

Deconstructing the Faciality Machine: Becoming-Animal and Becoming-Post-Face in Contemporary Society

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the contemporary relevance of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of the abstract faciality machine. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of faciality explains the construction of significance and subjectivity in facial interactions. Although faciality has coded and demarcated the body into a fixed site for subjectivity, sites of faciality extend far beyond the one-dimensional coded face. Post-faciality enables a digital view of faciality, where the face as a digital object is an independent entity, and interactions with this entity generate potentiality. Through interactions with the digital face, positive and negative responses are produced, but positivity is limited to specific circumstances. In facial surgery, politics, architecture, and the digital realm, faciality and post-faciality demarcate the face. To deconstruct faciality and post-faciality, certain interactions must be prioritized to produce either becoming-animal or becoming-post-face, creating positive lines of escape from faciality, but the efficacy of each method is largely dependent on the specific instances of each deterritorialization.

Keywords: Deleuze; faciality; postmodern; philosophy; surgery; architecture; digital; surveillance

INTRODUCTION

A major focus of postmodern philosophy is the role of the face in subjectification. Many conceptualizations of the face have emerged, from Emmanuel Levinas' establishment of the face as the site of subjectivity to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's theory of the face as a fixed site of control. Levinas' work in *Totality and Infinity* created the principle of interaction as a philosophical theory: "the Other continues to face me, to reveal himself in his face" (1). In contemporary life, the face serves as the pragmatic basis of most everyday

interactions, but the philosophical dimensions of these exchanges remain widely undertheorized. From ethical considerations to broad philosophical reasoning, the face remains an important consideration in analyzing dominant power structures and the underlying forces beyond. Due to the prevalence of the face in interactions, and the increasingly digitized presence of facial constructs, updating philosophical conceptions of the face is increasingly important, particularly by building on Deleuzian concepts in the context of digital interactions. Using concepts established by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, this article examines the deconstruction of the underlying power structure that preserves face as the site of subjectivity, separating contemporary examples of these deconstructions into either the Deleuzian theory of becoming-animal or the novel theory of becoming-post-face, and concluding that becoming-animal is more effective at deconstructing this power structure.

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ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This article proposes becoming-post-face as a conceptual alternative to Deleuzian becoming-animal. The following Deleuzian concepts are central to the concept of becoming-post-face. Faciality is a machinic assemblage that determines the desirability of a certain face. Post-faciality is an extension of that Deleuzian concept, centering mainly around the evolution of faciality in the digital sphere. The main mechanisms of post-faciality include the increasing automation and morphing of faces. These processes create digital post-faces with no bodily referent. The novel idea of becoming-post-face refers to the proliferation of potential faces which removes preexisting connections or ties to the body. The established alternative, becoming-animal, refers to the erasure of significance from the face. Becoming-animal decenters the face by eroding faciality, whereas becoming-post-face proliferates the face beyond its bodily referent.

Both methods of becoming-faceless seek to achieve the same goal: the body without organs (BwO). The BwO is the notion of a body with maximum potentiality, free from signifying regimes that otherwise determine significance and subjectivity. Under this goal, these methods necessitate a deterritorialized assemblage. Deterritorialization involves the removal of significance, subjectivity, and signifying regimes overall, whereas reterritorialization involves reintroducing control or producing a new signifying regime. Deterritorialization and reterritorialization always operate in cycles, with deterritorialization preceding reterritorialization. In this article, these cycles emerge from interactions between two assemblages, and are interpreted as either positive or negative based on their implications for potentiality. Within these cycles, a “line of flight” refers to the potential escape from a signifying regime. Additionally, absolute deterritorialization refers to cycle which achieves the BwO. It requires both a sufficiently positive deterritorialization and a relatively minimal reterritorialization. This article also employs more targeted, Deleuze-adjacent terms of face-subject and face-object. The face-subject is a face with a bodily referent, whereas the face-object is a face without one. A post-face is a subset of face-objects that is nevertheless viewed as a subject and can therefore produce interactions resembling subject-subject without being a bodily subject itself.

Because this article introduces the new theoretical concept of becoming-post-face, the following conceptual

framework establishes decision criteria for distinguishing whether a positive territorialization cycle results in becoming-animal or becoming-post-face (Table 1). These criteria are used in the subsequent sections on facial surgery, politics, digital architecture, and post-faciality.

Table 1. Decision criteria for distinguishing the two proposed modes of becoming-faceless. The table compares becoming-animal and becoming-post-face according to their primary interacting assemblages, mechanisms of deterritorialization, degree of subsequent reterritorialization, and principal limitations. These criteria are applied throughout the manuscript to classify the modes of becoming associated with facial surgery, politics, digital architecture, and post-faciality.

Criterion	Becoming-animal	Becoming-post-face
Primary acting assemblages	Body-face	Face-subject-face-object
Mechanism	Removing significance	Digital proliferation
Degree of resulting reterritorialization	Low-none	Constant
Primary limitation	Social constraints	Algorithmic recoding

GILLES DELEUZE AND FÉLIX GUATTARI'S ABSTRACT MACHINE

Because the face functions as an almost inseparable semiotic identifier of the body, it remains a site of subject-subject exchange and interaction with the Other (1). Subjects also tend to form a natural recognition and preference for the face, identifying it far more frequently than an object, even when distorted (2). Despite the pragmatic and empirical role of the face as the foundation of subjectivity, its significance stems from an assemblage of features, traits, and symmetries (3). Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have attributed the face's anthropological significance to demarcation and territorialization. Deleuzian territorialization represents the codified responses integrated into the face to separate itself from the body, linearizing the face. This transformation follows the white wall/black hole analogy, where

The face constructs the wall that the signifier needs in order to bounce off of; it constitutes the wall of the signifier, the frame or screen. The face digs the hole that subjectification needs in order to break

through; it constitutes the black hole of subjectivity as consciousness or passion, the camera, the third eye (4).

The white wall/black hole framework describes the simultaneous production of significance and subjectivity: the white wall functions as the surface of signification, while the black hole organizes subjectivity. Faciality therefore limits the potentiality of the body by organizing significance and subjectivity through the face. The BwO endorses the body as a set of intensities without organization and is thus limited by organizational principles like territorializations. For the face to get coded, however, a system of signs is required: “Concrete faces cannot be assumed to come ready-made. They are engendered by an *abstract machine of faciality* (*visag  t  *), which produces them at the same time as it gives the signifier its white wall and the subjectivity its black hole” (4). The faciality machine is therefore “abstract,” as it does not simply code an already existing face but instead codes the decoded and deterritorialized body. This abstract machine produces regimes of power, centralizing some faces over others, organizing both significance on the white wall and subjectivity on the black hole, necessitating methods for deconstructing these signifiers.

Although the faciality machine is like any other machinic assemblage, its operations have unique cultural significance that establishes a hierarchical mode of subjectivity. Specifically, the faciality machine codes to create a specific hierarchy: deviance from the Christ-face. The machine establishes a standardized face, with each part of the facial assemblage necessitating certain characteristics to have zero degrees of deviance from Christ (the standard White Man). This system works not in degrees of difference, but degrees necessary to achieve sameness, as “racism operates by the determination of degrees of deviance in relation to the White-Man face, which endeavors to integrate nonconforming traits into increasingly eccentric and backward waves, sometimes tolerating them at given places under given conditions, in a given ghetto, sometimes erasing them from the wall, which never abides alterity” (4). The implicitly hierarchical nature of the faciality machine defines subjectification within subject-subject exchanges. It overcodes both the white wall and the black hole to only signify or shape subjectivity around degrees of deviance. The facial regime of signs therefore does not create subjectivity so much as territorialize it, separating the face from the broader potentiality of the body.

Due to the prevalence of the faciality machine within modern subjectivity, escaping faciality requires escaping its territorializations of significance. Consequently, faciality has emerged as a prevalent force in everyday interactions, as subjects have a natural tendency to facialize (2). To disrupt facialization, assemblages must disrupt territorialization: “one never deterritorializes alone; there are always at least two terms, hand-use object, mouth-breast, face-landscape. And each of the two terms reterritorializes on the other” (4). The nature of this interaction determines whether the resulting line of flight expands or limits potentiality. The face-body therefore becomes a key site of analysis: interactions with other assemblages may either reinforce faciality or weaken its organization of subjectivity. Through various mediums, these interactions are considered for their potential to weaken the faciality machine.

While the faciality machine is originally tied to demarcating the face from the body, its reach extends to any white wall or black hole requiring a signifier or regime of signs to operate within. The faciality machine then becomes important to all forms of exchange, subjective or not, because of its signifying nature and its accompanying regime of signs that are accepted by the black hole subject: “Facialization operates not by resemblance but by an order of reasons. It is a much more unconscious and machinic operation that draws the entire body across the holey surface” (4). The abstract machine does not require resemblance to the facial assemblage to construct a normalized white wall/black hole and establish degrees of deviance, leading to more territorialization beyond just the face. These extensions of faciality create potential new sites for potential deterritorialization, which the following sections examine through two distinct modes of becoming.

DIGITAL FACIALITY

The most prevalent application of the abstract machine of faciality to emerging assemblages lies in the digital realm. The Deleuzian society of control specifically centers surveillance and mediums of interaction, essentially bracketing reactions through coding and overcoding (5). The faciality machine operates within these societies, furthering coding responses and territorializing for control through deviance and sameness. As society becomes digitized, “we have increasingly been immersed in a visual culture. Among the images that surround us, the face stands out; there are more images of faces than of any other object” (6).

With the emergence of faces, the faciality machine gains more wall space to separate and bore black holes into, creating an age of digital facialization. Within this digital facial territory, a distinction emerges between *types* of deterritorialization: “face-subject and face-object” (6). The face-object represents the coding of faciality in the digital sphere, imposing a digital society of control where the face is weaponized. The resulting facial surveillance for face-subjects and overcoding of face-objects limits scenarios for positive deterritorialization.

In this digitized realm of faciality, deconstructing the signifying regime becomes increasingly essential to counteract the increasingly efficient control society, which territorializes and brackets every exchange under the hierarchy of deviance. To escape this implicit facial hierarchy, two methods exist: becoming-animal or becoming-post-face. Both methods serve to create a faceless subject with more potentiality for affective responses, exemplifying the BwO.

CONTEMPORARY DECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE FACIALITY MACHINE

Facial Surgery

Facial surgery serves as an important site for deterritorialization of the face, under limited constraints. With facial surgery as a philosophical tool, facial surgeons must create a new line of flight upon the territorialized face instead of reproducing faciality. When the surgeon acts “as a collaborator in the patient’s *becoming*,” the patient-surgeon exchange can produce a positive line of flight (7). The collaborative exchange, however, limits the radicality of the deterritorialization that the patient-surgeon interaction can produce while preserving the patient’s subjectivity. Nevertheless, this site can erode faciality, inviting surgeons to “move beyond the confines of standardization and normalization” (7). This “moving beyond” constitutes a form of deconstruction in which the body, rather than the face, becomes the site of subjectivity, producing a becoming-animal.

Although facial surgery is a logical site for deterritorialization and escape from faciality, ethical constraints limit the radicality and, consequently, the effectiveness of the resulting lines of flight. In the ideal territorialization cycle of facial alteration, the patient-surgeon assemblages interact together, and the surgeon reterritorializes upon the assemblage of the patient to produce a positive line of flight. This outcome, however, is not assured. Most commonly, “the surgical impulse to normalize can inadvertently suppress the patient’s

evolving subjectivity—a subjectivity shaped by trauma, resilience, and refusal of the ‘old face’” (7). The facial surgeon can remain embedded in the signifying regime of the faciality machine from a Deleuzian perspective, and when interacting with the patient, may reproduce rather than disrupt facial norms (8). The probability that the surgeon facializes rather than deterritorializes would negatively reterritorialize the patient, negating the potentiality of the patient’s line of flight. Conversely, the patient could paradoxically reterritorialize upon the surgeon, prompting recognition that “their work influences not only form but the patient’s lived experience and social reality” (7). Yet the patient’s own desires may also reproduce faciality, particularly when surgery is sought to conform to the White-Man face. More likely, the overcoding of the patient by the faciality machine limits degrees of deviance post-surgery (9). In the surgical sphere, the ethical obligations of both the surgeon and patient limit the potentiality of the patient-surgeon line. Because many possibilities exist in which a negative reterritorialization is produced upon facial alteration, cooperative deterritorialization is prerequisite to any positive deterritorialization. The surgeon therefore has a very narrow opportunity for deterritorialization, requiring specific conditions for the patient-surgeon exchange to produce a positive line, overall limiting the extent to which faciality is deconstructed.

Following the analytical framework, the successful deterritorialization of the face through a positive patient-surgeon line most closely resembles becoming-animal through the abandonment of signification and subjectivity, as opposed to a post-faciality exchange. The patient-surgeon exchange is a direct deconstruction of faciality, where the surgeon directly renders the patient faceless, resisting “the face’s capture by representation. Instead, they explore how a head might have no face, or how a face might open into multiplicity—scar, asymmetry, expression, mask” (7). This pivot away from the significance of the face’s features facilitates the patient’s becoming-animal. The patient forms a coherent sense of subjectivity through affect and the face follows, as opposed to vice versa. Additionally, the patient’s newfound “multiplicity” assumes a becoming-assemblage. The patient realizes the body’s affectual capabilities and achieves a high level of deterritorialization, escaping a unified face-subject. Under the aforementioned criteria in the analytical framework, deterritorialization via facial surgery enables the potentiality of absolute deterritorialization, redirecting subjectivity towards the broader bodily assemblage.

American Politics

While many sites of faciality exist, the political sphere provides a particularly important example where discourse and rhetoric significantly shape subjectivity. In this section, Donald Trump is examined as an illustrative case study of faciality in American politics, rather than as a representative account of democratic politics. While the political sphere is frequently the site of territorialization, modern society exhibits how an overemphasis on signifying regimes can reinforce faciality, especially viewed through the actions of President Donald Trump:

In his discourse, America's president appeals to a social order in which subjects bound to a paradigm are produced, and where individuals must correspond to the American stereotype: middle class men of Caucasian origin, among other characteristics, in which the construction of a normative order exists only for those who belong or are married to that power discourse (10).

The Trump regime's use of the face can reify degrees of deviance from the White-Man face, enhancing the contemporary control society (11). As a result, the political sphere is interpreted in this article as undergoing becoming-faciality, where even rhetoric can acquire the ability to facialize upon bodies, limiting the affectual capacity of the body (12). This process produces a negative deterritorialization, as the subject-political exchange is significantly reterritorialized by rhetoric. The political assemblage thus necessitates a method of deterritorialization upon itself, in which faciality rhetoric is deconstructed as a first step towards reaching the BwO.

The importance of the political assemblage stems from its ability to constrain the relative escape of any line of flight produced through embodied subjects. This political control originates from the face that

The body is a surface of immanent inscription, a "surface that allows the inscription of certain symbolic practices." The body is the battlefield, the canvas. Therefore, the body, without a doubt, also has a political dimension (10).

As such, the territorialization of politics implicates the territorialization of the body, departing from the state of becoming-animal. The political sphere is increasingly co-opted by facialization, with faces central to modern methods of control (5). As a result, the degrees of

deviance from the standard face shape the black hole subjectivity of individual bodies, territorializing faces. The overcoding of the face-subject limits becoming-animal, as the face is emphasized and the assemblage of the body is never realized as the site of subjectivity. Political faciality also uses the face "as a control mechanism that ensures a specific social production" (10). The codified expressions advance the control society, achieving power through limiting individual freedom. Such codes contain subjectivity to a single identity rather than allowing multiplicity *in potentia*. The doubly territorializing nature of politics underscores the importance of deconstructing faciality, particularly in relation to the increasing control society and the codification of expression.

While deconstruction of faciality within the political sphere is relatively improbable, deterritorialization can also emerge through a contrary response of proliferation of faciality. The Trump regime's political discourse, for example, increasingly encourages faciality through the establishment of normalization and degrees of sameness. However, this intensified reliance on the face is a method of overproliferation, and "Trump's political *performance* must be taken as a possible opening, as a symptom capable of generating ethical repositionings that would lead the American community to genuinely ask about its political order" (10). Particularly in politics, the rising emergence of the face as a method of control is itself a site of potential deterritorialization. Faciality rhetoric produces a diametrically opposed reaction against control societies (10). This can produce a subject-politics deterritorialization in which the subject reterritorializing on the political assemblage becomes possible. Such a reaction would weaken the grasp of faciality, shifting the political sphere. Under the analytical framework, the line produced from these reactions is positive only when the subject assemblage is relatively less facialized than the state of the political assemblage. Such a reterritorialization appears relatively rare, however, as the political machine tends to shape subjectivity of the face-body to a higher degree than the reverse (11). Even so, the potentiality produced from a positive reterritorialization is not insignificant, and due to the relative importance of political assemblages, it is important to deconstruct faciality on the political site specifically.

Despite the importance of deconstructing faciality in politics, the likelihood of producing positive lines from subject-politics deterritorializations is low because they are primarily produced after the faciality-politics reterritorializations. Still, when successful, these positive

detrterritorializations expand the potentiality of becoming-animal for the face-body subject by lessening the political influence upon the body's subjectivity, reconstituting the assemblage of the body instead of the static, coded face. Politics is thus a powerful site for detrterritorialization, and can constitute a prerequisite for deconstruction of faciality given its influence in determining bodily subjectivity.

Digital Architecture and Affective Responses

A particularly strong case for deconstructing faciality lies within the digital realm, as societies of control expand endlessly and digital surveillance mirrors architectural control. Architectural societies of control emerged with the panopticon, a layout for constant surveillance and territorialization, and within the abstract machine of faciality, surveillance still holds a particularly strong relevance (13). The emergence of architecture within Deleuzian thought began with the establishment of controlling structural layout, as "office workers, objects, and machines are spatio-temporally organized to maximize efficiency" (14). This organizational principle merged architectural control with faciality, constituting the basis of the modern control society (15). As the demand for control increases, digital architecture plays a significant role in the operation of the abstract machine: "Today's surveillance regimes do not correspond to anthropomorphic references or the regulating of physical bodies in prescribed and contained spaces. Instead of tracking bodies, surveillance in control societies tracks bodily representations. Bodies become converted into body data" (14). The digital realization of surveillance creates a novel white wall upon which the faciality machine takes hold, boring a black hole (15). The territorialization of body data, and by extension facial data, enables the creation of the face-object, forming a new form of coded subjectivity under absolute coding and contributing to the emergence of post-faciality. Digital architecture therefore reconceptualizes the face as data, expanding the control society through mechanisms of post-faciality (14).

The intersection between architecture and digital assemblages creates new possibilities for the detrterritorialization of the codified face-body. As digital surveillance codes the face through facial data and facial surveillance, expressions become increasingly subject to coded action-reaction responses. In opposition to the face-body action-reaction response system, "the affect-image is a critical interval for Deleuze that lies between the perception-image and the action-image. In

other words, facial expression cannot reference what would qualify as an expression that falls into the regime of semiotic codes" (14). The distinction between the coded face and the affectual face lies in the ability of the semiotic machine to predict a particular response. When provided with a detrterritorialized stimulus, no predetermined reaction exists. Increasing digital facialization risks more coded responses, and therefore the gaps in the faciality machine's semiotic codes can become opportunities for affective responses to interrupt coded action-reaction responses (16). Using these gaps, a subject can produce affective responses, an affect-image exchange that produces a positive line. Without these affectual responses, lines of escape within digital architecture become increasingly improbable: "If simulated surveillance space is increasingly dominated by a vast continuous interior, then what happens to architecture's fundamental role of demarcating an inside that correlates to an outside?" (14).

As exchanges that produce affective responses can positively detrterritorialize, they must be prioritized to deconstruct post-faciality. Such affective responses, however, necessitate subjective exchanges without a coded response. This induced affective response is evident in the *diplorasis*, an installation where the perceived self-image

On the one hand mimics a surveillance apparatus, making the visitor aware of the underlying surveillance mechanism, and on the other hand, produces an image that is in-determinate by having no surveillance value. This paradoxical image, where one sees oneself seeing oneself, exceeds human vision. By doing so, diplorasis moves beyond the signification of codifying the face as it induces an affective state in the visitor's perceptual field (14).

By creating an encounter with the black hole subject of the face-body and a digitized recreation, the face-subject encounters a state of mental paralysis. This mental paralysis is primarily defined as an exchange where no coded response exists. Due to the lack of codes, there is no limiting semiotic regime of signs which reterritorializes on the face-subject. Under the proposed analytical framework, this face-subject-face-object exchange can produce a higher probability for a positive line, directing detrterritorialization towards the BwO. Although the exchange is a post-faciality interaction, the interaction is not a move towards becoming-post-face. The face-object remains facialized data, but the

face-subject returns to the BwO to become faceless, producing becoming-animal.

Post-Faciality and the Post-Face

In the midst of post-faciality, new modes of becoming have emerged from face-object-face-subject exchanges. This article proposes that these modes of becoming serve as a distinct and potentially more unstable alternative to becoming-animal. The proliferation of digital face-objects creates new territorialization cycles between face-subjects and face-objects, and Jacques Lacan's concept of *extimacy* provides a framework for interpreting these interactions:

The face becomes and collapses at the instance of each encounter, making any sustained relationship impossible. The flash of a smile, the dilation of the pupil, the flare of a nostril—every face is already a new face and a loss of another. In short, understanding the face as a site for extimacy considers its affective and relational role in encounters without being tethered to subjectivity and recognition (17).

Extimacy describes how interactions can reveal more about one entity to another than to the entity itself. Lacan's concept emphasizes that aspects of the self become legible through encounters with external subjects. Viewed as an assemblage instead of a coded white wall/black hole, the face can be understood as constantly morphing and transforming through encounters. The production of a new face-subject upon every extimacy mirrors the ever-changing but also entirely coded realm of expressions. This process creates a proliferation of potential face-subjects under the facial regime of signs prescribed by the abstract machine. Considering extimacy in relation to the face-object, the constant shifting of the facial assemblage to resemble new white walls becomes a machinic process when digitized:

The face, seen through computer vision, is fragmented but modular, each feature able to stand on its own as a whole entity capable of attaching to a larger assemblage, and optimized for certain outputs (be that recognition confidence, aesthetic appeal, etc.). The subjective, human aspect ('This is my face, reflecting my feelings') gives way to an objective processing ('This is a face with features X, which can be altered to features Y to reach a larger or niche audience') (17).

When the face-subject is transformed into the face-object through some extimacy with a digitized medium (i.e. social media), the resulting face-object is in constant extimacy with other face-objects. These interactions form a collective proliferation of potential face-objects under the post-facial regime of signs prescribed by algorithmic goals, such as an expanding audience (18). Post-faciality thus expands extimacy beyond the physical face-body relationship into interactions between physical and digital assemblages (17).

As the digital face-object emerges, coded under post-faciality, extimacy between the face-subject and the face-object produces new lines, despite the limited assemblage of the face-object when compared to the BwO potentiality of the face-subject. The fundamental difference between the face-object and the face-subject means that "unlike its embodied counterpart, the uploaded face does not function as a static representation of the user's identity, but as a distinct entity in itself, that is also a modular, reconfigurable component in computational processes" (17). Because the face-object experiences similar extimacies as the face-subject, post-faciality allows black-hole subjectivity to be replicated digitally. The face-object can acquire similar subjectivity as the face-subject, and any resulting extimacies will share characteristics (17). As such, the face-subject-*post-face* interaction produces profoundly different lines than face-face interactions under the faciality machine, especially because of the post-face maintaining difference from the original face-subject.

In face-subject-post-face extimacies, the subject confronts a face that is simultaneously familiar and detached from its bodily referent. The post-face then reterritorializes on the face-subject, creating potentiality for becoming-faceless. This interaction meets the criteria for becoming-animal, not becoming-post-face, due to the proliferation, rather than erasure, of faciality: "I am not my face as a fixed entity, but as a set of proliferating, interrelated, and computationally animated forms—each one both me and not me, each one real in its own context" (17). As subjectivity shifts toward the post-face, the face-body loses the territorialized face, instead transforming into post-face-body. In post-face-body, the post-face and body both belong to the same assemblage. The post-face refers to face data as individually transforming parts, and the body refers to the BwO as an absolutely deterritorialized assemblage. Under the analytical framework, this becoming-post-face does not appear to produce the same level of absolute deterritorialization because the post-face remains coded and reterritorialized

separately by external stimuli, such as social desirability (16). In contrast, becoming-animal has the potentiality of absolute deterritorialization as the face loses signifiers. Nevertheless, the digital sphere remains a potential site of deterritorialization, where becoming-post-face can render the body faceless, deconstructing the dual faciality and post-faciality machines.

In this new mode of deterritorialization, deconstructing faciality is not necessarily positive, and the proliferation of potential post-faces still leaves the body coded, despite its assemblic nature, producing a negative counterforce. The existence of constantly mutating but ever-coded post-face assemblages remains territorialized while faceless. When becoming-post-face leaves the black hole of subjectivity behind, “the face as a digital object becomes non-superimposable to a source, thus separated from subjectivity while highlighting a pervasive obsession with traits, assemblages, and identifying with categories” (17). Every post-face is constantly transforming, its data being manipulated by never-ending extimacy, yet the potentiality of the post-face and the face-subject becoming-post-face lies within the probability of these reterritorializations (19). The likelihood of a positive line following the face-subject-post-face extimacy appears relatively low, as the post-face is principally reterritorialized by desirable traits, despite its faceless nature (16). As such, the faciality machine to the face-body is the same as the data machine to the face data, where desirability becomes lost in principles of organization. Within this territorialization, the post-face remains essentially faceless, and the body loses

its significance and subjectification, but the white wall and black hole are unlikely to be borderless. Becoming-post-face then means submitting to infinite extimacy, where the probability of lines of escape is low, but the body gains affectual capabilities. Instead of producing a coded action-reaction response, the body retains a white wall/black hole in potentia. Its resulting responses are therefore less animalistic than machinic. The potentiality of a bodily response is therefore affectual, as the body chooses its own regime of signs but remains limited. Becoming-post-face can render the body affectual but still territorialized, effectively deconstructing faciality in favor of a new but still limiting regime of digitally mediated significance.

The preceding analysis applies the article’s conceptual framework of becoming-post-face across four distinct domains of faciality. The following synthesis compares the interacting assemblages, forms of deterritorialization, modes of becoming, principal limitations, and implications for faciality in each domain (Table 2). Viewed together, these comparisons support the consistency of the analytical framework and the distinct mechanisms that each domain uses to deconstruct faciality.

CONCLUSION

The analysis demonstrates that different forms of extimacy create different possibilities for deterritorializing faciality. Facial surgery, politics, and digital architecture primarily support becoming-animal

Table 2. Comparative application of the analytical framework across four domains of faciality. The table summarizes the interacting assemblages, forms of deterritorialization, resulting modes of becoming, principal limitations, and implications for faciality in facial surgery, politics, digital architecture, and post-faciality.

Domain	Interacting Assemblages	Form of Deterritorialization	Mode of Becoming	Principal Limitation	Implication for Faciality
Facial surgery	Patient-surgeon	Collaborative, physical removal of facial significance	Becoming-animal	Ethical constraints and normalization tendency	Exhibits bodily resistance away from faciality
Politics	Subject-politics	Political resistance to political coding	Becoming-animal	Persistent rhetorical reterritorialization	Exposes the potential downsides of faciality as a political tool
Digital architecture	Face-subject-face-object	Interruption of surveillance via affective responses	Becoming-animal	Expanding digital surveillance networks	Can enable temporary lapses in controlling digital systems
Post-faciality	Face-subject-post-face	Digital proliferation and constant extimacy	Becoming-post-face	Algorithmic constraints of deterritorialization	Introduces a novel method of deterritorialization

by weakening the face's role in determining subjectivity, whereas post-faciality proliferates facial forms beyond a bodily referent, enabling becoming-post-face. In becoming-post-face, facelessness is relatively limited as the post-face is constantly coded, thereby limiting the potentiality of becoming-post-face. Using this article's analytical framework, becoming-animal appears to provide a more direct process of reaching absolute deterritorialization. However, the increasing digitization of the face makes becoming-post-face a novel mode of deterritorialization, despite its inherently coded nature.

Further research is needed on new sites of deterritorialization and the continued evolution of the post-face. Although the post-face is currently constrained to a limited set of potential faces with sometimes negative and territorialized implications, the evolution of artificial intelligence algorithms, social desirability, and the ever-shifting prevalence of the face may forge new paths to the BwO (19). Furthermore, as digital surveillance architecture becomes increasingly pervasive, further analysis is needed to examine its consequences and identify new lines of escape. Larger analyses can also consider post-Deleuzian authors, such as Arun Saldanha and his work on faciality and race, to examine other variables in achieving positive deterritorialization.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest related to this work.

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