and historically present racial hostility and the continuation of residential segregation of blacks in the "post-racial" era and post-industrial urban environment. Scholarship on the history of racial formation in the United States help highlight how in the period after landmark Civil Rights legislations in the late 1950s and 1960s, racism and racial segregationist policies and practices have continued to be covertly or unwittingly implemented by dominant institutions mostly by ignoring or denying the inherent presence or historic influence of racism on such policies and practices and, hence the controversial

notions of a "post-racial" or "color-blind" society. Although in less overt forms of residential segregation characteristic of the early 1900s restrictive housing covenants and Jim Crow segregation that, for example, confined blacks to Five Points for decades till the late 50s, the social impact of the so called "color-blind" urban renewal projects (mainly through the associated process of gentrification) has been equally devastating as it often leads to displacement and concentration of poverty and related social ills such as unemployment, drug use and crime. As already highlighted in chapter 2 of this study, drug use and crime among the black youth has become a common pretext of racially motivated brutal treatment of black youth and other ethnic minorities by law enforcement.

Through a detailed look into the case of Five Points neighborhood, this chapter illustrates how the marginalization of racial and social justice issues surrounding the city's gentrifying downtown neighborhoods, specifically, the continuing displacement of economically vulnerable ethnic minorities including African Americans and African immigrants does not represent an individual, isolated outcome but an integral part of Denver's colonial present, one that exploits the history and culture of blacks and indigenous groups in marketing the place while simultaneously facilitating the social exclusion and hence, hostility and disdain towards black and indigenous bodies. When analyzed within Denver's colonial present, the economically vulnerable African Americans and African immigrants who are currently being displaced by the blue print urban renewal projects and the consequent gentrification of downtown neighborhoods can be conceptualized as occupying the same socio-historical space inhabited more than a century ago by Native Americans of the greater Denver area who were violently displaced to make room for the development of the city and its hinterland.

In this study there are two dimensions in which the story of Five Points counteracts or challenge the dominant global market oriented urbanist discourses that represents the current urban renewal projects and the economic revitalization of the downtown as an inherently positive and inevitable form of social change:

First, the story of Five Points places within the historical context of racial segregation, the origin of ideas and practices of the current urban renewal projects or economic revitalization of the downtown as well as, the consequent gentrification of the historically deprived downtown neighborhoods. As currently conceived, the policies and practices of urban regeneration projects (that are part of the ambitious reimaging of the urban center with the ultimate goal of creating the global brand image as well as, turn Denver into a flourishing global hub for cultural tourism and business) are seen as an inevitable and desirable form of social transformation, one that aims at turning these blighted and crime ridden downtown neighborhoods into economically profitable and safe environments.[241] As such, the current policies and practices of urban regeneration projects place more emphasis on physical regeneration of the city or greater investment on urbanism that would help facilitate the marketing of the city as a global "hot spot" for cultural tourism and business.

Closely associated to the emphasis on physical regeneration or investment in urbanism has been the predominant focus on the present and future transformative potential of urban renewal projects which serve to over-simplify or erase the past, thereby constructing a social reality in which there is a highly positivistic and optimistic outlook for the transformation of deteriorating historic downtown neighborhoods.

The critical recollection of the story of Five Points helps situate within the historical contexts of racism and segregation, the current urban renewal projects, thereby, highlighting

the socioeconomic consequences of revitalization such as the rising property values and rents and consequently, the displacement of economically vulnerable long-term residents of downtown neighborhoods, mostly blacks (gentrification). By highlighting the internal problems and racial social justice issues surrounding the gentrification of downtown neighborhoods (the continued social exclusion and displacements of the historically less favored indigenous residents of the city, namely African Americans and new African immigrants) the critical recollection of the story of Five Points helps challenge or counterbalance the highly positivistic dominant urbanist discourses in the representation of the redevelopment of the historically neglected downtown areas of the city. Emphasis on the social consequences of urban renewal projects creates a different social reality, one that calls for social intervention and locally oriented community development as a way of restoring the historic downtown neighborhoods to their proud and prosperous past.

Second, by providing some insights into the strong social ties and social diversity that enabled African Americans to build a flourishing cultural and business community even in the face of a hostile environment of racism and segregation, the story of Five Points leads us to question the very meaning of the redevelopment or economic revitalization of Denver's deteriorating downtown neighborhoods as constructed by the dominant urbanist discourses. At the height of its prosperity from the 1920s to the 1950s, Five Points neighborhood exhibited the characteristics of a community that was built on human scale, with strong social ties and oriented towards serving the needs of the local community.[242] This, therefore, calls for the humanistic approach in assessing the social impact of the urban renewal projects. From this perspective, the economic revitalization of the downtown could only be represented as positive if it benefits everyone in the neighborhood, including the poorest

residents. In other words, economic growth and social justice issues, including racial economic justice are not conceived as inherently opposed.

Partly because of racial segregation that confined African Americans with diverse income and social status in the same neighborhood and partly because mixed income housing was an integral part of how the community was built as "evidenced by a variety of houses. … Mansions [that] were built next to row homes"[243], mixed income residents lived harmoniously together, doctors, lawyers and businessman lived next to people who served them coffee and workers who built their homes and new each other's names.[244]

Closely related to the mixed income residents (social diversity) that characterized Five Points at the height of its prosperity was the close connection between local businesses and the community and how these businesses became part of the character of the neighborhood. For example, the now famous Welton Street was once synonymous with the rich mix of businesses and commerce it harbored, these included the "butcher, the real estate companies, drug stores, religious organizations, tailors, restaurants, barbers… and was also home for over fifty bars and clubs,"[245] including the now iconic Rossonian Hotel and Bar which became synonymous with the thriving local jazz music culture, and therefore, the character of Five Points neighborhood itself.

Revisiting the Five Points neighborhood's proud and prosperous past, should lead us to question the goals of current urban economic revitalization projects. Who benefits from the revitalized urban landscape? To whose preference and taste is the new consumption landscape built? More significantly, what is the social impact of economic revitalization (gentrification) on lower-income residents as well as, the historic character of the neighborhood?

As highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, current literature on the debates or conflicts surrounding the gentrification of historically deprived downtown neighborhoods highlight the dominant perception that although they result in the displacement and consequently, the impoverishment of economically vulnerable long-term residents of these neighborhoods, efforts to revitalize the economy of downtown neighborhoods and the unintended consequences of gentrification should be accepted as part of the reality that we live in, a capitalist society where market logics and not humans determine how cities are built and how houses should be allocated, all of which have led to the naturalization of the current urban affordable housing strategy as highlighted by the slogan: "drive until you qualify."[246] From this perspective of the social reality of living in a capitalist society, complaints about the social impact of gentrification (which is thus represented as a "color-blind" process) on the economically vulnerable residents, mostly blacks and other ethnic minorities (social economic justice issues) has been equated to "bitching and mourning about the weather [since gentrification is just life and, therefore,] – it just is."[247]

What is significant about the representation of gentrification as an unintended but inevitable consequence of a desirable social change (economic revitalization of deteriorating downtown neighborhoods) is that it eliminates or renders as irrelevant to dominant urban public discourse and consequently important policy decisions, the soul justice issues, including inherent racial bias or the historic influence of racism and segregation on the social impacts of gentrification on blacks and other ethnic minorities. This, as would be highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, is illustrated by the inconspicuous

absence of the discussion on social justice and race issues in the city's relevant public documents like the "Denver Downtown Plan."

Revisiting Five Points' proud and prosperous past, therefore, not only leads us to question the goals and social impact of economic revitalization of the urban landscape, but equally significantly it sheds light on the nature of socio-economic environment in which the seemingly intractable social and economic justice issues surrounding the current urban renewal projects and the gentrification of downtown neighborhoods could be more effectively addressed, namely by implementing redevelopment projects that are locally oriented to developing a thriving community (one similar to Five Points during the 1920s to late 1950s) than a global cultural entertainment center.

The current dominant and global oriented urban renewal projects that emphasize physical intervention or investment in urbanism as a way of redeveloping or restoring Five Points to its prosperous past can, therefore, not be represented as inevitable or inherently positive but a socially constructed reality that could be counteracted or counterbalanced by alternative conception of social realities.

The Rossonian

In the case of Five Points, the conceptual limitations of the dominant urbanistic approach to the redevelopment of downtown neighborhoods is illustrated by the failure of more than two decades of efforts to redevelop the iconic Rossonian hotel which currently has been perceived as key to restoring the neighborhood to its proud and prosperous past.[248] As highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, while now generally empty and in semi-desolate state, the Rossonian was always sold out during the 1920s through the 1950s when the Five Points neighborhood thrived as a cultural center for jazz and black

business. Having been the center of the neighborhood's social life at the height of its prosperity and thus becoming synonymous with the thriving jazz culture in the neighborhood, the Rossonian's historic significance was formally recognized in 1995 when it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[249] However, despite becoming a focal point of sustained redevelopment efforts starting in 1986 to the present (2016) and an investment of public funds totaling more than $3 million,[250] the Rossonian has so far failed to replicate the popularity and business success it enjoyed when it reached the summit of its jazz legend and as a result, "the once stately hotel and jazz club has now spent more time as a has-been than it ever did as a hot spot."[251]

This study highlights how efforts to redevelop the Hotel are framed by the dominant urbanist discourses that emphasize investment in the physical redevelopment of the hotel's building structure itself and the surrounding infrastructure and, therefore, are more oriented towards the global market (place-marketing) than on local community development or the social intervention aimed at solving the internal problems of the neighborhood. Such an approach, I show, fails to draw inspiration from the strong social ties and social diversity that characterized this historic Five Point neighborhood at the height of its prosperity and which, in turn, helped sustain the business success which enabled the Rossonian to reach its musical legend in the in the decades between the 1920s and 1950s.

As highlighted in more details in subsequent sections of this chapter, what makes the Rossonian particularly significant to this study is the social symbolism it represents and particularly the hidden stories about the social and cultural barriers that were broken at the hotel at the height of racial segregation in the city, which also happened to be the height of the hotel's business success. Local blacks and white jazz fans and patrons of the Rossonian

mixed freely at the Rossonian, making this iconic hotel one of the few places in the city and even in the nation at large where such cultural and social barriers could be broken even if temporarily, thereby, highlighting some fleeting social possibilities for the redevelopment of the neighborhood. As a historic or heritage site and, therefore, a significant symbolic structure, the Rossonian is, in many ways a microcosm of the Denver Arts Museum in that they both have the potential to play a crucial role as didactic instruments, extending notions and possibilities to the city and, more especially, the urban contexts or the city's urban environment in which they are both physically located.

The overall theme of this study, however, is how such potential to expand the meaning of indigenous history and culture and hence, promote critical cross-cultural dialogue and social inclusion tend to be defeated by dominant global market oriented urban discourses that are more oriented towards turning the city and the neighborhood into a global cultural entertaining center than an towards achieving local community development or social economic justice. More broadly, the insightful humanistic perspective of Denver's historic downtown neighborhoods that potentially could conceive or point to an alternative course for the redevelopment of historically deprived downtown neighborhoods, one that emphasis community oriented development (for example, one that could draw on the history of strong social ties and diversity that characterized Five Points neighborhood at the height of its prosperity) has largely been subsumed and, therefore, erased by the dominant Euro-American-Centered and global market oriented urbanist discourses – in the case at hand, the cultural construction and celebration of Denver's Western history and global image as a culturally significant, diverse and welcoming city.

In this chapter, I suggest such hidden stories symbolically represented by the historic and now iconic Rosssonian building (strong social ties, social diversity as well as cross-cultural interactions) that characterized the neighborhood at the height of its prosperity, although seemingly irrelevant to the current pressing issues in the neighborhood, could be tapped into in solving the seemingly intractable social justice issues and conflicts surrounding the gentrifying neighborhood.

Therefore, efforts aimed at redeveloping the Rossonian and in so doing, conceivably catalyze the restoration of Five Points neighborhood to its vibrant and prosperous past would need to once again look inwards for the development and empowerment of the local community just as the celebrated African American residents of the neighborhood did in the 1920s through the 1950s if forcibly by racial segregation.

The contrast between the humanistic perspective of downtown neighborhoods and the dominant global market oriented urbanist perspective can be illustrated by how they frame the most recent internal social problems faced by inner-city or downtown neighborhoods such as unemployment, drug use, violence and crime. With regards to Five Points, for example, local community activist, Jeff Fard talks about how during the period around the late 1980s to the early 1990s disinvestment and economic marginalization led to unemployment, drug use and violence that turned the neighborhood into "practically a war zone."[252] The humanistic perspective would highlight historical contexts of such social ills, specifically the historical influence of racial segregation and how the current urban renewal projects, mainly the process of gentrification, tend to exacerbate rather than alleviate the social problems faced by downtown neighborhoods. From this humanistic perspective, the redevelopment of the downtown would have to emphasize social intervention aimed at

alleviating the internal problems of these communities. Along the same vein, the redevelopment of the neighborhoods would have to be locally or community oriented thereby focusing on restoring the historic character and strong social ties that, for example, characterized the Five Points Neighborhood at the height of its prosperity as thriving center for jazz and black entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, as illustrated by the conception of the Denver Downtown Plan (see details in chapter 4), the dominant global market oriented urbanist perspective has highlighted the recent problems of these downtown neighborhoods (unemployment, drugs, violence and crime) as a way to stigmatize and represent these downtown areas as "blighted" zones that are in serious need of total transformation.[253] As already highlighted, such transformation has been achieved by massive investment in the physical regeneration of the city's downtown urban environment with the goal of facilitating the marketing the city as a global cultural hotspot. Discursively, this has been achieved by ignoring the historical contexts (racial segregation) and, therefore, the social impact of revitalization projects on the poorest residents in the area, mostly blacks and other ethnic minorities, thereby constructing a social reality in which the goals and impact of such transformation are seen as inevitable and inherently positive. In seamless ways, the positive framing of the transformation of the downtown becomes the foundation for place-marketing campaigns (global cultural tourism) that rely on the now transformed, innovatively constructed and attractive new urban environment to attract visitors to the city and local businesses.

Five Points Becomes "An It" Neighborhood

Today, the celebration of African American history and culture associated with Five Points exhibit clear evidence of more emphasis on place-marketing than on critical reflection

of the historical context and the social impact the city's urban renewal projects has on the economically vulnerable and historically marginalized African American residents in the neighborhood (social justice issues). The neighborhood's famous Welton Street, once the social heartbeat of the African American community, has been declared a historic cultural district and offers visitors a rich mix of African American music, food and culture, with restaurants like the Welton Street Cafe offering what they call authentic southern-style soul food and, hence the use of well-known catch-phrases like "southern hospitality." The stated mission of the Five Points Business District, an organization charged with the economic and cultural revitalization of Five Points, especially the Welton Street business corridor "involves marketing the corridor as a cultural and tourism destination for arts, culture and entertainment and that showcases Denver's African American history and the area's rich jazz heritage."[254]

Today the neighborhood also plays host to two globally-publicized and colorful annual events, the Five Points Jazz Festival every Spring and the Denver's Juneteenth celebration every summer, both of which are meant to celebrate and showcase the rich African American history and culture that centered in the neighborhood, especially the thriving jazz community through the 1920s and 1950s that made Five Points a cultural and entertainment destination and requisite stop for the world famous jazz musicians of the time. Famously nicknamed the "Harlem of the West" for having nurtured for decades, the entrepreneurial, creative, and persevering spirits of African Americans who exclusively had lived and worked there, the main sales pitch for visiting or living in this historic black neighborhood and hence, a historically significant part of Denver is that it offers a unique experience of a distinctively African-American history and culture.

The caveat with regards to this image, however, is the fact that due in part, to the processes associated with gentrification, especially the increases in income and rising home prices, the Welton Street urban corridor today has the characteristic of an up-scale neighborhood and, therefore, is unaffordable for the less affluent, mostly African Americans to live there. While "many African Americans continue to regard the neighborhood as home and frequent its social, cultural, and religious institutions,"[255] many no longer physically reside in the neighborhood either by choice or having been prized out of the neighborhood and, therefore forcibly displaced by the processes associated with gentrification. Nevertheless, so heavy has been the material and symbolic investment in the construction of the image of Five Points as a historically African American community and, therefore, a historically significant place, that "despite the fact that the [neighborhood] statistically is no longer a predominantly African American community, it is often thought to be by residents of the metro area."[256]

The current relationship between Five Points and its displaced long-term African American residents is, therefore, a testament of a city that exploits and celebrates black and indigenous history and culture while harboring disdain and hostility towards black and indigenous bodies. In the case at hand, the exploitation of African American history and culture in promoting or marketing the place in a historical and socio-economic context in which black bodies themselves are disdainfully excluded.

As currently conceived, the recollection and celebration of African American history and culture associated with Five Points is laden with contradictions since the development of the neighborhood as the heart of social, political and economic history of the African American community in Denver, although not defined by racism and segregation, has largely

been a response to and bounded by the hostile environment blacks have encountered in the city from the early years of its foundation to the present. In the early 1900s it was the "restrictive housing covenants and Jim Crow segregation [that] confined the majority of African American to Five Points neighborhoods,"[257] with an overwhelmingly fewer number of them settling in neighborhoods scattered throughout the city.

As already highlighted in this study, in more recent history, the racial tension has centered around the impact of gentrification which has been stimulated by the so called "color-blind" urban renewal projects that, nonetheless, have been perceived as facilitating the economic conditions in which the less affluent, usually the long-term black residents of the neighborhood have been forced out while the more affluent, mostly whites have been subsidized (mainly through luxury houses and improved public services) to move into this historically black neighborhood. Because of such perceived racial bias, urban renewal projects and the associated phenomenon of gentrification have been referred to as a form of "ethnic cleansing."

It is, therefore, within this context of historical and continuing hostility and marginalization of blacks that the uncritical conception and celebration of African American history and culture associated with Five Points could have the impact of depoliticizing or politically containing the historic and continuing social exclusion or hostility towards blacks. In other words, the uncomfortable history of racial discrimination that is inherently entangled with the development of Five Points as a historically black neighborhood as well as, the continuing racial discrimination and marginalization and consequently, concentration of poverty among blacks (more recently facilitated by urban renewal projects) tend to be politically contained or made absent when the history and culture of black residents of Five

Point is uncritically conceived or re-articulated and used as part of the construction and celebration of the image of Denver as culturally diverse and socially inclusive. Along the same vein, Chapter 5 of this study focuses more broadly on how the complex layers of meaning of indigenous art displayed at Denver Arts Museum is uncritically conceived, re-articulated and used as part of the construction and celebration of the global brand image or identity of the city.

Brief History of Five Points

Five Points and the other historically black neighborhood of Whittier are located in the northeastern part of downtown Denver, with Whittier adjoining Five Points on its eastern edge. Five Points was designated as the neighborhood's name in the early 1880s, which also marked the period during which the city experienced its longest growth period (1870s to the silver crash of 1893) and during which its neighborhoods were created and initially shaped.[258] The name "Five Points" specifically derives from the five-way intersection of Welton Street, 27th Avenue, Washington Street and 26th Street. Initially a white neighborhood with large German, Irish and Jewish population, Five Points became an exclusively black neighborhood in the early 1890s when the wealthy moved on to newer and more affluent neighborhoods such as Capitol Hill to the South, allowing African Americans who, prior to the 1890s were scattered throughout the city, to move in.[259] By providing a sanctuary to African Americans who faced racial discrimination and hostility throughout the city, Five Points "became the heart of the black community and played an important role in the social, political and economic history of African Americans [in Denver]."[260]

Although much of its historical significance derives from having been the home for the black community, the designation of Five Points as a historic neighborhood also derives

significantly from being one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, mostly for the more affluent. Given the "dusty," "rough" and "tumble" that characterized Denver's downtown in the 1800s, "Five Points was one of the city's first subdivided parcels described as 'far away from the city in the wide open prairie' …[and] the Curtis Park district, which is within the Five Points area, was considered the most elegant street suburb in Denver in the 1880s [offering those with means to move out of the city, an escape to the peaceful tree lined suburbs that boasted the city's first public park."[261] Unlike its adjoining Whittier which has been exclusively a residential neighborhood from its inception, the Five Points was from "its earliest incarnation, …a mix of residential structures – some grand and stylish, others more modest, and business and industrial concerns"[262] and, therefore, had been considered a more vibrant community.

All in all, the Five Points neighborhood has been marked by equally important long periods of success or prosperity and decline, both of which provide some important insights into how its long-term black residents have responded to and, most importantly been impacted by racism and segregation. The 1860s through the 1950s marked the period in which the neighborhood came into historic prominence as one of the city's oldest and most affluent neighborhood ("facilitated with the construction of urban railroads, and the city's first street railroad, the Denver Horse Railroad Company [which connected the neighborhood] with downtown Denver in 1871"[263]) and most significantly, its development as the heart of the black community in the city. This also marked the period (from the 1920s to the 1950s) in which the neighborhood thrived with a rich mix of residential, commercial and business, especially along the Welton Street Corridor.[264] The period of prosperity also

marked the time when the neighborhood became the cultural and entertainment destination for world famous jazz and blues performers, in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s.

However, the period from the late 1950s through the late 1990s was marked by the decline and deterioration of the neighborhood. In what has been described as the "urban flight," many creative and affluent black residents of the Five Points neighborhood left for newer, safer and more affluent suburbs. This resulted in the series of local business closures and consequently, the deterioration of the neighborhood alongside the influx of drugs and crime such that "by the late 1970s, its reputation as a dangerous neighborhood was well established."[265]

Recent efforts to revitalize and restore the neighborhood to the "thriving residential, commercial and cultural community it once was" has been marked by racial tension since the revitalization process, mainly through the urban renewal projects, as already highlighted, have been perceived by critics as resulting in gentrification, a phenomenon in which the long-term residents of the neighborhood, namely the economically vulnerable African Americans and other ethnic minorities, including immigrants have been displaced or forced out and replaced by the new and more affluent residents, mainly whites.

The Hostile Environment

The hostility towards blacks in Denver and, in particular, the black residents of Five Points is vividly illustrated by the formation of Neighborhood Improvement Association, formed by white communities surrounding Five Points that sought, through the covenants that banned residents from selling their homes to non-white, to prevent African American families from entering their neighborhoods, thereby confining blacks in Five Points.[266] The pervasiveness of racism in Denver was also demonstrated by the rise of the Ku Klux Klan,

particularly in the early 1920s into the mainstream political life of the city and the state of

Colorado. The Klan, whose participation numbers in Denver were boosted by fear of change

and cultural difference as well as, "the changing demographics of home owners and, to some

extent, employment dynamics"[267] boasted among their ranks highly influential elected

officials such as Clarence Morley who served as the governor of Colorado from 1925 to 1927

and Benjamin Stapleton who served as the mayor of Denver from 1923 to 1931.[268] By the

1920s Klan participation in Colorado "had reached an all-time-high" with fifty thousand

Coloradans having joined making the state's Klan membership numbers second only to

Indiana nationally.

It is not a coincidence, therefore, that the hostile environment for blacks in early

twentieth century also marked the "pivotal moment in the creation of Denver's African

American community."[269] Already confined mostly to Five Points by prejudice, African

Americans banned together and institutions like the church and black owned newspapers

helped glue the black community together in Five Points and beyond. Churches like the Zion

Baptist Church and Shorter African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the first African

American church established in Denver, Colorado in 1868 by the prominent Bishop Thomas

M.D. Ward, who pioneered African Methodism in the West, offered more than just religious

services to African Americans in Five Points:

> The Churches of Five Points offered incoming migrants and permanent residents a
> sense of place, community unity, and pride in home ownership. As elsewhere in the
> country, churches functioned as houses of worship, networking sites, places where
> members and visitors could appreciate Christian fellowship. Black churches offered
> opportunities to hear meaningful sermons from their distinguished pastors and invited
> guest speakers.[270]

The enduring influence of black churches in Five Points is reflected by the fact that despite the fact that most black residents have left the neighborhood, either voluntarily or forced out by gentrification, they still frequent Five Points for religious services and through churches that remain in Five Points, they still regards the neighborhood as home. In a 2003 interview, Reverend Frank Davis of the Zion Baptist Church revealed that out of the 1800 members of his congregation, about less than 10% of them resided in Five Points.[271]

The two local black owned newspapers, the "Colorado Statesmen" and the "Denver Star" that agitated for social change were instrumental in the formation of Civil Rights organizations in Five Points.[272] In 1915 Denver founded its own branch of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) with George W. Gross becoming its founding president. Despite threats from the increasingly powerful Klan organization, Denver's NAACP under the leadership of Gross and the prominent dentist and Denver's native Dr. Clarence Holmes Jr., increased its campaign against racial discrimination and inequality.[273] The growing influence of Denver's NAACP was highlighted by the fact that a little more than a decade after its founding, Denver would be host in 1925 to the national meeting of the NAACP.

The rapid growth to national prominence of Denver's NAACP is, therefore, a testament to the vibrancy and unwavering spirit of the segregated black enclave of Five Points, which, besides NAACP, was also the base for the Urban League which agitated for better jobs for African Americans.

What should have made headlines on the "Colorado Statesmen" and the "Denver Star" are the frequent visits to Five Points by the iconic progressive era (approximately 1900 to 1918) African American leaders and thinkers that included Marcus Garvey, W.E.B Du

Bois and James Weldon Johnson. Although the progressive era in U.S history was marked

by efforts to correct the social, economic and political injustices in the country, such good

will did not extend to African Americans who were perceived under the prevailing Jim Crow

racial ideology as characteristically undesirable and, therefore, part of the national problem

even by the white progressives. The surging Ku Klux Klan membership in Colorado,

reaching an all-time-high of some fifty thousand members in the 1920s had been a direct

response to the national trends, marked specifically by the D.W. Griffith's film "The Birth of

a Nation," which was released in 1915 and had glorified the Ku Klux Klan while

perpetuating stereotypes of African Americans as less intelligent, lazy and incompetent.[274]

The frequent visits to Five Points by iconic African American leaders and thinkers of

the time, therefore, highlights the national recognition that although not located in the South

where racism and lynching of African Americans by the Ku Klux Klan was more prevalent,

the African American residents of Five Points were at the "frontline" of racial segregation,

stereotyping and violence. Partly due to pervasive racism or hostile racial climate, and partly

due to the resilience and determination of local leadership as highlighted by the Civil Rights

activism of George W. Gross and Dr. Clarence Holmes as well as, the central role played by

the two locally black owned and trusted newspapers, the objectives, hopeful, uplifting and

prideful words of the new Negro thinker and founder of the Universal Negro Improvement

Association and African Communities League (UNIA – ACL), Marcus Garvey were well

known and resonated with the African American residents of Five Points:

> The Garvey movement illustrated how collective and individual confidence, faith, and
> pride can achieve African redemption. Marcus and Amy Jacques Garvey's
> thunderous voices were not only spellbinding, persuasive, and inspiring, but also
> pragmatic in constructing and promoting a human civilization of racial equality. Their
> slogan, 'africa for the Africans,' both at home and abroad, situated the African

predicament on the continuum as other global liberation movement. The couple rallied black Coloradoans to make the mental shift from a race of an inferior people to a race of superiority, a people embracing their cultural dignity, identity, independence, soul, and pride.[275]

By invoking the slogan "Africa for the Africans" while addressing African Americans in Five Points in early 20th century, Marcus and Amy Garvey critically expand the Denver downtown "frontier" beyond the limitations of time and place in situating the hostility towards indigenous African bodies in Denver. The slogan, in other words, globalizes or critically expands the socio-historic space occupied by current African immigrants in Denver, thereby highlighting the continuing colonial domination and hostility towards Africans.

"To the stars, through difficulties." The historic triumphs of African American residents of Five Points have been in spite of the racial discrimination and hostility the city has historically harbored against blacks. The neighborhood became a thriving residential, commercial and cultural community because its black residents had to pool their resources together not only to survive, but also thrive under the hostile environment of pervasive racism and segregation. It was due to the hostility they encountered in every other part of the city, for example, that blacks with different expertise, occupation and social class: doctors, lawyers, accountants, artists, entertainers, including cooks and janitors all "made their homes in Five Points – attending its many churches, patronizing black businesses, supporting three newspapers, a YMCA and YWCA, baseball clubs, and social activities of all kinds."[276]

Not only did the segregated African Americans in Five Points manage to maintain a normal, successful and independent community under conditions isolation and hostility, what also sets their story apart is the fact that these were "children of former slaves and railroad workers [who] grew to become merchants, doctors, attorneys, office workers and teachers

who served Five Points."[277] Due to the heavy odds that they had to overcome in order to

succeed individually as well as, build a fully functioning and independent community, the

perseverance, entrepreneurial spirits and success of the black residents of Five Points can be

summed up by the motto adopted by the locally based Colorado Federation of Colored

Women's Club: "To the Stars, Through Difficulties."[278]

Among the many African Americans who reached for the stars from within the

segregated Five Points in the early 20th century was Madam CJ Walker who became United

States' first woman millionaire.[279] Tapping into the thriving businesses, especially along the

Welton Street that included, among others, restaurants, real estate agencies, saloons, doctors

and dentists, Madam CJ Walker put her creative entrepreneurial gifts to bear when she

opened a successful business selling hair products. Madam CJ Walker, therefore, was

following the foot-steps of the aforementioned pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit of

"Aunt" Clara Brown, who, not far removed from the lifetime of servitude, migrated to

Colorado and successfully ventured into business.

So too, was the story of Dr. Justina Ford who became Denver's first African

American woman doctor.[280] Like many black immigrants to the West who were escaping

racism in the South, she had hoped for a better reception in the new city of Denver having

found it difficult to be African American, a woman and a doctor in Alabama in 1900.[281]

Ford soon realized, however, that racial discrimination also existed in the West when she was

not accepted by the Colorado Medical Society and also not allowed to practice medicine in

local public hospitals in Denver. Having arrived in Denver in 1902, she found a home in

Five Points where she "opened her gynecology, obstetrics, and pediatrics office …when

discrimination would not allow her to practice in public hospital."[282]

Besides her own personal success story of becoming the first African American woman doctor in the United States, Dr. Justina Ford, who specialized in women and children's medicine, was also known for her generosity, especially towards the marginalized and economically vulnerable citizens, "[caring] for immigrants and minorities, those cultures not accepted by the community or local hospitals."[283] Another distinguished African American doctor who was also known for his philanthropic effort in Five Points was Dr. Clarence Holmes who, "while not the first licensed African American dentist in Colorado, a distinction that belongs to Dr. Ernest McClain (licensed in 1907; practiced until 1948), … was the first African American dentist to join the Denver Dental Society."[284] Dr. Holmes, who also opened his dental practice in Five Points neighborhood's Welton Street, was also known for his generosity of performing free extractions for people in the community who otherwise would not have had access to dental care.

Holmes' contributions went beyond his dental practice since he was actively involved in several community organizations in Colorado. Besides helping found the Colorado-Wyoming branch of the National Association for the advancement of Colored People (NAACP), he also helped found the Glenarm YMCA (which was meant to counter the other Denver YMCA that were not open for African Americans membership.) Holmes is also known for founding the Cosmopolitan Club in 1931 of which he served as its President for 30 years. The club, whose membership cut across social and cultural divisions aimed at "promoting interracial and interfaith understanding."[285]

Popular historic businesses. What is significantly associated with the success stories of many individual African Americans in the segregated Five Points neighborhoods is the fact that they always made an effort to utilize their business or professional success to

help and provide opportunities for their marginalized fellow African Americans in the

neighborhood. There was willingness or voluntary obligation that was felt by local business

and successful individuals in Five Points to uplift the whole community, partly because of

the racial segregation and marginalization of the immediate community that they served:

> Local businessmen served as role models for neighborhood children and their
> enterprises symbolized success and stability. Often these local businessmen became
> leaders within the community and were well respected among their peers. Local
> business establishments became meeting places for the entire community where
> neighborhood issues were discussed. In addition, the owners of businesses in the
> district aided their neighbors by extending credit and helped many survive and
> recover from hard times.[286]

It is no wonder why, therefore, that the success stories of individuals and businesses

in Five Points are almost synonymous with their philanthropic efforts mainly to help or

extend opportunities to fellow African Americans and other minorities who were disdainfully

rejected by the white-dominated public institutions in the city.

Important and popular local businesses "provided the segregated citizens of Five

Points an opportunity to relax and enjoy a wide variety of entertainment"[287] that they did not

have the opportunity to enjoy in other parts of city. The Rossonian Hotel, the Rice's Tap

Room and Oven and the Ex-Servicemen's Club, all located in Welton Street became iconic

businesses in Five Points and were synonymous with the thriving jazz musical culture of the

neighborhood in the 1930s and 1940s.

Benny Hooper also became a well-respected figure in Five Points when he opened the

Ex-Servicemen's Club for African American soldiers who had suffered the indignity of

returning home after World War II only to find out that they were still not accepted in

restaurants, hotels, theaters and clubs around the city simply because they were black,[288]

meaning that not even their willingness to pay the ultimate sacrifice in service of their

country was enough to overcome the fact that they represented indigenous bodies that were disdainfully rejected.

Like Benny Hooper and others, Otha P. Rice, Sr. (1916-1993) became a well-known and beloved figure in Five Points as the owner of the iconic Rice's Tap Room and Oven and more significantly, for his active involvement in civic organizations and important issues affecting the neighborhood.[289] Alongside the Rossonian Hotel, the Rice's Tap Room and Oven personified Welton Street's thriving jazz and blues musical culture: "The two-story Tap Room included a jazz and blues club, a bar and a restaurant on the first floor and the Simmons Hotel on the second floor. The club featured live jazz and blues every week on 'Blue Monday' [290]and every Thursday was the ever-popular 'Ladies Night." Like the Rossonian and Ex-Servicemen's Club, the Rice's Tap Room and Oven did not only provide entertainment, but also a much needed sanctuary and welcome feeling for African Americans who were disdainfully rejected by entertainment centers beyond Five Points.

Perhaps, the lasting and legendary gift that Otha P. Rice gave to Five Points, and now the city of Denver is the Juneteenth Celebration, which is the celebration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Although in the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862 Abraham Lincoln had declared January 1863 as the date when all people held in slavery were to be forever set free, the declaration did not reach Galveston, Texas till June 19th 1865, two and half years after the proclamation.[291] Slavery was still practiced in Galveston when the news of this declaration arrived, prompting widespread celebration and jubilation. Otha P. Rice, who was a native of Texas, brought the Juneteenth celebration to Five Points neighborhood in the early 1950s. As already indicated, today, the celebration which is still

hosted by the neighborhood, has become part of the broader city-wide projects aimed constructing the global image of the city as a culturally diverse and significant place.

What is significant about these iconic businesses of Five Points is the fact that although they represent feel-good stories about this historically black neighborhood, they all also had dark tales of racism and discrimination since they accommodated blacks who were rejected by other businesses and entertainment centers around the city. The tendency for the feel-good stories to dominate the current recollection of African American history, especially the jazz musical culture associated with Five Points has the impact of politically containing the historic and continuing forms of social exclusion and hostility towards blacks. More specifically, it is this feel-good story aspect of the recollection of the history of Five Points that today dominates the marketing of the place as a global cultural tourism destination.

Dr. Justina Ford, Dr. Clarence Holmes & Counsellor Frederick Jayweh. It is also significant in this study to emphasize the fact that African American professional elites like Drs. Justina Ford and Clarence Holmes faced obstacles when they tempted expand their contributions to society. What would have enabled them to better serve their segregated residents of Five Points and other minorities would have been recognition by and membership of mainstream professional organizations, in this case the Colorado Medical Society. However, despite her accomplishment that ideally should have been be the pride for all Denverites and even the country, Justina Ford was, as already indicated, denied membership to Colorado Medical Society and was not allowed to practice in public hospitals, thereby, being confined to practice only in Five Points. Another African American professional elite at around the same period, Clarence Holmes, although he was eventually

admitted into the Denver Dental Society, he also had faced "some initial opposition to his membership."[292]

By attempting to join mainstream or public organizations that would have allowed them to have an impact on larger society and, therefore, a position of influence, Ford and Holmes were viewed as attempting to occupy a space that was not meant for indigenous bodies. They were attempting, in other words, to "rock the boat."

It is, therefore, significant for this study that almost a century later, another black professional elite, this time in form of the aforementioned Denver based African lawyer, Mr. Frederick Jayweh has been perceived today by the white-dominated society as attempting to occupy a space that was not meant for indigenous bodies when he sought to positively transform the socio-economic environment for the socially and economically vulnerable African refugees through the immigration agency, the Center for Immigrants and immigration Services that he helped to co-found in 2009. Like the African American professional elites about a century earlier (Dr. Justina Ford and Dr. Clarence Holmes) who, as already indicated, were denied the opportunity to tap into mainstream organizations/agencies (the Colorado Medical Society in the case of Dr. Justina Ford and, in the case of Dr. Holmes, being grudgingly accepted into the Denver Dental Society) where they could have managed to be more effective in bringing about broader and more profound transformation of the socio-economic environment for their fellow historically marginalized black people.

As already highlighted in chapter 2 of this study, it is through a critical examination of such socio-historical space occupied by both African American and African professional elites (Dr. Justina Ford, Dr. Clarence Holmes & Counsellor at Law, Mr. Frederick Jayweh)

that the necessary, but currently elusive shared political agenda between African American and African elites could be conceptualized.

A Cultural & Entertainment Destination

Segregated from the greater Denver community's cultural and entertainment centers, African Americans in Five Points, nevertheless, drew from their own rich cultural wealth to build a flourishing cultural and entertainment center of jazz whose far reaching popularity resulted in the neighborhood becoming "a requisite stop for world famous performers traveling between the Midwest and West Coast."[293] The ability of the black residents of this segregated neighborhood to look inward for happiness and empowerment amidst the hostile environment extended from economic and political spheres to entertainment and popular culture: "we had our Aunt Bees, our Opies, our Barneys—every character in the Andy Griffith show. It was a very insular neighborhood. Everything was there. And 26th and Welton was our Broadway."[294]

The iconic Rossonian Hotel on Welton Street was always sold out at the peak of jazz's popularity in Five Points during the 1920s and 1940s and accommodated jazz greats that included the likes of Miles Davies, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Count Basie and Lionel Hampton.[295] These talented and famous black musicians would perform for adoring fans, mostly white, in concert halls and hotels in other parts of the city but were not allowed to stay there and the Rossonian Hotel in Five Points was one place where they were made to feel at home. People enjoyed late night jazz gigs at the Rossonian because "these talented musicians, … would return from shows and play the small first-floor bar, still keyed up from their earlier gigs."[296] If Five Points was known for its jazz music, the Rossonian was referred to as the "piano-trumpet-cymbal-sax-blasting heart of Five Points"[297]

because the local and visiting jazz musicians filled the air with music into the late night hours.

Contributing to the historical significance of the Rossonian is the social contradiction it highlights about the relationship between the city and the segregated black community of Five Points, one that could be viewed as further illuminating the theme of a city that celebrates indigenous history and culture while exhibiting disdain and hostility towards indigenous bodies. At the height of racial segregation in Denver in the 1920s through the 1950s when Five Points represented a community "behind the barbed wire of prejudice," white jazz fans and patrons of the Rossonian Hotel ironically out-numbered blacks from within the neighborhood since most blacks could not afford the Rossonian. A popular local Jazz pianist and leader of Le Jazz Machine, Purnell Steen recalls how the white patrons of the Rossonian who were generally wealthier than blacks enjoyed special privileges:

> I can recall going to the Rossonian once as a little boy during World War II. If there was a long line of people waiting to get in, Quinton Harrington, who was the manager at the time, would go get the Anglos [whites] first, even if a black couple were in the front. He was black, but he would leave the black people standing on the sidewalk. He knew the Anglos could afford the cover charge and the drinks.[298]

As highlighted in more detail in subsequent sections of this study, just like they were priced out of entering the Rossonian in the decades between 1920s and 1950s, African Americans and other minorities today continue to be prized out of their historic neighborhood by the process of gentrification brought about the so-called "color-blind" urban renewal projects. When analyzed within this long history of the displacement and exploitation of indigenous history and culture, urban renewal projects and the consequent social impact of the gentrification process could be viewed as representing the contemporary or latest form of the colonial logic of the domination of indigenous populations, one that

excludes their bodies while simultaneously exploiting or appropriating their history and culture.

Nevertheless, the rise of Five Points as a cultural and entertainment destination that attracted the world famous musicians highlights the resilience of this African American community that was bounded by, but never defined by racism and segregation. If as the Mecca of African American entrepreneurship, Five Points can boast nurturing United States' first woman millionaire in the aforementioned Madam CJ Walker, as a flourishing cultural community for jazz, the neighborhood can boast producing another first in Charlie Burrell who broke the color barrier in classical music by becoming "the first black symphonic musician in the United States."[299] The bassist extraordinaire was a regular jazz musician at Denver's Five Points and attributes his success in classical music to his background in Five Points' Jazz:

> When I came through, I was exposed to the giants of the swing [jazz] era, the Duke Ellingtons, Count Basie, Earl 'Fatha' Hines, Nellie Lutcher, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald – there are not too many I didn't play with really. … If it had not been for playing Jazz, I could never been a classical musician.[300]

Now in his 90s Charlie Burrell is known as the Jackie Robinson of classical music, playing for years since 1949 with Denver Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and finally retiring with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra in 1999.[301]

While famous Jazz musicians were always in transit when they visited and performed at Five Points, the thriving jazz community in the neighborhood "was fostered by talented local musicians who continued to play at Five Points' hotels and bars when the marquees went dark."[302] Today, Five Point is still a bustling scene of jazz music thanks to the

stewardship of talented local Jazz musicians, including the aforementioned popular pianist Purnell Steen and his group, the Le Jazz Machine.[303]

     The Rossonian, symbolic function & urban context. As a heritage site with a complex relationship with the neighborhood and ultimately, the city, the Rossonian has the potential to unlock or make visible the city's hidden histories and stories that if critically recollected could help raise critical questions and solutions to internal problems of the city's historic neighborhoods. Although now empty and semi-idle, the iconic Rossonian Hotel building still stands prominently on Five Points' Welton Street because of the crucial historical stories it always had to tell about the neighborhood having been the hub of social life during its proud period in history. However, it was not until 1995 that the historic value of the Rossonian was formally recognized when it was named a national historic landmark and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[304] With the recognition of its historic value also came the perception that it could be effectively utilized as a focal point for the redevelopment of the whole neighborhood.[305] The Rossonian, as a result, has become the most visible symbol and hence, an important critical window into the neighborhood's "hiccupping development history"[306] under the current global market oriented urban renewal and economic revitalization projects.

     At the height of its popularity in 1920s through the 1950s (which was also the period when racial segregation in Denver and the nation as a whole was at its height), the Rossonian was a place where social and cultural barriers were often temporarily broken when white jazz fans and patrons of the hotel could rub shoulders with local black patrons in ways that were not possible anywhere else in the city. Even though the Rossonian was often regarded as too expensive for an average black person in the neighborhood and was generally about 95%

white, local jazz legend Charlie Burrell makes it a point to highlight the fact that blacks "could [still] go in there" and mingle with whites.[307] Jazz pianist and patron of the Rossonian, Charlotte Cowens points to the social significance of such interactions, noting that the white Denverites who patronized the Rossonian were exposed to the social possibilities that potentially could undermine the dominant racial ideologies and the political order of the time: "They mixed with us. They found out we didn't rub off. We were humans, just like they were."[308]

As already indicated in the introduction section of this chapter, the popularity and business success of the Rossonian was also based on the strong social ties that existed between local businesses and the community during the period when the neighborhood thrived as a cultural center for jazz and black entrepreneurship. At the height of its popularity and business success, the Rossonian, therefore, provides a glimpse of social possibilities of an economic prosperity that does not exclude others, but one that is built on social diversity and cross-cultural relations. Such social possibilities or the social symbolic significance of the Rossonian is conceptualized in this study hidden history or untold stories about the neighborhood and the city. If critically conceived and brought to the forefront, the hidden story of the Rossonian's rise to the musical legend of Five Points could offer some humanistic view or perspective of the neighborhood's history which, in turn, could offer some critical insight into the current social status of African Americans and other ethnic minorities and hence, the best intervention strategies needed to restore the neighborhood to its proud historic period of prosperity for all.

In this study, I argue that while seemingly irrelevant and inconsequential, the hidden histories and stories surrounding the rise to the musical legend of the Rossonian could be

recalled in addressing some of the pressing social issues of today, especially the social justice issues and conflicts arising from the current urban renewal projects, especially the gentrification of Five Points neighborhood. In so doing, the Rossonian mirrors the potential symbolic role of another prominent building in the downtown neighborhood, the evocative Denver Arts Museum building (DAM), namely on how as an evocative entity it could effectively engage the urban contexts not only with its image, but also with its content.[309] DAM's collection of historically and culturally diverse artifacts as well as, its innovative exhibition techniques that aim at introducing more inclusive narratives of art, history and culture to reflect the heterogeneity of the city and the museum's global audience, has the potential to expand the social, cultural and historical contexts within which the meaning of indigenous art and culture could be experienced or analyzed. More specifically, such innovative exhibition techniques and hence, evocative potential could be brought into dialogue with the current urban contexts that are characterized by racial and social conflicts emanating from the process of gentrification.

However, although the historic value of the Rossonian has recently been recognized (as evidenced by its listing as a National Historic Landmark in 1995) and its redevelopment now perceived as key to restoring Five Points to its vibrant and prosperous past, the historic value and redevelopment of the Rossonian as framed by the current dominant global market oriented urban renewal projects fail to tap into the hidden story of the Rossonian. From the global market oriented perspective, the meaning of African American history and culture as represented by the Rossonian is re-articulated and used as part of the broad urban cultural projects that are designed to market the city as a global cultural tourism destination. As already highlighted in the introductory chapter of this study, while they possess a

democratizing potential when critically conceived and their content and stories brought into dialogue the urban contexts, under the colonial tradition of exploitation indigenous history and culture, the symbolic meaning of museums and heritage sites like the Rossonian has traditionally been re-articulated to authenticate or legitimize Western cultural traditions and modern institutions, often in socio-economic conditions in which indigenous bodies themselves are socially excluded.[310]

The influence of the dominant global market oriented approach in conceptualizing the historic value of the Rossonian and, hence, its redevelopment approach is evidenced by a more urbanistic approach to the redevelopment of the building which emphasis the physical investment in improving the physical appearance of the building itself and the surrounding infrastructure while ignoring the social impact such physical transformation of the urban environment on historic local business and hence, the character of the neighborhood.

Beginning in the 1980s, successive individuals and business brought the Rossonian building and invested significant amounts of money on renovation.[311] For example, the latest of the successive ownerships of the building, the Bourgeois's Civil Technology Firm got into partnership with Sage Hospitality in 2014 and planned "a luxury hotel and condominium complex at the Rossonian [and] early designs called for a new eight-story structure behind the original three-story hotel, with the connected buildings containing 105 hotel rooms, 40 condos or apartments, two restaurants, a jazz club, a fitness center, and 60,000 square feet of office space."[312]

In what further attest to the urbanist bias in this partnership and, therefore, the global market orientation in the redevelopment of the Rossonian is the fact that Sage Hospitality Firm also "worked on the redevelopment of Union Station,"[313] which is one of Denver's

major downtown redevelopment project developed with an ambitious goal of revitalizing the downtown and ultimately turning it into an international "hot spot" for cultural tourism and business.

However, despite the fact that since 1986 more than $3 million of the public funds have been invested in redeveloping the Rossonian (mainly through loans extended to private individuals and firms by public entities such as Denver Office of Economic Development[314]), these efforts have so far not been able to restore the Rossonian to the level of popularity and business success the iconic hotel once enjoyed when it reached its musical legend as the best jazz club for decades between the 1920s to the 1950s.

The impact on local businesses and hence, the character of the neighborhood of such physical or urbanist approach to redevelopment have been profound. For example, associated with the redevelopment of the Rossonian has been the urban design of the light rail whose tracks that are close to the south side of Welton is viewed by some as not only creating "a barrier between both sides of the street and an unpleasant sidewalk frontage on the south side," in addition, it has been blamed for the demise of many historic businesses in the early 1990s, especially along the historic Welton Avenue commercial core of the neighborhood.[315]

If race could be dismissed as a factor in the demise of historic black business in Five Points, this exchange between Denver activist, Melissa Kleinman and Shareef Aleem, an activist and founder of the Aurora, Colorado Chapter of Cop Watch, that reveals the still existing brutal forms of racism experienced by long term black businesses and residents which contradicts the "color-blind" approaches to social justice issues in the neighborhood and more broadly, current celebration of the neighborhood's black history and culture:

Published on (September 10, 2010) by online magazine, Workers World, "Denver Struggles against police brutality, gentrification":

Kleinman: Recently there have been a few struggles in Denver. Can you tell us what happened at the Zona's Tamales restaurant, in the historically Black neighborhood of Five Points?

Aleem: The police did a vice sting on owner Zona Moore, an 84-year old Black woman, for allegedly having received stolen merchandise. The cops say her brother bought a stolen TV from someone. They charged Zora with theft by receiving. Meanwhile, a nuisance abatement was filed against her Zora's Tamales, based on accusations of loud customers outside the restaurant.

Over the last 10 years the city has used whatever means to take over not only black owned businesses, but black people's homes as well. Zona's restaurant sits on prime real estate for condominiums that black people in the area can't afford.

Her restaurant has been in the Five Points community for over 40 years. In previous years she met with the police and the city because as the neighborhood became gentrified she received noise complaints. Destroying her business is a mission they had for some time now. This was their latest effort to get her out.

Kleinman: How did the community organize a defense for Zona?

Aleem: When Zona was arrested – the elder was taken to jail in an ambulance – her daughter contacted me. Three days later we held a rally in Five Points consisting of community leaders, respected businesses and supporters. There were over 100 people. The community doesn't want to see her shut down. This won't be the end of it, even though she is still in business.

A noted scholar in urban sociology, Sharon Zukin, explains how the destruction of

such pressures and subsequent destructions of local traditional businesses often lead to the

gradual replacement of traditional local products and hence, the character of ethnic or racial

minority neighborhoods themselves:

> How many people have seen the local hardware store closed and be replaced by a
> frozen yogurt shop – and a lot of these changes in small stores represent the growing
> power of expansion of chain stores, a lot of them represent the absoluteness of a lot of
> certain products. …So we are seeing a lot of things changing neighborhood character
> all at once and there are neighborhoods where the gentrifiers who are wealthier and
> buying homes of people of color …and others where the diversity of more affluent
> people coming in brings white people.[316]

Today, Five Points neighborhood is celebrated for its African American history and

culture as part of the construction of the city's global brand image as a historically

significant, culturally diverse and socially inclusive, yet many of the neighborhood's long-

term black residents still face racial discrimination in their day-to-day life and many no

longer reside in neighborhood, having been prized out or displaced by the processes related

to gentrification. The case study, therefore, illustrates in concrete ways the theme of the

study, namely the inherent contradiction involved in the exploitation of indigenous history

and culture in the cultural construction of the global image of a city that disdains or is hostile

towards indigenous bodies.

The Decline & Gentrification

From the beginning, Five Points has always benefited from being diverse community

"with a diverse economic mix of residents, evidenced by the variety of houses there.

Mansions were built next to row homes."[317] Unlike other neighborhoods that were entirely

residential like the adjoining Whittier, for example, Five Points derived its vibrancy from its

mixed use for land – sustaining different business and industrial interest.[318] When the

neighborhood became predominantly African American in the early 20th century, it was ironically the discriminatory home sale laws that kept blacks segregated in Five Points that contributed to bolstering the neighborhood's vibrancy because a diverse economic mix of black residents were forced to live and work in the same neighborhood and as a result, developed a thriving residential, commercial and community based on a rich mix of business and commerce, especially along the famous Welton street.[319]

As already highlighted in this study, it was on the back of such rich mix of land use based on a long tradition as well as, a diverse economic mix of residents (when doctors and cooks and lawyers and janitors lived together as neighbors) that characterized Five Points through the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s and sustained the thriving social and economic conditions of the neighborhood. Equally significant and highly symbolic is the fact that the iconic Rossonian hotel and lounge also reached the height of its popularity and music legend during this period.

In what could seem at first glance as highly ironic, the demise of Five Points as a thriving economic and cultural center for African Americans was triggered by the successes in Civil Rights legislations that allowed many African American residents, mostly the more affluent to leave the neighborhood, taking advantage of the lifting of restrictive real estate covenants to realize their American dream of moving to the suburbs.[320] However, the desire for African Americans to leave Five Points can be understood within the context of the immigration pattern in the United States that equates spatial assimilation with social mobility or economic success:

> Throughout US history, racial and ethnic groups arriving in the United States for the first time have settled in enclaves located close to an urban core, in areas of mixed land use, old housing, poor services, and low or decreasing socioeconomic status. As

group members build up time in the city, however, and their socioeconomic status rises, they tend to move out of these enclaves into areas that offer more amenities and improved conditions—areas in which majority members are more prevalent—leading to their progressive spatial assimilation into society.[321]

Spatial mobility for immigrants (ability to move from poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods often the older urban core or deteriorating inner city areas) to the suburbs with better amenities constitute an important step in attaining social mobility or integration for immigrants. The concentration of blacks and other ethnic minorities in downtown or inner city neighborhoods is, therefore, a result of systemic racism, namely residential segregation that forcibly confined blacks to rigidly segregated and deteriorating downtown neighborhoods.

When blacks migrate into American cities, mostly from the South they found out that "avenues of spatial assimilation [were] systematically blocked by prejudice and discrimination."[322] The urban flight of black residents of Five Points, therefore, do not represent a unique situation, but the general eagerness of African Americans throughout U.S. cities to finally realize the post war American dream of moving to the suburbs, the dream that had been delayed by systemic racism: "The lifting of restrictive real estate covenants in 1959 and again in 1965, prompted African Americans to join the post war American dream of moving to the suburbs. Taking advantage of the opportunity that was not previously available, African Americans left the aging housing stock in Five Points for the new houses of places such as Aurora."[323]

It is in this context that for many black residents of Five Points, "making it in Denver often meant leaving Five Points."[324] This sentiment is also shared by the 81 year-old John Porter, a former resident of Five Points who for 40 years had been a resident of Park Hill.

When asked in 2005 about the prospect of returning to a revitalized and renewed Five Points neighborhood was ambivalent about the idea.[325] His reflection about his former neighborhood reveals the feelings of those who were able to leave, but also those of economically vulnerable residents of this neighborhood who could not afford to move out of the neighborhood voluntarily: "when they tried to revive Five Points, people felt like, 'I spent all this effort to get out of Five Points, why would I want to go back? That is how I felt."[326]

Affluent black families started moving east wards to the city's newest neighborhoods which, therefore, offered better public amenities and these included Montbello, Green Valley Ranch and eventually Denver International Airport and Stapleton.[327] In the 1990s the eastwards shift among African Americans was due to the gentrification of historically black neighborhoods such as Five Points, Whittier and Cole.[328]

The current Denver mayor, Michael Hancock is one of the African American residents of a historically African American community who moved eastwards due to the process of gentrification. His experience illustrates how gentrification leads to the departure of both the affluent and economically vulnerable African Americans from their historic neighborhoods. As a home owner, Hancock took advantage of rising property values to sell is home and move east: "I was one of those home owners, so I know that you bought a home for $40, 000 and sold it for $120, 000 or $130, 000 and you move to Green Valley Ranch— the bigger the better that was what the model was, more house for more money."[329]

However, as noted by Sharon Zukin, while home owners in gentrifying neighborhoods feel the pressure and temptation to sell their houses for a lot more money than they paid, there is a significant difference on how gentrification affects home owners and renters since renters are the most economically vulnerable. While home owners have an

option to stay in place, renters have no choice and are forced out of the neighborhood by

"rapidly rising housing prices."[330] Overall, the social impact of gentrification on historically

black neighborhoods in Denver (the physical displacement of indigenous bodies) could be

summarized by Mayor Hancock' observation: "Today if you are to point to a physically

majority African American community in Denver, you could not do it. Not like when we

grew up. If you asked me as I grew up where African Americans were, I would tell you Five

Points and Park Hill."[331] As highlighted in subsequent sections of this chapter, the loss of

majority African American communities directly leads to the loss of political representation

since the city's council seats traditionally held by African Americans can no longer be

guaranteed due to the district's rapidly changing populations.[332]

The eraser of African American proud history. Local community activist, Jeff

Fard, a.k.a, Brother Jeff, describes the social devastation that resulted from the flight of well-

to-do African Americans from the neighborhood:

> If we start thinking about some of the housing covenants that came down in the 70s,
> you start to see a migration of individuals outside of this community who had means
> to leave, and then when you start to move into the 80s, you start to experience a great
> decline based on drugs particularly and the loss of jobs had an incredible impact on
> those who were working their way through the job system or economic system that
> had a bottom rung, where the bottom rung was pulled out. And then when the drugs
> came in you saw and intense decline in community around the late 80s, early 90s to
> where this was practically a war zone.

It such deterioration of the social fabric that historically had characterized these

downtown neighborhood, triggered mostly by the departure of business and investment, that

has been highlighted and used to stereotype these neighborhoods as "blighted" zones of drug

use and crime that were in serious need of transformation. Such stereotyping and

stigmatization, highlighted in this study by the characterization of Denver's deteriorating

downtown neighborhoods in "Denver Down Town plan,"[333] has often been perceived as

justification for gentrification. Responding to the characterization in a Canadian TV panel

discussion of "Regent Park," a gentrifying downtown neighborhood in Toronto, Canada that

shares similar features to Five Points, as having been at some point "one of the most God

forsaken parts of the city,"[334] due to drug use, crime and unemployment, Martine August

who had conducted extensive research on the neighborhood not only disagreed, but also

pointed out that such characterization has been used to justify the gentrification of such

neighborhoods:

> This is a common perception that you often see put on public housing communities and often places where you find a lot of racialized poverty … stereotyping and stigmatization of these places is dangerous and a lot that feeds into and justifies the need for redevelopment and the need for gentrification. So another key piece about Regent Park is that it is massively gentrified. They are building 5 400 condominiums in this community that is going to be 75% market housing. So there is a dramatic social and cultural transformation that is being unleashed on that community.[335]

Participating in the same discussion panel, Diane Dyson, Director of Research and

Public Policy at Woodgreen Community Services notes how such stigmatization and

subsequent gentrification often leads to the transformation and hence, destruction of strong

social ties that characterized these communities: "Regent Park was built on a human scale.

There was 4 or 5 stories high, loud enough so the mother could call down to children playing

outside and say come on in for dinner. …and what happened as it was being redeveloped is

that instead of moving people around within the community, we moved people to

Scarborough, another suburb where they were landed in places where they had no social

connections."[336]

The strong social ties that characterized "Regent Park" are echoed by Five Points

residents in a historical documentary about the neighborhood published by the Rocky

Mountain PBS (July 05, 2012). In this documentary Five Points residents talk about how everyone knew everyone else in the neighborhood and how people sat on their front porches and how few locked their doors. The documentary also narrates how "like ban raising residents pooled their resources, built their own Churches and created fraternal organizations." House parties and backyard barbecues are also said to have characterized the neighborhood during happier times. Also interviewed in the documentary was who one Five Points resident who recounted on how when she was growing up her grandmother had friends who were also parents and could discipline you if they caught you doing something wrong: "you could get spanked by a stranger, that is how much trust there was in the neighborhood."[337] Personifying the strong social ties that characterized Five Points during its proud moments is history is the story of the aforementioned popular doctor, Dr. Justina Ford "who made house calls and delivered most of the babies in Five Points."[338] Those Five Points residents who were delivered by Dr. Ford are said to have proudly called themselves the "Ford Babies."

It is such strong social ties and hence, the humanistic view of the historically black neighborhoods of Denver as highlighted by the case of Five Points that are being authoritatively erased by the blackened or "blighted" spots by the maps of Denver's Downtown Plan. As legitimating tools of the state/city, the imposing maps of the downtown plan have effectively constructed such historically black neighborhoods as creating a "physical and psychological barrier"[339] to safety and economic viability of downtown neighborhoods, thereby, creating a social reality in which their radical transformation is seen as inherently positive and desirable. The description of the redeveloped and transformed downtown neighborhoods as "walkable" and "safe," have, therefore, a racial undertone of the

dangerous and disdainful black bodies (indigenous bodies) having been removed from the scene.

Community activist, Jeff Fard's reflection about the current social status of African Americans in Five Points reflects the concern that the neighborhood has become a thriving global cultural tourist center that showcases the proud history and culture of African Americans in a socio-economic environment in which those African Americans themselves are currently excluded. He notes that Five Points is in the middle of a resurgence:

> But that [the] resurgence does not necessarily include fully the African American community or people who are looked outside of the economic means to participate, and so I am very interested in making sure that as this community thrives, this community becomes a place where every from everywhere comes to experience, that they will also see that there are people here that represented all economic levels, from all backgrounds, etc. We don't want this to be just a high end community that had a history of 'has beens' or 'used to bees' …..and we are also creating a network of people who are making sure that everyone is included.[340]

Demographic changes and impact on traditional black council seats. Today the Five Points neighborhood exhibits clear evidence of changes in racial makeup resulting from process of gentrification. Although still a hub for African American culture, music and food, evident mostly along Welton Street and although still playing host to the Five Points Jazz Festival every Spring and the Juneteenth celebration every Summer, the current racial makeup of the Five Points neighborhood has changed drastically. The U.S. census carried out in 2010 found out that Caucasians today make a majority of the resident's population (56.95%). With a Caucasian population of over 50%, it is clear who is getting displaced by the urban renewal projects in this neighborhood.[341]

As already indicated, the heavy cultural and economic investment (revitalization) in Five Points in recent years has given the place the visibility and a feel of a neighborhood that

is undergoing a renaissance. Millions of investment by the city and private developers, namely the subsidized upscale redevelopment projects has been experienced through mushrooming of new luxury apartments and soaring median home values. Subsidized luxury combined with the neighborhood's convenient urban location (convenient light rail access to downtown) has attracted the expanding millennial population (young, educated, high income and mostly white residents) from the city and beyond who are part of the manifestation of Denver's currently "booming economic engine."[342] If the new look and feel of Five Points, especially the Welton business corridor, is what defines a trendy or an "it" neighborhood that is being widely promoted to market the place, it means that it is one that excludes the long-term residents of the neighborhood the African American who comprise mostly the low income bracket and darker skinned:

> Take a walk through Five Points and you will notice that the scenery is a lot different than it was 30 years ago: new businesses, new condominiums, remodeled Victorians, and the people walking dogs and pushing babies in strollers are not the same as those seen in the 1970s, 80s or even the early 90s. The residents in the historically African American neighborhood, and the nearby neighborhoods that make up Council District 8, have changed. The new faces are lighter, wealthier, and younger, with smaller families.[343]

It is due to such visible changes that the process of gentrification, which as indicated, is "happening everywhere, but in Five Points [as pointed out] it has a face."[344] It is in the light of such effects of gentrification on Five Points, especially the rapidly changing demographics that the Denver historian Phil Goodstein wonders why the place is still regarded as black community: "There is an irony there that I don't think they get. If the area is increasingly more affluent and white, how is it still the 'Harlem of the West'?"

Proponents of gentrification see it as a "color-blind" process that is inevitable under the current conditions of the global economy with its emphasis on capitalist production and

consumption. As would be highlighted in greater details in chapter 4 of this study, this debate extends to the debate on the public role of art museums, with proponents of consumerism viewing the commercialization of museums as an inevitable path to a successful art museum in the 21st century global economy. The representation of the Guggenheim art museum in Bilbao, Spain as a success story, mainly the prominent symbolic role the museum is perceived to have played in the economic revitalization of the city, is often highlighted in not only pointing to the inevitability of commercialization of the public spheres, but also on how such broad societal transformation could be seen as positive.

It is from this perspective that the significant trade-offs that comes with the process of gentrification, namely the displacement of the most economically vulnerable populations could be tolerated. From this perspectives, it is acceptable to let the free market help guide our policies in urban planning, including the economic revitalization of the downtown neighborhoods that are perceived as deteriorating or blighted areas characterized by crime.

As already highlighted in this study, the color-blind and consumption oriented approaches to economic revitalization of urban neighborhoods shape Denver's approaches, including the revitalization of Five Points. This approach, as already highlighted in this study, this approach emphasis the benefits involved in transforming the once blighted areas into areas of increased value and hence, attractive to economic investment. Hidden in this emphasis, is the impact, namely the displacement of economically vulnerable residents, mainly blacks and the impact such displacement has on the communities where these less affluent residents normally end up.

In the case of Five Points, the revitalization projects have traditionally ignored the complexity of the neighborhood, especially the competing interests that leads to the

differences in the evaluation of the impact of the urban renewal projects. The concerns of the long-term black residents of the neighborhood to the impact of urban renewal projects to their familiar surroundings and livelihood.

Concerns about the impact of gentrification, especially the demographic changes in this historically black neighborhood has reached a crisis state now that the politics of "color-blind" approach to issues is now being drawn upon to justify the possibility of "Denver losing its only city council seat ever held by African American" when the new residents who now make the majority of the neighborhood and are non-white and the fact that in voting for their representative, people tend to vote for people who look like them. This sentiment was echoed by the then council candidate for the historically black District 11, and now mayor of Denver, Michael Hancock: "You tend to vote with folks whose values mesh with your values. I think you will see the new residents in the district vote for people who look more like them, so you will see a change in representation."[345]

Some observers dismiss the gravity of losing the council seat held by African Americans, noting that the qualification of the elected representatives, as well as their ability to listen to the concerns of the people is more important than their skin color. Some have, however, expressed concern noting that diversity in representation is still very important since there is a need for "an understanding of the community's history and outreach to the neighborhood's African American elders is important for a well-qualified political leader."[346]

Sharon Bailey, Denver auditor's policy and research director, noted that the arguments supporting qualification and "color-blindness" are more idealistic than real since they assume that we live in a society where race does no longer matter:

It probably shouldn't matter, if we were living in a society where race didn't matter. In a perfect world, it probably would not make a difference. I think we have a long way to go in being truthful about how race impacts people on the day-to-day basis. As long as we are in denial, I don't think we are going to resolve a lot of issues.[347]

Sharon Bailey's concern is justified in the light of racial tension that still exist in Denver. The politics of "color-blind" approach to social justice issues extends from the urban renewal projects and gentrification to justifying the possibility of "Denver losing its only city council seat ever held by African Americans" in Denver is a testament of the hostility the city harbors against blacks. The story of Five Points is in many ways, therefore, a microcosm of the overall theme of this study in that it reflects in specific ways, the contradictions of a city that celebrates indigenous history and culture while, at the same time disdains indigenous bodies.

The hidden stories about Five Points neighborhood as symbolically represented by the Rossonian namely, the strong social ties and community oriented environment and, therefore, socially inclusive, offers not only moral, but also practical solutions about the socio-economic conditions under which the iconic Rossonian business could be revitalized and how such condition/environment is not sustainable under the currently gentrifying conditions of the neighborhood. More specifically, it highlights why social intervention and community development that aims at restoring the healthy diverse economic mix of residents that once characterized the neighborhood and contributed to its flourishing businesses, was the key.

In Five Points, such diverse economic mix of residents was devastated by urban flight beginning in the late 1950s when well-to-do black residents of this segregated neighborhoods took advantage of Civil Rights legislations and moved to the suburbia in search of better

public amenities, leaving behind the working class and economically vulnerable residents. Under the current gentrifying conditions, the restoration of a socially diverse neighborhood has remained an elusive idea since gentrification, as already indicated, tends to create a homogenous neighborhood that is characterized by a concentration of wealthy residents.

If as a case study Five Points reflects in more concrete and historically specific ways, Denver's colonial present, namely the city that exploits indigenous history and culture to represent and legitimize its modernity while harboring disdain for indigenous bodies, the iconic Rossonian Hotel, as a significant symbolic structure in a neighborhood mirrors the symbolic function of the city's most prominent structure, DAM building. More specifically, the incorporation of the Rossonian into Denver's urban cultural projects reflects the potential and limitations of the DAM's democratizing potential or specifically, its ability to act as an effective didactic instrument for extending important notions and social possibilities to the city, including its current urban contexts that are characterized by social and racial conflicts surrounding the gentrification of historically black neighborhoods.

Chapter 4: DAM & the Dominant Global Market-Oriented Urbanist Discourses:

A Close Reading of the Downtown Plan and Place Marketing Materials

Introduction

As one of Denver's most visible flagship cultural projects for post-industrial urban economic regeneration, DAM cannot dissociate itself from the city's dominant global market oriented urbanist discourses that, as already highlighted, have generally been critiqued as essentially focused more on economic growth than on solving urban social ills. In this study such dominant urban discourses are epitomized by the conception and representation of the "Denver Downtown Plan" which has subsumed racial social justice issues surrounding the gentrification of the city's historically marginalized ethnic downtown neighborhoods, including the historically black neighborhood of Five Points.[348] However, as highlighted in more detail in subsequent sections of this study, DAM has invested in some educational activities that reflect the museum's belief in human potential as an important asset to society. DAM's mission statement highlighted on its robust website reflects the civic obligations that museums typically have towards the communities in which they are located:

> The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflects the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for community to learn about cultures from around the world. The mission of the Denver Art Museum is to enrich the lives of present and future generations through the acquisition, presentation, and preservation of works of art, supported by exemplary exhibitions presented by the museum.[349]

Beyond the traditional functions of an art museum, what seems to be DAM's emphasis is to ensure that the visitors' interaction with art collection becomes a "transformative experience" and one that fosters "creative thinking," and, therefore, by implication, the ability to imagine possible alternative futures to those framed by dominant

discourses. DAM, as shown in more details in subsequent sections of this study, has invested

significantly in innovative art exhibition techniques based on many years of survey input

from visitor experiences and preferences (since the mid-80s).[350] The museum's "Interpretive

Project," for example, was framed to capture how both novice and expert visitors interacted

with the museum's galleries and specific works of art in its collection.[351] The findings from

the interpretive project have guided the museum staff in designing and installing on its

galleries creative and engaging interpretive activities that "would provide choices for visitors,

support their interactions with art, and encourage them to return again and again."[352]

Part of DAM's creative and innovative exhibition technique that aim at providing

"choices" for visitors as they interaction with art, is the juxtaposition in the museum's

galleries of artworks "from different traditions, countries, and centuries in ways that a viewer

might find surprising and intriguing."[353] What is significant about such innovative exhibition

techniques is that they not only expand the meaning of art, including Indigenous art by

reconfiguring the traditionally rigid, hierarchically organized and closed historical and

cultural boundaries (including those between colonizing and colonized cultures), more

importantly, such innovative art exhibition techniques encourage people to question long

held assumptions, engage in cross-cultural dialogue as well as, to have bold imagination of

possible futures. From this perspective DAM can have an emancipatory or democratizing

impact by helping people image possible or alternative futures beyond those framed by

oppressive dominant discourses.

However, in order to understand the democratizing potential of DAM's new creative

and innovative exhibition techniques, it is important to highlight the challenges faced by the

museum. One of the main arguments for this study is that DAM's new innovative exhibition

techniques that aim at introducing more inclusive narratives of art, history and culture are

ultimately defeated by stabilizing dominant global market oriented urbanist discourses that,

as already indicated, aim to construct the global image of Denver as a stable, culturally

diverse and socially inclusive landscape. By virtue of being located in an urban environment

dominated by global market oriented urbanist discourses, the democratizing potential of

DAM's innovative exhibition techniques (whose art galleries offer viewers spatial freedoms

to create their own interpretations, meanings and associations in experiencing art), could be

ultimately defeated or not tapped into in addressing the current social urban ills, including

those associated with gentrification. To support this point in more concrete and historically

specific way, chapter 3 of this study illustrates how the dominant global market oriented

urbanist discourses framing Denver's urban redevelopment projects fail to draw inspiration

from the success story Five Points neighborhood, namely strong social ties (humanist

perspective and hence community oriented development) represented by the historic

Rossonian hotel building.

Moreover, by collecting and displaying indigenous art, including African art, in an

urban environment in which blacks are displaced by the process of gentrification, DAM

becomes an integral part of the appropriation of the history and culture of the displaced

indigenous bodies by the dominant Euro-American-Centered and global market oriented

urbanist discourses that aim at the cultural construction and celebration of the image of

Denver as a culturally significant, diverse and welcoming city.

As one of the most architecturally evocative and highly visible urban landmark and,

therefore, one of the city's flagship cultural projects, DAM is an integral part of the city's

symbolic economy and, therefore, subject to symbolic manipulation by place entrepreneurs

and powerful business and political elites seeking to represent the city as world class or a

global hub of culture, tourism and business activity:

> Building a city depends on how people combine the traditional economic factors of
> land, labor, and capital. But it also depends on how they manipulate symbolic
> languages of exclusion and entitlement. The look and feel of cities reflect decisions
> about what – and who – should be visible and what should not, on concepts of order
> and disorder, and on uses of aesthetic power.[354]

As illustrated by the statement above, what is significantly associated with the

symbolic economy of cities is the languages or discourses of "exclusion." It is from this

perspective as a significant urban historical and cultural symbol that DAM's exhibition of

indigenous art, including African art, could be perceived as a form of cultural legitimation of

the controversial Denver downtown plan. As highlighted in more detail in subsequent

sections of this study, although presented in highly positivistic and neutral language, the elite

designed Denver Downtown Plan could be perceived as highly controversial and racially

biased since the new downtown has been curved out of existing historic downtown

neighborhoods inhabited mostly by blacks and other ethnic minorities who, as a result, have

been forcibly displaced from their long-term residential neighborhoods.[355]

The Denver downtown area is, therefore, in essence, characterized by potentially

destabilizing local colonial histories of violent displacement of blacks, entrenched racial

social inequalities and conflicts. When co-opted by the dominant discourses as part of the

cultural legitimation of the controversial Denver downtown plan and consequently, the

constructed global image of the city as a socially stable, inclusive and culturally significant

place, DAM's symbolic function draws from the notion of "essentialized difference"

conceived in the exhibition of indigenous art (which privileges the authentic African or black

other that is from elsewhere in Africa or one that is fixed in some historical past) as a way to

"disenfranchise local difference."[356] In other words, by foregrounding indigenous history

and culture in the cultural construction of Denver's new global image, DAM has the impact

of suppressing or depoliticizing as fundamentally inauthentic the troubling and potentially

destabilizing local colonial histories of entrenched racial inequalities, conflicts and violent

displacement of indigenous bodies as highlighted by the physical displacement and

discursive eraser of the history and memory of black residents of historic downtown

neighborhoods by the Downtown Plan.

The analysis in this chapter focuses on three types of sources:

First, the analysis focuses on important **planning documents** produced by the city

mainly the Denver Downtown Plan, highlighting how, in ways that are largely unseen or less

obvious, dominant discursive frames create a social reality in which the controversial

downtown plan and upscale transformation of historically neglected and deteriorating

neighborhoods, mostly inhabited by lower-income blacks and other ethnic minorities (the

urbanist global market oriented or economic logic of city development) are framed as

inherently positive and inevitable responses to what is described as the "blighted" recent past

of these neighborhoods. More significantly, how the desirability of creating "safe," "livable"

and "walkable" urban environment is always inherently linked or has an implied racial

undertone or disdain of what existed before – these urban environment having been blighted,

crime-ridden places occupied by blacks and other undesirable ethnic residents.

Secondly, the analysis focuses on the **promotional materials** produced by the city

such as the official visitors guide magazine/brochure: "The Mile High City Denver,

Colorado" and the city's official website promoting the historic downtown neighborhoods.

In this category, the analysis also focuses on promotional materials, mostly the robust

promotional websites produced by important businesses in the downtown area, focusing

especially luxury hotels such as "Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel" and "Renaissance

Denver Downtown City Center Hotel" that target global cultural tourists. The promotional or

place-marking materials are conceptualized as the end product of the city's planning

documents since they build on the new highly positive social reality that is both discursively

and physically constructed by the downtown plan (one that erases the historical contexts and

social impact of urban renewal projects and hence, the racial social and economic justice

issues). Drawing on the highly attractive newly created images (including spectacular

building structures like the Denver Arts Museum constructed by a brand name architect

Daniel Lubeskind), advanced services, public transport infrastructure and other related

features – all achieved through massive investment in the transformation of the downtown's

physical environment, the city and these downtown businesses engage in aggressive place-

marketing of the downtown as a global cultural tourism hotspot.

Overall, the critical analysis of the Downtown Plan and place marketing or

promotional materials highlight the contradictions of a city that foregrounds indigenous

history and culture in constructing its modern global image, while historically has always

harbored disdain and hostility towards indigenous bodies.

Third, the analysis focuses on **DAM's creative and innovative exhibition**

techniques that highlight that although the symbolic function of the museum is coopted by

the dominant global market oriented urbanist discourses that are more focused on economic

growth than engaging on the urban social issues, in their day-to-day activities, the museum

staff is significantly investing in human capital. The museum's innovative exhibition

techniques that provide viewers the freedoms and choices to create their own meanings in

interacting with artifacts, including indigenous art, have democratic potential in enabling people to not only question, but imagine possible futures beyond those framed by dominant discourses.

However, building on the example of the limitations or failure of the historic symbolism of the iconic Rossonian Hotel Building (humanistic perspective to social problems faced by the city's downtown neighborhoods) to inspire a community oriented redevelopment of the historically black neighborhood of Five Points, this study has already illustrated how DAM's emancipatory or democratizing potential could be ultimately defeated by the dominant urbanist and global-market oriented discourses aimed at constructing the image of Denver as a flourishing global hub for cultural tourism and business. Under the dominant urbanist and global-market oriented discourses, the complex meaning of indigenous art is exhibited in DAM is uncritically conceived (authenticated) and exploited in the construction of the image of the city as a culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape.

Nevertheless, as illustrated in more detail in chapter 5 of this study, DAM's new innovative exhibition techniques that aim at introducing more inclusive narratives of art, history and culture to reflect the heterogeneity of the city and, hence the globalized post-industrial urban social space (cultures of circulation) creates a "generative tension" with stabilizing dominant global market oriented urbanist discourses that aim to construct the image of Denver as a stable, unique and culturally diverse landscape by politically containing uncomfortable colonial histories and post-colonial social inequalities and conflicts that tent to be exacerbated and brought back to Denver's door step by forces of globalization. This "generative tension" created by the museum's creative and innovative exhibition techniques

demonstrate the museum's potential to engage its colonial past and, the ability to mediate

complex identities characteristic of the city's globalized post-industrial social space.

The Downtown Plan

To understand the symbolic function of the Denver Art Museum (DAM), it is

important to first understand the nature and social impact of Denver Downtown Plan that has

significantly shaped the urban context or the locality in which such symbolic function could

be analyzed.

The current Denver Downtown Plan of 2007 which, essentially, is the brainchild of

the city's elite, is a revised version of the original Downtown Plan of 1986 that constructed

and mobilized support for the new downtown with the aid of large and powerful GIS-

designed authoritative mapping of the proposed new downtown.[357] When the existence of

the new plan was first reported by one of the city's major newspapers, the Denver Post, it

highlighted the elite group of expert that produced it: "Power brokers and city leaders have

spent the past year sifting through ideas about how to shape downtown Denver over the next

20 years. About 40 architects, developers, financiers, lawyers, neighborhood activists,

business owners and city officials have compiled the best of those ideas into a document

called the Downtown Area Plan."[358]

In highly positivistic language, the new Downtown Plan is introduced as ushering a

new guidance on how the downtown should be utilized by the Denver community:

> Denver's Downtown Area Plan is a tool to help community leaders, decision-makers,
> and citizens build upon Downtown's assets and guide future development to reflect
> the community's vision of a livable, healthy, sustainable and vibrant Downtown.
> …The 2007 Denver Downtown Area Plan builds on the 1986 Downtown Area Plan
> by providing an updated vision and set of goals and recommendations for Downtown.
> While much of the vision as conveyed in the 1986 plan remains valid, many
> conditions have changed dramatically over the past 20 years.[359]

Figure 4. Denver Downtown Area Plan.

What is significant about the Downtown Plan in this study is how with legitimating

tools that included GIS mapping (positivist, fact-driven GIS technologies with exceptional

ability to visualize territories in in highly precise fashion), what has been in essence, a

controversial planning document, has been effective in mobilizing the "city energies behind

urban redevelopment plans that benefit one segment of society at the expense of another."[360]

As already highlighted in earlier chapters of this study, the new neighborhoods that were

created and authoritatively mapped into the New Downtown Plan were "curved" out of

existing historic downtown neighborhoods communities, mostly inhabited by blacks and other ethnic minorities. On the maps of the New Downtown Plan, for example, two historic downtown neighborhoods famed as homes for working class Latinos and Blacks," [Curtis Park and Five Points] are not named and featuring prominently in their place, are two newly created or mapped neighborhoods, "Ballpark" and "Arapahoe Square."[361]

It is through sophisticated mapping, therefore, that the Denver elite not only manage to "capture the imagination of the city," with new powerful tools like GIS technologies (which they have access to as representatives of the state/city and big business) that lend legitimacy and a sense of inevitability to their controversial downtown plan, the power elite are able to erase the history and memory of historic low-income and indigenous communities (African Americans and African immigrants) whose existence was perceived as hindering the realization of a more efficient economic utilization of the downtown. In constructing the new and acceptable order of the downtown the maps and texts of the Denver Downtown Plan represent an instrument of power or the power to construct and in a blueprint fashion, define the new uses of the urban spaces: "the map, perhaps the central referent of geography, is, and has been fundamentally an instrument of power… It is a way of representing space which facilitates domination and control. To map…serves the practical interests of the state machine."[362]

Indeed, while with the "positivistic claims of technical neutrality of mapmaking" normally leads to maps being uncritically accepted as "perfectly conveying the social and physical space," maps are inherently controversial since they almost always "reflect the values and choices of their authors" [363] who in most cases are the elites with political and financial resources, including training and access to GIS technologies. For this reason, for

every map that is made to represent the interests and taste of the powerful, there is always

other maps that remain unmade and these normally convey the stories and interests of the

marginalized communities.

In the contexts of the Denver Downtown, the legitimating sophisticated maps and the

upscale transformation of the downtown could be effectively countered by critical questions

that point to the total absence the mention, interests and concerns of the marginalized

segment of the Denver community:

> Where in this plan are the photos, the renderings, and maps that might come from
> low-income residents and marginalized businesses of the current inner-city? What
> happened to the immigrant bus depot in these pictures, and would low-income
> residents be pleased to find part of their historic community now mapped as
> "Arapahoe Square" rather than Curtis Park or Five Points?[364]

These historic low-income communities that have now been curved out by the new

upscale neighborhoods of the Downtown Plan are ones represented or silenced by the heavily

darkened spots on the previous Downtown plan as they have been perceived as representing

unutilized and underdeveloped land that created "physical and psychological barriers"

separating neighborhoods and the urban core.[365] It is precisely these communities that have

been described by one of the former architects of the Downtown Plan and Denver Planning

Director, Jennifer Moulton as "an intimidating moat that makes getting to downtown an

unappealing trip."[366] Her version of an "investor quality downtown residential

neighborhoods" (representing the renewal strategy of city planners who sought to turn the

core-city into an efficient economic zone by attracting the more affluent "creative class,"

people with money to spend on housing) is the transformed new upscale neighborhood

characterized by "two sports stadiums, lofts projects in the Lower Downtown, the Denver

Pavilions (an open-air mall), luxury hotel renovations and the new Convention Center."[367]

Such subsidized luxuries ("roughly a billion dollars of public subsidies and direct public expenditures for downtown projects"[368]) are described as creating safe, predictable and an attractive environment for investment. However, what is described as a safe environment for wealthy investors and homebuyers is one that is characterized by rising property values: "Denver planners sought over the last decade to create an environment where core-city investors and homebuyers could have confidence that property values would continue to rise."[369] As already highlighted in detail by the case of Five Points, it is precisely such urbanist emphasis of the Downtown Plan or the urban renewal projects and the consequent high rising costs of property values that have triggered the gentrification of the lower-income and mostly historically black downtown communities. The "safe" and "attractive" environment for the wealthy, mostly white residents, is, therefore, one that was hostile and uninhabitable for lower-income residents, mostly blacks and other ethnic minorities. Included in this group of lower-income residents, including small businesses being displaced by rising costs of property values and rentals, as highlighted by the case of Five Points, were people with deep love and connection with their old neighborhoods with long storied history and proud past. The very legitimacy and a sense of inevitability that the powerful GIS-designed maps of the Downtown Plan bestowed upon city's creation of the new neighborhoods (eraser or curving out of existing historic communities) also bestowed city planners the authority to "define exactly what kind of people and uses would be welcome in newly mapped communities."[370]

Figure 5. A walkable city.

The focal point of the Downtown Plan, as already indicated, has been to create a less intimidating (safe, walkable and attractive) environment connecting the city's neighborhoods to the urban core, a quality that was also seen as creating a predictable environment for investment. As would be highlighted in subsequent sections of this study, what is often highlighted in promotional materials of upscale or luxury hotels located in downtown is how their convenient location in the downtown area ensures that their guests/visitors are within "walking" distance to a variety of downtown activity centers such as: the Denver Arts

Museum, Center for Performing Arts, the Denver Library and Retail District to the Mall.

What is taunted as facilitating such easy access to a variety activities downtown is efficient

transportation, but more importantly the safety, attractiveness and walkability of the new

urban environment.

What is also significant in this study is the fact that closely associated with the

legitimation of the Downtown Plan (the sense of positivism and inevitability it gives about

the transformation the downtown) is by design, the social construction of a sense of an

inherently negative, undesirable and dangerous environment that characterized these

downtown neighborhoods before the transformation took place, namely blighted and crime

ridden areas inhabited by blacks and other ethnic minorities, including low-income

immigrants. What is the repeated characteristic of the new urban environment created by the

Downtown Plan is how the Downtown is now "livable," "walkable" and "safe." These new

desirable characteristics are, therefore, a natural outgrowth of the clearance or the lightning

up of the blighted or dark spots that were effectively visualized by the GIS Maps on the

original Downtown Plan. The physical manifestation of this transformation from darkened

spots on the old plan to lightened spots on the new downtown plan is the process of

gentrification which, as already indicated, has come to be associated with the displacement of

low-income long-term residents of downtown neighborhoods, mainly black and their

replacement by more affluent lighter skinned or white residents who have been enticed to the

place new attractive urban environments, with rising property costs and, therefore,

predictable further investments. To highlight the racial elements of the transformation of

downtown neighborhoods, the urban renewal projects and the consequent gentrification of

process has been teamed the "bleaching" or "racial cleansing" of historically black neighborhoods.

Global orientation: The Bilbao effect. Closely associated with the transformation of the downtown, is the city's desire to enhance its international visibility as a way to tap into international business activities. The stated major goal of upscale transformation of the downtown is to make "downtown Denver one of the most livable places in the world." The new downtown plan was conceived with aim of painting "a vision of the direction Downtown Denver must take to succeed globally, not just nationally." [371] These goals reflects the global influence in shaping the strategies of the Denver Downtown Plan, namely the increasing bias towards the urban core of post-industrial cities that are now perceived not only as offering tremendous opportunities for business activities, but also the reimaging of the urban centers and hence, their global image.[372]

Although the trend of post-industrial urban renewal and flagship projects began in the US and Europe back in the 1960s, the spectacular results and media attention such strategies brought to the old industrial city of Bilbao in Spain, especially with its Guggenheim Museum, has meant that Bilbao's urban regeneration strategies have become the global standard reference for such strategies.[373] The construction the Guggenheim Museum represents the initial regeneration strategies that called for 'flagship' redevelopment projects on old industrial sites or 'derelict non-residential inner-city spaces.' The aggressive mapping of new upscale downtown neighborhoods, curving out or at times completely subsuming historically deprived inner-city neighborhoods represented in the case by the Denver Downtown plan, makes the new phase that involves the identification of new spaces that offered opportunities for further regeneration and reimagining of the urban landscape.[374] As

already indicated by the case of Denver downtown neighborhoods, it is the expansion of

global oriented urban regeneration projects (that aim at turning post-industrial cities into

global destinations for cultural tourism and business activity) that has led to the gentrification

of historically marginalized inner-city neighborhoods.

Figure 6. The evocative image of Denver Arts Museum's new Fredric Hamilton building designed by the world renowned architect, Daniel Libeskind and opened to the public on October 7, 2006.

The redevelopment of DAM, especially the addition of evocative image of the

museum's new Fredric C. Hamilton building designed by a well-known global "starchitect,"

Daniel Libeskind and unveiled to the public in October 7, 2006 reflects the ambition of the

Denver city planners to turn Denver into a global city and the cultural hub of the "Rocky

Mountain West." Although he does not specifically mention Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum

by name, DAM's director, Lewis Sharp and Denver city planners were clearly inspired by the

global trend in regeneration strategies when they hired a world-renowned architect to build

the new building:

"We had the expectation of being able to engage an architect that would create a building that

might have the same impact that the Sydney Opera House has had on Sydney Australia and

the that entire country really."[375]

Therefore, as one of the most visible urban structures and clearly designed with the

global orientation of marketing Denver as a global city, DAM is an integral part of the

downtown plan and from this perspective, part of Denver's dominant global market oriented

urbanist discourses. It is within this context that the meaning of indigenous art prominently

displayed by the museum is re-articulated and used as part of the cultural construction of

Denver's modern image as a culturally diverse and socially inclusive landscape.

On its website DAM boasts to possess "one of the largest and most comprehensive

collections of world art between Chicago and the West Coast [as well as being]

internationally known for its holding of American Indian art."[376] In foregrounding the

exhibition of indigenous Native American art and African art (both housed in the new

spectacularly built Hamilton building) in an urban environment in which indigenous bodies

themselves are displaced by the city's urban regeneration projects, DAM's integration into

the urban context, therefore, highlights the dominance of the global market oriented urbanist

approaches to urban regeneration. As illustrated by the similar integration of the Rossonian,

under the dominant global market oriented urbanist approach, the indigenous history and

culture associated historic or cultural sites like the Rossonian and DAM is uncritically conceived (authenticated) used as part of the construction and celebration of the image of the post-industrial city as historically and culturally significant places and, therefore, attractive global cultural destinations. As already highlighted in the introductory section of this study, Denver's global image or symbolic capital is packaged in cultural indigeneity from which it derives qualities of uniqueness and authenticity associated with indigenous history and culture. Besides the highly expressive and attractive image of its new Hamilton Building, what makes DAM a popular image on websites and promotional materials of many downtown business is because of the cultural legitimacy (including notions of authenticity and uniqueness associated with indigenous art) the museum lends to the downtown area and its businesses.

Place-Marketing/Promotional Materials

In seamless ways, the new social reality of the downtown constructed by the controversial Downtown Plan finds its way into promotional materials (websites and brochures) of local business, namely the luxury hotels and upscale restaurants that benefit from Denver becoming flourishing international hub for culture, tourism and business. In what illustrates the success of the Downtown plan to physically transform the downtown into an attractive, safer and accessible public space, most of the downtown businesses boasts about the convenience of their downtown location as providing visitors access to multiple activity centers all at once. Words like "safe," "walkable," and "livable" that form the highly positivistic overall tone of the downtown plan, seem to have naturally slid into promotional materials of downtown business.

On its official visitors guide, for example, Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel emphasis its convenient location in the city's downtown area which puts the visitor just "steps" from other top downtown attractions: "Effortless Experience—explore Denver and find yourself energized by the city's modern attractions. The Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel puts you steps from the mile-long stretch of bistros, microbreweries, shopping and dynamic nightlife of the 16th Street Pedestrian Mall."

Figure 7. Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel.

In what could appear as an extension of the Downtown Plan, the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel lists on its robust website the downtown attractions that are a prominent part of the downtown: the Denver Art Museum; Denver Pavilions; Denver Breweries; 16th Street Mall; Coors Field; Sports Authority Field & Pepsi Center. The selling point for these centers is that they, like the Sheraton Hotel are conveniently located in the heart of the

downtown and, therefore, very accessible on foot or by efficient free transportation: " … Hop on a free shuttle and you will be whisked around the area which also includes some top downtown Denver attractions, like the Denver Performing Arts Complex, Colorado Convention Center and the city's major professional sports stadiums."[377]

Like other upscale hotels located in downtown Denver such as the Four Seasons Hotel and Hyatt Regency Denver, Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel won't miss out from highlighting its close proximity to one of the downtown's most visible flagship cultural project, DAM whose iconic image finds its way into the hotel's robust website:
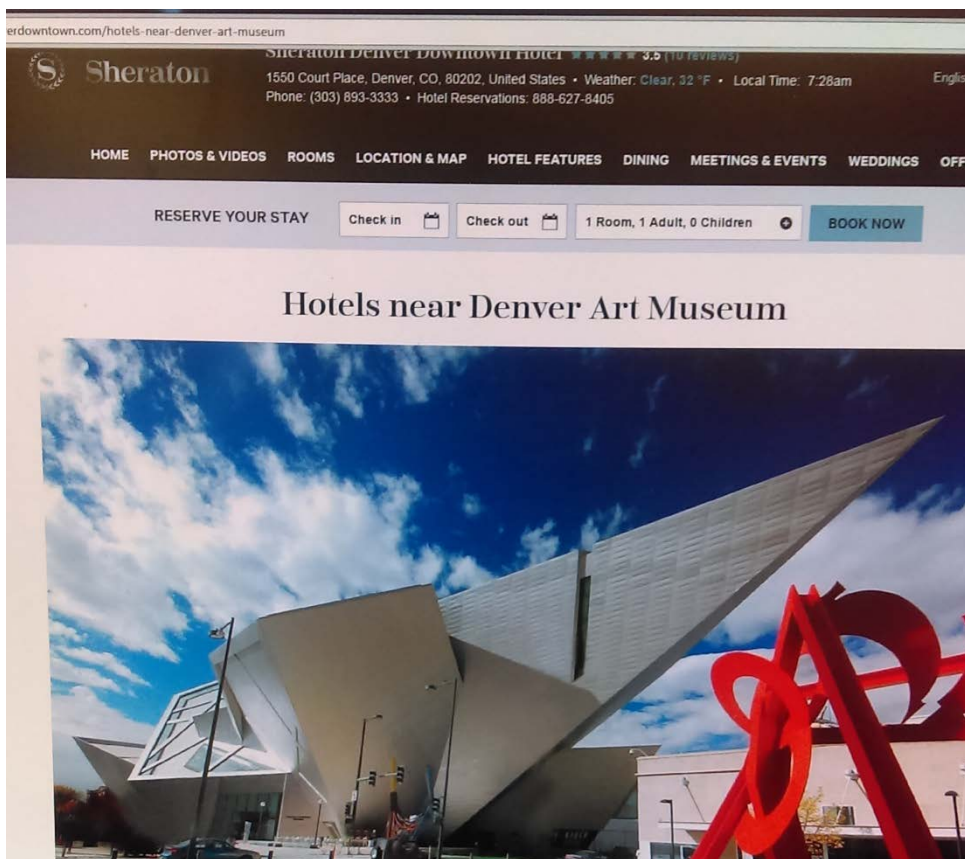

Figure 8. The Image of DAM on the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel's Promotional Website.

The caption on DAM's image on Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel's Promotional Website reads: "Looking for a hotel near the Denver Art Museum? The Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel is just blocks from the Denver Art Museum and offers exclusive packages that include tickets to the museum."[378]

What is significant about such close association or collaboration between the museum and local businesses is that it blurs the distinction between public and private spaces thereby bringing about legitimate questions about the publicness of the museum and the downtown as a whole. If information and access to DAM is obtained through upscale and global market-oriented hotels like Sheraton, who is able to access this information? Who can afford these tickets to the Museum? Who is the targeted customer or along those lines, who is desirable and who is undesirable? These are important questions to consider when considering who resided in these downtown neighborhoods before their upscale transformation by the city's urban regeneration projects. As illustrated by the case of Five Points neighborhood, such upscale transformation of the historically neglected downtown neighborhoods tends to enhance gentrification.

Equally significant is the cultural legitimation that museum lends to this upscale hotel through such collaboration. The Sheraton Hotel's Website goes on to provide a detailed description of DAM and its foregrounding of Indigenous art in its exhibition:

> Denver Art Museum's Hamilton Building is an architectural work of art. Designed by Daniel Libeskind, it will change the way you experience art and architecture. Explore the Museum's galleries showcasing a world-famous American Indian art collection, as well as art from around the world. Family programs, traveling special exhibitions, Museum shop, on-site restaurants and spectacular event spaces.
> Founded as the Denver Artists' Club in the 1890s, the Denver Art Museum has expanded from its humble beginnings into a 356,000 square foot complex that includes collection gallery space, three temporary exhibition venues, and the Lewis I. Sharp Auditorium. The Denver Art Museum is renowned in the international museum

community for its family-friendly atmosphere and commitment to activities that promote art appreciation.[379]

From this context, Indigenous art on display at DAM seamlessly lends its legitimating qualities of authenticity and uniqueness to Denver's downtown business. It is not only Sheraton Hotel that boasts of its close proximity and association with DAM , Kimpton Hotel Monaco Denver and Four Seasons Hotel also display the iconic image of DAM on their promotional websites.
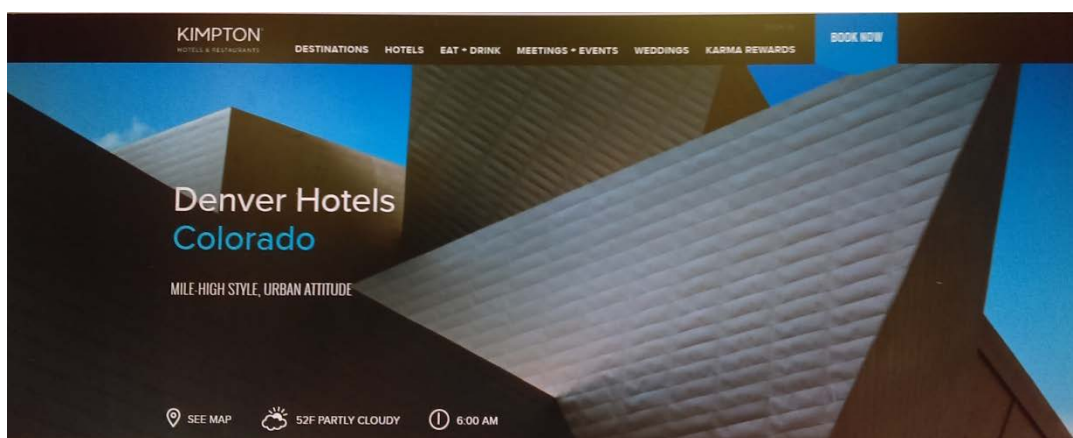
Figure 9. The image of DAM on Kimpton Hotel Monaco Denver promotional website.

The partnership between DAM and Kimpton Hotel Monaco is even more explicit. Not only does the does the hotel proudly display the museum's spectacular building image on its promotional website, it also advertises some of the museum's exhibit:

"The power of costume. The Star Wars costume exhibit is at the Denver Art Museum. Stay at Monaco Denver for VIP tickets and more."

"The force has awakened in Denver. The Kimpton Manaco Denver has partnered with the Denver Art Museum to provide you passes to the power of costume exhibit. Book now, be brave and don't look back."

From this context, DAM is, therefore, an integral part of the downtown plan lending strong visual identity and cultural legitimacy to the transformed and, therefore, new social reality of the city's downtown. From this perspective DAM is part of the dominant global market-oriented urbanist discourses that aim to enframe an attractive image of the city as unique, culturally diverse and socially inclusive.

Naturalizing the controversial downtown plan into the urban landscape. As already highlighted in this study, the major selling point of the downtown plan is, among other key issues, to transform the Denver's downtown into an attractive, more accessible, safer and livable environment. The downside for this transformation has been the fact that this caused the displacement of the economically vulnerable longtime residents, mainly blacks and other ethnic minorities and, making the plan controversial.

However, the controversy surrounding the plan and the new uses of the downtown get effectively erased from memory when the physically opened up, more accessible, safe, convenient and attractive downtown environment is seamlessly adopted by local businesses in promoting their businesses as well as, marketing the place for international business.

The new conveniences are described in natural terms such as: "few steps from," "located nearby," "a bike ride from," "adjacent to," "within minutes," etc. When conveyed in such natural terms, the new downtown environment becomes naturalized and, therefore, unquestionably positive and serving the public interest.

On its website, Four Seasons Hotel draws on elements of the city's attractive and famous landscapes to describe its convenient location:

"This upscale hotel in a landmark high-rise is a 10 minute walk from both the Colorado Convention Center and less than a mile from the Denver Art Museum."

"If the sun feels warmer here, it is because you are much closer to it. One mile above sea level, you will feel that warm, friendly spirit of Denver. Come experience the city's invigorating blend of urban sophistication, vibrant culture and year-round Rocky Mountain adventure."

"A soaring landmark in the heart of downtown, Four Seasons Hotel Denver stands at the intersections of 14th and Arapahoe Street, bordering fashionable lower downtown ("LoDo"). Top-rated restaurants, lively bars and diverse shops are steps away on Larimer square and 16th Street Mall. Ideal location for business, the location is within the 14th street Central Business District and just three blocks from the Denver Convention Center."

Such seamless merging of nature with the new downtown landscape has the impact of erasing our memories of who lived in the downtown area before the transformation. When legitimized by natural elements, the transformation of the downtown gets the feel of being an inevitable and natural process and, therefore, inherently positive.

Five Points becomes an integral part of the new downtown. Associated with the aggressive marketing of the downtown and its upscale businesses, has been the current celebration and global marketing of the historically black neighborhood of Five Points as one of the downtown's "hot spots" for cultural tourism.
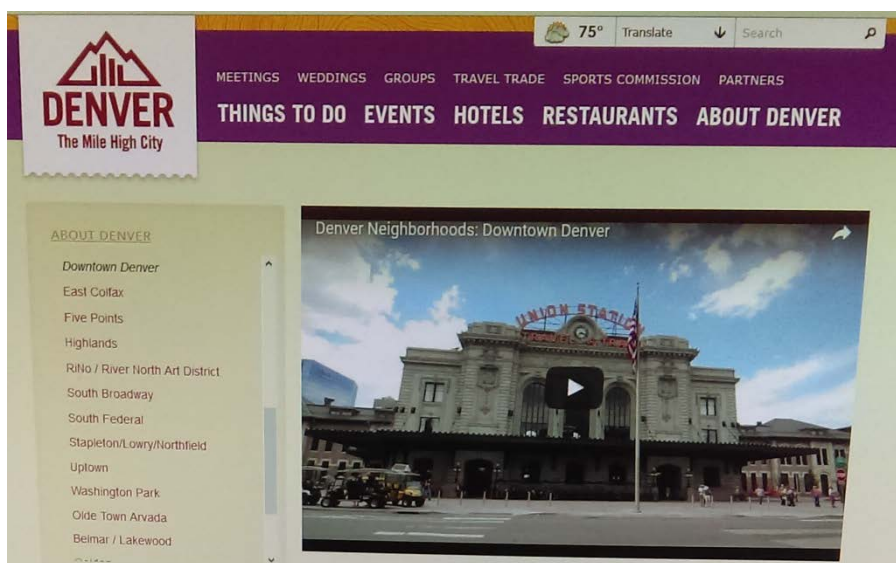
Figure 10. The Downtown Neighborhood Guides Featuring Five Points Alongside Upscale Downtown Businesses.
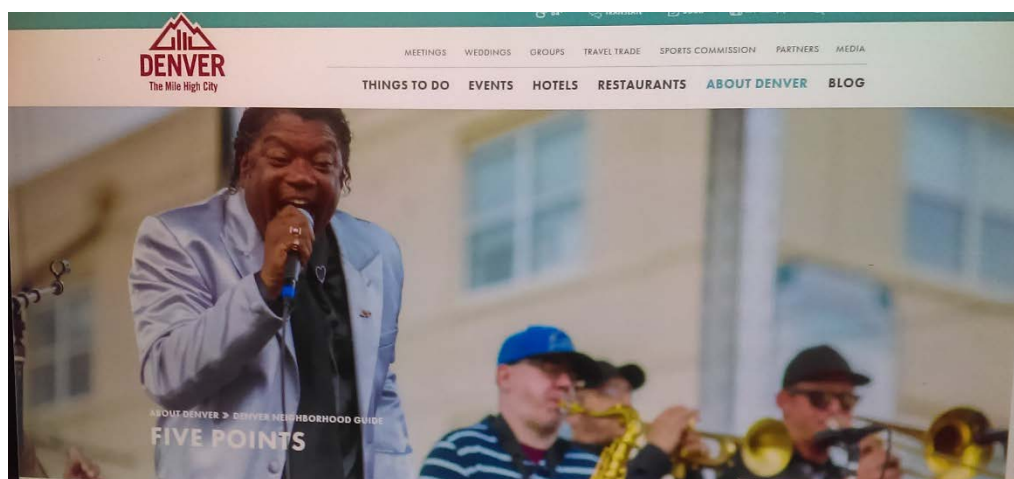
Figure 11. Five Points, the "Harlem of the West"

As already highlighted in this study, Five Points' famous Welton Street, which was once the social heartbeat of a vibrant but highly segregated African American community during the 1920s through the late 1950s, has now been declared a historic cultural district with a stated goal to globally market it "as a cultural and tourism destination for arts, culture and entertainment and that showcases Denver's African American history and the area's rich

jazz heritage."[380] The marketing of this historically black neighborhood which is also

branded the "Harlem of the West," focuses on the period when the neighborhood flourished

as a cultural center for jazz and thus associating Denver's downtown with universally

recognizable and well-liked iconic African American jazz figures like Louis Armstrong,

Bellie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Miles Davis and others who frequently

performed at Five Points' famous Rossonian hotel during the neighborhood's heyday.

The downtown visitor's guide promoting Five Points and other downtown attractions

also involves a video clip featuring various speakers who reminisce about the place's proud

jazz history. The names of iconic jazz figures are mentioned in the video clip, including the

Rossonian hotel. With the enthusiasm that would make the listener to still want to visit the

place today, one of the speakers heaves out "oh' the Rossonian was the place to be, the

history is wonderful." Later in the video clip the same speaker goes on to promote the Five

Points Jazz Festival that takes place in the neighborhood every Spring and the Juneteenth

Celebration that takes place every summer: " the jazz festival is absolutely marvelous, people

have no idea how many jazz artists are right here in Denver. Juneteenth celebration happens

right there at Lassen Park where we celebrate the civil rights movement. There is another

kind of rhythm to Five Points that you don't find in any other place."

Therefore, the celebration of Five Points' proud African American history and culture

is directly linked to the promotion of the upscale downtown businesses as visitors to the

neighborhood today are offered a rich mix of African American music, food and culture. As

part of African American cultural appeal, local restaurants offer what they represent as

authentic southern style soul food and treating their customers with "southern hospitality."

Although seemingly a routine celebration of a historic district, the current celebration and global marketing of African American history and culture associated with Five Points is laden with contradictions that are significant to this study. As already highlighted, when situated within the long history of racial segregation against African American residents which, ironically had confined them to this neighborhood and, more broadly, when situated within Denver's colonial legacy of the violent displacement of indigenous Native inhabitants (whose history and culture has been reconfigured by the city's dominant urban discourses and used as part of the cultural construction of the city's modern identity), the current celebration and global marketing of African American history and culture associated with Five Points is a testimony of a city that celebrates black and indigenous history and culture while it disdains black and indigenous bodies.

As already highlighted, many long-term African American residents of Five Points no longer physically reside in the neighborhood due to the upscale transformation of the neighborhood and the consequent gentrification of the place. In what reflects the dominant impact of the global market-oriented urbanist discourses, in this case at hand, the aggressive marketing of African American history and culture associated with the neighborhood, "despite the fact that the [neighborhood] statistically is no longer a predominantly African American community, it is often thought to be by residents of the metro area."[381]

All in all, the inherent contradiction or racial undertone of the positive representation of the transformation of the downtown is symbolized by the centrality of the use of terms like "safe," "walkable," and "livable" which always implies that the new and attractive environment of the downtown was made possible (safe, walkable and livable) through the

removal or displacement of an "intimidating moat" (blacks and other ethnic minorities that lived in these neighborhood before their upscale transformation.)

Democratizing Potential of DAM's Innovative Exhibition Techniques

Before one could highlight the democratizing potential of DAM, it is important to highlight ways in which museums traditionally have functioned as instrument of power, used to frame and legitimize in ways that are largely unseen, the political interests and tastes of the elite and most powerful. Both colonial and post-colonial regimes have utilized the symbolism of modern architecture, mostly associated with museums and other heritage sites, to shape national histories and cultural identities of populations they ruled.[382] In what could be viewed, essentially, as the commercialization or commodification of colonial and postcolonial forms of state legitimation and domination, post-industrial city elite (albeit the new highly expressive building structures of art museums or "brand" architecture) have retained the colonial era cultural and historical symbolism of museums not only to frame and legitimize the appropriation of urban public spaces for private business, but also in the construction of the global image of these post-industrial cities as historically and culturally significant places and, therefore, global hotspots for cultural tourism.[383] The result has been the blurring of lines of demarcation between private and public spaces as well as, economic and social power, allowing the business and political elite to manipulate and use culture and cultural institutions like art museums as powerful means of controlling cities:

> There are special connections between artists and corporate patrons. …the presence of artists documents a claim to [the] cities' status in the global hierarchy. The display of art, for public improvement or private gain, represents an abstraction of economic and social power. Among business elites, those from finance, insurance, and real estate are generally great patrons of both art museums and public art, as if to emphasize their prominence in the city's symbolic economy.[384]

Although artists, including museum staff, have remained faithful to their interests as artists and their civic obligation to their communities, they have been co-opted by dominant discourses (that represents the interests of the political and business elites) into cultural means of framing and legitimizing the domination of corporate and elite interests, including the "possibility of controlling all sorts of urban ills, from violence and hate crime to economic declines and [racial social inequalities.]"[385]

In his many publications, including "Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison," (1995 [1975]), Foucault highlights the role social institutions play in the evolution of dominant discourses in society. He illustrates, for example, how the egalitarian representations of modern institutions such as schools, hospitals and prisons, make it natural for the public to accept the terms of their domination. From such Foucaultian approach, art museums draw their symbolic and ideological impact or their ability to inspire universal consensus among members of the public by constructing new identities and meanings of place in ways that are historically and culturally meaningful.

From the colonial tradition, museum exhibitionary narratives are characterized by rigid, hierarchically organized and closed historical and cultural boundaries, mainly between those of the colonized and colonizing cultures. As such, such narratives are often singular, stable, hierarchical and, therefore, oppressive: "the single-narrative curatorial style by nature leaves much unsaid and many points of view unrepresented."[386] As already highlighted in the introductory section of this study and is highlighted in more detail in chapter 5, associated with such closed or rigidly organized historical and cultural boundaries in museum exhibition is the authentication of indigenous art and culture and hence, cultural identities. The notion of authenticity within the colonial tradition of museum exhibits draws from the modernist trop

for identity construction that promotes primordial cultural attachments to the concept of race, thereby, making race an irreducible and permanent marker of cultural diversity among people.[387]

While within the historical context of colonialism, such an ideology of racialized ethnicity was constructed to naturalize racialized hierarchies of difference and, therefore, justify the colonial domination of indigenous populations (whose racialized cultural identity was represented in complex museum exhibitionary narratives as "outmoded" and "degenerate," or "primitive"),[388] within the current environment of post-industrial urban re-imagination, the meaning of such racialized ethnicity and cultural difference is re-articulated and used as part of the aesthetic enhancement of the city as a multicultural or culturally diverse and inclusive landscape.

As highlighted in more detail in chapter 5 of this study, what is significant about such racialized notion of ethnicity or cultural difference and hence, the notion of multiculturalism or cultural diversity, is the fact that it oversimplifies (stabilizes) what is essentially a more complex, fluid, transversal, deterritorialized and globalized post-industrial urban space and consequently, the processes of acquiring cultural identity.[389]

Conceiving the viewing of art as a fluid and interactive process in which the life and memory of the viewer is essential for the creation of meaning, Kiesler in (Staniszewski, 1998) calls for an expanded and open environment of viewing artwork in which "meanings are shaped by the specific determinants of time, place, and function" (Staniszewski, 1998: 8). Taking an even more radical departure from the perceived static and essentialist traditional exhibition technique, Allen (2004b) conceives museum narrative as taking a personal perspective and deriving its authentic originality from artists being able to tell a story. For

his part, Bedford, (2001, 2004) who conceives storytelling as the "real work" of museums, suggests that the ability of the listener (viewer of the museum artifacts) to create their own meanings, as well as "project their own thoughts, feelings and memories onto the story" is contingent on a storyteller (creators of museum artifacts) having the agency to define their values and beliefs.

DAM's new innovative exhibition techniques, for example, the juxtaposition in galleries of works from different traditions, countries and centuries as a way to reconfigure traditionally rigid historical and cultural boundaries (reminiscent of the colonial era), has the impact of offering visitors choices or the freedom to interact and create their own meanings out of the works of art. The museum's interpretive activities allow the visitors to interact not only with the artifacts but also with artists, therefore, providing multiple platforms in which artists themselves can interact and communicate with viewers.

DAM's innovative exhibition techniques: Providing choices for viewers in their interaction with art. Adventurous Architecture; Dramatically Slanting Walls; New Interactive Technologies; Engaging Interpretive Experiences; Visitor Choices; Response journals; Postcards; Videos and iPod, these are just a few of the many interactive activities made available at DAM to help visitors interact with art, artists and even their own personal experiences.

As already highlighted, DAM has significantly invested in creative and innovative exhibition techniques that aim at providing "choices" for visitors as they interaction with art. The museum's creative and interactive activities have been enhanced or expanded by the new architecturally adventurous Frederic Hamilton building designed by an equally innovative and forward thinking and world renowned architecture, Daniel Libeskind.[390] Based on his

belief that the viewing of art should be conceived as a "creative adventure," Libeskind admits

that in designing DAM's New Hamilton Building, he wanted to build a structure that

although officially functioning as a museum, would in many ways comprise of new and

"unprecedented series of spaces …[meant] to enhance the experience of art."[391]

The adventurous architecture merges seamlessly with the new technologies employed

by the museum to increase visitor experience in the interaction with art. Instead of presenting

challenges to museum staff, the sloppy ways of the new creative architecture is viewed as

providing more creative opportunities by the museum staff:

> one of the questions that I was asked – how in the world are you going to install art
> on sloppy walls, and Daniel [Libeskind] all I say is you have given us so many
> wonderful opportunities to do this. For all of us on the staff we were able to relax a
> little bit and look at so many of different wall surfaces not as a challenge but as an
> opportunity. (Lewis Sharp, Director, Denver Art Museum).

Visitors casting shadows inside the DAM.

Figure 12. Playing with shadows inside the DAM.
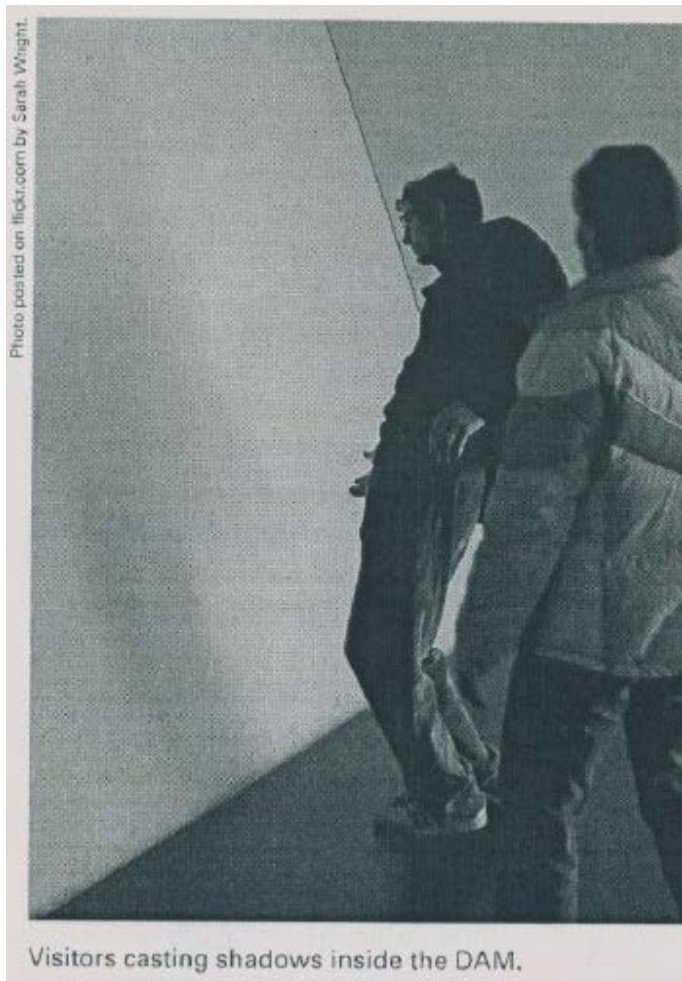
Libeskind's creative imagination and sense of adventure is effectively demonstrated by the process in which he conceived the plan and design of DAM's new building, by discovering while flying over Denver how he could design a building that symbolically construct a meaningful synergy between the city and one of its famous and highly recognizable natural landforms, the Rocky Mountains:

I was flying over the Rockies and I instinctively took out my boarding pass. I had nothing to draw on, I just started scratching these incredible geological formations which with the tectonic plates, really burst to give birth to Denver and I thought this is a building that should really bring nature and the culture of the city … together and create something that really in the 21st century is unprecedented on its face.[392] (Daniel Libeskind)
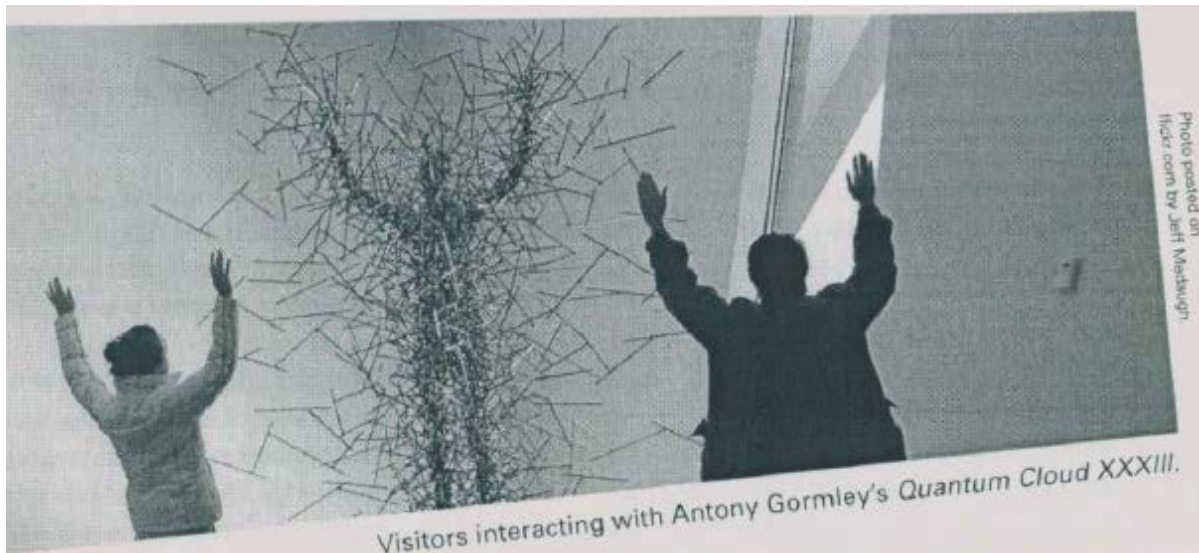
Figure 13. Interacting with Antony Gormley's Quantum Cloud.

Just as he conceives some form of synergy between nature and the buildings, Libeskind also conceives synergy between the work of art the visitor experience and he notes that new and unexpected spaces created by creative and adventurous architecture is the key to such experience.[393]

DAM's interpretative activities. DAM houses diverse permanent and traveling art exhibitions that include American Indian, Spanish Colonial, pre-Columbian, Asian, Oceanic, African, western American and modern and contemporary art. As would be highlighted in subsequent sections of this chapter, when indigenous art, including African art is juxtaposed against other cultures, including that of the colonized, this expands the social, historical and

cultural environments in which the meaning of indigenous art, including African art could be constructed.

DAM has installed interpretives that accompany their permanent collections and these are meant to offer the visitors a variety of choices to have hands on interactions with the objects and in some cases with the artists themselves. The goal of these interpretives, according to a staff member, "is to open up possibilities for our visitors to not only be creative on how they look at and engage with art, but also for them to be inspired by art."

At DAM, installed interpretives involve a variety of technologies that allow visitors to interact with art on their own. They are also involve visitors having access to watch artist interview videos that allow them to have more insights into the live and experiences of the artists.

Expanding the meaning of indigenous art. From the onset, DAM sets a tone of its intention to break away from the colonial tradition of exhibiting indigenous art by confronting the common stereotypes associated with the meaning of indigenous art. At the entrance of DAM' spectacular Hamilton Building, visitors come across highly visible and insightful information and quotes by a well-known Native artist, Fritz Scholder who has dedicated his artistic career to confronting common stereotypes about Native art and culture.
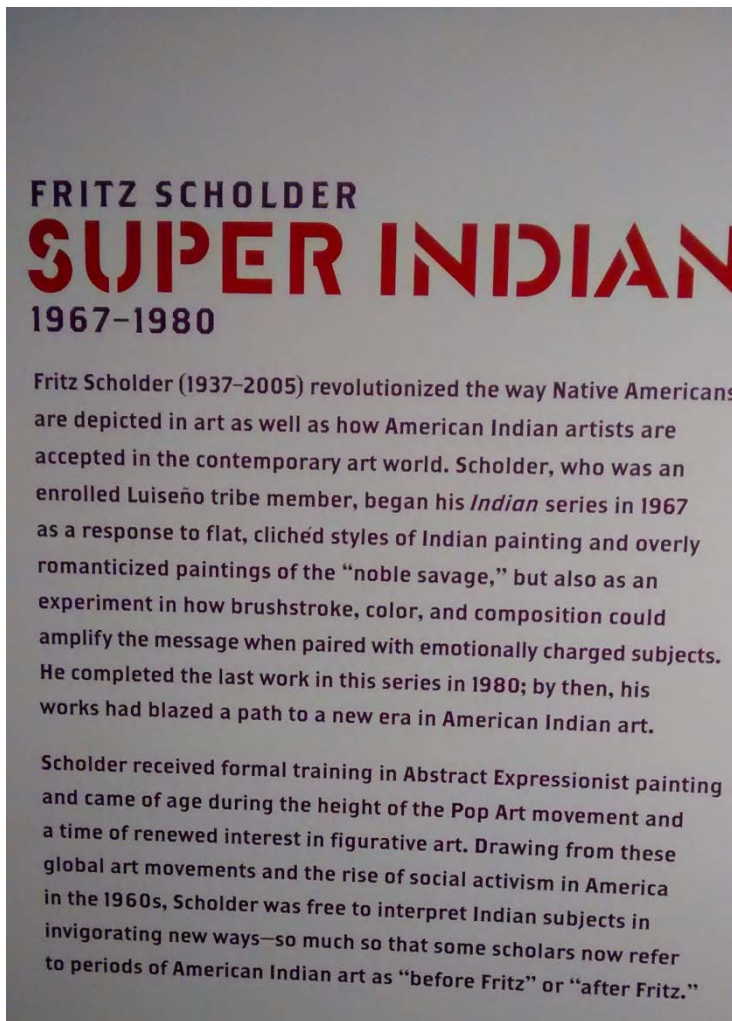
Figure 14. The Life and Work of Native Artist Fritz Scholder.

The romanticization of Native art as representing dead cultures thereby confining its meaning to some idealized historic past is the principal form in which its meaning is currently uncritically conceived as marketed as representing authenticity which in turn, lends ideological institutions like museum the authority to define what or who is authentic and who is not. The key to Schroder's contribution, as indicated in the text above is his desire to "interpret Indian subjects in invigorating new ways." Combined with DAM's interpretive activities, the introduction of Scholder's ideas represents the museum's goal to expand the

possibilities and choices for the visitors to interact with indigenous art, thereby expanding its

meaning.
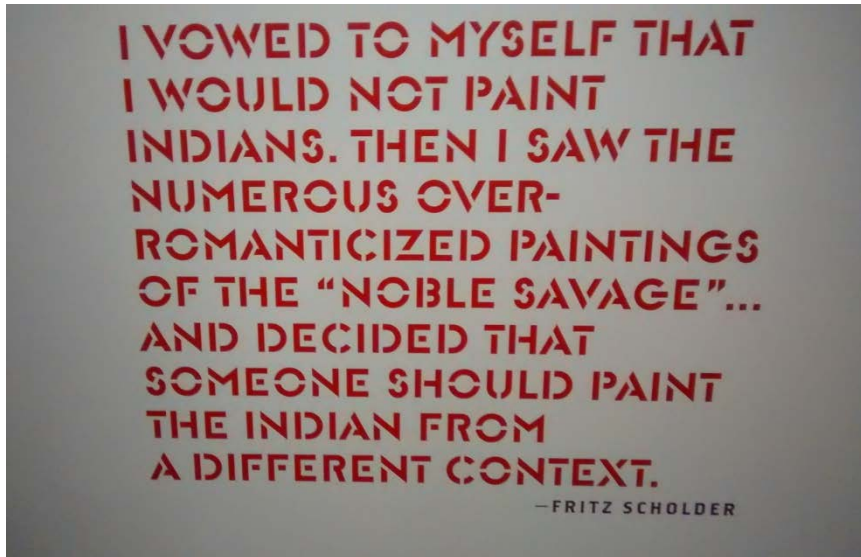
Figure 15. Painting the Indian from a Different Context.
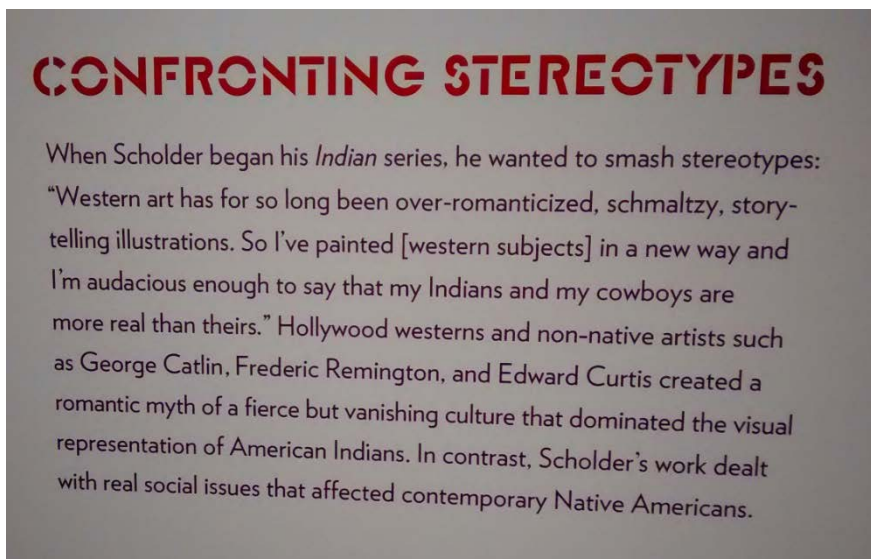
Figure 16. Confronting Native Stereotypes.

Part of highlighting Denver's "colonial present" is to get the visitors to start to think

about indigenous people in relation to "real social issues that affected contemporary Native

Americans" today as is represented by Scholder's work. What are current issues or challenges faced by Natives today compared to others whose history and culture is also on display. In other words, the juxtaposition of Native American art with others, including African indigenous art is no longer just a historic or representing the romanticized historical past, but the current issues, the colonial present.

The following images of an Indian eating ice crime or as a pop artist is an effective way of stimulating the new and invigorating ways of thinking about Natives.

Figure 17. Associating Natives Contemporary Issues and Images.

Figure 18. Bright Colors, Pop Art, Confronting the Sanitized
Images of Native People.
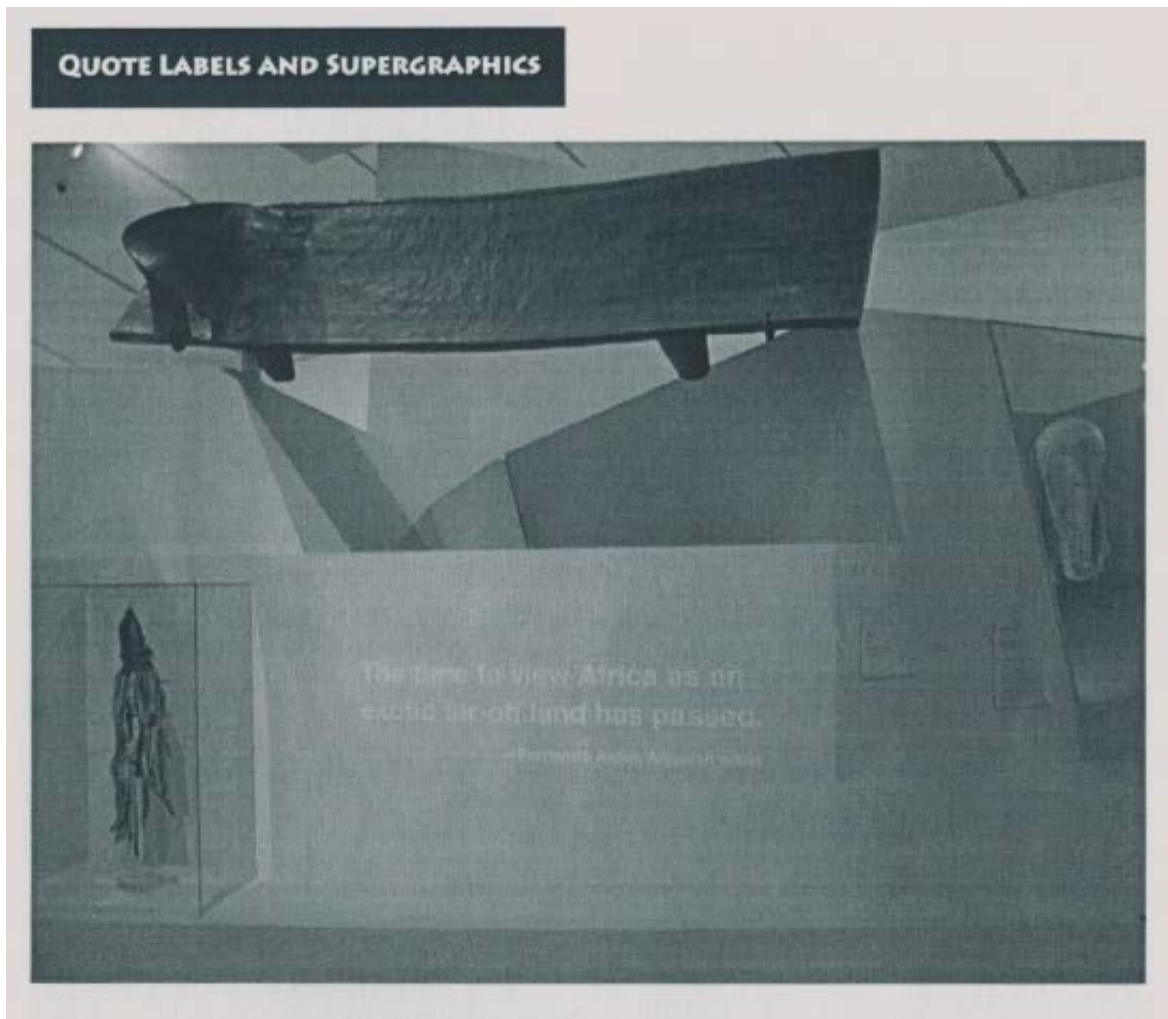
Figure 19. "The time to view Africa as an exotic far off land has passed." (Fernando Aluim, Angolan Artist)

With regards to African Art, the tone is set by the SuperGraphics that reminds the visitors to change the way they think of African art, as representing cultures that are alive and dynamic as opposed to the common stereotype of dead cultures that are frozen in some historic past. In other words, African artists are alive and available to be interviewed or interacted with.

Still image from video by Moyo Okediji.

Seven video segments running simultaneously show the Akire painters mixing and applying paint, as well as carrying out integral steps like singing and praying.

Figure 20. African Video Collage.

Just like artists from other cultures, visitors at DAM can interact with African art and artist through a variety of installed interactives, live programs, journals and books. They can also visit the African video collage and watch the complex processes involved in making African art. When visitors are able to interact with African art and artists the way they interact with other cultures, it goes a long way to expanding the meaning of African art. It brings possibilities to ask questions that have not been asked before and be able to respond.

Sounds of the Akire painters singing and praying resonate in this alcove, which includes the group's paintings as well as the video collage, titled *Beyond the Brush: The Akire Painters' Process*. The video segments are grouped into three phases: preparing, painting, and praying.
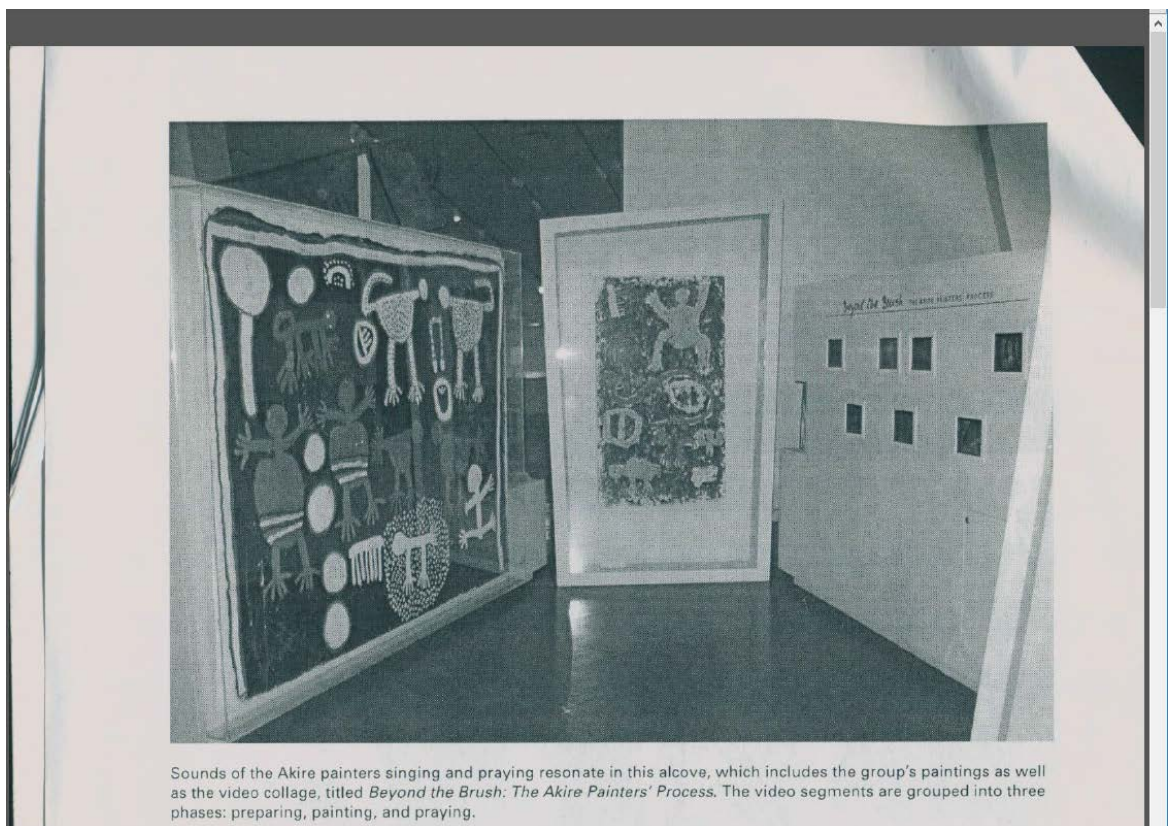
Figure 21. Sounds of the Akire painters in the alcove.
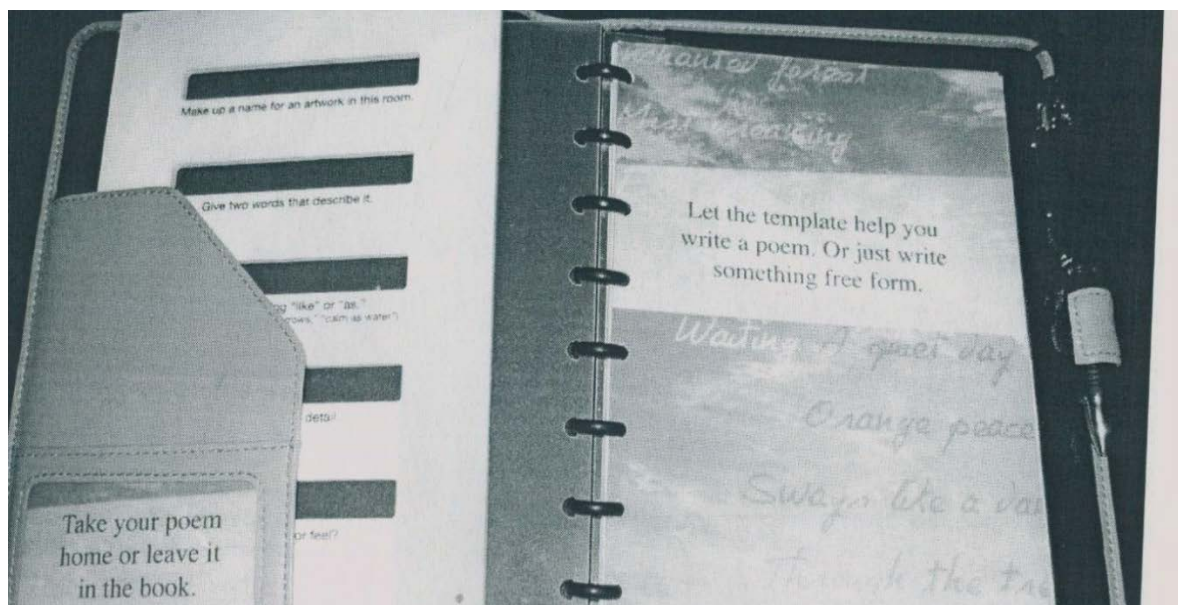
Figure 22. Guided Poetry Journal.

Table 1

Hamilton Building Adult Interpretives by Collection.

Modern and Contemporary Art	**Oceanic Art**
• Human connection labels • Quote labels • Question • Duchamp focus area (with introductory panel, idea banners, browsing books, collection connection hand-outs, supergraphic quotes, chess game) • Response journal: "of all the photographs you have ever taken, tell us about the one you are most proud of." • Response journal: "share your experience with James Turrell's Trace elements	• Human connection labes • Response journal: "Tell your story." • Oceanic projections
African Art	**Western American Art**
• Video collage • Human connection labels • Response journal: "What is beautiful to you?" • Supergraphic quotes • iPod station • African studio	• Daniel Sprick focus area (with video, projected quotes, objects from painting, artist quotes on touchscreens, foldout booklet of in-progress photos, FAQ cards) • Remington focus area (with interactive video and human connection label) • George Catlin focus area (with Catlin cubes, human connection label, and response journal) • Select-a-chat • Postcard activity • Studio browsing objects • Response journal: "what does the West mean to you?" • Guided poetry journal • iPod station with "Suggest a song for these iPods" response journals • Quote cards • Conversation labels

DAM, therefore, has invested in a wide variety of ways to illicit visitor responses and encourage creative thinking and imagination as evidenced by a wide range of formats and design for their installed interpretives. When visitors are encouraged to participate (play games, test their creativity by making art or write poetry or take advantage of available books to do some research and reflection about art, write postcast, etc) their viewing of art gets enlivened and expanded. Even more significant, the social, cultural, geographic and historical boundaries between cultures on display gets challenged or problematized when visitors, who are being provided with the tools and choices, are being encouraged to be creative in their thinking and imagination.

In the context of this study, the juxtaposition (through gallery installations and different interactive technologies and techniques) of artifacts from different cultures and eras has the impact of deconstructing dominant and stabilizing intellectual discourses that aim at politically containing potentially destabilizing colonial histories and social inequalities and conflicts (social and political instability) through the construction of false banaries of tradition versus modern; global versus local or past versus present etc. As already illustrated in this study, such false banaries of tradition versus modern are key ingredients in the cultural construction essentialized notions of places, identifies etc., as static, frozen in time and, therefore, enclosed from outside influence.

In the context of this study, the ideological impact of such essentialized notions is the depoliticization of culturally constructed modern images of post-industrial cities like Denver as socially stable, autonomous and, therefore, authentic or unique. DAM's innovative exhibition techniques, therefore, highlight the tension with such stabilizing dominant discourses, in the case at hand, global market oriented urbanist discourses) by confronting

static notions of historical and cultural boundaries between cultures and places thereby

effectively conceptualizing cities like Denver as a globalized socio-historical spaces

comprising of multiple identities and stories. In other words, DAM's innovative exhibition

technique reflects cultures of circulation that characterize post-industrial cities like Denver.

Chapter 5: Denver Art Museum & Globalization:

Highlighting the Museum's Engagement with the Enduring Legacy of Colonialism and

Complex Identities

Introduction

Drawing on Foucault's epistemes scholars have highlighted how museums, having long been regarded as sites for the preservation of local histories and culture, can help mediate national identities and power relations between people (colonizers and colonized) and dominant institutions like the state in ways that are historically and culturally meaningful and, therefore, often accepted as legitimate.[394] While such historical and cultural symbolism of museums and other historic sites have traditionally been manipulated by state and city elites to promote their political and business interests[395] (mainly through their power or ability to frame dominant discourses of entitlements and exclusion), it also means that museum staff have a responsibility and an opportunity, through innovative exhibition of art, to engage people's creativity as a way to help them image possible or alternative futures to those framed by stabilizing and hence, oppressive dominant discourses.[396]

However, as already highlighted in small part by this study, in order to have an emancipatory or democratizing impact, museums have to confront the legacy of European colonialism which has dominated nearly 450 years of human history and have impacted the lives and identities of every nation and person both the colonized and colonizers.[397] Although equally powerful forces such as globalization and decolonization have had some significant impact, they have, nevertheless, only added complexities that present further dilemma to museums as they confront the enduring legacy of colonialism that continues to frame national histories and identities.[398]

Therefore, in order to demonstrate the potential to mediate the complex identities that characterize Denver's globalized post-industrial urban social space, the broader vision of DAM's art exhibition activities should seek to enlighten people along the dominant European colonial discourses with which it is embedded in complex ways. The museum, in other words, should not view its engagement with local colonial histories involving the colonization and violent displacement of Native Americans as separate or in isolation from its engagement with the legacy of European colonialism at a much broader global scale.

A significant amount of indigenous artifacts housed in art museums in the United States today have complex layers of meaning due in part to the complexity of the history of collection and ownership (colonial and post-colonial) of individual artifacts.[399] With respect to African art, numerous African artifacts on display in American art museums today have been collected under the global environment that was dominated by European colonial expansion which was at its peak levels in the late 19th century.[400] The exhibitionary narratives of an international network of museums under the global environment dominated by European colonial expansion shared a common ideological role of naturalizing and justifying colonial domination of Indigenous cultures through the cultural construction of racialized hierarchies of difference.[401] Beginning mainly with the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 which saw European powers divide the coast of Africa among themselves and culminating in the period around the beginning of World War I in which the entire African continent, except Ethiopia and Liberia, came under European colonization, "European involvement in Africa also yielded vast collections of Africana—ranging from the humblest tools of daily life to finely formed works of sculpture—in ethnographic museums in Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, Portugal, and Italy, among others."[402]

DAM's close association, at least initially, with major European museums with extensive early collections of African Art such as Pitt Rivers and Royal Scottish Museums (UK) and the University of Ghent (Belgium) in which DAM was able to acquire early collections of African artifacts via European institutions,[403] is not an isolated example, many American art museums acquired vast amounts of African artifacts from European museums with predominantly anthropological and natural history themes in their selection and exhibition of African art.[404]

The significance of the anthropological and natural history themes that guided the collection and display of African art by European institutions is one of the two factors that make the association and exchanges of African artifacts between American art museums and European institutions significant to this study. The first one is that such an association and exchange has meant that American art museums get entangled with African colonialism that is embedded in almost every aspect of major European museums, including the complexities of the ownership of individual African artifacts.[405] The need for European and American museums to confront their complex historical past, including the complex history of ownership of collections in their possession has now become a pressing issue arising mostly in the current global environment dominated by decolonization forces and in which both Indigenous Native Americans in the US and Africans in newer nations since decolonization are contesting the legality or conditions in which European and American museums gained ownership of indigenous artifacts and more broadly, the morality of the ownership of Indigenous art by Western institutions they view as embedded in an immoral and even violent colonial past.[406]

As illustrated in more detail in subsequent sections of this chapter, a comparison between DAM and Pitt Rivers Museum (UK) on how they each confronted the complex and contentious issues related to the enduring legacy of colonialism help illuminate DAM's efforts to confront its colonial past, and hence its potential to effectively mediate complex post-colonial identities and power relations between people and dominant institutions.

As highlighted in detail in chapter 4 of this study, DAM's significant investment in innovative exhibition techniques that aim at affording visitors freedoms and choices in their interaction with art represents a departure from the oppressive colonial tradition of rigid, hierarchically organized and closed historical and cultural boundaries in the exhibition of indigenous art. DAM and other museums in the state of Colorado have also taken a leading role in the whole nation in implementation of the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), an organization founded to legally challenge and redress centuries of human rights violations against Native Americans involving the "grave looting, stealing, and improper sales of cultural items"[407] to museums around the nation. With such actions DAM could, therefore, be viewed as reflecting an attitude of a modern museum that is willing to confront rather than shy away from the colonial past with which it is entangled in many complex ways.

On the other hand, the Pitt Rivers Museum in United Kingdom, having been founded in 1884, the same year when the Berlin conference and subsequent colonization of Africa took place, was from its inception a tool to justify the colonial expansionist policies of the British Empire.[408] Having been designed mainly to display the archaeological and anthropological collection of the University of Oxford, the museum that is now at 130 years old did not modernize or transform its 19th century layout and display tradition that

highlighted an evolutionary approach to material culture and this has led to accusations

against the museum for seeming to preserve or cling to the colonial past.[409]

However, the choice to maintain its colonial era layout and display has meant that Pitt

Rivers Museum had to do more to confront its colonial past than other museums that have

since modernized or transformed their colonial layout.[410] This included an obligation to

provide more information on individual artifacts at its display that is often lacking on

artifacts displayed in other museums. Like DAM's active involvement with NAGPRA, Pitt

Rivers Museum has also invested significant effort, although with mixed results, to

confronting and addressing the colonial origin and complexities of ownership history of

individual artifacts in its collection. An example of the dilemma faced by the museum is in

fulfilling the seemingly simple, but highly complicated demand from the Uganda Kingdom

of Bunyora that the museum return almost 300 artifacts it claims were looted from the

Kingdom during the colonial era, including a royal throne.[411] As would be highlighted in

detail in subsequent sections of this chapter, like the complications involved with the

implementation of the provisions of NAGPRA in the US, the complexity of the nature of

ownership of individual artifacts being claimed by Kingdom of Bunyora before the

museum's ownership makes fulfilling the request a complicated process.

Nevertheless, comparing DAM's approach to confronting its complex colonial pasts

to a European museum like Pitt Rivers that was used as "an active tool of empire," to justify

colonialism and also significantly, a museum that has decided to maintain the look of its

colonial past, thereby becoming "an exhibition piece itself, as a museum within a

museum,"[412] help to illuminate DAM's embeddedness with the colonial past and hence, its

potential to mediate complex identities. Moreover, the comparison also highlights the fact

that everywhere around the globe, indigenous peoples are seeking recognition within post-colonial nations and environments in which their "individuality and autonomy"[413] is recognized as opposed to group stereotypes. This, in turn, highlights the significance of DAM's engagement with NAGPRA.

Confronting Dominant and Stabilizing Discourses and Racialization of Ethnicity

The second and equally important factor about the association and exchange of African artifacts between American Art museums and European museums is that the association and exchange also led to the transference to US art museums of the colonial paradigms and ethnographic missions that major European museums at the time shared with natural history museums in the United States that "collected a broad range of objects and attempted to represent cultures through their material production"[414]. This, therefore, has meant that like natural history museums, American art museums have to confront the lingering notions of white supremacy that once found home in countless disciplines, including history, anthropology and archaeology.[415] Under the influence of anthropological and natural history themes, museum exhibitionary narratives were characterized by rigid, hierarchically organized and closed historical and cultural boundaries, in which the habits, customs and traditions of indigenous and colonized subjects (racialized others) were represented as "outmoded" and "degenerate," or "primitive" and, therefore, inherently inferior:

> Prior to the 1960s, [mainstream museums throughout the United States] took the form of anthropological or natural history themes that predominately displayed cultures of Native American or African groups. More often than not, these displays depicted the peoples in early Common Era diorama environments or at best as 'noble savages,' with the underlying implication being these were dead cultures and societies. A reflection of their times and lingering notions of white superiority, these exhibitions

often reinforced stereotypes rather than illuminated the dynamics of depicted peoples' values and beliefs or cultural expressions.[416]

What is significant in this study is that such oppressive colonial tradition of the construction of the meaning of indigenous art, one that is characterized by rigid or closed historical and cultural boundaries and meant to authenticate the meaning of indigenous art is currently employed by post-industrial city elites to control these cities, mainly by manipulating the ambiguity associated with uncritical conception of the meaning of indigenous art and culture to frame dominant discourses of exclusion. The notion of authenticity associated with uncritical conception of the meaning of indigenous art and culture (one that freezes indigenous culture and identity in some historical or distance past) has traditionally been exploited to legitimize European colonial institutions of domination.[417] It is also precisely this notion of authenticity associated with indigenous culture that is currently be exploited or appropriated for symbolic capital by late modern cities in cultural construction of their post-industrial global market oriented image as authentic and, therefore, unique, stable and historical and culturally significant places.[418]

In what could demonstrate its potential to effectively mediate complex identities reflective of Denver's globalized post-industrial urban social spaces, DAM's symbolic function reflects what LiPuma and Koelble, (2005) would refer to as a "generative tension" between on one hand, stabilizing dominant global market oriented urbanist discourses represented, for example, by the Denver Downtown Plan (see chapter 4) that seek to enframe the image of Denver as historical and culturally stable and, therefore a unique landscape and on the other hand, the cultures of circulation fueled by globalization and represented in this case by the museum's new innovative exhibition technique that aim at introducing inclusive

narratives of art, history and culture to reflect the heterogeneity of the city and the museum's global audience.

As already highlighted in more detail in chapter 4 of this study, by virtue of its urban location and the highly expressive architectural structure of its newest Hamilton Building built by a world renowned or brand name architect, Daniel Libeskind, DAM has become one of the most visible fuels of the city's symbolic economy. It is from this standpoint as one a flagship cultural project that DAM's symbolic image has become subject to manipulative languages of dominant discourses of exclusion as illustrated in chapter 4 by its co-optation as part of the cultural legitimation or depoliticization of the controversial Denver Downtown Plan that has led the displacement of economically vulnerable long-term residents of downtown neighborhoods, mostly blacks and other racial minorities.

On the other hand, Denver's symbolic capital and image constructed through uncritical conception of indigenous art is highly contested by the critical conception of the meaning of indigenous art represented by DAM's new innovative art exhibition techniques that aim at expanding the social, historical and cultural boundaries of art exhibition (see DAM's interpretive activities in chapter 4). When the fluid and complex layers of meaning of indigenous art get invigorated by expanded historical, cultural and social environment of display, the meaning of indigenous art becomes reflective of the complex socio-historical realities of globalized post-industrial urban social spaces that are characterized by "globally circulating images, identities, and ideologies"[419] and representing the political and culturally unstable environment of postcolonial social inequalities and conflicts that tend to be re-igniting or exacerbating by forces of globalization.[420]

A significant part of DAM's new innovative exhibition techniques is illustrated by its new gallery designs that juxtapose works of art from different traditions, countries and centuries thereby representing a significant departure from the traditionally rigid or closed historical and cultural boundaries in art display that were characteristic of the colonial era.[421] The colonial tradition of art exhibition is one that is characterized by singular narrative hierarchies and, therefore, oppressive.[422] By reconfiguring the oppressive rigid boundaries of art display (including those between the colonized and colonizing cultures) thereby offering visitors choices and the freedom to interact with and create their own meanings of works of art, DAM's innovative exhibition techniques demonstrates the potential to have a democratizing impact since such new innovative exhibition technique represents an investment in human potential as they are meant to encourage people to question long held assumptions, engage in cross-cultural dialogue as well as, to have bold imagination of possible futures beyond those framed by oppressive dominant discourses.

From this perspective, cultures of circulation, conceived through the innovative art exhibition techniques have a destabilizing impact on stabilizing dominant discourses meant to depoliticize or politically contain the city's uncomfortable colonial history of violent displacement of indigenous groups as well as, the current racial social inequalities and conflicts. In the case in hand, when critically conceived (invigorated by expanded historical, cultural and social environment of exhibition), the meaning of Native American art and African art displayed in DAM threatens to re-ignite or bring back to Denver's door steps, its uncomfortable colonial history of violent displacement of indigenous population highlighted by the Sand Creek Massacre and the current racial social conflicts surrounding the displacement of African indigenous bodies by the city's urban renewal projects. In so doing,

the expanded or invigorated meaning of indigenous Native American and African art

displayed at DAM could potentially destabilize the carefully constructed global market

oriented symbolic capital or image of Denver as an authentic, social and culturally stable and,

therefore, unique urban landscape (see chapter 4 for detail).

Bottom:

Figure (Mboko)
1800s
Wood

Artist not known
Luba culture, Democratic Republic of the Cong
Anonymous gift, 2001.1098

Figure 23. "The only reason African artists' names are seldom known is because early collectors did not bother to ask." (African Art, Brief Guide to Collection: The Cleveland Museum of Art.)

As already highlighted in the introductory section of this study, DAM houses diverse permanent and traveling art exhibitions that include American Indian, Spanish Colonial, pre-Columbian, Asian, Oceanic, African, western American and modern and contemporary art.

Figure 24. Some African Artifacts Displayed at DAM are from the Democratic Republic of Congo, An African Nation with a Brutal Colonial History that Should Automatically Remind Us of Colorado's Sand Creek Massacre of Native Americans in 1864.

DAM's newest and most architecturally adventurous Frederic Hamilton Building houses, among others, Indigenous Native American Indian Art and African art, including some artifacts from the Democratic Republic of Congo (see Figure 17). What is significant about the juxtaposition of Indigenous Native American and African art is that it merges and, therefore, globalizes not only the meaning of relocated African colonial history entangled with African art, but also the history of the colonization and displacement of Native Americans in the United States, including specifically Colorado and the greater Denver area.

Only two decades after the Sand Creek Massacre of Native Americans in Colorado in 1864, European leaders met at the Berlin Conference in 1884 and divided the African content among themselves. At the conference King Leopold II of Belgium was given the mandate to rule over the now Democratic Republic of Congo as a de facto owner. Besides amassing a personal fortune exploiting the country's natural resources, mainly rubber, he went on to commit atrocities among the African natives whose estimated death toll range from 1 million to 15 million.[423] Yet till this day, this has been the least written or talked about genocide of native Africans by the European colonial ruler.[424] With the freedom and choices in interaction with art provided by DAM's new innovative exhibition technics, viewers have an opportunity to construct a link between the violent colonial history of Colorado and the Democratic Republic of Congo and, indeed, the rest of Africa.

As would be highlighted in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, DAM's juxtaposition of Indigenous Native American Art and African art in its display also highlights Denver's colonial present when understood in the of light of the protest on the street of another American city, in New York on September 17, 2016 by the African-American Pan-Africanist group, "December 12th Movement" who were expressing their supporting for an

embattled veteran African leader, Robert Mugabe who they view as being targeted by the United States and European powers (who currently have imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe) because of his recent action of forcibly taking land from descendants White colonial settlers and giving it to native black Africans claiming that it was the land that was violently taken from Africans during colonial domination. At 93 years of age and being the world's olden President, Robert Mugabe is closely associated with the anti-colonial movements in the 1950s, 60s and 70s in which many nationalist movements in Africa finally gained their independence from colonial rule and as one of the well-known and very few remaining nationalists leaders from that era, the veteran leader is well-known within the Pan-Africanist movement.

Countering the Pan-Africanist support for Robert Mugabe were Zimbabwean citizens, mainly from the Diaspora who were accusing the Pan Africanist group as being ill-informed about the current situation in the country and were on the wrong for supporting a dictator who has held onto power for too long and has grossly mismanaging the country, leading to the suffering of many citizens in the country. This clash between Pan-Africanist African-Americans and Africans on the street of New York could be linked to DAM's new innovative exhibition of art in two significant ways:

First, DAM''s juxtaposition of African art and Native American art gives the viewers the freedom to connect the violent colonial displacement of Native Americans from their tradition land by Europeans in the US, including greater Denver area with an equally violent displacement of African natives from their traditional land by European colonial settlers in Africa. A globalized form of colonial present is highlighted by the fact that the land issue directly linked to colonialism is still being fought over today, with the United States and

former European colonial powers directly involved. From this perspective, the colonial displacement of indigenous bodies whose beginning is marked by the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864 does not only stretch to today's "Denver Downtown Frontier" in which indigenous bodies continue to be displaced by the city's urban renewal projects illustrated by the city's downtown plan, but also stretches across the Atlantic to involve Africans who still feel displaced from their land by the colonial past, currently enforced by European powers and the United States.

While making his point that Mugabe was not to blame for the African country's current political and economic challenges, but the Europeans and Americans who he perceived as still harboring colonial interests in Africa, one of the African American Pan Africanist noted to an African protesting against Mugabe: "the same people who are oppressing you over there are also oppressing us over here." With this statement, this African-American Pan-Africanist was essentially describing the transnational nature of the colonial domination and violent displacement of indigenous bodies. In other words, he is making a suggestion for the critical conception of the meaning of indigenous art that expands the Denver downtown frontier (currently experiencing gentrification or displacement of African American and African immigrants) to not only historically include the violent displacement of Native Americans represented by Sand Creek Massacre, but to also include the colonial displacement of Native Africans by Europeans thereby expanding the downtown Denver frontier from Sand Creek to the African continent (from Sand Creek to Somali).

Secondly, in display the relocated African colonialism through the exhibition of African art, DAM has an obligation to highlight the fluidity and multiple perspectives and historical narratives that constitute the African memory. As illustrated by the clash of

perspectives between African American Pan-Africanists and Africans in their support and

opposition respectively of the long term African leader and dictator, Robert Mugabe,

although they occupy the same transnational socio-historical space as colonized indigenous

bodies, African Americans and Africans have different experiences and perspectives

resulting from equally powerful forces of globalization and decolonization. From this

perspective, we can say Denver's relationship with Africa and hence African colonialism

cannot be characterized as a relationship with a distant and stable continent. Instead, it

should be the Africa that is at its door-steps, one that is reflected by the city's globalized

post-industrial urban social space that is characterized by a complex and socially and

culturally unstable transnational socio-historical social space comprising of multiple

perspectives and narratives of history and memory of Africa.

As already highlighted in the introductory section of this study, the politics of

"essentialized difference" conceived through the uncritical conception of the meaning of

indigenous art (authentication), Denver's dominant global oriented urbanist discourses (that

borrow heavily from the colonial tradition of the exhibition of indigenous art) and reflecting

the political and business interests of the city's elite attempt to stabilize or politically contain

unstable and politically destabilizing global circulations through the promotion of the notion

of racialized ethnicity, which, as already highlighted, is the key ingredient in the construction

of the city's global image as a unique, stable, culturally diverse and socially inclusive

landscape:

> The most critical counterweight to circulation and plurality is the notion of ethnicity,
> which serves as the modernist trope for social organization of interurban group
> relationships. Thus the ideology of racialized ethnicity as enunciated by politicians,
> the media, and community leaders imagines an urban landscape of permanently

identifiable and fixed groups, each arising from a set of primordial cultural attachments.[425]

While within the historical context of colonialism, such an ideology of racialized ethnicity was constructed to naturalize racialized hierarchies of difference and, therefore, justify the colonial domination of indigenous populations (whose racialized cultural identity was represented in complex museum exhibitionary narratives as "outmoded" and "degenerate," or "primitive"), within the current environment of post-industrial urban re-imagination, the meaning of such racialized ethnicity and cultural difference is re-articulated and used as part of the construction of the image of post-industrial cities as a self-contained, stable and territorialized landscape made out of a cultural plurality of permanently identifiable and fixed racialized ethnic groups - in the case at hand, an attractive image of culturally diverse and socially inclusive city.[426]

However, fueled mostly by forces of globalization, the current decolonizing environment and the establishment of newer independent nations, African memory is highly unstable and composed of multiple perspectives and narratives.

Stabilizing Discourses versus Cultures of Circulation: The Complexity of an African Memory

While the Berlin conference marked the final phase of the European colonial domination of the African continent, the disruptive commingling of African history with European capitalist expansionist pursuit began with the transatlantic slave trade from the 15th through the 19th century in which millions of Africans were transported as slaves to the Americas thereby creating a permanent social-historical and cultural connection between the African continent and the Americas.[427] Although pre-colonial African societies and cultures

influenced the nature of European colonial domination to a significant degree and some have remained vibrant in the post-colonial era, as former slaves and colonial subjects, African culture, identity and politics have been indelibly marked by colonialism.[428] Added to that, slavery and colonialism also marked the integration of Africa and Africans into the current global capitalist economy dominated European powers and the United States thereby ensuring the continued influence of the West and Western culture on Africa: "This global economy is dominated for most part by the few rich, politically and militarily powerful countries of Europe and by the United States—countries that initially gained much of their preeminence from the exploitation of Africans and other Third World people."[429]

The idea of Pan-Africanism spawned in varied ways by African Americans intellectuals (Edward Wilmont Blyden, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois et. al.,) who called for racial unity among all people of African descent in order to fight white racism, was ironically subscribing to the notion of "African/Black essentialism," which, as illustrated in greater detail in subsequent sections of this study, could be oppressive since it represents an uncritically conceived form of African/Black identity that is not reflective of the complex experiences and identities engendered by, among other powerful forces, globalization and decolonization processes that, nevertheless, continue to be shaped by the colonial past. In other words, the attempt by black intellectuals to racial unity among Africans as a way to dissociate from and fight White racism around the globe had the unintended consequences of re-essentializing Africanness or Blackness creating the appearance of "strange bedfellows" between the idea of Pan-Africanism as conceived by the black intellectuals and the dominant global oriented Euro-American stabilizing intellectual discourses that, as already highlighted

in this study, ideologically seek to normalize, naturalize and, therefore, depoliticize colonial racial inequalities and social conflicts.

While the Pan-African racial unity called for by black intellectuals resonated in the early 1800s and early 1900s, gaining momentum in the heady decades of African independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as the colonial era recedes in time, Africa's continued political and economic problems has led to "more critical attention [being more] focused on Africans themselves, especially their leaders."[430] However, so profound has been the negative legacy of colonialism that even when most Africans acknowledge that Africans themselves should be able to manage political and economic wellbeing of their individual African countries, "Africa's political problems such as coups d'etat and authoritarian rule [including gross mismanagement of economies by African leaders themselves] could still be laid at the West's doorstep."[431] Given the current dominance of the West in the global capitalist economy, including their ability to impose economic sanctions on African regimes usually under controversial circumstances (since "typically, Western interference in African politics has been determined mostly by geopolitical or economic interests rather than by such lofty goals as democracy or good government"[432]), the West is still perceived as responsible for Africa's economic and political problems.

Nevertheless, what is significant about the growing complexity in national identities as well as, in the power relationship between colonizing and colonized cultures is the illustration of the enduring impact of colonialism and how the powerful forces such as globalization and the decolonization processes are not only shaped by, but tend to exacerbate and further complicate the pre-established colonial relations, inequalities and social conflicts. As highlighted in subsequent sections of this study, the encounter and debate on the street in

New York between Africans protesting against a long-serving African leader, Robert

Mugabe whom they accuse of poor governance and dictatorship and African-American Pan-

Africanists whose support for this African leader goes back to the colonial days when Mr.

Mugabe led his country, Zimbabwe to independence against British rule. What the exchange

between Africans and African Americans highlight is the increasing importance museums as

mediators of complex post-colonial cultural and national identities.

The African encounter in a globalized post-industrial urban social space. On

September 17, 2016, protesters from an African nation of Zimbabwe gather in front of the

United Nations headquarters in New York to protest against their 92 old President Robert

Mugabe (perhaps the oldest President in the World) who has been in power since 1980 when

he liberated the country from British colonial influence. Part of the "Lancaster House" talks

that led to Zimbabwe's political independence was an agreement that United States and

Britain would compensate the white landowners who decide to give back some of their land

to Africans who were wrongfully dispossessed from the land during the colonial rule.

However, under controversial circumstances, in year 2000 President Mugabe advised

landless black Zimbabweans to invade white farmers and take back the land by force,

arguing that Britain and the United States did not fulfill the obligations of the agreement they

signed on decades earlier. The President Mugabe ordering Africans to unlawfully occupy the

land owned by White Zimbabwean farmers who are currently rightful owners of the land was

a controversial move on many levels, the least of which was that the President's move was

viewed as an attempt to make himself relevant again after having been in power for decades

and presiding over a nation that was experiencing rapid economic and political decline. The

resulting violence against local opposition as well as, tension with the international

community has led to sanctions being imposed on Zimbabwe. For over a decade now, the political and economic conditions in the country has been rapidly deteriorating.
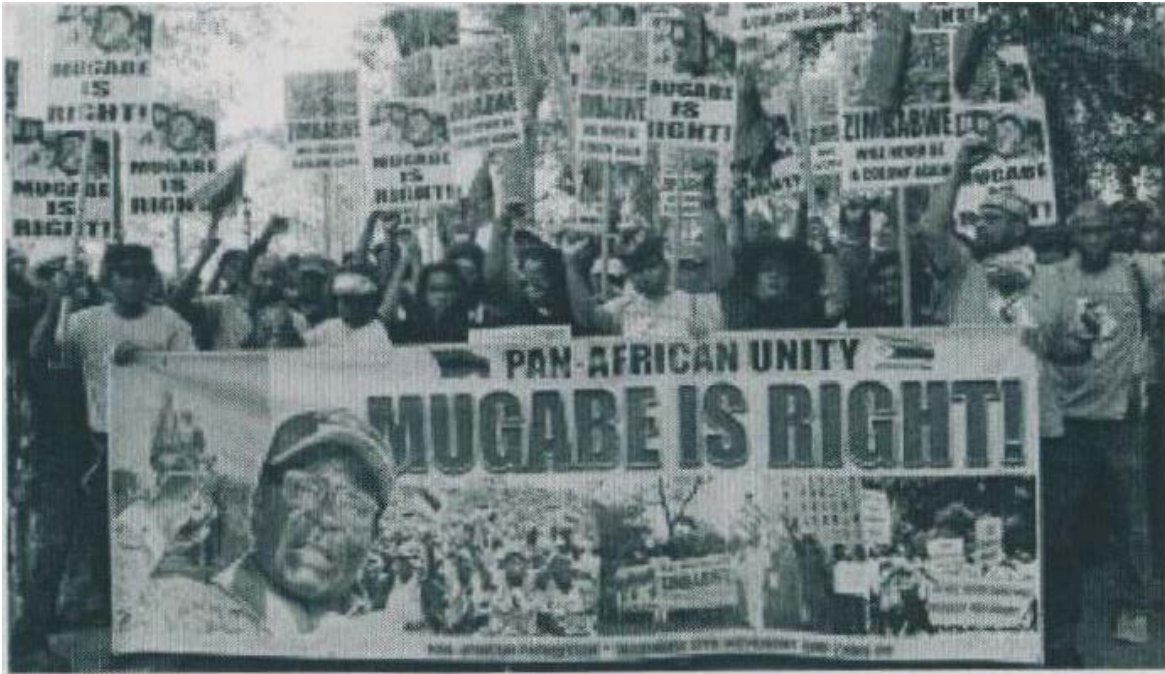
Figure 25. Pan-Africanists Show Support for a Long-serving African Leader: Fight U.S. Sanctions on Zimbabwe.

However, in New York, the Zimbabwean/African protesters are encountered by members of the "December 12th Movement" (an African-American Pan-Africanist group) who had known and supported this aging Zimbabwean leader since the days when he lead the struggle against colonialism and interestingly, like the Zimbabwean leader also look very elderly. They confront Zimbabwean protesters who they accuse of pointing their guns on the wrong enemy. The enemy, they argue, is the continued American and European colonial interests in Africa and they attribute the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe by the US and Europe as an attempt to punish this African leader who fought colonialism and managed to return to the Africans the land that was stolen from them by the European colonial settlers.

These views are, however, seen as outdated and irrelevant by Zimbabwean protesters who have dealt with the realities of living under a brutal dictator for decades now.

Obviously, the two groups think of each other as uninformed. The question is, under what display contexts could the notion of the colonial present and DAM's display of both Indigenous Native American and African Art (situated on a globalized urban social space of an American city) help educate these African indigenous bodies about the common colonial dominated and transnational socio-historic social space they occupy…connecting Denver/New York (Sand Creek) to Africa).

Here is the exchange that ensured:

Dec. 12th Member # 1: The Americans, the French are trying to take over, that is what colonialism is, the oil, the minerals, everything they want. Yeah they want everything. Who has got the diamonds?

Zimbabwean VOA Studio Interviewer (who agrees with African protestors): So who are you representing right here?

Dec. 12th Member # 1: I am representing Mugabe and the Zimbabwean people.

Zimbabwean VOA Studio Interviewer (who agrees with who agrees protestors: Why?

Dec. 12th Member # 1: Because there is an African struggle all over the world. The capitalists want everything and they want every country. They want everything in Africa and they plan to take it and you people are helping them.

Dec. 12th Member # 2: The sanction giver, who put sanctions on a small country that is trying to survive? Who put sanctions on Haiti? Who put sanctions on Cuba? Who put sanctions on Venezuela?

Zimbabwe Protester: Why were sanctions put by the US? People are dying in Zimbabwe. I am from Zimbabwe. I know Zimbabwe.

Dec. 12th Member # 2: When did the US care about black people dying?

Zimbabwe Protester: People are dying every day, he is killing people every day.

Dec. 12th Member # 2: Attack the sanction giver first, the people who put sanctions on you. Attack them first and we will be with you. You are fighting a man who brought freedom to your country.

Zimbabwean VOA Studio Interviewer (who agrees with African protestors): Do you know the current situation that exist in Zimbabwe right now?

Dec. 12th Member # 2: I know that if you go back under British influence things would be worse. I know when Zimbabwe was Rhodesia, Ian Smith gave hundreds of thousands of acres of land to his people, while you had nothing. That's what I know.

Dec. 12th Member # 1: They are angry because Mugabe took the land back that was stolen in the beginning and gave it to the people who were struggling in the revolution. That is why the United States and Britain are angry at Mugabe because they won't let them take over the country like they want to.

Later in this protest, one of the Zimbabwean protesters says that he is protesting against Mugabe because he wants to bring to Zimbabwe the same freedom he is currently enjoying here in the US, "to be able to protest and not be afraid when I see the police" (saying that while pointing at a white police officer who was standing by to make sure there was peace). The African/black man talking about feeling safe when he sees a white police officer was ironic in the current political environment in US that is characterized by tension between the police and black youth (the high profile shootings and protests against police

shootings of black youth in the US.) This Zimbabwean/African protester needs to talk to "Black Lives Matter" movement or the NFL Quarterback Colin Kaepernick who is currently protesting against the US flag as a way of protesting against what he perceives to be the prevalence of racial discrimination in the US OR police brutality against black youth.

Still further into the exchange, a member of the "December 12th Movement" says to the Zimbabwean protestor: "The people who oppress you over there, are the same people who oppress us over here." Albeit ignoring the controversies surrounding the African President he is supporting, this statement by the African-American protestor comes closest to describing the transnational socio-historical space that he and African protestors occupy (consciously or unconsciously, he correctly connects Sand Creek Massacre, Displacement of indigenous bodies in gentrifying Denver, to colonial displacement of Zimbabweans to their land and the current African struggle against neo-colonialism—the colonial present).

Authenticity as an element of dominant stabilizing discourses. The notion of authenticity associated with the meaning of indigenous art, including African art, evokes the notion of originality or purity from any form of contamination.[433] While such notion is internally contradicted by the fact that the discovery of such purity or originality cannot exclude the contamination (ethnographic influence) of the art collector, the notion of authenticity also oversimplifies the understanding of African societies by suggesting that "before colonialism most African societies were relatively isolated, internally coherent and highly integrated."[434] Such romanticization or essentialization of the meaning of African art and, hence, African cultural identity has the effect of freezing into some fictitious past (pre-colonial past), the idea of Africa and the cultural identification of people deemed to be of African descent. From this perspective, the true and hence, desirable African art and culture

is one that is static or unchanging, representing the timeless past. The search for authenticity in African art, in other words, reduces the long and complex history of Africa, its "innumerable befores and afters [in order to emphasize] the eve of European colonialism as the unbridgeable chasm between traditional, authentic art and an aftermath pullulated by foreign contact."[435]

Within broader contexts of contemporary decolonization projects and the pluralization of public spheres, the recognition of previously marginalized indigenous art and culture is used as a benchmark for the social and cultural progress that has been achieved, especially in cross-cultural relations. Although the fictitiousness of the notion of authentic African culture and identity and hence, its use as a viable unit for the pluralization of public space has long been highlighted, the search for authentic African culture in the selection and display of African art remains a "powerful paradigm … fundamental to the West's understanding of Africa."[436]

What is significant in this study about the romanticization of the pre-colonial past in the conceptualization of the new meaning of indigenous art, is the ideological impact such meaning tend to have when it is re-articulated and used as part of the broader cultural projects of post-industrial urban re-imagination. More specifically, when the new meaning of African art is uncritically conceived (frozen in the pre-colonial past) and used as part of the cultural construction of the new and attractive image of post-industrial cities as culturally diverse and, therefore, socially inclusive landscapes, the ideological impact of such new meaning is that it depoliticizes the uncomfortable colonial histories of the place that are inherently entangled with both Indian and African art as well as, the current racialized social

inequalities and conflicts characteristic of post-industrial cities like Denver (the colonial present).

Emanating from the notion of authenticity associated with African art has been the primordial attachment of African culture and identity to race (blackness or Africanness) in the conceptualization of the meaning of African art. As highlighted in greater details in subsequent sections of this study, racialized ethnicity form a very important ideological background for cultural projects that seek to enframe the imagination of post-modern, post-industrial cities like of Denver as self-contained, stable and territorialized landscape made out of a cultural plurality of permanently identifiable and fixed racialized ethnic groups - in the case at hand, an attractive image of culturally diverse and socially inclusive city.[437]

What is Africa and who are Africans? Just like the idea of Africa itself, the cultural identities of people deemed to be of African descent, whether in the African homeland or in the diaspora, cannot be represented or claimed in spatial or racial terms because "Africa is much a reality as it is a construct whose boundaries—geographical, historical, and cultural have shifted according to prevailing conceptions and considerations of global racial identities and power as well as African nationalism, including Pan-Africanism."[438] When understood based on its four main constructions—that is, Africa as a biology, space, memory and as representation: "African identities and cultures are mapped in racial, geographical, historical, or discursive terms."[439] Adding to the complexity in understanding Africa and African identities is the fact that the African Union (AU) recognizes the diaspora as part of its region.[440]

From this complex understanding of Africa and African identity formations, the racialization of ethnic or cultural identity of people deemed to be of African descent and

reside in a globalized post-industrial urban social spaces like in the city of Denver, would represent gross oversimplification of these people's everyday social experiences and hence, their identity. Racialized ethnic identities in such context oversimplifies (stabilizes) what is essentially a more complex or heterogeneous, unstable, transnational and globalized post-industrial urban social space and (cultures of circulation) and consequently, the cultural identity formations.[441] While within the historical context of colonialism, such an ideology of racialized ethnicity was constructed to naturalize racialized hierarchies of difference and, therefore, justify the colonial domination of indigenous populations (whose racialized cultural identity was represented in complex museum exhibitionary narratives as "outmoded" and "degenerate," or "primitive"), within the current environment of post-industrial urban re-imagination, the meaning of such racialized ethnicity and cultural difference is re-articulated and used as part of the aesthetic enhancement of the city as multicultural and, therefore, a culturally and historically significant landscape.

What makes the exploration the complex nature of African identity crucial is the fact that under the current postcolonial global environment that has been dominated by the decolonization processes and, more crucially, increasing cultural diversity in major US cities, art museums have assumed a significant symbolic role in articulating and managing cultural diversity as well as, the recognition of equal rights for indigenous and diasporic populations.[442] Within this context, uncritical conceptualization of the meaning of African art, namely, the primordial cultural attachment to the concept of race (Africanness or blackness) as an irreducible and permanent marker of African identity and, therefore, a viable unit for overall cultural diversity in the city, has meant that the postcolonial social and cultural agenda of the art museums has been beset by an inherent fundamental weakness,

namely the failure to engage the social and cultural complexities of African diasporas and

diaspora communities. Within African diaspora studies the idea of "Africa" is increasingly

understood in its complex form, and along that, questions of "who are the Africans that

constitute, when dispersed and reconstituted, African diasporas"[443] are asked to capture the

complexity of diaspora communities and identities. Generally defined:

> "Diasporas are complex social and cultural communities created out of real and
> imagined genealogies and geographies [cultural, racial, ethnic, national, continental,
> transnational] of belonging, displacement, and recreation, constructed and conceived
> at multiple temporal and spatial terms scales, at different moments and distances from
> the putative homeland."[444]

Current literature on diaspora studies show equal emphasis on continental African

and diaspora communities, which is important given the transnational nature of the identities

and everyday experiences of recent immigrants who, while having to content with their

conditions in the host nation, can also not fully detach themselves from conditions in the

homeland. The phenomenon of "transnationalism" reflects the increasing interconnection

between international migration and globalization in how the sending and receiving countries

mutually shape the experience of immigrants and how they are perceived:

> "increasingly, international migration has come to be seen as an integral part of
> globalization, or the phenomenon known as "transnationalism," a social process in
> which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political
> borders. Viewing international migration from the transnational perspective has
> serious implications for how immigrants should be viewed by both sending and
> receiving countries and how migration is analyzed (Glick Schiller et al. in Paul
> Tiyambe Zeleza, in Osidore Okpewho, 2009:39).

Pan-Africanism & the Burdensome Legacy of Race

To understand the ideological impact of black racial essentialism it is important to

understand that the oppressive racial binary of Blackness and Whiteness was constructed

exclusively for the purpose of social and cultural exploitation of blacks and, therefore, that

the reessentialization of Blackness by blacks (the idea that there is an essential Black identity) has inevitably meant conforming to or reproducing the abstract notion of Blackness that is fundamentally oppressive rather than liberating or emancipatory.[445]

However, the natural inclination by black intellectuals to forge unity or solidarity among other blacks in order to dissociate themselves from or fight against racism and White supremacy has meant that "in the absence of critical self-reflection," the reessentialization of Blackness by blacks has always been inevitable.[446] For African Americans, the search for an essentialist identity was a way of restoring their humanity and sense of belonging that was destroyed by the traumatic experience of slavery and racism:

> That the institution of slavery and the continuation of racism in its aftermath has had a traumatic effect on the self-consciousness of African Americans goes without a saying. One of the symptoms of this traumatic experience is the feeling of homelessness and a loss or destroyed sense of self. The knowledge of having been uprooted from one's homeland and purged of all knowledge of one's language, customs, and a ancestry leaves one longing for a self that one never was and for solidarity with one's people and place of origin. That is, the quest for identity and solidarity with a people often causes one to long for an essentialist identity that is rooted in one's geographical origins or ancestry.[447]

It is, therefore, not by accident that the idea of "Africa" and what constitute "Africanness" or "Blackness" has historically been shaped mostly by the ideological politics of the 19th and early 20th black writers from the New World, who were responding to the system of racial classification in the United States. What particularly made the African-American iconographic constructions of diasporan identity and black modernity more influential has been the global and imperial reach of the American state and capital, including corporate media on whose tentacles African American elites have been able to export their ideas about Blackness around the world.[448] This, however, does not imply that the interaction between Africa and its Diasporas was characterized by a one-way flow but rather

a two-way flow as exemplified by the "cycle of reciprocities between the literary movements of Africa and the diaspora, most significantly the Harlem Renaissance and the Negritude movement"[449] both of which became a source of inspiration for the Black Arts and the Black Aesthetic movements in the U.S. and nationalist movements in Africa in the 1960s and 1970s.[450]

Nevertheless, the Pan-Africanist black intellectuals like Alexander Crummell and Edward Blyden and later, W.E.B. du Bois on whose intellectual paradigms and ideological politics the idea of Africa has been imagined and constructed, and on whose intellectual ideological background the concept of African diaspora has been conceptualized, were preoccupied with the concept of "race."[451] However, given the complexity and multiple genealogies and meanings involved in the construction of the idea of "Africa" and African identity and culture, by linking the singular concept of race and Pan-Africanism, these influential black intellectuals are said to have left us with a "burdensome legacy."[452]

Placing within current critical debates in African diaspora studies the exploitation of African indigenity in the cultural construction of the image of a modern American city, I conceive what I see as "strange bedfellows" or unintended ideological alliance between the white dominated Western mainstream museums and black nationalism (Black Zionism, Ethiopianism, Negritude) in the essentialization of African identity and culture, namely the reduction of a complex and fluid African identity and culture to an essentialist Black racial identity that is rooted in geographical origins or ancestry (Africa). Although the motives for essentializing African culture and identity could be viewed as different if directly opposed (the former being to oppress and exploit black social and cultural life, and the later as part of the anti-racist movement), I argue that through their language and logic of inverted racial

thinking in conceptualization of African identity or blackness, the founding Pan-Africanism intellectuals or black nationalist in the late 19th and early 20th century, most notably Alain Leroy Locke, Alexander Crummell, Edward Wilmont Blyden and later W.E.B. du Bois played a significant role in racializing African identity (reessentialization of Blackness by Blacks).

In the realm of art and museum exhibitions, to understand the language and logic of inverted racial thinking among black intellectuals, one has to first understand the significant historical role museums, as most visible public institutions in modern societies, have played in promoting the notion of white supremacy alongside the negative stereotypes and imagery reflecting the black race in American art. In the United States and other parts of the world, mainstream museums that historically have been white dominated played a significant role in racializing indigenous ethnicities mainly through the primordial attachment of the culture and tradition of these societies to the concept of race thereby reducing the complex social realities and multiplicity of indigenous identities to a fixed or unchanging essence.

Deeply rooted in the colonial era and concerned with the promotion of white superiority, mainstream museum exhibitions taking the form of anthropological or natural history themes depicted the cultures of indigenous Native American and African groups with the goal of "[reinforcing the negative] stereotypes rather than illuminated the dynamics of the depicted peoples' values and beliefs or cultural expressions."[453] As already indicated in this chapter, the lingering notions of white supremacy in current exhibition and exploitation of indigenous cultures is reflected by the underlying implication of the notion of "noble savages" in representing indigenous cultures as primitive, pre-modern or pre-industrial and,

therefore, only acceptable or authentic as dead cultures and societies rather living, vibrant or dynamic cultures.

The intellectual efforts of black elites in late 19th and early 20th century was focused on reversing the stereotypes associated with African identity and culture in white dominated American art by demonstrating through scholarship centering on the discovery of their African heritage that Africans had elaborate and sophisticated history and culture, including art that could even rival Western civilization as highlighted by the debate surrounding the "Hamitic hypothesis" concerning the origin of Egyptian civilization. In direct response to the late 19th and early 20th century propagation by mostly European archaeologists, ancient historians and ethnologists that the Hamitic outsiders were mostly responsible for the civilization and cultural achievements of Africans, thereby reinforcing the notion of black inferiority, a concerted effort by early 20th century black scholars focused their scholarship on highlighting the black origins of ancient civilization also centering on Egyptian civilization.[454] In this effort, the intellectual ideological underpinnings of Pan-Africanism worked in tandem with cultural movements, most notably the Harlem Renaissance during the 1920s in which "African art was increasingly regarded as relevant to African American constituencies, as examples of cultural heritage and artistic inspiration."[455] Du Bois and other African intellectuals responded to earlier calls by Alain Leroy Locke (1885-1954) and others who noted that focus on the subject of race and culture would enable African Americans to place the African American aesthetics in the larger context of American art while centering their scholarship "on the discovery of their African heritage and a definition of a prideful self."[456] Through his regular contributions in the 1920s and 30s to the magazine he helped found, "The Crisis," du Bois, for example, not only used African art images to

appeal to African American artists to return to the ancestral arts of Africa for inspiration, he also used African art to achieve his long term agenda of persuading African Americans to recognize their shared racial identity with Africans.[457]

It is within context of this bold undertaking to break with the Euro-American mid-set by objectively outlining the history of African Americans' artistry to that of their forbearers in Africa, an approach that would enable "black artists … to turn inward for inspiration that would enable them to produce new images of themselves that were void of negative references"[458] that African-American elites, mostly through the Harlem Renaissance, turned to "Nativist" modernism which conceived an emancipatory politics based on Africa's cultural uniqueness grounded on geography, race, heritage and African ancestry.[459]

Among black artists and intellectuals associated with the Harlem Renaissance, Ethiopianism and Egyptomania came to represent key concepts in black centered historicism meant to authenticate a transnational Pan-African racial and cultural unity among blacks. Egypt became a source of native tradition, cultural heritage and pride among new world blacks when it became an integral part of Ethiopianism "derived from a strategic reading of the bible to claim a specifically black form of providential design."[460] As already indicated, the "Hamitic hypothesis" centering on Egyptian civilization represents a creative response by black artists to counter ideas of black inferiority, starting with the social application to racial difference of the biblical interpretation, namely the thesis of "Noah's curse" which until well into the 19th century served to justify or divinely ordain the enslavement of blacks as descendants of Ham, and with the shifting of historic times, being later exploited by white supremacists in the construction of the discourse of scientific racism centering on the ideological linkage of race and civilization, and representing blacks as primitive, uncivilized

and inferior in nature and thus had to depend on the outside "Hamitic" influence for civilization.[461] Envisioned and inspired by Alain Leroy Locke, black counter-myths of white racist discourses of black inferiority in black racial school of arts was creatively fashioned by also drawing on the biblical construction of the myths of the diversity of humans to racially authenticate the origins of blackness (specifically to claim providential design) and thus effectively instrumentalize the reading of the bible to counter the discourse of scientific racism by centering black art on scholarship highlighting the black origin of ancient civilization.[462]

The mostly symbolic Ethiopianist prophecy was secularized and politically boosted by "real" events in Ethiopia that captured the attention and interests of African-Americans and thus providing resources for black political and cultural elites to strengthen Pan-African awareness and racial unity among African descendants around the world. Real historic events such as the Ethiopians successfully beating off the Italian invasion in Adwa in 1896 (this representing "the first time in the era of colonialism that an indigenous population had resisted and successfully subdued a European power"[463]), the coronation of Ras Tafari Makonnen in 1928 and followed subsequently by his emperorship as Haile Selassie from 1930, and finally the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 (which drew the defensive participation of African-Americans thus directly involving them "in the making of a politics of the diaspora")[464] all helped create the environment for the social and political relevance of cultural Pan-Africanism and, hence the social role of cultural artists of the Harlem Renaissance.

Thus, through Egyptianisms and Ethiopianisms as the core themes in their construction of black aesthetic, black artists of the Harlem Renaissance cemented African

identity and subjecthood on geography, race and ancestry (African). As already highlighted throughout this chapter, the pitifalls of such objective (essentialist) construction of identity is that when African/Black identity is "so deeply grounded in race and geography … the distinctions between "racial body," "spatial body" and "civic body" are erased, and the idea of an Africanity that is not black becomes unimaginable."[465]

What unites these "strange bedfellows" (Authenticity/Eurocentrism and Pan-Africanism intellectuals and black nationalists) is their ethnocentric view of African culture and identity that is mostly constructed from the essence of race and geographic origin. Through his numerous publication in his magazine, du Bois relied heavily on the ethnocentric (authentication of African art) to promote the positive image of the negro race in the face of the prevailing European negative styreotyping of the black race. Both Du Bois and Edward Blyden viewed African culture, religions and lifestyles as primitive. Du Bois's journal publications revealed, for example, that he "looked at Africa with the eye of a primitivist, romanticizing the simple, sweet African lifestyle, the slow eyes, the ease of it all."[466] While for their part, Alexander Crummel and Edward Byden supported the black colonization of Africa which they perceived as civilizing missions to uncivilized or primitive African cultures and religions.

It is because of such an ethnocentric view of African culture even among blacks that historically has helped maintain white dominated racial hierarchies. In subsequent sections of this chapter I introduce the term "Zoological Multiculturalism" that has been coined to highlight how the representation of multiculturalism or diversity in contemporary art museums always implies/assumes the presence of a White culture not as just part of the group, but as a dominant culture or force whose presence is necessary to facilitate the

coexistence of other ethnic cultures. In the same vein, I also highlight social tensions (including some stereotyping) between Africans and African-Americans (contemporary vs historic African diasporas) over access to resources highlighted most visibly by the issue of "affirmative actions" in college admissions. A section of African-American community feel aggrieved by what they perceive as the disproportionate enrolment of African students and children of recent African immigrants to elite American colleges compared to African American students. They view this as African students taking advantage of resources historically reserved for children of black descendant of slaves. Just like in the realm of art in which Euro-American (whiteness) influences the definition of the artistic standards for the African/Black art, such examples of inter and intra African diaspora struggles over identity and access to resources in America's highly racialized society signifies the social and cultural practices that have functioned to create white supremacy starting from the colonization and enslavement of Africans and Native Americans to the present.

The politics of Black racial identity. It can then be argued that it is due mostly to uncritical conception of race (essentialization and reessentialization) that the notion of race has historically been conceived within the dominant white oriented ethnocentric discourses about "race." Although always conceived in biological terms, the notion of race has always been fundamentally a social construct and, more specifically, a "structure rooted in white supremacy, economic exploitation and social privilege,"[467] and, therefore, a product of class domination. By conceiving the meaning of Blackness in terms that connotes categorical and essentialist language in representing Black life and experience (racial essentialism), Black racial essentialism has delimited the meaning of Blackness within the structure rooted in white supremacy, thereby ensuring that Blackness has no meaning outside of this structure:

> What is black authenticity? Who is really black? … blackness has no meaning outside of a system of race-conscious people and practices. After centuries of racist degradation, exploitation, and oppression in America, being black means being minimally subject to white supremacist abuse and being part of a rich culture and community that has struggled against such abuse. All black people with black skin and African phenotype are subject to potential white supremacist abuse. Hence, all black Americans have some interest in resisting racism—even if their interest is confined solely to themselves as individuals rather than to larger black communities. … Hence any claim to black authenticity—beyond that of being a potential object of racist abuse and an heir to a grand tradition of black struggle—is contingent on one's political definition of black interest and one's ethical understanding of how this interest relates to individuals and communities in and outside black America. In short, blackness is a political and ethical construct.[468]

Drawing on the ambiguities associated with the notion of authenticity, the dominant ethnocentric discourses of race have the impact of masking or depoliticizing the reality of race and racism namely, the pervasive institutional arrangements and social outcomes which perpetuate the exploitation and subordination of the black community's social and cultural life. The meaning and reality of race is ideologically made invisible when the oppressed black people have always "perceived domination through the language and appearance of racial forms,"[469] ensuring that the political culture of Black America and efforts to empower Black people are limited by the preoccupation with race as opposed to class domination and, therefore, always confined within environments of whiteness or structure rooted in white supremacy.

The historic ideological battles/debates within black political culture on how to fight racism and empower black people reflect the continuing burden of race, namely the "limitations and inherent weaknesses of a model of politics which is grounded solely or fundamentally in racial categories."[470] Both the "integrationist" black intellectuals (represented in the early 20th century by W.E.B. du Bois) and the "separatists" or Afrocentrists (represented in the early 20th by Marcus Garvey and today by Molefi Asante)

tended to reify race thereby confining or limiting in varied ways their strategies for ant-racism or Black empowerment within environments of whiteness.[471]

The historic challenge for black intellectuals has been on how to theorize black solidarity or unity that goes beyond the limiting "racial bifurcation of white versus black" while, nevertheless, not forgetting the collective struggles and history and, therefore, the common destiny among people of African descent. Given the challenges of the postmodern era such as growing class divisions and the dislocations of Black identity, the search for Black racial solidarity in the absence of critical self-reflection has led to unfortunate results, namely the reessentialization of Blackness and Whiteness by Blacks which is no less oppressive than the original racial essentialism: "It is possible for Blacks to oppress other Blacks by insisting that they conform to a set of criteria that determines one's Blackness. Such an act may destroy an individual's opportunity to flourish as a human being."[472]

While in general, the reessentialization of Blackness by Blacks is not done with the purpose to oppress or exploit black people like the original racial essentialism by dominant whites, the rhetoric of racial solidarity has been utilized by the minority Black elites to promote their own material interests at the expense of the poor majority: "symbolic representation can be manipulated to promote the narrow interests of minority elected officials who may have little commitment to advancing the material concerns of the most oppressed sectors of multicultural America."[473]

Dissertation Conclusion

Due to limited financial resources and time constraints, this author was forced to rely on secondary sources in some key parts of the dissertation where it would have could have been strengthened and enriched by primary sources and personal interviews with ordinary people whose personal experiences would have helped. However, while in Denver the author identified a healthy variety of sources that could be revisited in the near future. Nevertheless, my dissertation has answered the broad questions that I had and has highlighted some interesting areas for future research.

As people who have historically been displaced by modern European global capitalist expansion, mainly through colonialism and the related transatlantic slave trade, Native Americans, African Americans and recent African immigrants to the United States occupy a globalized socio-historical space that highlights shared conditions of struggle, and, therefore, the possibilities for solidarity, political collaboration or effective partnership in their attempt to gain social exclusion in a globalized environment dominated by Euro-Americans. However, since such displacement and colonial domination of Native Americans, African Americans and recent African immigrants, takes place at different historical eras, geographic locations and through different political events and, therefore, highly complex, to this day, there is no formal political collaboration and effective partnership between these historically marginalized groups.

Drawing on the concept of the "colonial present," the entry point for my dissertation is to highlight how such lack of formal political coalition today among people who have been displaced by European colonialism could be traced to the misdiagnosis of the nature of European settler colonialism and the related slave trade and chattel slavery in the United

States as mere events of the past as opposed to conceptualizing them as marking the enactment of European and Euro-American structures of global domination that continue to shape the sociality of places worldwide.

Focusing specifically on black urban experience in the post-industrial city of Denver, a globally ambitious city with a legacy of colonial violence against indigenous populations and also a long and continuous history of racial hostility against African immigrants, this study focuses on how dominant Euro-American discourses have been mobilized to politically contain the past and present presence of blacks and indigenous populations. Situating current black experience within Denver's colonial history, this study draws on the notion of the colonial present to highlight how relying on the uncritical conception of the meaning of indigenous art, dominant Euro-American discourses, in the case in hand, global market-oriented urbanist discourses have relied on the false dichotomy of tradition versus modernity, global-local and past versus present to essentialize (stabilize) what is an essence a globalized post-industrial urban social space of Denver thereby separate Sand Creek Massacre from the current displacement of blacks by the city's urban renewal projects (therefore, continuing colonial forms of domination.)

Focusing specifically on the status and relationship between African Americans and recent African immigrants in the United States today, existing literature has highlighted the fact that in their attempt to attain social assimilate or gain social mobility in the United States, new African immigrants have to face the challenge of navigating the legacy of racism and violence against blacks in American society that does not distinguish between African Americans and African immigrants. Indeed, the success of new African immigrants in the United States today is closely tied to socio- economic and political progress that has been

achieved by African Americans over the years.[474] Along the same vein, despite the fact that they comprise the most educated immigrant population in the United States today and the most economically savvy,[475] African immigrants are the least compensated for their educational attainment and career achievements and, furthermore, they are less politically involved and influential compared to African Americans.[476]

This literature, therefore, reveals two key issues about the relationship and social status of African Americans and recent African immigrants to the United States: 1) that there is need for political collaboration between the two groups since they occupy the same socio-historical space as people who have been displaced by modern European global capitalist expansion and, therefore, face common racial systematic barriers to progress. 2). That African immigrants in the United States today have become a significant social and economic force (as highlighted by high educational achievements) and formal collaboration with African Americans who have accumulated vast amount of political clout in the United States over the recent years, has unlimited potential to improve the social status of blacks as a whole, not just in the United States, but in Africa as well.

As a theoretical model, the notion of the colonial present (highlighting current structures of domination) could provide an insight into the challenges and opportunities for such a coalition to be effective.

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