



# Artificial

Forensic  
and  
Documentary  
Knowing

Elizabeth Anne Davis



**BUY**





# Forensic and Documentary Knowing

Elizabeth  
Anne Davis



EXPERIMENTAL FUTURES

Technological Lives, Scientific Arts, Anthropological Voices

*A series edited by Michael M. J. Fischer and Joseph Dumit*

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

# Arti- fact- ual

Duke University Press  
*Durham and London 2023*

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



© 2023 DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞

Project Editor: Liz Smith

Designed by Courtney Leigh Richardson

Typeset in Warnock Pro, Clarendon, Source Variable Code,  
and Flood by Copperline Book Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Davis, Elizabeth Anne, [date] author.

Title: *Artifactual : forensic and documentary knowing* /  
Elizabeth Anne Davis.

Other titles: *Experimental futures*.

Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2023. |

Series: *Experimental futures* | Includes bibliographical  
references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022044167 (print)

LCCN 2022044168 (ebook)

ISBN 9781478019886 (paperback)

ISBN 9781478017202 (hardcover)

ISBN 9781478024453 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Committee of Relatives of Turkish Cypriot

Missing Persons. | Forensic sciences—Social aspects—

Cyprus. | Documentary films—Political aspects—Cyprus. |

Cyprus—History—1960—Documentation. | Cyprus—Social

conditions—1960—Documentation. | Cyprus—Politics and

government—1960–2004. | BISAC: SOCIAL SCIENCE /

Anthropology / Cultural & Social | HISTORY / Europe /

General

Classification: LCC DS54.9 .D37 2023 (print) |

LCC DS54.9 (ebook) | DDC 956.9304—dc23/eng/20230105

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022044167>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022044168>

Cover art: From exhibition on the Black Bible of the  
Missing, 1974. Reproduced with permission from the Press  
and Information Office in the Republic of Cyprus.

This publication is made possible in part with support from  
the Barr Ferree Foundation Fund for Publications, Department  
of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University.

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

**for Ruby**

**DUKE**

**UNIVERSITY  
PRESS**

Since Aphrodite this island has turned into  
a rubbish dump of love.

Our feet tangled in the roots of invaders  
bone piles crack as we move  
under our weight.

The earth so over-saturated with death syrup  
the only escape

is not poetry . . .

water!

**Gür Genç, from “Not Poetry . . . Water” (2000)**

translated by Aydın Mehmet Ali

**DUKE**

**UNIVERSITY  
PRESS**



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS — xiii

PROLOGUE. NOBODY KNOWS A THING — xix

INTRODUCTION. ARTIFACTUAL — 1

Conflict as Such — 1 — Overview — 15 — Emergence and  
Recursion — 23 — Comparison and Context — 29 — Time,  
Secrecy, Artifactuality — 33

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

## Contents

# 1

### Forensic — 45

The Only Terrorist Is the State — 48 — Time Machines — 63 —  
Circles of Trust — 71 — Same Old Shit — 78 — The Politics of  
Bones — 83 — History Doesn't Belong to Us — 87 — Keep the Door  
Locked — 90 — Those Aren't His Bones — 96 — Very Transparent —  
103 — Why Humiliate the Dead? — 110 — Lost Heroes of the  
Republic — 126 — The Bones Become More Human as We Look  
at Them — 133 — Outside of Time — 139 — Endless — 147 —  
Whether a Genocide Has Taken Place — 150 — We All Have the  
Same DNA — 154 — We All Have Darkness in Our Hearts — 157 —  
Nonknowledge — 159 — Let Me Rest — 166

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

# 2

## Documentary — 173

An Impossible Thing — 176 — My Own Archive — 180 — Stills — 191 —  
A Brief History of Cypriot Documentary Film — 201 — This Empty  
Folder — 213 — There Is No Meta-archive — 225 — I Didn't Know —  
229 — A Crystal Image of Time — 250 — More Beautiful — 260 —  
What I'd Been Missing — 271 — The Cave — 278

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



EPILOGUE. OUR OWN GHOSTS — 287

APPENDIX. ARCHIVE — 299

NOTES — 305

FILMOGRAPHY — 337

REFERENCES — 339

INDEX — 353

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

## Acknowledgments

I owe a debt of gratitude that I cannot measure or repay to my interlocutors in the Cypriot context, some of whose own work has become my “material.” I deeply appreciate their willingness to engage with me so seriously, and to meet my questions with their own curiosities, thus opening a shared horizon of knowledge making. Others whose work is not discussed in this book nevertheless shared precious insights, great stories, and their wonderful company with me; this book bears their good influence. Some of my interlocutors have become close friends; our conversations have been going for years, and I hope they will never come to an end. Many have read parts of this text and helped me, as only they can, to develop and improve it. Along with others I have renamed in the text, I warmly thank Alev Adil, Umut Bozkurt, Rebecca Bryant, Panicos Chrysanthou, Costas Constandinides, Olga Demetriou, Karen Emmerich, Ellada Evangelou, Leslie Frost, Antonis Hadjikyriacou, Evi Haggipavlu, David Hands, Mete Hatay, Murat Erdal Ilican, Alana Kakoyiannis, Ruth Keshishian, Iosif Kovras, Yael Navaro, Argyro Nicolaou, Kyriakos Pachoulides, Yiannis Papadakis, Despo Pasia, Nicos Philippou, Stephanos Stephanides, Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert, and Konstantina Zanou.

Due to the conditions of confidentiality to which I agreed, and which bind them as well, I cannot name the scientists and staff at the Committee on Missing Persons with whom I worked in 2011–12, some of whom I visited on later trips to Cyprus. Many are no longer with the CMP, though some are. I wish I could thank each one of these people individually for their patience and generosity, for giving me their time, sharing meals and stories and jokes and complaints with me, inviting me out, teaching me their practices, and

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

showing me their world. I have enormous respect for the work they do and how they do it, especially in dealing so judiciously with the limitations and pressures they face in that work.

I am, however, very glad to be able to thank by name the former Third Member of the CMP, Christophe Girod, long since departed from Cyprus, without whose understanding of the project and gracious guidance in navigating the CMP I would never have been able to conduct fieldwork as I did. I am grateful, too, to Linda Marquardt, in the Third Member's office, for her consistent help and kindness, as well as to Florian Von Koenig and Bruce Koepke, who facilitated my access to CMP photographs and my permission to use them, long after my fieldwork was done.

## xiv

I have been writing and rewriting this book for more than ten years, and many brilliant and generous people have helped me in the process. I am especially grateful to friends who took precious time to read closely and share their feedback on the evolving text: Yelena Baraz, Karen Emmerich (again!), Jessica Goldberg, Mark Greif, Belinda Haikes, Liz Harman, Eben Kirksey, Pamela Mazzeo, Shannon Novak, Anand Pandian, Lauren Silver, and Melissa Yates. My dear Diane Nelson also belongs in this list, though engaging with my writing is only one of the countless ways she helped me think and enriched my life.

My profound thanks go, as well:

To the graduate students with whom I had the pleasure and privilege of working as I was writing this book, who helped me conceptualize and communicate better and from whose own work I learned so much. They have all moved on to bigger and better things by now. I have in mind especially Tyler Adkins, Jessica Cooper, Thalia Gigerenzer, Onur Günay, Sebastián Ramírez Hernández, and Igor Rubinov.

To the participants in the "Ethnography and Theory" working group organized by Didier Fassin at the Institute for Advanced Study in 2013–14; in the workshop organized by Susanna Trnka and Catherine Trundle at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study in 2014, "Beyond Neoliberal Responsibility: Rethinking Anthropological Approaches to Responsibility"; and in the long-format conference, "The Anthropology of Becoming," organized by João Biehl and Peter Locke at Princeton in 2014. My comrades in these groups gave discerning and open-minded attention to my work early on, when it made the most difference. Among them, I especially want to thank Mike Fischer for his searing and imaginative commentary; Laurence Ralph for offering a crucial thought about narrative in this text; and especially João, for painstakingly reading my book manuscript as it was then, in-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS  
PRESS



roducing me to William Connolly's work on time, and suggesting the resonance of Nicole Loraux's writing on civil war—right on the nose.

To Dimitris Gondicas, my colleague and mentor in Hellenic studies at Princeton, who has given me tremendous and indispensable support for this project from the earliest phase of research onward (and has tirelessly clipped Greek news items related to the Cypriot missing for me, when I could not keep up); to Stefania Pandolfo, whose influence on my thinking and sensibility as an anthropologist is beyond reckoning, and who first brought Damir Arsenijević's writing to my attention; to Joe Masco, whose work on secrecy has provided me ongoing inspiration, and whose incisive reading of my writing in progress opened new avenues of thought; to Jody McAuliffe, whose critical perspective and wit have sharpened my own, and whose stunning theatrical adaption of Don DeLillo's *The Body Artist*, which she directed at Duke University in 2018, offered me a way to think about the phenomenology of time that made possible my writing of this book this way; to Vangelis Calotychos, whose insight into the Cypriot context and whose ongoing commentary on the shapes and legacies of conflict there have helped me ask better questions; and to my colleagues in the Department of Anthropology at Princeton, especially Carol Greenhouse and Rena Lederman, who, in their different ways, offered me human support when I needed it, and modeled practices of anthropology to which I continue to aspire; as well as Carol Zanca, Mo Lin Yee, and Patty Lieb, who have provided so much vital and multifaceted help over the years that enabled me to keep going with this project in the interstices of everything else.

To the audiences, participants, and organizers of the talks and workshops where I have presented portions of this writing over the years, including at the University of Auckland, the University of Chicago, Duke University, Washington University, the Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies at Princeton University, and the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University. Sharing my work with people in these settings, and learning from their generative and provocative questions and comments, has been the most enjoyable and productive part of the writing process. In the same spirit, I thank the two anonymous reviewers at Duke University Press, who probably spent more time with this text than they had bargained for and gave me rich, thoughtful feedback that made it much better.

To my editor at Duke University Press, Ken Wissoker, who supported this book project unstintingly from beginning to end, in its many forms and tempos, and who offered crucial advice and guidance all along the way; as well

**XV**

**D**

**UKE**

**UNIVERSITY  
PRESS**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

as to Elizabeth Ault and Ryan Kendall, who graciously and expertly played key roles in the editing and production process.

Finally, to my family. To Rob Vogt, who has shared my life in Cyprus as well as the United States and has supported me as I have stolen time over the years to travel and write. His exquisite artistic sensibility has shaped and enriched my own sense of the visual and material world of Cyprus. He also taught me how to take good photographs and provided essential technical support in producing the images in this book. And to Ruby Davis, who was born a few years into this project and has grown as the book has grown: she is ever becoming, densifying my own belonging to time in the most joyful and surprising ways.

xvi

I have been very fortunate to receive generous support at Princeton University for my research and writing in this project, including a Stanley J. Seeger Hellenic Studies Sabbatical Research Grant, a Richard Stockton Bicentennial Preceptorship, a Behrman Faculty Fellowship in the Humanities, and research grants from the University Committee on Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. I have also enjoyed the immense benefit of two sabbaticals at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton—first, in the School of Social Science, and later, in the School of Historical Studies—where I found a by turns stimulating and serene environment in which to read, write, think, and learn from truly remarkable colleagues. My second year at the IAS was made possible by a Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship for Recently Tenured Scholars awarded by the amazing people at the American Council of Learned Societies; I thank them and the panel of reviewers sincerely. I also want to thank Didier Fassin and Joan Scott in particular for their warm hospitality and helpful engagement with my work while I was at the IAS.

The excerpt from Gür Genç's poem, "Not Poetry . . . Water," that appears on the dedication page is reproduced with permission. The full poem was originally published in Turkish in his collection *Yolyutma* (Nicosia: Işık Yay, 2000). I thank Gür for his generosity and trust, and for the inspiration of his work.

Early versions of some material in this text were previously published in chapters of edited volumes: "Time Machines: The Matter of the Missing in Cyprus," in *Unfinished: The Anthropology of Becoming*, edited by João Biehl and Peter Locke (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); "The Information Is Out There': Transparency, Responsibility, and the Missing in Cyprus," in *Competing Responsibilities: The Ethics and Politics of Contemporary Life*, edited by Susanna Trnka and Catherine Trundle (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); and "Archive, Evidence, Memory, Dream:

D

U

K

E

E

S

S

S

S

S

UNIVERSITY  
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS  
PRESS

Documentary Films on Cyprus,” in *Cypriot Cinemas: Memory, Conflict, and Identity in the Margins of Europe*, edited by Costas Constandinides and Yiannis Papadakis (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). I am grateful to João, Peter, Susanna, Catherine, Costas, and Yiannis for inviting me to participate in these extraordinary collective projects, and for patiently and assiduously shepherding the writing to publication.

This publication was made possible in part with support from the Barr Ferree Foundation Fund for Publications, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University. I thank the Barr Ferree Committee for their immense generosity.

xvii

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



## Prologue. Nobody Knows a Thing

Why must we know what we don't want to know? Why would we claim to know what we don't know, or not to know what we do? These questions flash through the documentary film *Birds of a Feather*, made in Cyprus by Stefanos Evripidou and Stephen Nugent in 2012. The film features interviews with Cypriots who lived through episodes of civil and state violence in the 1960s and '70s, as well as Cypriot researchers, activists, and educators who study those events. These figures rarely appear in the film in conventional talking-head interviews; instead, they are filmed together, already in dialogue about Cyprus's history of violence and division, and it is their conversations—with all the contradictions, tensions, and elaborations they contain—that form the overt subject of the film.

The film opens in Peristerona, a farming village in the foothills of the Troodos Mountains, just west of Nicosia, the capital city of Cyprus, and just south of the so-called Green Line, the de facto cease-fire line that has divided the Greek-Cypriot region in the south from the Turkish-Cypriot region in the north since the war in 1974. Although Peristerona had been a so-called mixed village, inhabited by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, for most of its modern history before the division, its residents today are exclusively Greek Cypriots—those who had lived in the village before the war along with those who arrived afterward as refugees, forcibly displaced from their homes in the north. In the opening sequence, the camera follows Salih Niyazi, in his sixties, in an elegant suit, identified as a Turkish-Cypriot former resident of the village. He explains in a voice-over that, since the opening of the border, he has returned every day to Peristerona to visit his old friends, to eat and talk with them. As he makes his way through the village

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

mosque, now empty and encrusted in dust—there is no one to use it—he speaks, in Greek, of the suffering of Turkish Cypriots before 1974 and the suffering of Greek Cypriots during 1974: “I believe that we shouldn’t hide behind our fingers, all us Cypriots. We should speak the whole truth, Turks and Christians. That’s what I believe.”<sup>1</sup>

XX

Salih joins Andreas Kyriakides and other residents of the village who have gathered around a café table in the bright courtyard of the mosque. They speak in Greek, Andreas’s native language; in his youth, Salih, like many Turkish Cypriots from mixed villages, had mastered the dominant language. They argue over an incident in 1964, when their neighbor, Arif Çağal, was shot by a Greek-Cypriot police officer. Andreas suggests that Arif had been a member of a Turkish-Cypriot militia group at the time and had been trying to cut the village’s phone line to the police when he was shot; Salih disputes his account, contending that Arif had innocently been harvesting olives in his field when he was targeted by the police. They argue over where the shooting took place and who saw it. They argue over what each has told the other about the incident in the past. “You don’t know!” Andreas shouts. “Of course I know!” Salih shouts back, laughing. They argue over each other’s qualifications to testify: Andreas was a few years older than Salih and therefore “knows better”; but Salih was “in the events” and heard the story directly from Arif’s sister, mother, and grandmother, all witnesses to the shooting. The two men interrupt each other, pointing, flicking their worry beads. Their voices rise and fall; their sight lines connect and move apart. A third man, an old friend of the other two, finally intercedes: “Anyway. It’s over!”

Peristerona is one of the legendary sites of the Cyprus conflict—a village of storied beauty, built on the banks of Peristerona River among shimmering olive groves and flowering, redolent citrus and almond. I have seen it. I visited because it is one of the places celebrated by peace-minded Cypriots as a symbol of harmony between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, as they lived there together for generations before it was riven by violence in the 1960s. The PRIO Cyprus Centre,<sup>2</sup> a nongovernmental research center in Nicosia that explicitly brands itself as bicomunal—meaning it employs Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot researchers and disseminates materials in Greek and Turkish as well as English on both sides of the divide—gives a quick sketch of the events in its report for Peristerona, which a PRIO research team mapped as part of the project “Internal Displacement in Cyprus” (PRIO Cyprus Centre 2011b). According to the PRIO report, Peristerona was a mixed village of about 1,200 people in 1964; that February,

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PROLOGUE  
PRESS



DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

no.

P.1

after two Turkish-Cypriot police officers were shot, almost all the Turkish-Cypriot residents fled—about five hundred people altogether, two-fifths of the village—and settled in enclaves in Nicosia, or in towns under Turkish-Cypriot control in the north. Those who returned to the village during a phase of calm in 1968 left again, for good, in 1974, when two Turkish-Cypriot residents were killed by Greek-Cypriot irregulars from a local paramilitary group.

Before I visited, I had already encountered Peristerona in another film, which framed the village as a place of exodus and exile. The village was the addressee of a melancholic poem by Neşe Yaşın, a Turkish-Cypriot poet and peace activist born in Peristerona who, as a young child in 1964, fled with her family to Nicosia. Her return to her village as an adult, “a woman broken by life,” as she describes herself, was recorded by the Greek-Cypriot filmmaker Panicos Chrysanthou for *Our Wall*, the documentary film he made in 1993 with Niyazi Kızılyürek, a Turkish-Cypriot friend, a political scientist at the University of Cyprus and, at the time of this writing, a member of the European Parliament: the first Turkish Cypriot to be elected from Cyprus. *Our Wall* was the first bicomunal film to be made in Cyprus about the events of the conflict, and, as such, it is considered by many of my interlocutors in the Cyprus film world to be groundbreaking in its time. I saw it at a screening in January 2012, with about thirty other people, in a municipal gallery on the southern edge of the so-called dead zone in the center of divided Nicosia. Chrysanthou was there, and, before the screening began, he explained to the audience (in Greek) how the film had come about. He said he had always imagined the film through a poetic frame, but it was not until he met Neşe Yaşın that he had figured out how to do it. This was in 1988, long before the checkpoints between the northern and southern regimes opened in 2003, a time when it was nearly impossible for Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots to meet; but they had both gotten formal permission to attend a cultural event in Nicosia, and they got to talking there about their childhood experiences of fleeing their villages, he to the south and she to the north. He remembered her for a long time afterward, he said, and eventually managed to get a letter to her through Kızılyürek, a mutual friend, inviting her to appear in the film they were then planning to make together.

In the sequence, Yaşın travels to Peristerona by bus, passing along the Venetian fortress walls enclosing the old city of Nicosia, topped with barbed wire and shadowed by the flags of Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, and the UN. The bus follows a long, dusty road to the village, crossing over a dry riverbed, passing by a rusty van half-buried in a sandy field and old buildings left half-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PROLOGUE  
PRESS

constructed and crumbling. Ambling dreamily through the village, Yaşin speaks the lines of her poem in voice-over, in Turkish, as English subtitles spell out a translation.<sup>3</sup>

I remember when I was a little girl.  
Everything changed quickly then between joy and sadness.  
They brought me into this world to live through a story.  
I had a mother and father then.  
I remember the day I saw the almond-tree for the first time,  
the sun rays caressing the flowers and my face  
and a village kept deep inside me as the joy of life.

People there had beautiful faces.  
They thought that this child was born to be happy.  
Peristerona, the child who called out your name  
didn't know that this was going to be a sad story.  
When she discovered the first bullet,  
when she heard the grown-ups whispering with tears in their eyes,  
she tasted a great pain and was scared.  
The mother could have died with the baby still in her womb.

Peristerona, you became a village more distant than the stars.  
Who remembers today the little princess of the flowers who once  
lived here?  
What life took without pity out of her arms each day  
was turned into tears wetting the pillow every night.  
Little girl from Peristerona.

Hello, Peristerona. Do you remember me?  
I've grown up, haven't I?  
Do you remember when I used to walk along  
your narrow streets holding my doll with the red hat?  
Was that a fairy tale?  
Was it a fairy tale, that I ran through the daisies?  
Maybe I loved you so much because they forced us to part.  
I always thought of you, Peristerona.  
Happiness was with you.  
My tears began after you.  
There was always a place in the world that I always wanted to reach.  
It was you, Peristerona.  
A village more distant than the stars.

xxiii

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

NOBODY KNOWS A THING

Yaşin enters the gated courtyard of an old house where she might have lived as a child, though the film does not say so. She encounters a very old woman dressed in black—a widow—who greets her with shaking hands, in mixed Turkish and Greek, and remembers her grandmother: “We harvested together. We had a very, very, very good time together.” Yaşin’s voice-over continues:

xxiv

Here I am, Peristerona.  
I’ve grown up and they say that I look like my mother.  
I think I am as old as she was when she left you.  
The war turned her first into a captive and then an unhappy and ill  
woman.  
By her grave I think of you.  
You are a dream-land village, Peristerona.  
You are the joys left behind, a house that was looted and set on fire,  
a place in the throes of death.  
  
When they brought our few belongings to our little house in exile  
they said our house had been looted and burned down  
and that my dolls were no longer there.  
With sadness I stared at what they were unloading from the truck  
and I cried inconsolably for my dolls.  
My dolls, poor captives of the war.  
I was forbidden to cry for you when at that time people were losing  
their lives.  
  
Oh, Peristerona, how much both of us have been wounded by wars.  
The joyful cries of the child are no longer heard in this house.  
I came to you as a woman broken by life, like all the other women,  
those who cried in two different languages from the same pain.  
On their faces is printed a story steeped in blood.

During Yaşin’s voice-over, the camera has already moved slowly through the doorway of an old house in Peristerona, down its creaking wooden steps into its basement, landing at last on the dour face of a middle-aged woman sitting stiffly on a wooden chair. The next sequence cuts between this woman and another, older woman sitting on the porch of another house. They recount, in Greek and Turkish, respectively, the atrocities they witnessed and experienced themselves in the summer of 1974—not in Peristerona but in villages so much like it that their names do not seem to matter. Where Yaşin is burdened by a melancholic attachment to her lost childhood village, which she remembers in a poetic reverie, these women seem to be

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY  
PROLOGUE  
PRESS



trapped in traumatic repetition, each reliving her experiences of the war by herself, unable to forget or move on. Separately, each breaks down in tears and covers her face; they “die every day”; they “can’t go on.” This series of cuts yields a series of metonyms: the pain of these women comes to stand for the pain of “all the other women” named in Yaşin’s poem, and more, the pain of all Cypriots. The intimate knowledge of violence conveyed in their testimony comes to stand for the history of war in Cyprus. And Peristerona comes to stand for all the villages of Cyprus destroyed by that history. It is a very specific place and also a generic anyplace of destruction and haunting.

*Birds of a Feather* returns to Peristerona in its closing sequence. The debate between Salih and Andreas about the shooting incident suddenly resolves into quiet consensus:

XXV

ANDREAS (*looking off-camera as he speaks to the filmmaker Evripidou, who appears briefly in the left foreground*): My friend, nobody knows a thing.

SALIH: They know nothing at all. Nothing.

ANDREAS: Nothing. (*He points to his left, off-screen, and the camera follows his gesture to show the face of a younger man, sitting silently.*) Costas here, he’s forty years old, and if you ask him, he has no idea what happened.

SALIH: Nobody knows, nobody knows.

ANDREAS: Nobody. Us, we’re the last generation from the ’70s. . . .

SALIH: We’re the last generation who knows.

ANDREAS: But when we go kaput—then, as a society, we can recover. Why wouldn’t we?<sup>4</sup>

Every position one could take in recounting and accounting for a history of violence is taken by these old friends in the opening and closing sequences of the film. Propositions of knowledge contend with accusations of not knowing: of ignorance, credulity, confusion, dissimulation. The opening sequence gives the lie to the premise that historical knowledge—what happened, who, and why—can be discovered; that someone knows for sure; that the facts to compose a coherent consensus can be ascertained. Positions become ways of seeing, modes of partiality, habits of refusal. In the closing sequence, disagreement and contradiction are assimilated into a larger story of how knowledge relates to history. Salih and Andreas know what happened, even if they do not agree on the facts; what matters is that they carry this knowledge with them into a present from which the incident in question recedes further every day. The younger generations *don’t know*; they do not bear with them, embodied in their very persons, the poisonous, destructive

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

NOBODY KNOWS A THING



knowledge of violence that is essentially retrograde, drawing people back to the past in their emotions and arguments. These old men are “the last who know,” they say; their knowledge will die with them, and perhaps the conflict will die as well. Even if their deaths are the cost of peace, then, it is perhaps a hopeful question that Andreas asks in his final line: Why wouldn’t society recover after that? Why wouldn’t history begin again?

I attended the premiere of *Birds of a Feather* at the Lemesos International Documentary Film Festival in August 2012. Theatro Ena, a historic theater in the old municipal market area by the waterfront of Lemesos (known in English as Limassol), was full beyond capacity, with about 150 people seated in folding chairs and another few dozen standing. The audience included many people I knew—teachers, activists, academics, and artists I had seen at cultural events in Nicosia as well. After the closing credits, the festival organizers invited Stefanos Evripidou, the producer and codirector of the film (also a prolific and well-known journalist for *Cyprus Mail*, the only English-language daily newspaper published in Cyprus), to stand and take questions. Thirty seconds of silence ticked by before a man in the back of the theater asked him, in English: *What was your motivation for making this film? So many films have been made about the Cyprus Problem. Do you have a new perspective?*

Evripidou laughed good-naturedly. *Maybe the economy is more important now than the Cyprus Problem!* Two days earlier, *Children of the Riots*, a film by Christos Georgiou about young people involved in street protests in Greece during the early days of the economic crisis, had screened to a packed house; that crisis was on its way to Cyprus as we watched. Evripidou continued, *What was our motivation? It seemed like no one could actually talk about history. We got tired of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots doing bicommunal work, or doing nothing, but not having conversations, and not listening. Rather than trying to change opinions, we hope this film just gives some perspective.*

The next question came from the front, in Greek: *Have you seen the documentary made by Christopher Hitchens, Cyprus: Stranded in Time? That film gives a tit-for-tat perspective on the conflict. What do you think of that? Do you think Cyprus is an occupied country?*

Evripidou demurred, repeating the question in English for the audience, and answering that he had not seen the film. *I can’t give an opinion on that*, he said. *But it’s from here that dialogue starts!*

What could he have said? The questioner’s reference to Hitchens was, it seemed to me, a challenge to Evripidou to abandon the assiduously even-handed perspective he had achieved in his film and sustained in his address

DUKE

to the audience—his invitation to dialogue rather than opinion. Hitchens, a notoriously contrarian polemicist, had spent years in Cyprus as a foreign correspondent for the *New Left Review* and the *New Statesman*, during and after the war. In 1984, he authored one of the internationally best-known works on the Cyprus conflict, *Hostage to History: Cyprus from the Ottomans to Kissinger*, considered by some a work of conspiracy theory, as it doggedly mounts the case, with much evidence from confidential sources, that NATO powers—the United States, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Greece—colluded in the division of Cyprus in the service of their own Cold War geopolitical interests. The film to which the audience member had referred—a BBC television documentary made in 1989 as part of the *Frontiers* series—followed the same line as Hitchens, the narrator and central character of the film, who travels throughout the island, itemizing the “absurdity” of the division and its disastrous consequences for the people he calls “ordinary” Cypriots.<sup>5</sup>

*Do you think Cyprus is an occupied country?* The question, its blunt abruptness so out of keeping with the measured tone of Evripidou’s film, implied that Cyprus was indeed a hostage—of Turkey, perhaps, or the UN, or, as Hitchens had it, history itself. The questioner seemed to be pushing Evripidou to take a position, to say what he knew about who was to blame for the war and the long-standing division, and not to retreat, in bad faith, behind dialogue and listening. The filmmaker had, after all, already expressed his frustration with the inefficacy of bicomunal work—activist cooperation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots that endlessly rehearsed the ideology of peace while turning a deaf ear to factual disputes and demands for accountability. Evripidou said he wanted his film to “give some perspective”; the first audience member to speak had wondered whether he had a “new perspective” to give. Was there something more this film could be made to say—something this audience wanted to know and did not already know about the Cyprus conflict?

*Birds of a Feather* was, at that moment, a party to a conversation taking place throughout Cyprus by way of documentary films and their public screenings: a conversation in which familiar places, people, and stories were reassembled from historical fragments and re-presented for collective recognition and inquiry. It was a conversation about the good of knowing Cyprus’s history of conflict, in two conflicting senses. In one sense, the good of knowing described an ethical orientation: a valorization of truth as a prerequisite for recovery and reconciliation. The other sense, borne of a more suspicious sensibility, took the form of questioning. What was the good of knowing, when knowledge itself was so fragile, partial, and debat-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

NOBODY KNOWS A THING



DUKE

no.

P.2

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

able; when it carried the memory and the threat of harm; when it inexorably pulled people into conflicts they had not yet and might never overcome; or when it merely disclosed, again, what everyone already knew? This tension within the good of knowing conditioned, I think, how many Cypriots came to understand themselves as subjects of history, forty years after the war and counting. This book is about the many ways in which they made knowledge and assimilated knowledge in that process of understanding—and the existential challenge posed to them by the indeterminate status of knowledge that cannot be shared.

xxix

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

NOBODY KNOWS A THING





NO. **DUKE**

P.3

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

*no.*

**P.4**

# Arti- fact- ual

## Introduction

### Conflict as Such

The facts of the past are contested, however often they are repeated. The line of division across Cyprus—known as the Green Line, and also, by some and not others, as “the border”—first marked the separation of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot municipal authorities in Nicosia, the capital city, in 1958. It was designated as a UN cease-fire line following devastating episodes of paramilitary and civil violence in 1963, and became a permanent de facto partition after the war in 1974. For the period between 1963 and 1974, when the cease-fire line definitively separated these populations, authorities in the north reported 1,800 Turkish Cypriots killed and 492 missing; authorities in the south reported 3,000 Greek Cypriots killed and 1,510 missing.<sup>1</sup> During the same period, almost 215,000 Cypriots were displaced: about a third of the Greek-Cypriot population and half the Turkish-Cypriot population.<sup>2</sup>

D

UKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



The Republic of Cyprus is the *de facto* name of the regime in the south, which claims continuity with the sovereign nation declared independent from Great Britain in 1960, and which enjoys international recognition as well as membership in the European Union; I call it “the Republic” or “the south” in this book, knowing from experience that even these terms will offend or even outrage some who would just call it “Cyprus,” as if plain and simple. The regime in the north, which unilaterally declared itself an independent sovereign nation in 1983 but is recognized as such only by Turkey, is officially named the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus; I call it “the TRNC” or “the north” here, though in the south it is commonly known as “the occupied territories” (τα κατεχόμενα), in contrast to “the free areas” of the Republic. The territory of the TRNC—though not the regime—also belongs to the European Union, in theory if not in practice. In thus referring to the sides of the division, I am following the minority practice of some of my interlocutors, honed with much painful trial and error, and designed to facilitate respectful communication and mutual understanding among people living on one side or the other, who have survived or inherited one history of violence or the other and aspire—perhaps impossibly—not to reproduce those histories in their use of names and terms.

As I write these opening lines, I recall the remarks of a Cypriot friend some years ago, as we were spending a blistering summer afternoon in the shady backyard of his father’s house in north Nicosia. At that time, my friend had just finished his dissertation on the history of property in Cyprus. One of his advisers had suggested that he remove an early chapter detailing the history of the Cyprus conflict, since it was not directly pertinent to his research on Ottoman and British policies of land tenure. But my friend had fought to keep the chapter: *Every Cypriot thinks he has to write a treatise explaining the Cyprus conflict from the beginning*, he said to me, laughing. *It’s my birthright to write it!*<sup>3</sup>

How far back must we go, to give an account of the Cyprus conflict from the beginning? To the founding of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, following four years of guerrilla warfare waged against British authorities as well as Turkish Cypriots by Greek-Cypriot radicals? To the British, ruling from 1898 to 1960, who introduced an ethnonational division between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots as a critical tactic of divide and rule? To the Ottomans, ruling from 1571 to 1898, who governed the inhabitants of Cyprus as discrete and unequal religious communities? To the Venetians, ruling from 1489 to 1571, who militarized the island and built its fortress geography? To the Lusignans, ruling from 1192 to 1489, who introduced feudal government, dispossessing Indigenous residents and concentrating massive estates in no-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS



DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

*no.*

I.1

ble and foreign hands? To the Byzantines, ruling from 330 to 1191, who administered the growth of Orthodox Christianity throughout the island, in bloody wars with European Catholic and Arab Muslim crusaders and invaders? To the ancients—the Mycenaeans, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Ionians, Hellenes, and Romans—the earliest inhabitants of this “island of Aphrodite” and the earliest war makers, whose artifacts are still being excavated and celebrated in Greek-Cypriot nationalist claims to the origins of Western civilization? How far back in historical time, and through how many imperial formations of culture and political economy, should the division of Cyprus be traced?

4

When I first conceived the idea for a research project on the so-called Cyprus conflict, and began to educate myself about the many debates that remained unresolved, I armed myself with what I thought were urgent questions about the nature of conflict and prospects for reconciliation. But the more I read, and the more I learned from those who became my interlocutors and friends in Cyprus, the less solid the conflict became as grounds for my research. Giving an account of the Cyprus conflict was not, of course, my birthright, but my position as a foreigner was equally delimited by this task. The unrelenting focus on conflict on the part of Cypriot and foreign researchers quickly showed itself as a trap for my own work, mostly conducted inside a peace-minded community of activists, writers, teachers, artists, journalists, scientists, and academics.<sup>4</sup> These people, my interlocutors, defined their aspirations in opposition to conservatives, the majority of Cypriots, who resisted reunification for different reasons in the north and the south; and especially to ultranationalist and neofascist groups like the Grey Wolves in the north, and ΕΛΑΜ (Εθνικό Λαϊκό Μέτωπο)—the National Popular Front party, closely linked with Golden Dawn in Greece—that emerged in the south in the early 2000s. The rise in auto and pedestrian traffic between north and south since the opening of checkpoints in 2003, and the revivification of the dead zone at the center of divided Nicosia, had fostered the growth of an antinationalist, multicommunal political culture whose origins can be traced to bicommunal groups active since the 1980s—something like a “minor” community, perhaps, in Deleuze and Guattari’s ([1975] 1986) sense of an essentially political collective that speaks in a majority language from a marginal (in this case, postcolonial and antinationalist) position. In my experience, members of this community for the most part took for granted that multiple perspectives on the conflict—and indeed multiple histories entailing incompatible factual claims—were present and arguable. At the same time, they often expressed frustration and even boredom with the perennial posing of the Cyprus conflict as such. The chronic impasse

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

in regard to a political settlement, the perpetual reiteration of entrenched positions, the stale terms of discussion, the occlusion or outright exclusion from consideration of other political problems in Cyprus, and the intractable self-congratulatory demeanor adopted by people across the political spectrum: all these features of the Cyprus conflict played a part in disposing progressive Cypriots to disaffection with activism and activist production of knowledge and culture.

*Artifactual* is born of this impasse: a situation of crisis, of opening, and still, of waiting. Although a plan for reunification has persisted as a dominant issue (if not *the* dominant issue) in Cypriot politics since 1974, the Green Line remains in place at the time of this writing. I have heard many Cypriots say that the division has become more entrenched and normalized—as well as more profitable—since the opening of checkpoints between north and south in 2003, and Cyprus’s accession to the European Union in 2004 as a divided country.<sup>5</sup> United Nations–mediated negotiations between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot authorities in 2008–10, 2010–12, 2014, 2015–17, and 2021 opened and closed, quickly folded into a history of the same. But beyond this terrain of official state politics, an undeniable cultural shift has taken place in Cyprus in the last twenty or so years: a post-ethnonationalist vision of Cyprus’s future has emerged along with a vigorous, multivocal questioning of its past.<sup>6</sup>

Such questioning is by no means a priority in all areas of governance in Cyprus. Other grave matters have provoked protests, rumors, and demands for change, but not widespread, organized calls for investigation and reform or intensive research and creative projects: matters such as human trafficking, the multiplex precarity of migrant workers, black markets for weapons and drugs, offshore banking, the prison system, and the political activities of religious institutions. The Cyprus conflict is one area where transparency is valorized and actively pursued by Cypriots across the political spectrum—perhaps because, as Marios Constantinou (2006), Olga Demetriou (2018), and Demetriou and Ayla Gürel (2008) have shown, the division has so thoroughly determined the structure and operations of government since the founding of the Republic in 1960. It has also oriented demands for reform toward supranational organizations—the UN and the EU, especially—which helps to explain why claims for information about the events leading up to the division are often framed by Cypriots in human rights language, in terms of their “right to know” (Bryant 2010; Demetriou and Gürel 2008; Kovras 2008; Kyriakou 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Sant Cassia 2005; Yakinthou 2008).

Why do Cypriots want to know what happened, so many years after the violence? What kind of knowledge do they seek? And is that knowledge ef-

D

UKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

fective? In this book, I take up these questions, exploring two interrelated areas of knowledge production about the violence of the 1960s–1970s: forensic science and documentary film. My ethnography follows the forensic archaeologists and anthropologists who work to locate, exhume, identify, and repatriate the remains of Cypriots killed in episodes of violence and buried in secret graves before and during the war, from 1963 to 1974, as well as filmmakers who use archival photographs and film footage from this period in their contemporary films, installations, and publications. In my analysis, I work through the dynamics of secrecy and revelation that animate the production of these knowledges and their reception, exploring the aims and ends to which they are differently tied. I examine how these knowledges interact in Cypriot political and cultural life: how they reinforce, supplement, or undermine each another. And I show how these knowledges about their history of violence have come to inform the hope some Cypriots feel for an open, democratic, unified society; or the certainty, felt by others, that this will never come to pass.

Artifacts are the special matter shared by the forensic scientists and documentary filmmakers whose knowledge making I document in this book: material remains (or remainders<sup>7</sup>) that are exhumed or otherwise uncovered, examined, and made to reveal something about the past. Bones and archival images are the artifacts, in this sense, that anchored and molded the knowledge projects pursued by my interlocutors. But I use the term “artifact” in this book as more than a commonplace label for this kind of matter. I do not want to place much conceptual weight on definitions, especially etymological ones; language is dynamic, and it would be foolish to equate meanings with origins, as Michel Foucault (1980, 140) argued in his essay on Nietzschean genealogy—a historical method that is categorically opposed to the search for origins.<sup>8</sup> In any case, the significance of a concept exceeds the semantic resources of any language in which it might be expressed, which makes translation a much more interesting context for conceptual work than etymology. That said, I chose the title *Artifactual* for this book in part because I wanted to amplify the double entendre of “fact” (from the Latin *factum*, any number of etymological sources tell me, meaning an act or fact) as something both done and known. “Art(i)-” accentuates the doing of the fact, the process of skillful crafting: the art of making facts.

This notion of artifacts as skillful works of knowledge will, I hope, redistribute into a different conceptual form what Bruno Latour long ago observed as “the ‘dialectic’ between fact and artifact”: an “impossible antinomy,” as he put it, that deeply vexed both the realists and the constructivists he caricatured, who were unable either to hold to the purity of their posi-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

tions or to resolve what they perceived as the paradoxical nature of experimentally “made up” scientific facts, being both “manmade” (in contingent, situated lab settings) and decidedly “*not* manmade” (but rather “out there” in the world), both “fabricated and not fabricated” (Latour 1999, 125). Even longer ago, pursuing a “usable doctrine of objectivity” for feminists seeking “a better account of the world” than positivist science had yet offered, Donna Haraway also rejected “the radical social constructionist programme” that framed the “artefacts and facts” of “manufactured” scientific knowledge as nothing more than “parts of the powerful art of rhetoric” in which “truth claims of hostile science” were made, debated, and accepted (Haraway 1991, 188, 187, 186–87, 185, 184, 185, 186). The “feminist critical empiricism” proposed by Haraway (1991, 188), and the ever-proliferating vocabulary developed by Latour and others—starting with “actants” and “propositions”—were meant to accommodate and resolve the apparent paradox of scientific artifacts by reconceptualizing the entities and relations that populate and structure the networks that characterize the events and situations in the world that we care about and thus care to know about. This undertaking in science studies and adjacent fields has, over a few generations, helped to destabilize the boundaries between ontology and epistemology that were once commonsensical in the history and anthropology of science, at least on Latour’s account.<sup>9</sup> The destabilization of those boundaries—our living and thinking with the intractable, irreducible mutual entanglement and entailment of what a thing is and how we know what we know about it—has in turn made many other analytic moves possible (or, if they were already possible, more intelligible), including one that is key to this book: the understanding of artifacts as temporal operators.

Raised (partly) in this tradition of science studies myself, in describing my interlocutors’ work throughout this book, I routinely refer to knowledge making, knowledge production, and knowledge projects, rather than to truth or, in a specifically Foucauldian register, truth games or truth regimes, which concern the very means by which truth as such is discursively established and distinguished from what is false, irrelevant, or nonsensical.<sup>10</sup> This is largely because, in the practices of my interlocutors, I do not think their onto-epistemological premises or procedures were being challenged or transformed by failures or alternatives; the way facts should be made in human biology, physical anthropology, archaeology, ecological science, and history (by which I mean historicism; more on this, below)—the knowledge fields most often in play here—was not being questioned. That does not mean the knowledge my interlocutors produced was not questioned; indeed, it was. But that questioning was conducted in the terms of the domi-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL





**DUKE**  
no.  
I.2

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



nant truth game: on grounds of suspicion that something was being hidden, distorted, or otherwise misrepresented, and thus that the true facts could be revealed or concluded without changing the onto-epistemological rules of the game. (I have more to say on suspicion, too, in the last section of this introduction.)

Thus, the forensic scientists and documentary filmmakers whose work I examine here often had specific and discrete goals that they could meet with the onto-epistemological tools at hand: to determine the singular identity of a set of human remains, to learn what had happened in a particular village on a particular day, to map the movement of people and things and money, to recover a memory or confirm the details of a story. The tools they used to investigate and analyze the artifacts they handled were important and effective insofar as they prepared those artifacts to link up with narratives about the past that were already at work in Cypriot public culture, shaping consensus reality—even if, on the unstable grounds of enduring conflict, consensus reality was especially hard to affirm, or enlarge, with such pieces of empirical knowledge. As a descriptor, then, “artifactual” conveys not only how knowledge is made (from what materials, with what tools, in what circumstances and time frames) but also, and more important, why knowledge is made: to what ends, in the service of which stories.

In the context of long-enduring social division in Cyprus, and therefore the long-enduring coexistence of incompatible narratives about the past, the artifactuality of knowledge signals its special fragility and falsifiability: again, not in onto-epistemological terms, but rather in social and political ones. These are the stakes of studying conflict as such, as I came to understand when I began conducting my own research in Cyprus. “Conflict” itself was a negotiated term, I learned—one of many by-products of self-censorship on the part of Cypriots who did not want to appear to be taking sides in the division they had inherited. The negotiated safe vocabulary for discussing conflict was delicate and sometimes sardonic; for some terms known to cause offense, there were “no agreed alternatives,” as noted in *Words That Matter: A Glossary for Journalism in Cyprus*, authored by Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot journalists in 2018 (Azgın et al. 2018).<sup>11</sup> I found many progressive Cypriots reluctantly but resignedly describing the actions of Turkish armed forces in the summer of 1974, for example, as a “military intervention” rather than an “invasion” or “occupation” (terms used commonly in the south) or a “peace operation” (a term used officially in the north). Violence done to people and property was often named “tension,” and its agency as “ethnic” or “intercommunal” rather than “state” or “paramilitary.” I found myself broaching conversations in this intricate, frail,

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

fraught idiom that sometimes seemed to me to be un compelling to Cypriots themselves—people so rehearsed in the terminology of the conflict that I suspected it might be more interesting for them to discuss other issues with me. Not to discuss the conflict at all, however, would be to accede to the normalization of the division—a position that many found untenable, not only politically but also morally and socially.

Was there any room for discovery in this double bind? How could I pursue knowledge in a context where everything that could be said had already been said, and the people I sought out as experts were reluctant to say it all again? And who was I to aspire to discovery, anyway? The overly well-trodden ground of conflict studies in Cyprus came to stand, in my mind, for critical questions about the innovation, authorship, and ownership of knowledge that I could not answer. I wondered how to tell the difference between wanting to know and wanting to be “in the know,” as Diane Nelson puts that ambiguous, burdensome insider status in her work on reckoning with the history of genocide in Guatemala (Nelson 2009, e.g., xxxiii, 30, 153). As I began my own research in Cyprus, some of the people I sought out as experts warned me that I might encounter difficulties picking my way through the turf claims of Cypriots who had worked so hard to carve out even the smallest corner of expertise on the conflict. Competition for the attention of a small public, and for scant funding to launch education projects, archive projects, oral history projects, and art projects, raised the guard of Cypriot researchers and activists. *People don't talk to each other here*, a political scientist told me, during my second trip to Cyprus in 2010. She had been working for several years at a nongovernmental organization that was about to fold, for financial and personnel reasons. *You have to be very careful not to threaten anyone. You have to stroke their egos. Treat them like kings—that's what Cypriots want!* And then, laughing, but not offering to play this role herself: *What you really need is a godfather, to vouch for you and open doors.* In many of my other conversations with Cypriot researchers and activists, they described Cypriot culture as crippled by scandal, clientelism, and conspiracism: sheepish or melancholic descriptions that gave them space to disidentify with aspirations to knowledge even as they were actively, if ambivalently, pursuing it themselves. In my own research, I did encounter a few gatekeepers who declined to talk with me, discouraged my curiosity, or disparaged my naïveté (or perhaps my arrogance) in trying to “do something” in Cyprus. I also found a few godparents, who did open some doors for me, in time.

One of these was a Cypriot art historian whom I met in November 2011, and who ultimately became a close friend. At our first meeting, I found him

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

friendly and good-humored; he had spent many years in the UK and could adopt, he said, an outsider's perspective on Cyprus. Over lunch, we talked about conspiracy theories and a recent documentary film about the so-called children of the division in Cyprus. When we got around to the question at hand—namely, what I wanted to know from him—I told him that I was interested in studying knowledge about the conflict. *Which conflict?* he asked me, pointedly. I paused, realizing I must have taken something for granted. *There are many conflicts in Cyprus*, he explained. *They're obscured by the focus on the conflict between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. But there are many other kinds of difference here.* He told me about the long-standing Armenian and Maronite communities in Cyprus, who had been forced to side with a majority community—Greek-Cypriot or Turkish-Cypriot—after the division in 1974. The Maronites had chosen the Greek-Cypriot side, he said, but had also developed their own nationalist politics, celebrating their Lebanese ancestry and identifying Lebanon rather than Cyprus as their homeland. Yet they were never discussed as part of the Cyprus conflict.

Then there was class conflict. The historian detailed for me the formation of the Communist Party of Cyprus (ΚΚΚ) in 1926 and its abolishment by the British following the October Revolt against colonial rule in 1931. But the party continued to operate in the shadows, he said, founding trade unions and fostering working-class and peasant solidarities—including all ethnic and religious communities—through the 1930s–40s. The unions remained the only legal vehicles for leftist organization until AKEL, the new (and current) communist party, was founded in 1941. *This struggle has been completely forgotten in Cyprus*, he observed, noting that class-based cooperation and mutual assistance between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were derailed by intercommunal tension and violence from the 1950s onward.

Then, too, there was conflict over immigration. *Surely you've noticed the presence of migrants here?* the historian asked me. He described the movement to Cyprus of people from the Philippines, south Asia, eastern Europe, and west Africa since the 1990s, occasioned by the collapse of the Soviet Union and intensifying since 2004, when Cyprus joined the European Union. *These people are victimized in many ways*, he told me: sex trafficking, exploitative employment, hazardous housing, police harassment, the state's informal policy of refusing all asylum claims. *But they're blamed for everything.*

In laying out these additional axes of conflict in Cyprus for me, the historian seemed to be pushing for their equal footing with the conflict between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. In that push, the door he had opened for me led back to the Cyprus conflict. The division between Greek-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL



DUKE  
no.  
I.3

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities had already so thoroughly colonized social and political life in Cyprus that other struggles and divisions inevitably appeared in relation to it: as dimensions and effects of it or, on the other hand, as social and political problems in their own right that the division mystified and obscured—what anthropologist Olga Demetriou has called “minor losses” (Demetriou 2018, e.g., 2, 22, 56). As I got to know Cypriot researchers and activists who addressed other such problems in Cyprus—poverty, corruption, sexism, xenophobia, the broken system of political asylum—I became increasingly self-conscious about my own focus on the Cyprus conflict. Perhaps it was only by way of justifying that focus that I began to see the closed horizon of conflict as, itself, an artifact of conflict: an effect of living in enduring division, an experience that yielded urgent desires to know what had happened and how, but that determined all such knowledge as a repetition of division.

That repetition was most obvious to me in the intractability of the positions my interlocutors occupied (and still occupy) in relation to the division, despite the aspirations many expressed to overcome those positions somehow. I knew no one engaged in knowledge projects in Cyprus who did their work with equal or comparable depth, reflexivity, and creativity on both sides of the divide; I knew no one who was neutral, no one who was fully mobile between north and south, and no one who claimed to be. Their projects conveyed “situated knowledges,” as Donna Haraway names a kind of knowing counterposed to the rationalist detachment that she associates with modern science, but also to relativism—both being “god tricks promising vision from everywhere and nowhere equally and fully” (1991, 584). Marilyn Strathern ([1991] 2004, xvi) framed this problem of situatedness in anthropological knowledge making as an artifact of the historical shift she was observing in the 1980s from a “perspectival” to a “postplural” anthropology—from, that is, a relativism necessitated by the fact of multiple perspectives (I see the world from my perspective, you from yours) to a partiality necessitated by the fact of fractal perspectives (I see infinitely multipliable and recombinant facets of worlds, rather than one whole world—and you do, too). This postplural epistemology does not speak to or about wholes, social or otherwise. Situated knowledges, likewise, Haraway says, take “the view from a body, always a complex, contradictory, structuring and structured body, versus the view from above, from nowhere, from simplicity” (1991, 589). In arguing for feminist objectivity as a modality of knowledge making, she raises the question of how to see from the body—how to establish a vantage “from below” that is not one perspective relative to others but rather an avowed partiality that cannot stand alone, though it can link up with other

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL



partialities in “webs of connection” to form “shared conversations” (Haraway 1991, 191).

14

With this question in mind (a question of such long standing, now, that we might sometimes forget to pose it), I am tempted to suggest that the knowledge projects I studied in Cyprus were, in their partiality, no different from any other—and tempted, then, to reject the kind of exceptionalism I find in so much scholarship on Cyprus that emphasizes its uniqueness and anomalous status on any given register and thereby undercuts the comparative thinking that would facilitate its cultural and political theorization, as I argue elsewhere (Davis, n.d.).<sup>12</sup> And yet I cannot ignore the unyielding presumption of wholeness as an end point for the knowledge projects pursued by many of my interlocutors—their retrojection of one Cypriot society before the division, and their projection of one Cypriot society into the future after reconciliation—as they lived in division and lived out its consequences. The division of Cyprus, enduring throughout their lifetimes without reunification nor definitive separation, contributed a specific and determinate social form to the situatedness of their knowledge. They had grown up on one side of the divide or the other; their friends, families, and professional worlds, their memories and comforts, their fears and desires and blind spots, were rooted on one side or the other. Most spoke either Greek or Turkish natively, but not the other language; even those few who did know both found their options to speak limited by the presence of interlocutors who did not. By consequence, the compulsion to operate in English—also a Cypriot language, established as such in the 1960 Constitution, but no one’s primary language except for some visitors and expatriates—was strong and relentless.

As a researcher myself, I was specially (perhaps especially) limited; an outsider by any measure, unrooted on either side of the division, I nevertheless had my biases and preferences. Before coming to Cyprus, I had lived long-term in Greece but not Turkey; I spoke Greek (though not Cypriot Greek) well, but only a little Turkish, and English natively; although I spent time all over the island while conducting my fieldwork, I lived on the south side of divided Nicosia, where Greek and English were the dominant (not to say only) languages, enjoying all the cosmopolitan conveniences of Cyprus’s European Union membership that had flowered there since the early 2000s. My limitations joined up with the limitations of my interlocutors to narrow and distort my questioning and learning, in some ways that I believe I can account for, but also in some that, I presume, I cannot. No one I know—least of all me—has achieved a view of a whole Cypriot society. Any attempt to present a balanced picture would thus be an empty gesture; from

D

U

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

what vantage, after all—by what “god trick”—could balance be judged? This text, then, can only represent my partiality, in all senses, as I belatedly share in the peculiarly faceted conversation that my interlocutors in Cyprus have been conducting for a very long time.

## Overview

This book is based on field research that I have been conducting in Cyprus since 2007 and as recently as 2021. My fieldwork included a period of ten months in 2011–12, when I worked with the forensic teams of the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP), a bicommunal organization established under UN auspices that is charged with determining the location and identity of the bodies of over two thousand Cypriots who went missing during the violence of the 1960s–1970s. With the CMP, I worked both on field excavations throughout Cyprus and in the laboratory in central Nicosia where human remains were examined and identified. During that same period, I involved myself in the activities of several organizations and institutes for public media recently established in Nicosia’s dead zone, and attended dozens of documentary film screenings and exhibitions of art and archival photographs in Nicosia and other cities. I thus came to know well a number of filmmakers, photographers, and archivists whose work has been critical to the development of a public, visual vocabulary of conflict and peacemaking in Cyprus.

Part one of this book addresses the forensic investigations conducted by the CMP. For decades, as investigative journalists on both sides of the division have shown, state authorities in the north and the south blocked the CMP’s investigations, concealing information about the deaths of the missing and the location of their bodies, and either encouraging relatives to put the past behind them (in the north) or cynically nurturing the hope among relatives that their loved ones might still be alive (in the south).<sup>13</sup> Since 2004, when the recovery of the missing was separated from other issues relating to political settlement and newly framed as a nonpolitical humanitarian project, the CMP has been conducting investigations at a rapid pace with the controversial mandate, laid down in its terms of reference, not to “attribute responsibility for the deaths of any missing persons or make findings as to the cause of such deaths.”<sup>14</sup> This mandate is grounded in an ideology of closure—an expectation that confirming the deaths of the missing and returning their remains to their families, and thus naming the bodies of the

15

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL



missing but not the perpetrators of their deaths, will suffice to heal the wounds of the past and clear a path toward reunification.

Reckoning with the deaths of the missing, then, to the extent that it happens today, takes the form of mourning rather than accounting.<sup>15</sup> The concealment of evidence that could be used to seek justice for these deaths is a constitutive part of the investigation process, which proceeds from the anonymization of witness testimony, to the destruction of gravesites through excavation, to the storage of forensic photographs and findings in confidential archives. Despite this secrecy surrounding the precise fate of missing persons, the CMP has received a great deal of media coverage in Cyprus in recent years, and the forensic teams have featured in a number of television broadcasts and documentary films. Images of scientists working with bones have become as commonplace as those of anguished relatives in representations of Cyprus's violent history, while forensic evidence has replaced grief as the public form of positive knowledge of that violence: empirical evidence determining the fact of death. But this evidence radically delimits what it means to know what happened: to be certain of death without knowing its cause and circumstances. In exploring the material, social, and imaginary dimensions of these forensic investigations in Cyprus, I show how this process participates in an ideology of transparency that sometimes reproduces secrecy, suspicion, and impasse rather than resolving unanswered questions.

In part one, then, I pay special attention to the dynamic activity of the artifacts of death, the hard evidence of violence at the center of so much concealing and revealing (and concealing again). The bones and belongings of the missing, exhumed painstakingly from mass graves and laid out on tables for analysis, identified and photographed, cataloged and archived before their reburial, are scripted in the narrative of healing and closure promoted by the CMP as the brute facts of death to be ascertained—and thus as substitutes for other truths that cannot be disclosed publicly. These artifacts objectify knowledge about the violence of the past that remains ever present in the ongoing division of people and places in Cyprus. Exploring this process of objectification—the transformation of suspicion into material objects, and of those objects into objective proof—I examine the intimate and complex work scientists do to “see” a missing person in his or her bones: a work of reconstruction, simulation, imagination, and humanization. And I consider what this knowledge does to the scientists, in turn.

Part two of this book addresses the visual archive of violence in Cyprus, and how this archive has been used in artistic and political projects of reckoning with the past through documentary film. Venues for film production and screening have proliferated in urban Cyprus since the checkpoints

opened in 2003: places where filmmakers collaborate with one another and connect with audiences, and where relationships take shape among filmmakers, artists, journalists, scholars, and other producers of knowledge and culture. Public screenings of documentary films in Cyprus have formed a new social space where intergenerational and intercommunal encounters with the past can happen; indeed, these screenings seemed to me, during the time of my fieldwork, to be among the most popular and productive spaces for discussion and debate about the history of division. But the affective dynamics of identification and catharsis in these encounters often deflected examination of the archive as a source of evidence. Those filmmakers who turned to archives to learn something about the past that they did not already know often found themselves trading in stock images and footage, offering generic depictions of war and the peaceful times before, and thus reproducing the very narratives they sought to contest.

In part two, then, I consider how documentary filmmakers in Cyprus have tried to resolve this archival dilemma—this tension between conventionality and novelty—using footage and photographs of the events of the 1960s–1970s to experiment with the visual representation of Cyprus’s violent history. Archival material is flexible, available for resonance with viewers not only in the forensic register of evidence but also in the phenomenological register of experience: of time, confusion, shock, reverberation. I explore how Cypriot filmmakers have tapped into these different registers, presenting archival materials as transparent, uncontested evidence of the events in question; as enhancements of the personal or collective memories of the events belonging to personae in the film; or as open-ended explorations or poetic reveries of the events, without clear veridical stakes or claims to historical truth. I trace the development of an aesthetics of the archive in Cypriot films, both in debates over the terms of use and interpretation appropriate to archival material, and in the cultivation of a taste for such material in documentary film. Notably, some Cypriot filmmakers have deferred the evidentiary problem of the archive, seeking instead an edge to cut through convention in its phenomenological resources—reworking its resolution, speed, palate, clarity, sequencing—in order to engage the sensorium of the audience, not so much to inform as to disturb and to imagine. Other filmmakers have probed the problem of archival evidence from a different direction, fictionalizing historical events and sites of collective memory in their works while refusing documentary classification. What all these approaches share—in their incorporation of archival images, in their visualization of artifacts like ruins and bones, and in their treatment of archival images as artifacts—is a preoccupation with the material presence of the past.

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

This text is, thus, organized in two main parts, addressing processes of knowledge making that I encountered in my fieldwork as somewhat distinct domains, phenomenally and socially. Their separation in the book, however, is artificial, contrived to set intelligible parameters for my ethnographic exploration and analysis—to set contexts, in other words. Forensic investigation and documentary film are mutually implicated in Cyprus, in terms of their shared artifacts—bones and images—and, in some ways, their onto-epistemologies. I have designed this book to manifest both the distinctiveness and the imbrication of these artifacts and onto-epistemologies, highlighting moments when markers of one kind of knowledge appear in the context of another—as in the archaeological metaphors of time (burying and digging the past, for example) that pervade documentary films about the division, and, likewise, the understanding of bones as pictures of the past that framed forensic analysis at the lab. Beyond the special affinities between forensic and documentary investigation expressed by these commonplace metaphors, I also track the many ways in which documentary and forensic knowledge directly fed into and extended each other, as in documentary filmmaking about the forensic investigations, and the use of archival photographs and footage by forensic teams to find clues to the location of hidden graves and the identity of missing persons.

Interspersed throughout the book, readers will also find a series of images—I call it an archive—that amplifies my discussion of archives throughout the main text and especially in part two. In constructing this archive, I drew inspiration from several experiments ventured by ethnographers and other writers to perform, in textual form, an experience of archival recursivity.

Key among these experiments are Neni Panourgiá's *parerga*, or “work[s] alongside another main work” (1995, xx), as she writes in her introduction to her first book, *Fragments of Death, Fables of Identity*. On the website for her second book, *Dangerous Citizens: The Greek Left and the Terror of the State*, Panourgiá (2009) describes *parerga* as “alternate stories about the main narrative, or interpretations of events.”<sup>16</sup> In these books, her *parerga* include her own commentary on the main text; her memories and stories she has heard from others; archival photographs and documents; letters, lists, poems, and fragments of writings by other authors—all placed obliquely to the main text, either in a parallel text running across the lower portion of each page (in *Fragments of Death*) or in the side margins (in *Dangerous Citizens*), rather than in footnotes or endnotes (although she uses those, too). The archive in my book takes a different form, but I give it a similar rationale; it is, as Panourgiá describes *parerga*, an “additio[n] . . . meant to complete, expand, and augment the main discussion” (1995, xix–xx).<sup>17</sup>

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS



DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

*no.*

I.4

Another source of inspiration for this archive is the experimental text *The Wind under My Lips*, composed by Stephanos Stephanides (2018), a Cypriot poet, translator, and comparative literature scholar. The bilingual English/Greek text intercalates Stephanides's poems between passages of autobiographical prose evoking his early childhood in Cyprus in the 1950s; his abrupt, unwanted move at the age of eight to Great Britain after the dissolution of his parents' marriage; and the rambling life of curiosity, creativity, and melancholy that followed.<sup>18</sup> In addition to the visual impression of English facing Greek in the bilingual text, what struck me when I first picked up a copy, newly stacked in a Nicosia bookshop immediately after its publication in 2018, were the images that appeared, every so often, along the top quarter or half of a page: black-and-white photographs of Stephanides and his family members (I gathered) during his early years in Cyprus, printed on the ivory archival-paper pages of the book in the same black-and-gray ink as the text, but without captions. And then, in the last part of the book, interspersed within the pages of one long poem titled "Postcards from Cyprus (Made in India)": pairs of facing pages printed with three color images each, again uncaptioned, depicting scenes of everyday life in contemporary Cyprus. Stephanides notes in his acknowledgments: "The colour photographs were generously contributed by Indian filmmaker Anandana Kapur. The black and white photographs were for the most part taken by my father, Demos Stephanides, in the 1950s" (2018, 8).

This lightest touch of contextualization, making clear that he is not the author of the images, is all that Stephanides offers to indicate to readers how they might receive them. Without captions, the images trouble their own penchant for iconic reference. For readers, they may shape-shift from snapshots of Stephanides's childhood and places in Cyprus where he has lived or visited to images much more loosely articulated with his experience: a genre of imagery whose commonplace familiarity—whose availability to readers as their own experience, or that of someone they know—emphasizes their indexicality; their reference depends on their context. With this technique, Stephanides invites readers to identify with the text: to feel his loss of childhood and home as theirs in some way, to remember and dream and wander with him through the text, without staking this most intimate experience on the singular facts of his biography. It is that kind of experience that I hope the archive in my own book will open for readers.

I compiled this archive from a number of sources: photographs from the Press and Information Office in the Republic of Cyprus, photographs from the CMP in Cyprus, stills and screen grabs from documentary films and art performances, the artworks of Nicos Philippou and Panicos Chrysanthou,

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS



my own and others' photographs of places and events and people, and scans of ephemera I collected during fieldwork. Their order in the text and their placement on the page matter, but I hope they will not be received as mere illustrations of the text in whose interstices they appear. Rather, they form a sequence whose reference is internal to the archive; it is another story, told visually.

That story is about the mediation of time, memory, and knowledge by images—a mediation that I would call amnesiac or, with Jacques Derrida (1995, 10, 11), archiviolithic. It is an ongoing process of editing (framing, cutting, concatenating), repressing, repeating, decaying, decontextualizing and recontextualizing, altering and repurposing, that describes both the circulation of these images and the condition of their recognizability and efficacy. My emphasis on this mediation would be undermined by any straightforward captioning—any attempt, that is, to pinpoint their evidentiary value through their iconic representation of events, places, and people. Their reference is more complex, unstable, and problematic than any such captioning might convey. Without captions to stabilize that reference artificially, I hope they may resonate with different readers for different reasons. For some, perhaps especially some Cypriots, their iconic reference to historical events and collective memorial sites in Cyprus may be privileged. For others, they might evoke events, places, and people far afield in time and space from those under discussion in this text; for yet others, they might suggest indeterminate elsewheres and elsewhens, anytimes and anyplaces, familiar from stock footage of other wars.<sup>19</sup> That these images can represent both specifically and generically—as the photographs in Stephanides's text do—is precisely what enables them to perform the mediation I am exploring in this book. Instead of captioning the images on the page, then, I offer an appendix where I attribute copyright, marking the ownership or custody of each image (which may be quite different from its origin or author). In some cases, too, I append commentary that embellishes the main text in a different key or voice (sometimes not my own), more like notes than captions; in this way, the images may refer to and help make sense of the main text without merely illustrating it.

What I want to foreground, by emplacing this series of images in the text, is their metareferential meaning: their common condition of being images that thematize images. Their sequencing generates reference to the production and selection and circulation and repetition of images over time, and thus to how these images have animated and shaped Cypriots' (and others') reckoning of their history of violence and division. In other words, the sequencing of these images constitutes an archive out of an array. Like all ar-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL



chives, this one is essentially incomplete and misleading in its incompleteness if readers expect it to stand for a situation of which it is but a set of fragments, contingently gathered together by the accidents of my own research and writing.

22

My research for this book was conducted partly in Greek and to a very limited extent Turkish, but also partly in English, an official language in Cyprus and the lingua franca of bicomunal groups whose members did not share a native language. The multilingual environment in which I worked is represented in the text in my attentiveness to the spoken languages of my interlocutors and to problems of communication among Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots—including contestations over the terminology of conflict—as well as to the special vocabularies of bicomunal discourse, which I take to be a novel feature of post-ethnonationalist Cypriot culture. That is not to say that I celebrate bicomunal discourse and ideology in this book, however. In Cyprus, as in many other postconflict contexts in which multiculturalism has been waged against the violent racism or ethnonationalism of the past, bicomunalism sometimes seems to reify and naturalize the very divisions in Cyprus that it is intended to heal.<sup>20</sup> I recall, in this vein, talking over coffee with two Cypriot friends, a philosopher and a poet, who had joined me after attending a poetry reading in Nicosia. They were discussing what it was like for them to do intellectual work in Cyprus; both participated often in conferences and public readings, and both had dense dealings with the organizers of cultural events in Nicosia. The philosopher railed against the multiculturalist “peace culture” under whose aegis such events transpired, a culture that obliged every Cypriot to represent the community to which she “belonged” in strictly identitarian terms—that is, to “be ethnic.” The poet added that there were only two choices in this scenario: *You can’t be a citizen of Cyprus. You have to be a member of one of the two communities; there’s no other option. I suppose that’s a good way to make sure there will always be two governments, two bureaucracies—everyone can keep their jobs!*

Inspired by these friends and many other interlocutors who likewise distanced themselves from bicomunal terms of engagement, I do not, in this book, take for granted the entrenched nature of communal, intercommunal, ethnic, or national bonds and divisions in Cyprus. Instead, I leave open the question of how such bonds and divisions are produced, reproduced, or disrupted in the present, in dynamic interaction with different kinds of knowl-

D

U

K

E

L

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

edge about conflict and division. I use the terms “Greek Cypriot” and “Turkish Cypriot” to designate individuals only when these terms circumscribed the context in which I knew them—as with CMP employees, who were explicitly hired to represent these communal categories on the forensic teams, and used them in reference to one another—or when people consistently used these terms to identify themselves, most often the case with Cypriots of the immediate postwar generation, who grew up during and immediately after the division in 1974.<sup>21</sup> Many of the younger Cypriots I knew were more interested in non-ethnonational categories of identity, such as “citizen” and “migrant,” around which they sought to build broader solidarities. My circumspection about the ethnonational and bicomunal grounds for contextualizing the knowledge projects of my interlocutors in Cyprus is thus informed and conditioned by experiments with identity and community that Cypriots from post-postwar generations were developing at the time of my fieldwork.

## Emergence and Recursion

The morning of April 7, 2012, I was up with the sun and walking through old Nicosia to meet a friend at her home on the north side of the city. I approached the checkpoint at Ledra Street, a narrow pedestrian road lined with shops that were already buzzing and open for deliveries at that hour. Since the previous autumn, a small group—a couple dozen people at their peak—had been living here, in the area of about a block, extending from the busy shopping area through the empty, ruined buildings of the dead zone between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot checkpoints. The installation had begun with a few people staging weekly demonstrations and grown into a permanent camp, where many more came to live—sleeping, cooking, debating, gathering for assemblies, music, and films—first in tents and then in an abandoned building that they cleaned, repaired, painted, and equipped with generators. They were a diverse group: Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot, immigrant, expatriate, antiauthoritarian, anarchist, Marxist, Green, undeclared. Their movement developed in dynamic alignment with Occupy movements worldwide but on the very particular ground of Cyprus, installed as they were on the edge of the dead zone between the north and south sides of old Nicosia, just a few steps from the checkpoints and the area in between, patrolled by UN troops. Inhabiting this no-man’s-land, an ostensibly safe space—a buffer zone—between the two regimes, they aimed

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

to develop a different relationship to land and property from that which they had inherited from what they called the “war generation.” On October 15, 2011, in solidarity with mass protests from the Arab Spring to the Spanish Indignados, they had issued a press release and a Facebook posting, and handed out leaflets to passersby:<sup>22</sup>

#### Description

The 15th October Movement: Occupy the Buffer Zone

This is an inclusive movement functioning within some principal umbrella concepts for which we initially united, these are:

—

The reunification of Cyprus

To raise awareness of how the Cyprus Problem is but one of the many symptoms of an unhealthy global system

—

It is important to elaborate on the intended inclusiveness of the last point.

We have occupied the space of the buffer zone to express with our presence our mutual desire for reunification and to stand in solidarity with the wave of unrest which has come as a response to the failings of the global systemic paradigm. We want to promote understanding of the local problem within this global context and in this way show how the Cyprus Problem is but one of the many symptoms of an unhealthy system.

In this way, we have reclaimed the space of the buffer zone to create events (screenings, talks etc.) and media of these events, which relate to the system as a whole and its numerous and diverse consequences.

Opinions expressed in this manner are not necessarily of the entire group, only the umbrella points of reunification and solidarity with the global movement can be assumed to be.

Performing their entitlement to inhabit this small piece of Cyprus’s immense stock of abandoned property—specifically, a building owned by the Greek Orthodox Church in Cyprus, which declined to evict them—they contested the sovereignty of both the Republic of Cyprus (in the south) and

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (in the north), as well as the occupation of Cyprus and the management of its buffer zone by UN peacekeeping forces since 1963 (Erdal Ilcan 2013). For months, I passed through their installation every few days as I crossed the checkpoints; I passed a few evenings as well at their general assemblies, film screenings, and parties, in the company of dozens of others attracted to the movement. Occupy the Buffer Zone (OBZ) endured the cold, dank winter of 2012 and came to seem—to me, at least—as permanent a part of the urban environment as the ruined buildings among which they camped. Despite derision and attacks in the press, and surveillance and harassment by UN peacekeepers, the Turkish army, and the Greek-Cypriot police, OBZ held their ground for seven months.

That morning in April, they were gone. I learned later that an antiterrorist squad of the Greek-Cypriot police had raided the installation, seriously injuring seven people who lived there (along with several dogs) and arresting twenty-eight. All at once, tents were pulled down, furniture and equipment removed, banners and photographs torn from the walls. Members of OBZ returned the next day to reinhabit the area, issuing a call to supporters to regroup and give a show of strength. I joined almost a hundred people gathered that night to discuss strategies for continuing the movement—and also to eat, drink, smoke, and listen to a rembetiko trio whose spirited minor key wound all the way up and down Ledra Street. I heard rumors that the raid had been coordinated at the top—that is, by the UN; the ongoing unity talks between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot authorities mediated by the UN had reached a critical point, and the high international profile of OBZ might have been perceived as an obstacle to the negotiation process. Another factor identified by those gathered that night was the upcoming EU presidency, set to move to Cyprus in June: “It’s time to clean up,” a Greek-Cypriot politician had said at a press conference only a few days before. Later that week, a demonstration to protest police brutality started in the main square on the south side of the walled city and proceeded up Ledra Street to the checkpoints where OBZ had dwelled. They made many signs of resistance, duly noted by the press. But within a month, the movement as such had moved on to other venues and tactics.

Less than a year after the police raid that shut OBZ down, in March 2013, the Republic of Cyprus entered the company of Eurozone states in crisis: banks closed, foreign capital withdrew, corruption scandals erupted, and parliament was presented the forced choice of a European bailout (which came to be known as the “haircut”). Bearing out OBZ’s foreboding about global neoliberal governance in Cyprus, a new era of austerity began, in

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

which the gift of membership in the European Union—from which the north had largely been excluded, in practice if not in policy—turned out to be poisonous. Austerity had come to the north two years earlier, when tax increases, the privatization of public utilities, and massive cuts in public sector salaries were imposed by Turkey. Now, in 2013, the south was swiftly catching up; the once-prosperous side of the division was transforming into a site of economic stagnation, political volatility, and dependency on sovereign patrons.

The going of OBZ and the coming of austerity in Cyprus are potential historical indices of a transformation in the meaning and effects of the division itself, which continued forcefully to shape social and political life in Cyprus during this time as it had for the previous fifty years, but in new directions, with new implications. The human geographer Murat Erdal Ilcan, reflecting on his experience in OBZ, describes how he was dislodged from his scholarly habits of “seeing like a state,” in James Scott’s famous phrase, as he came to realize that writing about OBZ “carries the weight of creating knowledge about a movement whose history is too recent” for the “contours of questions” about it to crystallize in “academic debate” (Erdal Ilcan 2013, 56). He associates this inchoateness with the destabilization of identity wrought by OBZ—reckoned through the group’s shifting and disavowed boundaries of inside and outside, their claims to “local” and “global”—which appeared, to him, as perhaps the most important question at stake in the movement.

This vocabulary of destabilization and disavowal hints at something incipient and inchoate that is waiting to emerge. Indeed, Erdal Ilcan’s reckoning with his own complex disruption by OBZ has clear echoes in the recent problematization of “emergence” in anthropology. Michael Fischer, perhaps the most creative and prolific contributor to this discussion, identifies “emergence” in the present—like the past, he suggests—with the appearance of “new ethical and political spaces” with which we are ill equipped to contend by our “traditional concepts and ways of doing things” (2003, 9, 37). His formulation of “emergent forms of life” brings into relation, on the one hand, the “ethnographic datum” that expert knowledge producers increasingly claim that new knowledge is required for us to comprehend and address new situations, and, on the other, the “social theoretical heuristic” of acknowledging that “complex societies, including the globalized regimes under which late and post modernities operate,” are not stable formations but rather exist in some complex, shifting temporal relation of proximity and affinity to “historical horizons” (37). One cannot ask about those his-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

torical horizons without seeking epistemological and ethical grounds for the tools we have, or make, for posing questions.

In Cyprus, these questions of emergence were impossible for me to disaggregate and distribute between the social-political field of my ethnographic research and my tools for knowing it. Perhaps that is the case everywhere and everytime; but in “the new Cyprus,” as Rebecca Bryant dubs the era of open checkpoints and EU membership, the overdetermination and colonization of knowledge production by the Cyprus conflict seemed to me to thematize that impossibility in a unique and especially compelling way.

To say that any emergent form of life, or emergent cultural or political practice, sticks to the tools we already have at hand for analyzing it, and thus might miss analysis in its own terms, is another way of saying that emergence is restrained and dynamically conditioned by recursion. This assertion is not made explicitly but is illustrated beautifully in an article coauthored by Cypriot scholars Olga Demetriou and Murat Erdal Ilican (2018), “A Peace of Bricks and Mortar: Thinking Ceasefire Landscapes with Gramsci.” They return here to OBZ, and specifically to the cleaning and restoration of one building within the encampment, in order to compare it with another reconstruction project in central Nicosia: the renovation of a war-torn building inside the buffer zone and its transformation into the Home for Cooperation (H4C), a multifunctional center for bicommunal research and activity founded and managed by the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research. Demetriou and Erdal Ilican minutely document the day-by-day processes of reconstruction entailed by the two projects, and the political ideologies that animated and followed them (their shorthand, which they nuance substantially in the paper, is “liberal/progressive” for the H4C vis-à-vis “anarchist/revolutionary” for OBZ). They construe participants in both projects as “organic intellectuals in the Gramscian sense” (Demetriou and Erdal Ilican 2018, 899); these participants were engaged in “making heritage” in the urban environment of Nicosia’s dead zone, in ways that contested not only the division of Cyprus that is symbolized and concretized by the dead zone but also the gentrification of the old walled city, where the dead zone is located, that has been ongoing since the pedestrian checkpoint at Ledra Street/Lokmacı opened in 2003.

That this environment was (and is) characterized, materially, by the debris and ruins of war—abandoned, dilapidated buildings behind fences and barbed wire, riven by bombs and bullets, full of trash as well as the property and other traces of prior occupants—drives the authors to focus on the human labor required to transform the two buildings. They therefore empha-





DUKE  
no.  
1.5

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

size the “embodiment” of the work performed by OBZ participants in particular, which involved occupying the vantages (even the “shoes”) of prior occupants, seeing and touching and using their things, but also lifting, sifting, carrying, cleaning, and being vulnerable to the physical environment—being present, in short, in a way that manifested the “intimate connection between intellectual and physical labour” they devoted to their project. These protesters, the authors explain, were “planners, dwellers, builders, cleaners, and thinkers” (Demetriou and Erdal Ilican 2018, 906).

Demetriou and Erdal Ilican end on a skeptical note, pointing to the role gentrification plays in the assimilation of protest by “hegemonic structures” of “capital accumulation” (2018, 911). But I would rather draw attention to their insistence on the “transformative capacity towards a new political situation” that animated the two projects of reconstruction, on their account—not because this capacity represents hope in an affective register (the authors are not hopeful, nor am I, especially), but because it expresses change as it happens, even when it goes unnoticed by most. So, they say, “The war over concepts, ideologies, and their material transformations continues through the new groups, the new ideas, and the new practices that take shape now in communal kitchens, brochures and journals, and protest initiatives” (900, 911). This transformative capacity is not incidental to the projects pursued by the participants in H4C and OBZ, as Demetriou and Erdal Ilican show; rather, it is a constituent feature of reconstruction. The participants encountered the material ruins and debris of war and, through a process of “memorialisation,” they “render[ed] it heritage” (908). I cannot think of a better description of the recursivity inherent in emergence, though I adduce other illustrations of the point in the pages that follow.

## Comparison and Context

This book grew out of my previous project on psychiatric reform and community-based care in Thrace, a culturally heterogeneous and politically contested region between the Turkish and Bulgarian borders of north-eastern Greece. In my first book, *Bad Souls: Madness and Responsibility in Modern Greece* (Davis 2012), I examined the multifaceted contention over responsibility among patients and therapists in this borderland, focusing on embodied histories of conflict and psychosocial dimensions of governance by way of the power dynamics between Greek therapists and Turkish-speaking Muslim patients from local Turkish, Pomak, and “Gypsy” com-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

munities. My research in Thrace thus introduced me to the problematic of minority governance in Europe and its borderlands, including “survivals” of Ottoman imperial rule. Along the way, I developed a vague and tentative comparative perspective on Thrace and Cyprus, with an appreciation for the complex histories they shared of pluralism, hybridity, communalism, and war. From the Ottoman period onward, Cyprus and Thrace appeared to me to be intimately connected, such that conflicts at one border were reflected in increased tension and even militarization at the other. Moreover, they seemed to me to bear important similarities as regions of historically Greek predominance where large Muslim-minority communities maintained ties to Turkey, and where long histories of conflict were expressed through embodied and discursive forms of suspicion.

When I initiated my research project in Cyprus, I was often asked how I had ended up in Cyprus after spending so much time in Greece. I would usually respond with some very provisional articulation of their comparability. I got many blank looks and a few blunt objections. A Cypriot historian tactfully told me once, *I think it would be difficult to draw a comparison like that. Our situation here is very different.* When Anna Fragoudaki and Thalia Dragona, education scholars in Greece, came to Nicosia in March 2012 to speak about their decades-long project to develop bilingual (Greek/Turkish) schools and curricula in the northeastern Greek city of Komotini, they prefaced their presentation with a series of elaborate caveats, distinguishing the majority/minority dynamics of the Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking populations of Greece from the two-state situation in Cyprus, and distinguishing the history of war between Greece and Turkey from the ongoing division in Cyprus. Similar parameters circumscribed the discussion of *Twice a Stranger*, a documentary film screened at the H4C in 2012, which addressed the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in the wake of World War I. The ethnonational coordinates of history and identity in Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus constituted implicit grounds of comparison with which many Cypriots seemed profoundly uneasy. Respecting this unease as I came to understand it better, I developed a wariness about comparison on the grounds of ethnonational identity that I have maintained in this book.

Even so, as I write about the particular experiences Cypriots have had in reckoning with their history, I show that these experiences are not isolated from other histories or other processes of reckoning. In their inaugural statement, reprinted above, OBZ articulated a compelling vision of Cyprus’s embeddedness in a larger world: “The Cyprus Problem is but one of the many symptoms of an unhealthy system.” The Cyprus Problem is com-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

posed of many parts from elsewhere—parts as abstract as theories and vocabularies, and as material as personnel, equipment, and body parts. I pay close attention, therefore, to the transnational dimensions of the diplomatic, peacekeeping, and transitional-justice apparatuses in Cyprus, including forensic investigations; and those of public culture, especially films and texts, whose production and circulation transpire outside as well as inside the borders of Cyprus. Parts of the Cyprus conflict likewise exist in many other places: in Greece and Turkey, where the enduring division remains a social trauma and a political bargaining chip; in the UK, where the Cypriot diaspora, a crucial political constituency in Cyprus, is approaching the size of Cyprus's own population; and even in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Cypriot DNA databank is housed and the DNA of Cypriot missing persons is tested.

Along these lines, I raise the issue of place: that is, what kind of place Cyprus is, and whether it is the place about which I have written this ethnography. The continuities and connections between Cyprus and other locales that I have been describing are more than explanatory; they are constitutive of the Cypriot context, as much as the more familiar features that so often distinguish it, at least in the imagination of foreigners: its smallness and literal insularity, the grayness of its sovereignty and economy, its fusion of western/European and eastern/Levantine cultures, and, of course, its enduring conflict. I do not deny that those features belong to Cyprus, but I want to emphasize that they also belong elsewhere, and tie Cyprus to elsewhere, and are therefore better understood as connections to other locales than as distinguishing features of this one.

It is for this reason that I decided ultimately to take “Cyprus” out of the title of this book, where it had stayed for years as I worked on the research and the text. The decision was in a sense made for me by my friend Nicos Philippou, who subtly suggested not too long ago that I did not need “Cyprus” in the title and that keeping it there might inadvertently limit the book's readership to a specialist audience—that is, those who already care about Cyprus. The suggestion was so subtle, in fact, that I almost thought it was my idea to let “place” operate more ambiguously in this ethnography. But this is an idea that Philippou has been working at for a very long time, both in his writing (Eftychiou and Philippou 2010; Loizos, Philippou, and Stylianou-Lambert 2010; Philippou 2014; Philippou, Stylianou-Lambert, and Wells 2014; Stylianou-Lambert and Philippou 2014) and in his photography (Philippou 2005, 2007, 2016; Philippou and Zackheos, n.d.), which explore Cyprus's colonial history and postcolonial experience. In these works,

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

he shows, place is something whose defining characteristics we are trained to perceive and desire through visual media; in Cyprus, those media have largely been touristic and folkloristic in style, characterized by romantic landscape photography and village pastorals that satisfied British colonial appetites.

To see place differently, one can take familiar tropes in the visual representation of a place and subversively recontextualize them in order to highlight and criticize their conventional reference—a strategy Philippou pursued in *Coffee House Embellishments* (Philippou 2007), taking up the trope of the coffeehouse as a public space of male sociality and agonism in the Mediterranean (and especially the Greek) world.<sup>23</sup> Another kind of intervention is to look at different things altogether, and deploy those things visually in order to redefine the place or broach the problem of defining it—Philippou’s approach, I would argue, in his most recent photography book, *Sharqi* (Philippou 2016), from which several images in this book are drawn. Thus, the Cypriot art theorist Elena Stylianou writes, in *Sharqi*, Philippou “revisit[s] existing key symbols of significance for Cyprus” and reenvisions them or altogether displaces them. One such symbol is the olive tree, which Stylianou notes has “ties to herbal remedies and Greek mythology” and, I would add, has long functioned as a key symbol of Greece—the homeland claimed by Greek-Cypriot ethnonationalists and clearly rejected as such by Philippou. “Here,” Stylianou observes about *Sharqi*, “the olive tree gives way to the less obvious palm tree,” which can be “cultivated almost anywhere in the world. . . . In many ways, it seems like a more appropriate symbol for Cyprus, as the island’s identity cannot be traced back to a single historical trajectory” (Stylianou and Philippou 2018, 106, 108). His Polaroids of palm trees, which we might find in Florida or Tasmania or Thailand, were indeed taken in Cyprus and in that sense do iconically represent Cyprus, but they do not particularize it in order to distinguish it from those other places. What these images do is connect Cyprus to those other places and, in doing so, suggest new comparisons that might distinguish Cyprus from those other places differently. In an essay on *Sharqi*, the Cypriot literature scholar Stavros Karayanni describes this comparative perspective offered by the images as “contrapuntal”—Edward Said’s term, “whose usefulness,” Karayanni explains, “is that it offers a comparative reading of contrasting narratives” (2019, 270).<sup>24</sup> That is the kind of comparative perspective I aim to develop in this book, too, decentering Cyprus as the place of this ethnography, and toggling between its various insides and outsides as I have come to recognize them.

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

## Time, Secrecy, Artfactuality

33

When it comes to the definition of place by visual representation, there is no aesthetic that more relentlessly defines Cyprus today than that of post-conflict ruin.<sup>25</sup> Deserted villages falling to rot; homes and shops in the dead zone of old Nicosia, the walled city, suddenly abandoned during riots and bombings and left ever after in suspended animation; airplanes grounded and rusting on the tarmac of the old airport of Nicosia, secreted within the UN-controlled buffer zone—such images of environments untouched since 1974, laden with the artifacts of conflict, might be taken to suggest something about the affective life of Cypriots, too: people frozen or stranded in time, almost fifty years after the war and counting, fixed in chronic impasse, trapped in traumatic memory, tired and cynical, waiting, still but tensed, anticipating further harm. Indeed, as I show in part two, such representations are commonplace in recent documentary films about the Cyprus conflict and the ongoing division. If there is motion in these representations, it is in the form of repetition: of reliving violence and dislocation; of rehearsing intricate, sclerotic arguments over property, security, and justice; of going through the familiar motions of settlement negotiations as if hoping for a new development, without any corresponding feeling of hope.

These aesthetics of ruin in Cyprus might be enchanting for many (like me) who see a story of power both in the events of destruction they materialize and in the chronicity of their decay—an “enchantment” that Shannon Dawdy (2010, 761) connects with the by turns romantic and dystopian “fascination” with ruins in the “archaeological turn” taken by anthropological approaches to time and materiality.<sup>26</sup> But, as Dawdy points out, one does not have to adopt a romantic or dystopian perspective on the ruins of modernity to register and appreciate the heterogeneous, nonprogressive, even paradoxical temporalities that their contemplation opens up. Indeed, the “recent ruins” of Cyprus suggest to me an alternative orientation to time—what I discuss, below, as an artifactual mode of historicity—that counters the frozen temporality of postconflict impasse that I advisedly refer to as “paranoid.”<sup>27</sup> In the context of the knowledge projects I examine in this book, I understand paranoia not as a clinical pathology (or any kind of pathology) but rather as an epistemology entailing a particular orientation to time: a knowledge practice of rehearsal and repetition, of learning again what one already knows, of anticipating that what has come before will come again or, more precisely, that it is always still happening.

This description of paranoia was of course popularized by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in her now-classic essay, “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Read-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL





DUKE  
no.  
I.6

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ing,” where she examines dominant practices of reading, interpretation, and critique attached to the overdetermination and inevitability of “systemic oppressions” (2003, 124)—and thus, she argues, to an essentially closed temporality. Working from Ricoeur’s taxonomy of interpretive styles in which Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud appear as progenitors of the “hermeneutics of suspicion,” Sedgwick catalogues the “suspicious” techniques of demystification, revelation, exposure, and decipherment of hidden violence and false consciousness through which paranoid critical theorists acquire a sense of self-protective distance from power and the satisfaction of “smart” analysis with sharp political teeth. In the contagious quality of paranoia—its capacity to generalize and reproduce itself, overtaking other modes of knowing—Sedgwick discerns its distinctive orientation to time: “a rigid relation to temporality, at once anticipatory and retroactive, averse above all to surprise” (146), in which knowing what one already knows generates a sense of proximity to truth: “The unidirectionally future-oriented vigilance of paranoia generates, paradoxically, a complex relation to temporality that burrows both backward and forward: because there must be no bad surprises, and because learning of the possibility of a bad surprise would itself constitute a bad surprise, paranoia requires that bad news be always already known. . . . No time could be too early for one’s having already-known, for its already having-been-inevitable, that something bad would happen. And no loss could be too far in the future to need to be preemptively discounted” (130–31).

Sedgwick’s interest in this essay lies not so much in assessing the value of paranoid knowing as an approach to truth as it does in questioning paranoia’s affective entailments and political commitments: “What does knowledge *do*—the pursuit of it, the having and exposing of it, the receiving again of knowledge of what one already knows?” (2003, 124). She seeks affective and political possibility beyond paranoia in “reparative knowing” (146), characterized by openness to surprises (even bad ones) and in attunement to contingency in the past as well as the future: a sense that things could have been otherwise yielding the hope that things could yet be otherwise. She poses the question of knowledge, here, as one not of access to truth but rather of the efficacy of affect, where affect is intricately bound up in an orientation to time.

Given the intense focus on the history of division and the chronicity of impasse in Cyprus, it is not surprising that time is a central theme in much recent work in Cypriot anthropology. Yiannis Papadakis, for one, has written extensively on the temporal dynamics of division, working through contradictory memories and differential forgetting of the time before war, and an-

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

alyzing the mythical and historical temporalities structuring Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot nationalisms, in cultural productions such as films as well as the material environments of symbolic spaces—neighborhoods in the old walled city of divided Nicosia, and the mixed “UN village” of Pyla, among others (Papadakis 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2005). Yael Navaro (2012, 7) explores the mutual constitution of space and time in the north after the division but before the opening of checkpoints, showing how the “stunted temporality” of this period materialized in Turkish Cypriots’ experience of confinement in a “make-believe” state. She finds essential to this experience the phantomic presence of former Greek-Cypriot residents, exerted through “melancholic objects” such as ruins, piles of rubbish, and looted household objects, temporally keyed to the moment of division and unassimilated through mourning.<sup>28</sup> Rebecca Bryant (2010, 150; 2014, 681) takes a different approach to the materiality of postdivision life in the north, considering history as an expressive register of belonging in the experience of Turkish Cypriots forcibly displaced from their homes in the 1960s–1970s, who both yearn and fail to forget or “pu[t] the past behind” them. She examines their appropriation of different kinds of objects left behind by Greek Cypriot refugees: “remainders,” “reminders,” and “remains” of an “unfinished history” such as houses, household items, photographs, and other personal effects (Bryant 2010, 149; 2014, 682, 691, 695). It is the “temporal dynamism” of these objects, she argues, that renders them “available for historical work,” even in their alterity to the temporality of history in which Turkish Cypriots reckon their belonging to place in the face of a radically uncertain future (Bryant 2014, 683, 684). And Olga Demetriou (2007) examines the formation of political subjectivity in Cyprus in relation to an “event temporality” that has characterized postwar life. Taking the opening of the checkpoints in 2003 as a point of departure, she argues for an understanding of such momentous events (including the division itself) as “supplements” to the truth-making processes whereby people understand the situation they are in, and thus as “mediations” of past and present that open the possibility for novelty and difference to emerge from history—if only temporarily. In Cypriots’ reactions to such events, she finds indications of the limits of their subjection to state power in the liminal phase immediately following a “surprise” event, and their formation as subjects of the state in the aftermath, as they consciously make decisions about how to act in relation to change and thus come to understand themselves as already governed in particular ways (Demetriou 2007, 990, 1002).

The event temporality theorized by Demetriou as central to political subjectivity in Cyprus—establishing the division as the foundational event in

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

recent Cypriot history—has, perhaps, overdetermined the pervasive representation of Cyprus as frozen or stranded in time and stuck in the past. But if we look closer, we can see that those ubiquitous images of postwar ruin in Cyprus are not at all what they seem. We do not see images of life in suspended animation; we see the material buildup of time, the process of decay, the pathways of life after the event: war, displacement, opening, closure. The homes and shops and transit points abandoned abruptly all those years ago do not look now as they did then. Dust and debris have accumulated on the surfaces of things; infrastructure has broken down into rotten wood, broken glass, and crumbling stone; plants and flowers are growing through the cracks in floors and windowsills; anthills and spider webs are built and rebuilt. These sites are not frozen in time; on the contrary, the work of time is visible everywhere we look. The aesthetic of postwar ruin in Cyprus thus could not be further from retro aesthetic trends in fashion, music, architecture, and design; this past is not a foreign country we can visit, reenact, and repackage.<sup>29</sup> It is present, unassimilated, and changing. Time passes; life goes on. The effect of the event of war—division—has become a cause of other things. The event itself is radically unstable on a historicist reckoning of linear time.

This situation describes a special mode of historicity: an experience of being in time whose interpretation defines the place and the relative significance Cypriots assign to past, present, and future. In their introduction to a collection of ethnographies of historicity, Eric Hirsch and Charles Stewart describe historicity as a “complex temporal nexus of past-present-future,” a “dynamic social situation” that entails “a complex social and performative condition, rather than an objectively determinable aspect of historical descriptions” (2005, 262). In this light, the historicity I associate with the Cypriot situation of enduring division and impasse is artifactual: it describes a temporal experience, and an interpretation of that experience, anchored by objects that survived the war and remain available for study, reuse, and recontextualization. It is not the pastness of these objects (their “historicality,” in Hirsch and Stewart’s term, 262) that interests me here, but rather the way their presence—their being present—materializes the past and, in doing so, summons a future. This is why, earlier, I characterized the knowledge projects pursued by forensic scientists and documentary filmmakers as, themselves, artifactual in nature: as dealing in facts made artfully that matter insofar as they link up with narratives about the past that figure expectations (especially hopes and fears) of what is to come.

Exploring this artifactual mode of historicity thus requires my ethnographic focus on Cypriots’ work with the artifacts of conflict: the bones

D

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL



DUKE  
no.  
I.7

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



and belongings of the missing, exhumed from fields, wells, backyards, groves, forests, and mountainsides; and photographs and films from the 1960s–1970s, recovered from ghostly public archives and scattered personal collections where they had been stored to wait out the passage of time. These artifacts manifest and materialize what Ewa Domanska conceptualizes as the “non-absent past”: an “ambivalent and liminal space . . . occupied by ‘ghostly artifacts’ or places that undermine our sense of the familiar and threaten our sense of safety” (2006, 346). While Domanska locates the missing bodies of the disappeared (in Argentina, in her case) in this “conceptual space,” my interlocutors dealt with the recovered bodies of the disappeared, or photographs and films of the dead or the past, and processed them as remains—thus introducing a material dimension to the enigma of non-absence. Bones and images have entered different regimes of knowledge making from different storage spaces and hiding places in Cyprus, and they have different material properties, sensory affordances, and onto-epistemological implications; but in their unsettling of “the familiar,” as Domanska puts it, including historical narratives of conflict and reconciliation, they have all become dynamic temporal operators in a situation of chronic impasse.

In their operation, these artifacts seemed to me, on occasion, to generate what political philosopher William Connolly, riffing on the final scene of the Coen brothers’ 1991 film *Barton Fink*, describes as “moment[s] of time without movement, engaging different zones of temporality”—moments that “arrest multiple sites and speeds of mobility that impinge on one another when in motion” (2011, 2). As I understand Connolly, it is the interference among these sites and speeds (“force-fields”) that actuates the experience of stopping (“time without movement”), but a focus is required—an image, an object, a “multisensory memory”—around which the past and present may coalesce in that moment (5, 2, 4). In the scene from the film that inspires these reflections, Barton Fink encounters a woman on a beach who sits and looks to the sea, adopting a distinctive posture; the “scene freezes,” Connolly tells us, and, in freezing, “recalls” a painting, unremarkable at the time, of that woman in that posture on that beach that had featured in numerous earlier scenes as a fixture on the wall of Fink’s rented room (1). For Connolly, it is this “figure of arrested movement”—or rather, this image of this figure—that forms a focus for our momentary experience of “time without movement” at the end of the film (1, 2). It is not time that moves then, nor the woman frozen in her pose, but rather we, the viewers, who “move back and forth between the picture and the closing scene” (2), perhaps (Connolly does not say so) exploring the temporal paradox presented by that scene: the

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL



painting, when we recall having seen it earlier, seems to be a representation of the final scene that has not happened yet in the chronological narrative of the film. *What time are we in? When do we belong? Is our world actually less finite than we take it to be?*

The impossibility of the painting, or of the final scene transpiring when it does, is a beautiful illustration of what Connolly discusses later (not with this example) as the powers of the false in Gilles Deleuze's theorization of the time-image in film. In *Cinema 2*, Deleuze broadly historicizes these powers and reads them symptomatically, associating their pervasion of post–World War II cinema with a loss of belief in the world: “The modern fact,” he declares, “is that we no longer believe in this world. We do not even believe in the events which happen to us, love, death, as if they only half concerned us. It is not we who make cinema; it is the world which looks to us like a bad film” (1989, 171).<sup>30</sup>

Among the filmic techniques and traits that Deleuze identifies with the powers of the false are “anomalies of movement” and “false continuity shots” (Deleuze 1989, 128); the “indiscernibility of the real and the imaginary” (131); the “simultaneity of impossible presents, or the coexistence of not-necessarily true pasts” (131); the use of mirrors, forgers, and other trickster characters; and, most generally, “falsifying narration” (133)—all having to do with the decomposition of Euclidean space (and movement within it) as a temporal framework.<sup>31</sup> Deleuze does not take the powers of the false to be destructive, immoral, repellent, or regrettable, even as symptoms; rather, like Nietzsche's conceptualization of the will to power, he sees them as a source of creativity, change—becoming—in ways that are unpredictable, beyond morality and, in some sense, beyond human agency and reckoning.<sup>32</sup> Thus, Deleuze says, “becoming is always innocent” (142); it does not entail or imply moral or political decline or progress; it is neither liberal nor cynical in tenor, but is rather “oppose[d]” to “history” (142).<sup>33</sup>

For his part, Connolly, as I read him, is less interested in demonstrating Deleuze's theorization of time-images in cinema than he is in exploring the ethical and political implications of the experience such images may inspire in viewers. His “experimental intervention,” as he frames it, is to try to “amplify the experience of becoming” by harnessing such “protean moments” when they happen—dilated beyond the “punctual time” of decision and action—to new reflections in “ethics, politics, economics, and spirituality” (Connolly 2011, 10, 5, 8). These “protean moments” are not inherent properties of the images and objects that often serve as their focus or anchor, as Connolly makes clear. They are, rather, the effects of one's choice to acknowledge and actively augment their interruptions of punctual time, and

DUKE

thus to appreciate the way these interruptions deepen and complicate our “belonging to time” (5). The dilation of temporal experience he is after may thus enhance one’s apprehension and appreciation of the uncertainty and essential openness of the world: a “world of becoming” (8, 5, 10).<sup>34</sup> This appreciation may be a spiritual or therapeutic end in itself, but Connolly also insists that it may activate and galvanize one to move in the direction of “existential attachment and political action” (10). Thus his “agenda,” as he calls it (10), being within history (and not “opposed” to it), diverges quite radically from Deleuze’s conceptualization of “innocent” becoming.

I find Connolly’s philosophy of a “world of becoming” a vitalizing complement to the paranoid epistemology in which the violent history of Cyprus might otherwise seem deeply and exclusively entrenched. What Sedgwick seeks as reparative hermeneutics can be found, I think, in Connolly’s theorization of time as becoming. Following Sedgwick’s suggestion that paranoia is a chosen disposition to knowledge rather than a privileged path to truth, and that it may thus coexist and fruitfully interact with other dispositions to knowledge, I aim in this book to develop a different understanding of the artifacts that are so often held to symbolize a Cyprus frozen in time. What I describe as an artifactual mode of historicity is, on this understanding, a materially mediated scenario of potential change, inspired by encounters with artifacts and enacted by their recursive recontextualization. My interlocutors, in undertaking artifactual knowledge projects, were seizing on this potential in their anticipation of the future—not a particular future, but what Deleuze calls “irreducible multiplicity” (1989, 145), naming a sense of radical openness, in light of which, whatever future arrives will come as a surprise.

I do not mean, however, simply to substitute “artifactuality” for “paranoia” in my conceptualization of these knowledge projects, as I do not think the matter of time in Cyprus can be understood apart from the problem of paranoid knowing—the problem of learning (again) what one already knows, driven by the suspicion that one has missed something: that something crucial has been concealed or withheld. Orientations to knowledge that I consider paranoid, in this sense—enacted in the unremitting treading over the ground of conflict by Cypriot and foreign researchers that I noted above—were conditioned by public secrecy to a high degree. Cypriots critical of the politics of division have often accused the state (meaning different things: the Republic of Cyprus, the TRNC, the “parent” states of Greece and Turkey) and state-like entities (a range of paramilitary and “deep state” organizations operating in Cyprus, including proxy agencies of Greece, Turkey, the United States, and the United Kingdom) of sponsoring and concealing

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

violence against civilians, surveilling and suppressing journalists and activists, censoring school curricula and artistic productions, and, in these and other ways, “brainwashing” postwar generations of Cypriots. Working actively against these practices of secrecy and their material sedimentations in social and political life, my interlocutors encountered many kinds of opacity in their work: privacy, confidentiality, classified status, censorship, silence, ambiguity, ghostliness, forgetting, confusion. Secrecy shape-shifted and densified and fractured and reassembled itself as both an object and a filter of their research, rendering some knowledge visible while other knowledge was left or kept unseen and, in some cases, encouraging the production of nonknowledge as a phatic activity.

42

But if secrecy thus expressed power, I am interested, too, in how secrecy denuded and eroded it—for example, by undermining the credibility of state actors and inspiring counternarratives to official discourses. In this book, then, I do not undertake a simple celebration of openness; to say the least, the chronic impasse in Cyprus, continuing at the time of this writing, does not warrant such a celebration. But I do pay attention to moments of openness that I observed in my interlocutors’ approach to their knowledge projects about the Cyprus conflict—including their propensity to keep at it, to come back again and again to unanswered questions, to develop new spaces and new languages for communication—which were tempered but not obliterated by their cynicism and despair at other moments.

In this context of knowledge making, fraught and delimited in all these ways, the projects pursued by my interlocutors in Cyprus had ethical and political stakes that were temporal in form, connecting knowledge about the past to prospects of justice, healing, and peace in the future. This book is about how and why they came to address themselves to those stakes. They looked for the remains of long-missing persons and tried to integrate the dead they found into their communities of the living. They sought in archives of all description the traces of hidden violence, secret plans, and untold stories. They became audiences for the memories of “the last generation who knows,” as Salih Niyazi described himself and his friends in *Birds of a Feather*: the last generation of witnesses to the violence of division and, for some, participants in it. In this book, I explore what it meant for these Cypriots—forensic investigators, archival researchers, and filmmakers, among others—to wrestle with the ambiguity and the danger of such knowledge. In their wrestling, they sought to “expand the domain of the empirical,” as Avery Gordon (1997, 21) describes one way to make room for ghosts in our analysis of social life; and, as part of that process, to try to put a whole society together with pieces of empirical evidence.

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY  
INTRODUCTION  
PRESS

At the risk of harping on this point, I want to emphasize here the rarefied nature of the communities and knowledge projects I document in this book. From the beginning, I conceived my own project as working against the hegemonic conditions of discourse on the division of Cyprus; that meant, to me, not giving mainstream ethnonationalist discourses any more attention than they had already received from journalists, activists, and scholars of all sorts. Readers outside Cyprus may have little sense of just how difficult it has been for progressive Cypriots to create and nourish the fragile space of indeterminacy and deferral in which my interlocutors have been trying to work; such a space might seem inevitable and common sense, especially to anthropologists and activists who have long ago passed to the other side of multiculturalism to become trenchant critics of it, and the rigid notions of identity and heritage promoted in its name in so many plural societies. Readers in Cyprus, though, know the difficulty better than I, and may therefore object to how poorly this book represents the actual conditions of political life and knowledge making in Cyprus. I agree, and I can only say in my defense that my goal has never been to write a representative account. My goal is rather to offer a glimpse of an emergent phenomenon from a rare and unstable vantage—to see if that vantage can be substantiated and sustained without dissolving into the double binds that relentlessly push Cypriots to take sides. I do not know if it is possible to distinguish and hold apart the indeterminate and malleable aspects of postwar life in Cyprus from those that are determined and intractable. But, to borrow Sedgwick's framing, I would like to find ways to let paranoid hermeneutics interact with reparative ones in an "ecology of knowing" (Sedgwick 2003, 145)—to document that complex ecology in Cyprus, and perhaps to contribute to it with this book.

DUKE

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

ARTIFACTUAL

## Notes

### PROLOGUE

- 1 — I quote here from the English subtitles of the film. My paraphrases of monologues and dialogues in Greek derive from my own translation.
- 2 — The PRIO Cyprus Centre is a branch of the Peace Research Institute Oslo, an independent Norwegian organization that funds peace-related research in dozens of countries worldwide.
- 3 — I reproduce here, with a few minor adjustments, the English translation of Yaşin's poem that appears in the film's subtitles.
- 4 — My translation of the Greek here differs slightly from the English subtitles in the film.
- 5 — See Christopher Hitchens, *Cyprus, Stranded in Time*, 1989, posted on YouTube by GeezerFellas, August 17, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwWozRqekUg>.

### INTRODUCTION

- 1 — These official numbers, which reflect a consensus currently supported by the two regimes and taken as a guideline by the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, have been revised multiple times since the division in 1974. See Nelson (2015) on the manifold complexity of counting the dead.
- 2 — In 1963–64, some 25,000 Turkish Cypriots seeking safety moved to villages or city neighborhoods that were exclusively Turkish-Cypriot; another 100,000 moved into enclaves. In 1974, approximately 45,000 Turkish Cypriots moved from the south to the north, while about 160,000 Greek Cypriots moved from the north

D

UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

to the south that year. See Bryant and Hatay (2020) and Demetriou and Gürel (2008), who note that some of these figures are contested. Estimates provided by Trimikliniotis and Bozkurt (2012, 3) indicate that the population of Cyprus a decade before the publication of this book was close to 1.1 million: almost 840,000 people lived in the Republic, about 200,000 of whom were non-Cypriot nationals, including undocumented migrants; and somewhere between 300,000 and 500,000 people lived in the TRNC, including 120,000 to 230,000 migrants and settlers. The authors note that these numbers are approximate and contested. See also International Crisis Group 2010.

3 — As in my other writings (see esp. Davis 2012), in this book I use italics to represent the speech of my interlocutors as reconstructed from my field notes; direct quotations indicate my verbatim representation of their speech.

4 — See Demetriou (2006a) on the focus on conflict in social science research about Cyprus.

5 — See Bryant 2007, 2010; Trimikliniotis and Bozkurt 2012. See also Demetriou (2008) on how the process of EU accession formed a space for opponents of reconciliation in the south to consolidate political and social support.

6 — In this book, I use the term “ethnonational” to describe identity formations that take ethnic nationality as their foundation, usually in cases where nationality does not accommodate ethnic distinctions by which a population is meaningfully stratified: for example, “Greek Cypriot” and “Turkish Cypriot” are ethnonational identity formations, while “Cypriot” is not (and “American” is not, as it describes a nationality but not an ethnicity, despite the best efforts of American white supremacists to make it appear so). “Ethnonationalist,” on the other hand, describes a political orientation grounded in an identification with one’s ethnonationality, explicitly as against other ethnonational identities. Thus, for example, I consider ΕΟΚΑ-Β, a paramilitary terrorist group organized around Greek-Cypriot identification with Greek nationality and antipathy toward Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot identity, to be ethnonationalist in its political orientation.

7 — See Bryant (2014), who distinguishes “remains”—personal items left behind by Cypriots who fled their homes, such as photographs and documents, which she sees as “inextricably braided with our stories of the Other”—from “remainders,” such as pieces of household furniture, which were also left behind but have a more “ambiguous nature” and lead a “mute existence,” even if they may also “come to bear an uncanny quality” (692, 693). My definition of “artifact” straddles this distinction. See part two for a fuller discussion of these objects.

8 — Foucault (1980, 142) reads Nietzsche’s genealogical work (especially in the *Genealogy of Morals* and *Human, All Too Human*) as a “challenge [to] the pursuit of the origin,” a pursuit that requires faith in the “exact essence of things” and their “inviolable identity” at their beginning, as opposed to the perennial “disparity” and

D

U



“piecemeal” fabrication that characterize their discursive reality—including the fabrication of truth itself. Thus, Foucault concludes, “the origin lies at a place of inevitable loss,” a place that never existed and cannot be recaptured, “where the truth of things corresponded to a truthful discourse” (1980, 143).

9 — On Latour’s telling, the status of “actants” and “propositions” challenges the very “demarcation between epistemological and ontological questions” that we are accustomed to establishing for “analytical clarity” (1999, 141).

10 — See my discussion of Foucault and the concept of truth games in the context of clinical psychiatry (Davis 2012, 54–55). In a short thought piece, “The Political Function of the Intellectual,” published in *Radical Philosophy* in 1977, Foucault described regimes of truth in broader terms than those in which he had introduced the concept, as a nexus of power and expert knowledge, in *Discipline and Punish* (1977a): “Truth is of the world: it is produced by virtue of multiple constraints. And it induces the regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is, the types of discourse it harbours and causes to function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorised for obtaining truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true” (1977b, 13).

11 — The *Glossary* was authored by Cypriot journalists Bekir Azgin, Christos Christofides, Esra Aygin, and Maria Siakalli, supported by the Cyprus Dialogue project of the Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s Representative on Freedom of the Media, along with colleagues in the Union of Cyprus Journalists, the Association of the Turkish Cypriot Journalists, and the Ethical Journalism Network.

12 — As superb exceptions, I note Demetriou (2018) and Bryant and Hatay (2020), who develop ethnographically grounded, theoretically powerful comparative theories on refugeehood and de facto statehood, respectively.

13 — See my discussion in part one (in “The Only Terrorist Is the State”) on the role of media publicity and especially investigative journalism in the development of the CMP’s mission. See Sant Cassia (2005) on the long history of these political strategies before the period of forensic investigations began in 2004. The deception of relatives about the fate of Greek-Cypriot missing persons already known to be dead by authorities in the Republic of Cyprus has, by the time of this writing, been well established. The early investigative work of Cypriot journalists Andreas Paraschos and Makarios Drousiotis, documenting the state’s cover-up, was published principally in the *Politis* and *Kathimerini* newspapers in the 1990s and early 2000s, as well as in Drousiotis’s book (see Drousiotis 2000). Drousiotis also gave testimony in one of the court cases brought by a Greek-Cypriot “Mother” against the Republic on the basis of her human right to know the fate of her missing husband.

On September 15, 2021, Kyriakos Antoniadis spoke to journalists about the deception on the *Politis* radio station: “We had testimony from witnesses. But the [Missing Persons] Service did not give this evidence to the relatives because they wanted the Mothers [of the Missing] to go to the roadblocks [i.e., the checkpoints between north and south that people could not cross until 2003] with their photographs and cry, so that some people could do their jobs at the expense of the missing. May God never show anyone what I went through during my tenure at the Missing Persons Service.”

According to *Politis* reporter Panagiotis Chatziapostolou (2021), Antoniadis had been a police officer from 1979 to 1983, and in that capacity investigated the missing after the war, collecting witness information and preparing files on each known missing person. His brother, Savvas Antoniadis, was also on the official list of the Greek-Cypriot missing. (Note that the Missing Persons Service, an agency created within the administration of the Republic after the war in 1974, is not the same as the CMP, the bicomunal agency operating under UN auspices in Cyprus, which was established in 1981 but did not begin investigations until 2004.) See Constantinou 2021 for a fuller contextualization of Antoniadis’s comments. For my analysis of “conspiracy theories” about the missing in the context of broader Cypriot discourse on “conspiracy theory,” see Davis, n.d.

14 — See the CMP’s Terms of Reference and Mandate, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.cmp-cyprus.org/terms-of-reference-and-mandate>.

15 — Cf. Nelson (2015), who meticulously documents and creatively thinks with the different practices and domains of counting (the number of the dead, the value of life, magic money) at the heart of public accounting for the genocide in Guatemala.

16 — See the web adaptation of Neni Panourgíá, *Dangerous Citizens: The Greek Left and the Terror of the State*, 2013, <https://dangerouscitizens.columbia.edu/>.

17 — See also Fischer (1993), who, in writing on post-Soviet Polish nationalism and postmodern anthropology (among other things), develops several textual forms to accommodate his wide-ranging, multidimensional dialogue with the Polish philosopher Leszek Koczanowicz that took place over several days. In one form, their dialogue is arranged as if the script for a play, organized in subsections by topic; but that form is soon complicated by interruptions, as bits of their dialogue taken out of the ongoing sequence are set into and alongside it. Another form incorporates excerpts from poems that Fischer and Koczanowicz discussed; the excerpts thus become part of their dialogue but also refer to integral texts outside it. In the last few parts of the piece, Fischer stages dialogues on the page that did not take place, between Koczanowicz and authors of variously, intriguingly relevant works who thus appear to be speaking directly to his concerns or responding to his comments. Fischer’s experiments here are more obviously and consistently dialogic than that

D

U

K

E

which I am attempting with the visual archive in my text, but the proliferation and scaling of setting and reference that Fischer accomplishes here are instructive.

18 — As Stavros Karayanni notes in his introduction, Stephanides's "vexed relationship" with English—in which "he found an uneasy home" although it was not the language of his birth or childhood—"yielded an impulse for creative refuge in a multiplicity of languages and cultures," in a distinctively postcolonial mode (Karayanni 2018, 14). This refuge is evinced in the text by fragments of the "Greek Cypriot vernacular," as his translator, Despina Pirketti notes, as well as words and phrases in "ancient Greek, Turkish, Latin, Portuguese, Sanskrit, and other languages," including Spanish and modern mainland Greek (Stephanides 2018, 12, 10).

19 — In *Emergent Forms of Life*, Michael Fischer (2003, 256) thematizes this indeterminacy in the reference of war photography, and the archival desires animating the search for "particular images" of singular events, in his discussion of Polish filmmaker Maria Zmarz Koczanowicz's 1994 work *Traces*, and in Milcho Manchevski's film *Before the Rain*, also from 1994. The setting of the latter is the then-ongoing Yugoslav wars; a character working in a far-off photo archive cannot distinguish "images of World War II concentration camps" from "photos of the former Yugoslavia" (255). Fischer frames this kind of referential indeterminacy in relation to the generic indeterminacy of Koczanowicz's films, and especially *Traces*, which deploys documentary tropes—clips of news broadcasts, archival images of different forms of violence in many different locales—in a fragmented pastiche. "Ethical responses require acknowledging that we have seen this all before," Fischer writes, "and that other worlds . . . continue in parallel time, and that images themselves can be ambiguous as entertainment or tragedy. . . . The immediacy of what is seen or heard is not the whole story, and montage does not itself provide meaning. We need to know what is beyond the frame, how the pictures of the world are constructed, the nature of the archives, the substitutions and variations that make up the grammar (and grammatology) that structures our subjectivities, epistemologies, and apperceptions of what is really going on" (256–57). In drawing parallels between Koczanowicz's film work and the work of contemporary anthropology, Fischer insists on the ethical and epistemological necessity of our engaging with the "increasingly mediated world" in which such images anchor and enliven our sense of reality (257). I take this up at greater length in my discussion of documentary and fiction film genres and tropes in part two.

20 — Arsenejević (2011a, 2011b) pursues this argument; see part one.

21 — See Loizos (2007) on the ambiguities, subtleties, and limits of anthropological, psychological, and historical conceptualizations of "generation" and their relevance to longitudinal ethnographic studies of refugee populations, such as his own multigenerational research with Greek-Cypriot refugees from the village of Argaki (Loizos 2008). Hirsch's (2012) generational distinction between "memory"

and “postmemory” in her examination of cultural transmission and memorialization after the Holocaust is also relevant here.

22 — See the original posting on the Internet Archive Wayback Machine: <https://web.archive.org/web/20130724030705/http://occupythebufferzone.wordpress.com/about/obz/>. Occupy the Buffer Zone still maintains an active Facebook page, including videos from protests at Ledra Street/Lokmacı over the closure of checkpoints at the beginning of the COVID pandemic in March 2020: <https://www.facebook.com/OccupyBufferZone/>.

23 — See Stavros Karayanni's (2014) discussion of *Coffee House Embellishments*.

24 — In his 2014 article on *Sharqi*, Karayanni finds and traces the “queer imaginings” of the Cypriot landscape that *Sharqi* engages (273)—which produce a “jar-ring” “incongruity” and paradoxical plays with hyper/reality through the “medium” and the “tool” of the Polaroid (271), and thereby, he says, “new associations and interconnections between psyche and place, imaginary *topos* and homeland” (269). In these imaginings, Karayanni alights momentarily on the rich and peculiar “encounter” between the landscape depicted in *Sharqi* and that of the dead zone (275): a “strip of land,” as he puts it, that “accesses its meanings through bare landscapes and apparent desolation,” and that, in hegemonic Greek-Cypriot narratives of victimization by the “perpetrator” on the other side (274), is rife with “signs of conflict” and “lingering evidence of abuse and violation” (274). The landscape of *Sharqi*, on the other hand, while sharing many of the dead zone’s ideologically overly symbolized topological and sensorial features, especially its “silence and decay” (275), as well as its alterity to picaresque and touristic dreamscapes of antiquity, villages, sea, and sun that dominate conventional (and commercial) depictions of the Cypriot landscape, nevertheless does not “display visible signs of some established national character” (274). For my purposes, what is most compelling in Karayanni’s extraordinarily rich reading of *Sharqi* in relation to the dead zone is his insistence that they both “continu[e] on a trajectory rather than standing still in time, and as a movement and motive that is recurrent, eddying” (275). Thus, he suggests, *Sharqi* engages time as well as place, memory and futurity as well as landscape and homeland—not by “simply” subverting or deconstructing essentialist representations of Cyprus, but rather, and more generatively, by “tak[ing] us across” (277, 275). I find it significant that most of the photographs in *Sharqi* were shot in the dry Mesaoria plains bordering the buffer zone on the Greek-Cypriot side, as it runs from southern Nicosia to the village of Lympia before jutting north again and then due east toward Pyla, a mixed village located in the buffer zone where it meets the shore, which is still inhabited (and still mixed). Thus the landscape captured in these images is a borderland, which Philippou has transformed into a kind of nonplace suggesting rich and numerous references to other places.

25 — See, for example, Neil Hall’s (2014) photo essay “Lost in Time: The Cyprus Buffer Zone,” and Michael Theodoulou’s (2016) article “Tour of the Buffer Zone

in Nicosia's Old Town." See also the exhibition catalogue for *UNCOVERED*, an art installation that took place in a gallery in the buffer zone but referred to the abandoned airport of Nicosia (Şenova and Paraskevaidou 2011, 9, cited in Pellapaisiotis 2014, 236).

26 — Dawdy (2010, 761) begins this essay by citing the "enchantment" of Alexis de Tocqueville, who "marveled" at the "oddness of new ruins" on the American frontier of the 1830s. I discuss Dawdy's perspective at length in the first section of part two. Cf. Ewa Domanska's discussion of the "'enchantments with things' observable in the humanities of today," which she understands in relation to the growth of "counter-disciplines" and their "'insurrectional' . . . discourses," where "things are perceived as Others who demand their place in discourse" (2006, 346).

27 — "Recent ruins" is Dawdy's (2010, 761) phrase.

28 — On "melancholic objects," see Navaro (2009, 2012, esp. chap. 7).

29 — The famous line is from L. P. Hartley's novel *The Go-Between* (1953).

30 — Cited and discussed in Connolly 2011, 62.

31 — Deleuze (1989, 130–31) is thinking with Leibniz's notion of impossibility here.

32 — Deleuze (1989, 141) explicitly equates becoming with the powers of the false.

33 — As Biehl and Locke point out in their widely read 2010 piece, "Deleuze and the Anthropology of Becoming," revised and updated for the introduction of their 2017 edited volume *Unfinished*, "With an eye to the possibilities and noninevitability of people's lives, social scientists must also recognize the thresholds where liberating flights and creative actions can become deadly rather than vital forms of experimentation, opening up not to new webs of care and empathy but to systematic disconnection. . . . Becoming is not always heroic" (2010, 336; 2017, 83).

34 — See also Biehl and Locke, who take inspiration from Deleuze's thinking of becoming—that is, "those individual and collective struggles to come to terms with events and intolerable conditions and to shake loose, to whatever degree possible, from determinants and definitions" (2010, 317). In working through their own research experiences in situations of individual and social crisis, they urge an emphasis on "desire," "openness," and "flux" in "ethnographic efforts to illuminate the dynamism of the everyday and the literality and singularity of human becomings" (318).

311

## ONE. FORENSIC

1 — See Bryant 2007, 2012; Demetriou 2007, 2018. Demetriou (2007, 987) notes that, within the first three days of the opening, approximately 45,000 Cypriots crossed from one side to the other; in the first three months after the opening,

DUKE  
UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

NOTES TO PART ONE