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Zig Jackson: Postindian Warrior of Fine Art

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Abstract: The article is a discussion of contemporary photographic works featuring Native Americans. The argument is framed through references to the conventions of representations of Native people in photography, on the one hand, and the critical discourse of Gerald Vizenor and the notions of the "Indian" and "Postindian," on the other. The article focuses on the artist, Zig Jackson, who is described as a Postindian "warrior of survivance" and whose practice is analyzed as an attempt at the deconstruction of the popular image of the "Indian."

Keywords: photography, Indian, Postindian, Native Americans

How to construct and perform the identity of a member of a marginalized group? How to build an oppositional identity? Can one create Native presence through denuding popular representations of a colonized group as the ultimate absence? These questions are tackled by both Native American academics and artists. This text analyses photographic works by a contemporary artist, Zig Jackson, whose works were shown at an exhibition called *Contemporary Native Photographers and the Edward Curtis Legacy* in the spring of 2016. As the description for the exhibition claimed "It will ask visitors to consider Curtis' continuing influence on the interpretation of Native American culture while highlighting contemporary reactions to his role within the history of representation of indigenous peoples" (*Contemporary Native Photographers*). Zig Jackson's work challenges the conventions of the portrayal of indigenous nations that are so widespread in the mainstream culture and that have their roots in the ethnographic tradition of the nineteenth century. I will argue that the examples discussed can be seen as survivance narratives that are, as Gerald Vizenor describes them, "renunciations of dominance, detractions, obtrusions, the unbearable sentiments of tragedy, and the legacy of victimry" (*Native Liberty* 85).

Photography as a Tool of Cultural Appropriation and the Postindian Way Out

The Edward Curtis reference in the title of the exhibition acknowledges how *The North American Indian* still holds a firm grip on public imagination, not only in the US but also elsewhere, which is visible for example in publications such as National Geographic. Curtis's work came about at the time when numerous anthropological expeditions set out to record, for scientific purposes, and for posterity, the last remnants of the "almost extinct [Indian] civilization" (Morgan 289). That endeavor was prompted by the nostalgic feelings for the gone by innocent days at the beginnings of the European colonization of America. This was a reaction of the dominant society to the transformations of Native communities in the nineteenth century even though the changes were called for and seen as unavoidable and beneficial by the mainstream society. The paradox of the situation was that the ethnologists' vision of the Native

culture often did not match existing reality. The Natives were no longer involved in inter-tribal warfare, they did not hunt buffalo, and in daily life, they relied on modern devices. Therefore, in order to emphasize the exotic aspect of their culture, the photographic images were often staged and enacted, rather than simply snapped when the photographer casually wandered around the reservation land. Thus, despite photographers' assertions about the accuracy and usefulness of his photographs as scientific evidence, the pictures did not document reality but rather constructed it in agreement with the pervasive mood of the time.

Edward Curtis's multi-volume *The North American Indian* is the most well-known project that aimed at recording the "vanishing race". The work was funded by John Pierpont Morgan and received extremely favorable and encouraging comments from president Theodore Roosevelt, who provided volume 1 with a foreword. Given Morgan's and Roosevelt's involvement in the project, the political and ideological entanglements of the undertaking cannot be denied. Curtis attempted to produce an earnest ethnographic record, in order to chronicle the lives of Native American tribes. But at the same time, he displayed a helpless urge to romanticize indigenous people and make them appear as "noble savages" who are soon to disappear because of the natural order of things, at the time when they were being intensely marginalized. Consequently, deflecting attention from the real and tangible predicament in which Native Americans were, and ignoring their efforts to adapt to the new way of life, while at the same time preserve their traditions.

Curtis's images can hardly be seen as ethnographic documents, which he persistently claimed they were, chiefly because they were heavily influenced by a dominant photographic aesthetic trend of the time, namely pictorialism (Gidley 182). The movement arose in response to popular claims that photography was just a mechanical way of recording reality, not a true art form. The proponents of the style therefore wanted to demonstrate that images produced by cameras can indeed attain the lofty position of works of art (Marien 136). Thus, rather than making "straightforward" photographs, they produced pictures that would resemble paintings or drawings. Their works were usually slightly out of focus, a bit murky, featured dramatic light effects, and exhibited brush strokes or other noticeable signs of manipulation. All these elements can be seen in the majority of Curtis's photogravures which defies Curtis' assertions about accuracy and preciseness. The images promote a vision of sentimental evanescence. Curtis's main, though to some degree unconscious, objective was to create spectacular and picturesque images. Yet, he presented his work as simple ethnographic documents that as he claimed mirrored the reality of Native life.

What is even more frequently leveled as criticism against Edward Curtis's methods, are the accusations of various types of manipulations that he deployed to get perfect photographs that would correspond to his vision. According to Lyman, "Curtis trumpeted the need to catch real 'Indianness'… but he knew that much of what he thought as 'Indianness' did not exist, and in that knowledge, his work tended toward deception" (149). In the process of the production of this falsehood, he would provide costumes, issue wigs to cover their short hair and supply them with accessories (usually, historically inaccurate) they were to pose with. These were to attest to the Indianness of people documented so that they could stage scenes that he imagined,

which often did not correspond to the actual Native histories or traditions (Lyman 90). Curtis also cropped his pictures and retouched them in order to eliminate the evidence of modern life, especially material objects of Euro-American cultures (Lyman 63). Furthermore, his subjects were mostly photographed outdoors, in a pristine looking natural environment, which together with the captions that preferably referred to events and customs of the distant past, situated Natives in some unspecified, mythical times gone by, and obliterated any suggestions for the cause of their difficult situation.

In *On Photography* Susan Sontag writes "To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge—and, therefore, like power" (4). The appropriation of Native American iconography is very much true if one looks at such examples as Curtis's monumental project. From its inception photography was used as a tool of cultural dominance, and control over the marginalized group identified as the Other, and its use for political purposes is clearly visible now. Most of the pictures that reached a wider audience, produced, in Gerald Vizenor's terminology, simulations that existed, or presumably still do, in the absence of the tribal real.

In his book *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance*, Gerald Vizenor examines the most important issues about Curtis's photographic project. Vizenor notes that the photographer was brought up in a society pervaded with tragic narratives on Native Americans, therefore his own work was influenced by them and was based on the premises that identified Native people as less developed, and so motivated and justified U.S. expansionism. In his portrayal of the "vanishing race," he overlooked all resistance and survival of indigenous people. But, the main problem with Curtis's photographs has been that even though the images were pictorialist the photographer showed them as ethnographic records and studies, and that subsequently they were received and treated as such by their viewers and readers creating a mythical image of the "Indian."

Vizenor's *Manifest Manner: Postindian Warriors of Survivance* discusses the emergence of the notion of the "Indian" and his own coinage "Postindian" which is aimed at destabilizing the former term. He writes that the "Indian" is a colonial concept used to refer to a whole lot of indigenous people, despite their tribal identity, to which there is no equivalent in any of the tribal languages since Native people never perceived themselves as a unity having belonged to different nations (*Manifest Manners* 11). For Vizenor the idea of "Indianess" is a simulation understood in the Baudrillardian meaning of the word as a "negation of the sign as value… the sign as reversion and death sentence of every reference" (Baudrillard 170). This particular simulation which does not refer to any reality whatsoever yet keeps up the pretence of being representative of particular groups of people populating the U.S., has been employed in the service of imperialistic purposes of the European colonists since Christopher Columbus's arrival in America as Native Americans were excluded from civil society and existed outside the U.S. constitution, and is still present in the mainstream culture.

For Vizenor the answer to the Euro-American "simulations of domination" is the Postindian. The very term alludes to postmodernism theories, most notably deconstruction, which Jacques Derrida defines in *Of Grammatology* as movements

that "do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor can they take accurate aim, except by inhabiting those structures" (24). As the term "postmodern" departs from the notion of modernism and is defined as something that comes after, derives certain features from that movement, yet is in many ways the opposite of that strand in art, so similarly "Postindian" can only be defined in relation to the word "Indian." The Anishinaabe writer acknowledges the impossibility of the critique of the notion of an "Indian" that does not start with the term itself. He refers to Derridian logic of paleonymics, recognizing the series of connected significations that a term entails, the contradictions contained in that system, the ambivalence and inadequacy of the existing term, and consequently offering a new understanding of that old concept. His coinage implies that the diverse tribal cultures could only be perceived as a unity from the colonial perspective. Only the play with the word and with the simulations that come with it might prove effective in showing the specificity of "Indian simulations" and so undermine them.

The Postindian lays bare and unsettles the mainstream conventions of supposed representation of Native people, with the use of humor, theatrical performances, circulation of new stories, what Vizenor generally calls the "simulations of survivance" (*Manifest Manners* 5). The term denotes Native survival and resistance against the hegemonic cultural structures (*Native Liberty* 24) and is inspired in its construction by Derrida's term *différance*, also a blending, of differ and defer, and a pun that characterizes and performs the situation in which all identities and meanings are possible as they are acknowledged and left over to be used in other contexts, and thus alters the traditional definitions of identity and difference. The simulations of survivance are any voices and acts that tease the prevailing and powerful simulations and tell fresh stories of indigenous people without offering any essential definition of the Native identity and without claiming its ultimate authenticity. These performances are often characterized by the hallmarks of postmodern art listed by Ihab Hassan, such as play, parody, irony, chance, deconstruction, performance and metonymy (91), and are aimed at creating the sense of Native presence rather than at being representative and focusing on the referential quality of images or texts produced, thus they are seen as strategic tactics (*Native Liberty* 159). The "Postindian" precludes any attempts of seeking ethnographic truth about the "Indian."

Entering Zig's Indian Reservation

One of the most important artists that use the repertoire of tools of "warriors of survivance" is Zig Jackson, a contemporary photographer of Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara descent, who makes the issues of identity making and representation the main subjects of his works. His series of black and white pictures *Entering Zig's Indian Reservation* shows him wearing what looks like a traditional headdress, and posing with a sign which says "Entering Zig's Indian Reservation" and a smaller one which states "Private Property; open range cattle on highway; No Picture Taking; No Hunting; No Air Traffic; New Agers Prohibited, without permission from Tribal Council." He put up his sign in various places, in front of the San Francisco City Hall, next to the Golden Gate headland, against the view of the San Francisco downtown or in a city

park. The series shows nothing even somewhat akin to what is usually presented in popular anthropology publications and builds upon the notion of performativity.

In *Performativity and Performance*, Eve Sedgwick Kosofsky and Andrew Parker sketchily describe how discursive processes impact our lives, and especially lives of those who belong to marginalized groups, who are discriminated against and cannot enjoy the same rights or treatment as others. They highlight the illocutionary force of words, their capacity to do things, especially if the discourse is in the hands of those who are powerful. They also remark, how in the very nature of performative acts resides a great potential for countering those abuses of power (2-3). Performatives lack the quality of being, either true or false, as they perform an action, rather than describe it. Yet, some of the performative statements might come out as, what Austin calls, "infelicities" (20) which means that somewhere in the context in which the phrase was uttered certain required expectations and conditions were not met. As a result of this, the action declared cannot be successfully performed. Those "unhappy" utterances are what later scholars focus on. They see them as the instances that show the underlying quality of all language, its citational character ("Signatures Event Context" 317), and what comes with it, the nature of identity as non-essential, based on repetition and performative acts that are promulgated by various media in cultural production. What is crucial, is the fact that these performances produce a series of effects, and that this illocutionary power can be turned back on itself by repeating the oppressive models to disclose their deeply rooted tradition of practice.

Jackson commits an "unhappy" performative act when he erects the "Zig's Indian Reservation" sign in various important places and makes the photograph. Putting up a road sign usually means designating a restricted area as a place with a concrete name and societal structure, and assigning it under specific jurisdiction. The usage of a sign, be it a board with a name, a flag, or a coat of arms, labels a place as belonging to someone. The action of setting up the sign can be compared to Austinian example of naming a ship (11). Yet, in this situation, the performative act of naming cannot be successfully executed. Zig Jackson is not a government official, the name does not refer to any geographical location, and the area of downtown San Francisco was never allocated to be governed by a tribal council. The act "etiolates," weakens and alters (Parker and Kosofsky Sedgwick 4) the official performative acts of naming, and brings attention to the arbitrariness of land allocation and the suppression of Native voices when the US frontier was being advanced, as well as resists the popular depictions of Indian Reservations, as places of poverty and crime.

The artist approaches the subject of reservations completely differently than mainstream press photographers do as he uses the strategy of catachresis to abuse the stereotypical enactments of "Indianness" in various media. He puts on a headdress and poses staring seriously and pensively into space, against an impressive natural landscape, to invoke the classic and defining presentation of Native Americans, the monumental pictorialist project created by Edward Curtis. The artists' intervention exceeds the conventional forms of portrayal, because the rest of his clothing is not "traditional," in one of the photos he is sitting on a bench in a natural and relaxed position, and in most of the pictures the cityscape enters into the images unsettling the romantic and heroic sentiments. He uses formulaic metaphors and makes them ambivalent. The old names

and images introduce new concepts, and destabilize the signification system linked with the familiar and long-established notions, such as the "Indian."

The same goes for the list of prohibitions. They all involve catchphrases associated in the popular imagination with "Indianness," and with how the "Indian" identity is perceived or constructed in the public discourse. They use one of the most widespread symbols for Native victimry, buffalo killing. They talk about photography, which was widely used as a tool for establishing Native Americans as Others. They mention the superficial contemporary fascination with Native way of life, through the quizzical reference to trends commonly clustered under the name New Age that often appropriate Native traditions. The prohibitions lack the illocutionary power that traffic signs possess, as there will be no consequences for the rule breakers and because these practices were or are accepted on Native land. Yet, being the "infelicities" or "unhappy" utterances, as they are performed theatrically, they aim at what Spivak describes as "'reversing… and seizing the apparatus of value-coding" (228). This strategy acknowledges that it resides in the oppressive power structures and cannot operate outside of them to be effective, and tries to deconstruct them through irony and play.

Postcolonial critics and artists often refer to or make use of the theories of performativity, as it offers a revision of how identities are constructed, and by that provides an apparatus for deconstructing the conventional or prescribed identity formation schemata. Zig Jackson as the "postindian warrior of survivance" and his work *Entering Zig's Indian Reservation*, uses conventional metaphors and non-normative "unhappy" enunciations. Through this, the citational quality of communication is exposed, the deep rooted ironies of the clash of two cultures are investigated, and the dominant imagination is reclaimed and de-mythologized.

Indian Photographing Tourist Photographing Indians

Another series created by Zig Jackson, *Indian photographing tourist photographing Indians*, literally does what the title states. It depicts tourists who take pictures of Native people wearing fancy dress during events such as fairs and parades. This body of work, both funny and painful, shows the ongoing tendency of white Americans to treat Native Americans as exotic objects worth documenting in their traditional attire and presenting them as romanticized figures from the past in pictures akin to the tribal portraits made by Edward Curtis. The images very directly play with the convention of who is the possessor of the gaze, who looks at who and how, as well as who is in charge of creating a visual record and thus producing a narration. They bring to the foreground, what is always implied but brushed over, the politics of looking, and so they stand against materials like Erika Larsen's "People of the Horse" or Aaron Huey's "Pine Ridge" that under a guise of documentary photography obscure the bias inherent in them.

Susan Sontag wrote that "To photograph people is to violate them, by having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed" (14) and Jackson's photographs draw attention to that very act, revealing the mechanism that is often taken for granted uncritically, rendering the

specificity of a point of view transparent, and questioning the hierarchy involved in the production of visual documents that show Native Americans by white Americans. Jackson makes pictures of people who were not expecting to be photographed, catching them in clumsy poses, picturing them from unusual perspectives, from the side or from the back, where their faces cannot be seen. He departs from the traditional rules of composition, not placing the subject of his photographs in a central position, as well as not avoiding having a tilted image. He defies the formal conventions used in the pictures of Edward Curtis. The images do not look like studied documentary photographs made with high quality equipment but rather like snapshots taken casually by a passer-by. His work undermines the primacy of the white western subject by exposing a particular standpoint implicit in the majority of photographic representations of Native Americans in place of the "invisible point of super-objective perspective" (Said 167) that is a default for the narration of world history in the West.

Through that Jackson overthrows the "imperial gaze," which Ann Kaplan defines as an approach that strips the colonized people of their subjectivity, treating them as objects, and hence dominating them. The white western subject is the one defining how the Other is supposed to be represented and does from its position and in accordance with its own presuppositions and interests while at the same time denying the privilege it enjoys (Kaplan 78). It also fails to acknowledge that non-white and non-American cultures have their own integral cultures (see Said). In Jackson's playful images this dynamic is reversed and the refusal to "mutual gazing" (Kaplan 79) is challenged as the photographer, the looking subject, returns the gaze, scrutinizes the non-Native picture takers, and presents them not only as objects to be looked at but also as awkward and ridiculous looking in their photographic endeavor as they unabashedly point their cameras that look strangely stuck to their faces at people who do not seem to care about them since they are preoccupied with the events taking place.

Indian Photographing Tourist Photographing Sacred Sites

A very similar idea drives Zig Jackson's work *Indian photographing tourist photographing sacred sites*. The images show people taking pictures of tourist attractions associated with Native Americans, such a Mesa Verde National Park or Monument Valley, laying bare the mechanisms involved in the creation of the dominant fantasy of the "Indian" as a child of nature, coming from the past of mankind, or in Vizenor's words the "simulations of domination." Apart from playing with the photographic gaze and the power relations implicit in it, the pictures disclose how present-day tourist photography falls back on the imperialistic imagination that emphasizes the "indigenous nature, settled lives, and picturesque appearances" (Price 29) of the colonized peoples. The series resists the essentialist discursive practices that paint Native American cultures as ancient and stress the cultural continuity above all else. The use of monochromatic grainy film and the unglamorized, amateur like, point-and-shoot style of framing reinforces the defiance against the representational tendencies that have not been initiated or propelled by Native Americans but imposed from the outside, and against the commercialization of Native culture epitomized in glossy, over aestheticized images published in various magazines.

All this is done with an ironic trickster twitch to it. The comical quality is brought about by the fact that the tourist in the photographs seem unaware that they are being observed as the photographer is standing at quite some distance from them, either not in front of them but on the side or behind them. The normal scheme of tourist photography is disturbed when those who are supposed to be creating a visual record are instead the ones who become the subject matter of someone else's images. The point of view of the invisible photographer can be seen as a trickster voice, a voice of a jester who defies the accepted behavior codes and upsets the established order of things. Gerald Vizenor writes that trickster is "chance and freedom in a comic sign; comic freedom is a 'doing' not an aesthetic presence… the trickster is outside comic structure, 'making it' comic… a 'doing' in narrative points of view, and outside the imposed structures" ("Trickster Discourse" 10). The narration brings out the absurdity of the acquisitive tourist obsession with recording the sighted locations and teases the popular commercial representations of Native culture in magazines and travel guides.

Commodity Series

A slightly different approach is taken in Jackson's *Commodity Series* that takes as its subject matter commodity food, that is products distributed through federal programs among Native American families living on or near reservations. Some of the photographs are accompanied by sketches, illustrations cut out from other sources, and hand-written text. In this series, Jackson draws on his own experience of living on Fort Berthold Indian Reservation and relying on food packages. With the use of banal food items, he tackles the imperialistic history and the relationship between the U.S. government and Native peoples, touching upon the serious subject of the colonial acquisition, exploitation of the American land, and the paternalistic attitudes that were adopted by the hegemonic institutions to justify and uphold the domination over indigenous people. As in other of his works Jackson does it in a comical way, alluding to various images from popular culture and art history.

The straightforward photograph of a generic tomato sauce is a clear reference to Andy Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Cans*. Both works are realistic depictions of food tins and show them from the front, in high contrast, with all the details printed on the label legible for the viewer. They also share the exact same composition, with the can being the only thing in the picture positioned exactly in the middle and occupying nearly all of the almost square canvas or background. The symbol of postmodern art, the canvases displaying soup cans, subversive in their repudiation of high art, were read as a contemplation on mass production, commodification of all aspects of life, the society viewed as a spectacle, and the death of referentiality, yet, according to their author, with no intention to criticize American consumer society. However, in the Native artist's work, the pictures are not as commercial-like, not as flawless, and not as repetitive as if they were massed produced. The scrapbook character of the two of them gives them an additional defiant element which Warhol's artwork lacks. His paintings were a form of protest against high art embodied in Abstract Expressionism (Danto 76) but they lacked any political or social dimension that the *Commodity Series* carries.

Warhol stressed the depthlessness of his images as he commented on repetition in his artworks "I want it to be exactly the same. Because the more you look at the exact same thing, the more the meaning goes away" (55). Frederic Jameson picked up on this theme in his discussion on postmodernism and its defining superficial quality as he wrote on *Diamond Dust Shoes*, "There is in Warhol no way to complete the hermeneutic gesture" (8). If one is to read Jackson's photographs using the dominant critical strand on Warhol's art, then one is to see the government commodities as the locus of the Native absence. This is emphasized by the images of people in traditional Native attire evidently cut out and pasted from printed sources and the colorful sketch of a buffalo and a horse, two animals most frequently identified with indigenous tribes, and also reinforced by the brilliant use of a container which carries with it ambiguity of whether it is filled with something or is empty. The likenesses of tomato sauce cans and food items given out to reservation inhabitants are to be seen as not pointing to anything, that is not being symbolically read as the characterization of Native people through the colonial eyes by the products that attest to the US government appropriation of Native land and the subsequent tragic narratives that include depictions of the reservation poverty.

Just as the best known pop artist portrayed Russell Means in his series the *American Indian*, so does Zig Jackson make a self-portrait in a headdress and put it on a tin can with commercial type lettering saying "100% Indian." Vizenor compared Warhol's silkscreen images to Magritte's painting of a pipe that has the words "This Is Not a Pipe" written over it and stated that those portraits were an epitome of the absence of a tribal real (*Manifest Manners* 18). Jackson denies the possibility of defining Native Americans through the lens of what Vizenor would call the "long gaze of Christopher Columbus" that is the perspective of those who "recount manifest manners and mistaken colonial discoveries" ("Manifest Manners" 225). The can picture undermines both the images of Native Americans used for commercial purposes but also such simulations as present in Warhol's art.

The ironic inscription, which is the exact opposite of the one from Magritte's *The Treachery of Images,* elevates the sense of the absurd to its peak, as it literally suggests that the Indian from the label can be found inside. The ridiculousness of that possibility exposes how ludicrous the assumption ingrained in the imperial gaze that the marginalized group can be represented by those belonging to the majority and not to the group in question is. The vision of a person contained in a food can is extremely morbid and points to the genocidal actions of the colonizers. At the same time, it avoids painting the Indigenous nations as victims because of the humoristic approach taken, the playful and nonsensical quality of the images, and the confident pose of the figure with sunglasses and regular 90s clothing on the front which is far from being the Curtisian Indian despite the headdress.

In other images, the droll grotesque element is brought about by the personal notes hand-written next to the food distribution program cans. Some of them are instructions on how to use the luncheon meat, while others are cynical comments that ask questions such as "I wonder if the U.S. government used Indians to test this food on." This text also provides an account of a lived experience that is missing from narratives on reservations produced by non-Natives as the artist recounts in his bio

how he used to sketch on and play with empty commodity boxes as a child (Jackson). The scribbles are a personal jest and a record of thoughts of a Native individual navigating the path of postcolonial identity-making. Jackson's photographs are very equivocal and cannot be read in one way. On the one hand, they refute the domination epitomized in the commodity boxes but simultaneously acknowledge that this is a point of departure from where oppositional identities can be built.

The canvases with branded items created by Warhol were seen as universal since the artist himself asserted that these are products that could be found in any household around the U.S. In a response to the supposed universality of the paintings and prints, Anthony Grudin remarks that the images were actually the opposite of it as they were class and race specific, which he proves by researching the advertisement strategies used in the 1950s and 60s (17). As Jackson draws on Warhol's commercial illustrations used in advertising and puts non-branded goods in an analogous context, he manages to highlight, by contrast, the incompleteness and partiality of the postmodern art project that marginalized Native perspective, and also brings attention to the problem of cultural appropriation for marketing purposes. The *Commodity Series* shows the paradox of how, on the one hand, Native Americans were in the eyes of PR specialists only associated with generic products, as they were not seen as potential customers, while at the same the image of an "Indian" and such attributes as headdress and tepees, often linked in the popular imagination with them, has been used as logos or marketing tools for a multitude of companies to sell everything from flour and washing powder to cigarettes and guns. This trend is still apparent as "Indian simulations" are frequently used in commercials and the fashion industry.

Gerald Vizenor writes in *Manifest Manners* "The postindian antecedes the postmodern condition; the resistance of the tribes to colonial inventions and representations envisioned the ironies of histories, narrative discourse, and cultural diversities" (167). He also adds that "postindian warriors of postmodern simulations would undermine and surmount, with imagination and the performance of new stories, the manifest manners of scriptural simulations and 'authentic' representation of the tribes" (17). This is exactly what is done by Zig Jackson as he disrupts the imagery that is produced by the dominant strategies of representation and contests their supposed authenticity of depiction, their claim to factuality, and their disinterested and unbiased point of view. He does it through the production of alternative histories, revision and deconstruction of hegemonic structures and the images they construct in social sciences and mass media, denouncement of exploitation tools, sharing of individual visions and stories, all done with irony and suspense, hence creating Native presence in visual culture, which is almost completely absent from most of the mainstream press or popular anthropology publications.

Zig Jackson's artworks presented at the Portland Museum of Art can be seen as narratives of survivance and their author as a postindian warrior. Vizenor repeatedly stresses, both in his critical works and novels, the importance of humor in the narratives of survivance. Seriousness is treated as a quality characteristic for the narrative of dominance and hegemonic histories. He writes "comic works make no attempt to actual representation. Laughter, in this case, is hostile to the world it depicts. It is free as tragedy and lamentation are not" (*Manifest Manners* 83). Comic elements

are present in all the works discussed above as they tease, exaggerate and defamiliarize the tradition of portrayal present in the works of the nineteenth and early twentieth century photographers but also contemporary image makers that construct indigenous nations as the Other and are vital for the metanarrative of the U.S. national identity. The parodic character of the Native artist's work makes possible the repudiation of essentialism and is vital for them as for trickster stories, which they undeniably are. The oppositional identity is created in the realm of fine art and it allows for the subversion of the visual tradition of representation of Native Americans that grew out of the attitudes encapsulated in the phrase Manifest Destiny and was partially created and upheld by ethnographic photographers such as Edward Curtis.

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