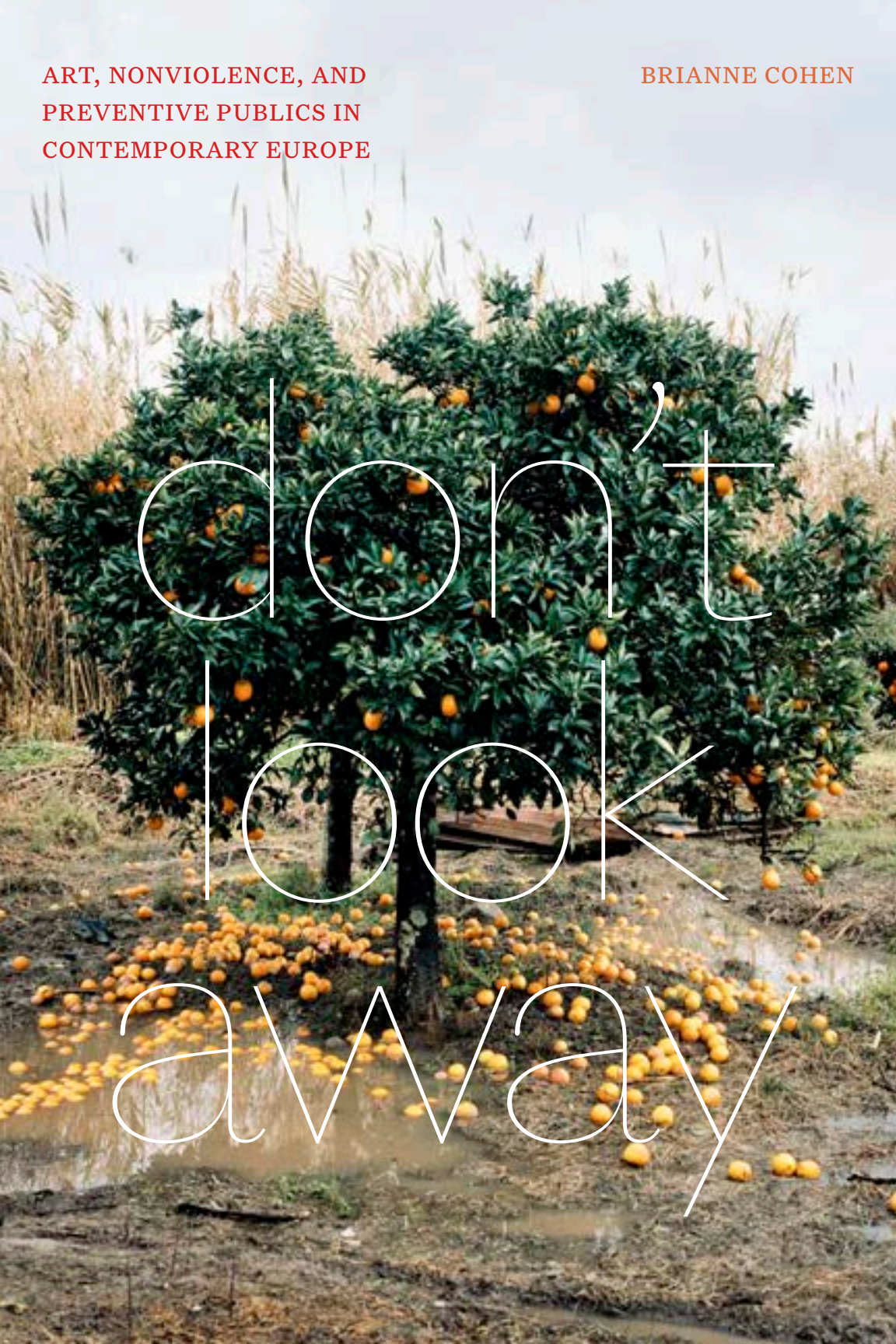
ART, NONVIOLENCE, AND PREVENTIVE PUBLICS IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

BRIANNE COHEN



don't look away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BRIANNE COHEN

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For Nels,
Shannon,
and Rory

contents

acknowledgments

This book reminds me of the Mallos de Riglos in Spain, a body of rock formations at the foothills of the Pyrenees. Like the cliffs, both strong and subtle forces have shaped and polished the conglomerate rock and sand of this book over a long period of time. Over a decade in the making, this book would not have been possible without the innumerable colleagues, friends, and inspiring authors and artists whose ideas and support have helped me smooth its rough edges, offering me through the process joy, cruxes, and balance.

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introduction

In the video *The Vanishing Vanishing-Point* (2015), an intertitle pleads with viewers, "Don't look away" (plate 1). It hails a public into being, calling for an ethical act of vision based not only on sight but also on imagination. At this point in the video, viewers witness a dead tree. It is hardly a gruesome image in a conventional sense, yet the three simple words suggest a larger force field of violence surrounding its brittle branches. This is its story: as a Mediterranean olive tree transplanted to the heart of Brussels, in the European Union quarter (relocated like the Israeli-born artists themselves), it could not survive the harsh winters of northern Europe. An olive tree was chosen in order to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the murder of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a controversial figure who strove for Israeli-Palestinian peace. Notably, olive branches, though a symbol of peace for many, are also fraught markers of the enforced uprooting of Palestinians from their homesteads. Furthermore, planted in Leopold Park, the tree recalls a long history of human and environmental atrocities and genocide committed by King Leopold II and the Belgian nation-state in its ex-colony, the Congo. In the video, Effi & Amir suggest that the olive tree acts as a kind

of "mirror tree" for them, since both they and it were "newcomers uninvited" to Belgium and Europe around the same time in 2005. The image thus also evokes the crisis of displacement and the politics of immigration, particularly from Africa and the Middle East, that have reached a boiling point in the European Union in recent years. With its plea, "Don't look away," the artwork aims to conjure a public that will not only notice one tree's corpse but also attend to this more expanded web of structural violence surrounding it.

At the "heart of the heart of Europe," as the video notes, Effi & Amir carefully capture the tree's death over the course of many years through handheld video, and then through Google Street View and Google Earth. With a forensic lens, the pair asks, who is responsible for its death? The artwork, for instance, evokes the parable of the lost garden of paradise and Adam and Eve (aka Effi & Amir), suggesting the idea of original sin. How far back must we investigate in order to unearth culpability for this crime? Moreover, without Effi & Amir's cameras, would we have even noticed its tiny death in the first place, represented as a mere blip on Google Earth? Initially, its removal is evident on Street View but not via satellite camera, making its absence seem even more discrepant and inconsequential. Ultimately, the artists set forth grave questions concerning not only the complicated social, political, environmental, and historical slow violence of this tree's history, but also how our current mediatized public sphere registers and provides publicity for such acts of slow violence. With years of available digital imaging of the olive tree, situated right in the central, symbolic park of the EU, could a general public have preempted its unnecessary death? Realized its (physically and symbolically) inhospitable conditions and saved it before it was too late? Can such public awareness prevent violence in the first place?

Typically, ethical considerations of halting violence in the public sphere are raised after significant human rights violations and atrocities have been committed, involving mass bodies or spectacular disasters. Visual culture theorist Thomas Keenan, for instance, has produced invaluable scholarship concerning structures of visuality in relation to humanitarianism and extreme political violence around the world. Investigating the 1990s Bosnian genocide in terms of a new global optic of nonstop satellite and televisual surveillance, he observes, "Among the too many would-be 'lessons of Bosnia,' this one stands out for its frequent citation: that a country was destroyed and a genocide happened, in the heart of Europe, on television, and what is known as the world or the West simply looked on and did nothing."[1] It is obvious that genocide should not have happened, least of all amid such full-on televisual

FIGURE I.1 – Effi & Amir, *The Vanishing Vanishing-Point*, 2015, still image.

FIGURE I.2 – Effi & Amir, *The Vanishing Vanishing-Point*, 2015, still image.

publicity. Yet, critically, Keenan goes beyond a mere question of shaming in order to probe the deeper ramifications concerning today's age of all-access information and atrocities that are now imaged in real time and in full view of a larger public sphere. For him, the more trenchant problem is how we still conceive of a traditional public sphere and, implicitly, the idea that once people have the relevant information, they will act, that things will change. The disastrous fallout of Bosnia was that this understanding of the public sphere "allowed or even produced an interpretative complacency," whereby an active public response was neutralized.[2] Around the world, from Bosnia to Somalia, Keenan focuses on the spectacular violence and new, unsettling speed and instantaneity of global tele-surveillance systems in the 1990s, yet Effi & Amir remind audiences of the slow violence that quotidian Google cameras now simultaneously register and collect through digital archiving.[3] This is not to place speed and slowness in opposition, as Keenan himself warns against ("We cannot simply say, 'warning! slow down!'").[4] Instead, it is to recognize that two decades later, the public sphere necessarily has a more developed understanding of, and relation to, global mediatization and that one should address interconnecting scales of violence, from drone warfare to everyday Google imaging via global satellites.

A recent group of activist visual and cultural thinkers/producers working on forensic aesthetics and forensic architecture has done groundbreaking work in this respect. Using all possible methods of visual analysis and reconstruction—mostly lens-based media and architecture—this dedicated group, including scholars such as Keenan and Eyal Weizman, aims to turn a forensic lens back onto states and corporations in order to bring mass events of violence to justice (e.g., genocide, human rights violations, environmental destruction).[5] This means not only in actual courts of law—in literally helping to bring perpetrators of violence to justice—but also within wider public forums such as the mass media. In terms of the latter, and what civil action could arise from such forensic investigation, Weizman claims in an *October* interview, "We have learned that it's not enough to address an academic context or a general 'public domain,' and that to become political we need to think about available civil tools and institutions that can exercise political leverage."[6] For him, their work is tactical, long-term, and not about "arguing with or critiquing the occupation [of Palestine]." Instead, they wish to "confront it," because "at present it is no longer enough to critique the politics of representation."[7] Weizman in no way dismisses the value of contradiction, ambiguity, and uncertainty in forensic analysis—quite the contrary. Yet for

him, more direct political action will crystallize through the starting point of materiality, not the "politics of representation." For any discussion of political aesthetics, in other words, it is important for Weizman not to "get lost in the solipsistic world of the subject or in endless meditations on the spectator."[8] The writings and actions of Forensic Architecture are impressive, and they have rightfully gained a tremendous amount of critical acclaim in recent years. However, I am wary of an approach that focuses primarily on materiality at the expense of the messier realm of human discourse and embodiment (even though in other writings Weizman is careful to stress their necessary imbrication). Frequently displayed in museum and gallery contexts, moreover, Forensic Architecture's practice is also indicative of a growing lionization of artistic-visual work that attempts to affect direct, clearly quantifiable political change in the aftermath of social injustice or atrocity. Ultimately, their conceptual and practical aims are to map culpability and to adjudicate guilt, working with the consequences of clear, tangible violence.

Instead, I wish to transform a question of informed public action in the aftermath of violence to one of the informed public prevention of both direct and more indirect aggression. For this to occur, one must rethink temporality in two ways. On the one hand, publics gain a heightened sense of the power of accretive, more invisible forms of slow violence. On the other hand, questions of response and responsibility transfer from those of action in the aftermath to those of prevention in the first place. As Judith Butler warns in their analysis of the aftermath of 9/11 (September 11, 2001), this is arguably a much more difficult, though necessary, challenge: "Conditions do not 'act' in the way that individual agents do, but no agent acts without them."[9] In the case of 9/11, they challenge a public to not remain content with only condemnation, to not only isolate individual perpetrators in establishing the most direct, clear line of violence. Rather, publics must search for a larger explanatory framework and the conditions that set the groundwork for such violence to occur in the first place. How might one understand and thus arrest the conditions of violence that lay the foundation for future atrocity to occur?[10]

In the case of Europe, one might point to the massacre committed by Anders Behring Breivik. In July 2011, the right-wing extremist and self-described Christian crusader widely disseminated a 1,500-page manifesto, "2083: A European Declaration of Independence." Breivik titled it thus to signal the four hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Vienna, as supposedly the last united European effort to repel Muslim forces. The manifesto calls for the violent erasure of Islam, immigrants, multiculturalism, and "cultural

Marxism"—all elements purportedly destroying European civilization—and he publicized his missive via social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter just hours before killing seventy-seven people in Oslo, Norway.[11] After exploding a car bomb in front of a downtown government building, he traveled to a nearby island and calculatedly shot down the next generation of Labor Party leaders and political activists at a summer youth camp, some no more than sixteen years old. Breivik's act was singularly shocking, but perhaps more striking is the fact that his beliefs echo many widely held, if less radical, views today in Europe, regarding immigration, Muslims, and intercultural communities. Breivik's murderous rampage and the onslaught against the World Trade Center, though both spectacularly devastating, are dissimilar in many ways. Yet Butler's point about the need to investigate broader sociopolitical, economic, and historical conditions remains an important call. What modes of social activism or social imagining could condition a world where such horrific violence would not occur? What public conditions might form a future social imaginary bound by a horizon of nonviolence?

In their book *The Force of Nonviolence: An Ethico-political Bind* (2020), Butler further outlines the stakes of such a broader project—of crafting a new political imaginary based upon commitments to nonviolence and radical equality, as well as an understanding that vulnerability is not an individual attribute but rather a feature of social relations.[12] Although nonviolence is usually seen as passive, it is in fact an active commitment and project, if less immediately visible. And above all, it is anticipatory: "The task of nonviolence is to find ways of living and acting in that world such that violence is checked or ameliorated, or its direction turned, precisely at moments when it seems to saturate that world and offer no way out. The body can be the vector of that turn, but so too can discourse, collective practices, infrastructures, and institutions."[13]

Don't Look Away addresses the contours of what an anticipatory art activism—or the active creation and visualization of nonviolent modes of inhabiting the world—might look like in a twenty-first-century European social imaginary. In Butler's decades-long analysis of sociopolitical precarity, key examples of nonviolent action include "ethical stylizations" of embodied, concerted assembly making, for instance, as human barriers in street demonstrations.[14] Yet publicly engaged art making may serve as an equally powerful site for the prevention of violence through its active envisioning of nonviolent ways of being and living in the world. I employ the term *preventive public* to signal such art making, whereby art may imagine a discursively

bound web of strangers who self-critically recognize the conditions of their socially entangled and differentially distributed vulnerability. Indeed, I aim to emphasize the conditions, background, or more invisible violence framing publicly oriented art making in Europe. Such art makes publics aware of structural or systemic violence that endures through time in more latent or slower forms, which might become reanimated later in familiar-yet-different ways in a future conditional tense. And, crucially, it makes publics cognizant of the publicity-inducing forms and media that are entangled with such violence. In such a way, artists expose the slower or more invisible conditions of violence in the public sphere in order to hopefully anticipate and arrest such conditions as they could become aggravated even further in a future social imaginary.

This book addresses an aspirational horizon of nonviolence in Europe, riddled as it is with deep contemporary and historical violence, through the projects of artists critically engaged with different public spheres and the spatial and temporal complexities undergirding the formation of public life. The mainstream public sphere is now defined by mediatized imagery in an age of instant information and real-time visuals, and twenty-first-century artists have been adept in tackling this issue. It is the task of the following chapters to explore how principles of collective social vulnerability, plurality, and nonviolence might operate through a diversity of public artistic manifestations, both embodied and mass mediated. On the one hand, artists in Europe such as Harun Farocki, Thomas Hirschhorn, and the collective Henry VIII's Wives—whose practices constitute the case studies in this book—all address spectacular moments of visual contestation that have gone viral, such as the news images of burning cars during the 2005 riots in France. On the other hand, their work also speaks to the digitized slow violence of surveillance and data collection in response to 9/11 and fears of terrorism. Responding to these changing conditions, such artists overwhelm spectators with a deluge of information in their art installations, yet they provide them discursive tools and forms with which to explore common matters of concern through mediatized and embodied relationality among strangers. For instance, Farocki created massive, multiscreen panoplies with surveillance footage and machine-interpreted imagery, mirroring the construction of fear-based publics. His installations physically and conceptually centralize the role of viewers, however, calling on them to critically make sense of the data together as a diverse public of strangers, such as in *Deep Play* with the infamous 2006 World Cup and French Algerian Zinedine Zidane's violent headbutt due to a

racial slur. Hirschhorn fabricates temporary cultural centers in neighborhoods such as the banlieues of Paris or historically ex-colonial-immigrant housing projects outside of Amsterdam, bombarding audiences with information, from community workshops to streaming websites. Yet these neighborhood installations imagine preventive publics through a shared sense of plurality, differentiated vulnerability, and historical reflection. Lastly, Henry VIII's Wives solicited and curated "user-generated content" in both real and digital spaces. With this culled input and feedback, the group reworked iconic, charged images in the mass media such as the Twin Towers in order to also envision nonviolent, preventive publics across Europe.

Each of these art practices, similar to *The Vanishing Vanishing-Point*, implore audiences not to look away—to notice not only the broken branches but also the more hidden roots of violence in Europe today that could lead to deformed life in the future. This is an imaginative task, to envision a horizon of nonviolence where a grounded and historical vanishing point does not vanish but is kept in view. I wish to underline that the focus of this book is on cultural, discursive production. My evocation of a preventive public is not quantifiably or positively illustratable; rather, it centers on the power and critical importance of the imaginative in arresting slow violence. It is imperative to rethink hierarchies of vision and publicity among larger masses of strangers who unsettle clear-cut boundaries of territory, class, language, ethnicity, and so on. Here a charged field of politics transfers from a realm of sovereign, centralized powers or economy to the messy ground of cross-border civil engagement, crafted through culture and discourse. Thus, in the end, while a contemporary art-critical pendulum has swung in favor of a type of direct efficacy wrought by art activism, I remain committed to redefending the imaginative, poetic, often more elusive potential of art in changing mindsets and resisting violence.

Art, Publics, and Violence in Historical and Contemporary Europe

In his memoir, published posthumously in 2017, Stuart Hall recalls the fraught political climate of 1950s Britain.[15] He speaks of the Windrush generation, or a pregnant moment of decolonization for the United Kingdom when half a million people moved from the Caribbean to Britain in response to labor shortages wrought by World War II. This occurred roughly between 1948 and 1970, and the country witnessed racist "white riots" in Notting Hill and

Nottingham in 1958 as well as a strongly populist, xenophobic backlash in the 1960s and early 1970s fomented by Enoch Powell and his anti-immigrant "Rivers of Blood" speech in 1968. Hall's narrative eerily evokes today's social atmosphere: "The newspapers were full of reports on the migrant 'crisis.' . . . The metaphors began to unroll, the moral panic to unfold. An unstoppable tide of black migrants, the public commentators prophesied, is headed in this direction! The British way of life would never survive the influx!"[16] Indeed, his description uncannily foreshadows the UK's decision by referendum (51.9 percent of those voting) to leave the European Union, largely viewed as a clarion response to a growing tidal wave of anti-immigrant sentiment evidenced by the rise of the extreme right-wing United Kingdom Independence Party in the early 2010s. Minus a few details, and ignoring the vastly different historical contexts, Hall might be describing here the current political temperature in the United Kingdom and, moreover, across Europe. My point with this limited example is that there are multifarious ways to enter the conversation with which this book wishes to engage, touching on moments that seem to circle back on themselves in different temporal flashes and longer periods from the late 1940s through the 2010s.

In art historical scholarship, one might index a long list of invaluable work addressing earlier, critical inflection points in art making and European public spheres during this stretch of time. This list would include—but by no means be limited to—innovative analyses concerning art, racism, primitivism, and globalization in the United Kingdom by figures such as Kobena Mercer, Rasheed Araeen, and Eddie Chambers.[17] In regard to France, one could point to extensive work on the situationists by Tom McDonough, the visual culture of decolonization by Hannah Feldman, or quite recent work by Lily Woodruff on participatory art and institutional critique.[18] Such scholarship grapples with the specificities of different nationalist frameworks within a European social imaginary and, in doing so, points to the breakdowns and tensions of those borders as well.

Mechtild Widrich's compelling book, *Performative Monuments: The Rematerialisation of Public Art* (2014), as one example, reflects the typical fluidity of cross-border, multitemporal artistic publics during the second half of the twentieth century. It interpretatively moves from the 1960s to the present day, analyzing confrontational performances by VALIE EXPORT and the Viennese Actionists, feminist art making in former Yugoslavia, and the politics of memory and monuments in Germany. I am particularly sympathetic to Widrich's methodological approach in its deft stretching of often-separated

categories—memorials, performance art, photography—across different temporal spans. Opening with a description of Thomas Hirschhorn's *Bataille Monument* (2002), in fact, she coins the term *performative monument* in order to suggest the importance of temporal extension involved in audienceship and the formation of publics.[19] Such an extended or delayed audience, for example, realized via documentation or architecture that lives on for later publics, allows a "pointing to the past while carrying its political and aesthetic effects into the future."[20] The performative monument thus emphasizes questions of history and commemoration by binding publics together critically through an approach of temporal elongation.

The formation of cross-border, temporally and spatially expansive publics in Widrich's analysis resonates with this book's use of the term *public*. Specifically, I draw from Michael Warner's detailed definition of a public in his book *Publics and Counterpublics* (2004). Chapter 1 provides a much lengthier theoretical elaboration on questions of historical and contemporary public sphere formation in Europe, but for now let me provide a brief sketch of some of Warner's main points concerning the term. According to him, a public exists as a "space of discourse organized by discourse," self-creating and self-organized, and "herein lies its power, as well as its elusive strangeness."[21] In other words, a public exists only by virtue of being addressed and thus requires at least minimal participation, even if this means the mere act of paying attention.[22] A public is organized independently from the state and could potentially be characterized as "stranger-relationality in a pure form," theoretically uniting strangers through participation alone.[23] It does not select its members according to territory, identity, belief, or any positive content of membership; a constantly imagined strangerhood is its "necessary medium of commonality."[24] In this way, theoretically (although not always in practice), it differs from a community or population, organized according to such positive criteria of belonging: "The existence of a public is contingent on its members' activity, however notional or compromised, and not on its members' categorical classification, objectively determined position in the social structure, or material existence."[25] Key here is active participation rather than ascriptive belonging, where attention constitutes membership or, as Warner eloquently puts it, where "the direction of our glance [constitutes] our social world."[26] Finally, as in Widrich's analysis, not only texts but, critically, a concatenation of texts circulating through time create publics.[27] This distinguishes a fixed idea of public space or public art

from a temporally and spatially extended sense of public sphere formation (discussed more in chapter 1).

Of course Warner's abstract definition of a public holds more complex ramifications when thought alongside notions of art making, what might be considered an art public, and the formation of social imaginaries within specific sociohistorical coordinates in Europe. As chapter 3 addresses in depth, for instance, many critics argue that Thomas Hirschhorn's *Bataille Monument* (2002) exploits a lower-income, culturally marginalized community for the sake of exposing social inequalities for a more strictly understood art public. Hirschhorn, Farocki, and Henry VIII's Wives all create and exhibit work within the museum-gallery nexus, but Hirschhorn, in particular, often explicitly challenges the institutional art frameworks within which his artwork operates and makes claims on reaching broader, more plural and porously distributed publics.

In this sense, his neighborhood installations could be situated and addressed within longer histories of institutional critique, also concerned with the "old promise of the museum as a founding institution of the public sphere," as art historian Blake Stimson describes it.[28] In *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings* (2009), coedited by Stimson and Alex Alberro, Alberro more explicitly connects the museum space to a Habermasian-like space of critique and debate, one "founded as a democratic site for the articulation of knowledge, historical memory, and self-reflexivity, and as an integral element in the education and social production of civil society."[29] In his view, most art practices following a trend of "historical institutional critique" from the late 1960s and 1970s have put "pressure on the disjuncture between the self-presentation of the art institution (as democratic and free of discrimination, partisanship, and plainly put, ideology) and the highly gendered, raced, and classed ideology that actually permeates it."[30] This echoes criticism of an idealized Habermasian public sphere (see chapter 1) and could also describe Hirschhorn's neighborhood installations. Furthermore, such artists—as well as Hirschhorn—have not attempted to jettison art public institutions or infrastructures, but rather have attempted to "straighten up the operation of this central site of the public sphere [the museum] and to realign its actual function with what it is in theory."[31] In this way, an art historical line of institutional critique informs questions of public sphere formation within this book, yet it is not the focus of my analysis. As Stimson points out, institutional critique and institutions more fundamentally are bound to a matter

of authority, to centralized sites of top-down power.[32] Instead, what I wish to stress interpretatively within this book is the decentralized, discursively dispersed, and "elusive strangeness"—to recall Warner's description—of public opinion. As such, it is almost impossible to clearly delineate between a public and an art public, yet my specific chapter analyses of projects, such as Hirschhorn's neighborhood installations, attempt to tease out the deeper, more specific consequences of addressing multiple publics with distinct commitments and modes of attention.

To return to a question of Europe, what I have seen less of within art historical scholarship is studies of contemporary art that, with sustained attention, connect histories of Holocaust violence with those of decolonization processes on the continent. In this regard, Hannah Feldman is right to reject the term *postwar* in her visual-cultural analysis of the period 1945–62 in France, for as she notes, "the history of war in France during the decades of decolonization would prove ongoing and perpetual."[33] Making such connections is an urgent project for our historical moment and for thinking through the current tensions concerning migration, which affects every corner of Europe. Farocki's classic film *Images of the World and the Inscription of War* (*Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges*, 1988), for instance, still speaks volumes today, with its juxtaposition of a forceful gaze by a Jewish woman in a Nazi concentration camp with the forced unveiling of thousands of Algerian women for identification purposes in a French internment camp (figure 1.3).[34] Although a sensitive area of scholarship—the relating of Holocaust studies to those of European imperialism—it is nonetheless burgeoning today in postcolonial and memory studies due to the fact that the scars of these imbricated histories still deeply etch the face of contemporary politics on the continent.[35]

I approach these longer histories through the complexly historicized practices of Harun Farocki, Thomas Hirschhorn, and Henry VIII's Wives. I focus on specific cross-sections of their oeuvres from approximately 2004 to 2009, which in turn reflect on a variety of flashpoints of violence and public formation from the end of World War II through the twenty-first century. With this analytical move, I wish to stress a certain type of temporal stretching and border crossing across the idea and geography of Europe. Following memory studies scholar Michael Rothberg's methodological call for multidirectional memory, this book—with a commitment still to deeply hewn analyses—aims to traverse genres, nations, periods, and cultures.[36] It is crucial, for instance, to recognize the specificity of the Nazi genocide, yet a comparative, multidirectional analysis suggests that we must not cordon it off from

FIGURE I.3 – Harun Farocki, *Images of the World and the Inscription of War* (*Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges*), 1988, film still. © Harun Farocki GbR.

other histories of collective violence (such as those of Indigenous, minority, and colonial genocide), which would be "intellectually and politically dangerous" in potentially creating a hierarchy of suffering and removing such violence from an intricately enmeshed historical field.[37] Such comparative thinking is not only productive in its fostering of new lines of sight and insight, but also important for enabling unexpected empathies, solidarities, and visions of justice to coalesce.[38] Following this impulse, this book's three case studies traverse unique generational perspectives on a New Europe in the twenty-first century.[39] A comparison among them is fruitful for the different historical bearings that anchor each of their oeuvres: Farocki's practice emerged at the height of '68er social and artistic upheaval and with

a trenchant attention to the sociopolitical devastation of the Holocaust; Hirschhorn's came to maturity against the backdrop of 1980s community arts practices and fraught postcolonial politics throughout the continent; and Henry VIII's Wives developed their practice in a post–Maastricht Treaty moment of deeper Europeanization and hopes for transnational unity. These artists' various generational backgrounds and geographical positioning allow them unique vantage points through their art making, and they offer diverse approaches to questions of publicity and public making that resonate with the heterogeneity and heterochronicity of media in operation today.

Additionally, my focus on particular artworks of theirs from roughly a handful of years between 2004 and 2009 coincides with a fraught period in European public spheres concerning the EU's perceived public deficit, which I will return to later. This moment marked a heightened awareness and questioning of mass citizen-strangers throughout Europe regarding the proposed deepening and widening of the EU's powers. Indeed, it is a time when the idea of Europe became quite charged and increasingly prominent in different yet overlapping public spheres throughout the continent. The artists' oeuvres, however, do not aim to create a homogenized and bounded, reconfigured sense of belonging or unity. In this manner, their work does not fit within a more traditional understanding, or regular routes, of collectivizing, alliance-building artistic activism. Artwork during this "period of reflection," by figures such as Farocki, Hirschhorn, and Henry VIII's Wives, raises pertinent questions regarding "the people" of Europe and historically interwoven modalities of violence and vulnerability that thread through the frayed seams of this socially imagined construct.[40]

The Time of Prevention

For some, the term *preventive* may trigger alarm bells. Does it not replicate the dangerous language of state security apparatuses that attempt to preempt noncompliant actions by citizens, to detect and prevent any possible threatening events in a future conditional tense? This is the logic by which governments and corporations advertise their "salutary" use of surveillance technologies: in order to discourage harmful behavior and promote the harmonious coordination of social space. I analyze this question of security in chapter 1. For now let me attempt to clarify what I mean by *preventive*, a term with tremendous potential but also maligned to a large degree, ensnared as it is in military and security discourses.

I wish to rehabilitate it in the metaphorical sense of preventive health, within a discourse of care, maintenance, and infrastructural attention.[41] Preventive health care encourages thoughtful, sustained scrutiny of the invisible roots of latent diseases, both those chronic and those quickly ignitable. At least in the US health care system, far too much currency is still afforded to quick-fix treatment after the fact, not to habitual checkups and durational, salubrious living habits—exercise, nutritious diet, enough sleep, and so on—in an anticipatory fashion. This kind of bedrock labor is often much more difficult and unquantifiable, not so easily measured in terms of long-term investment (as well as simply less profitable for the medical and pharmaceutical industries). Preventive health care does not target a specific disease with clear impact, but aims for the vital yet amorphous, less tangible contours of general health.

Yet to extend the metaphor further, the ability to carry out such self-care life choices, and access to the institutional and environmental support necessary for them, are by no means equally distributed. It is too frequently and typically the case that the most vulnerable and disabled peoples have the least access to quality health care, alimentary food, clean air, untainted water, with the list going on and on. In this regard, preventive health takes on the guise of personal responsibility and dissimulates its collective, civic foundations. As many scholars such as Judith Butler and Laura Ann Stoler have stressed, precarity is differentially distributed. Health and harm fluctuate in densities and distributions according to many historical, intersectional factors of race, gender, sex, class, age, and disability.

In *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*, Stoler proffers a concept of duress in order to signal such uneven distributions of care and injury, which, for her, result from colonial histories that live on in the present as multifarious "imperial formations" and "ruins." In other words, duress demands an analytic vocabulary that unearths what artifacts recombine in the present in transfigured ways, ruins that often revivify in deeply affective or concretely material and bodily forms.[42] For example, colonial histories often faintly but durably imprint the fabric of twenty-first-century life in the French banlieues in visceral ways. Sometimes these are more easily calculable, as with an unemployment rate among youth that has frequently stood at 40 percent, or four times the national average, yet often such duress is less obviously manifest in its clipping of the "health, livelihood, and psychic endurance" of particular groups.[43] In this sense, her work dovetails with the eco-postcolonial theorist Rob Nixon's idea of slow violence, or aggressions that are slower,

more habitual, or historically sedimented.[44] Yet Stoler's concept of duress is particularly compelling for my analysis of violence in Europe in its attention to differentially distributed futures. For her, duress is a relationship of "actualized and anticipated violence."[45] Critically, she stresses how such slow violence will continue to propagate unequally for the most vulnerable, and perhaps even exponentially so, in future times.

Thus, borrowing from Michel Foucault, she insists on the need for a "'recursive analytics,' or history as recursion."[46] The receding and resurfacing ruins of the past are not over and are never repeated in the same way, and when imperial governance meets armatures of security, it prompts an "avid concern not only for what is but for *what might be* [original emphasis]."[47] Stoler's analysis of historical time is not based on simple continuities, ruptures, or cycles, but rather on uneven repetitions with difference, or a type of historical folding-back-on-itself that mines yet also replots topographies of violence. Such a historiographical method of recursive analytics, one attuned to both the actual and anticipated aggressions of colonial entailments, is valuable in helping to imagine a type of public sphere formation in Europe centered on violence prevention. For if the grand, unifying project of a twentieth-century Europe was one geared toward nonviolence, then its seams have since been continually unsewn and frayed by violent histories of segregations and killings that repeatedly manifest in similar yet uncanny ways, from its present-day immigrant detention centers to a fetishization of sartorial appearance for women.

Along a similar vein, literary scholar Paul Saint-Amour calls for scholarship in critical futurities. In an impressive study on modernist aesthetics and the anticipatory violence of war, he rejects conventional historiography (an underlying thread in this book, touching on work from Aby Warburg and Walter Benjamin to Homi Bhabha and Stoler), that is "uncritically premised on the future's openness," paying "scant attention to the shape of that opening, to the constraints on futurity's aperture."[48] Likewise, many contemporary artist-activists are working within this imaginative, speculative line of inquiry, recognizing a constricted "aperture of futurity" for many that should not and need not continue to be "just an extrapolation of present-day power."[49]

In terms of artistic production, socially oriented art is also often described within contrasting temporal schemas of either rupture or continuity.[50] The historical avant-garde in modern art, for example, attempted to disrupt or break temporal continuity in order to promote novel, nonnormative ways

of thinking. Much artistic activism today, conversely, aims for greater impact through durational, lengthily researched art projects, often involving many other nonartist participants, whether these form a more marginalized community or an assembled cohort of boundary-crossing thinkers. Both are important modes of socially engaged art production; they just figure through time differently. One extolls immediate disruption, whereas another advocates longer-term commitment or temporal investment, in order to affect social attitudes.

However, another common temporal schema in art making could be named as well, one that, to my knowledge, has not been labeled as such: recursive artistic creation or intervention. This type of artistic activism would recognize the often slow and recursive (repeating yet different) aspects of violence that affect precarious peoples in inequitably distributed ways, leading to differentially injured futures. This is not to champion recursive socially engaged art making above art projects that stress immediate rupture or durational change. It is simply to highlight artists who think about the same sets of problems repeatedly but in varying contexts, according to densities and distributions of violence, both diachronically and synchronically. Farocki, for example, revisited the same problematics over and over again in his moving-image installations, working intertextually and intervisually to thread together disparate yet related histories of violence in Europe. Hirschhorn, likewise, creates recursively oriented neighborhood installations, always focused on questions of imperial duress yet in different locales. Finally, Henry VIII's Wives also produced work in a recursive manner, particularly returning to the same set of concerns with their campaign *Tatlin's Tower and the World*, yet always in altered spatiotemporal coordinates with each iteration of the project. I would argue that for these artists, in adopting such a temporalized mode of recursive artistic creation, violence prevention is an operative principle and driving force.

A recursive lens may provide a certain visibility to reanimations of aggression, both discursive and material, that are similar but always different. A stark example would be Denmark's recently passed set of laws, known as the "ghetto package," which literally labels people living in the country's twenty-five low-income and largely Muslim neighborhoods as "ghetto parents" and "ghetto children."[51] Now beginning at the age of one, "ghetto children" in these areas (not other children until the age of six), for instance, must be separated from their parents for a mandatory twenty-five hours a week (not including nap time) for training at preschools in "Danish values," including language

and Christian rituals. Otherwise their welfare benefits could be stripped from them. This is only the tip of the iceberg for these laws: other proposals are much more punitive, involving prison time, curfews, and surveillance. Amazingly, such rhetoric and laws are popular among many Danish citizens, and issues of Muslim ghettoization do not recall for them the horrors of religious persecution, segregation, and encampment in Nazi Germany. In this example, what is lacking is not enough population management for violence preemption. Rather, it is a sense of collective, discursive expectation of perhaps more spectacular, recursive violence built upon slow violence, where both actualized and anticipated harm inhabit the lives of the most scapegoated and precarious. This is not to be alarmist, but to recognize, with a recursive-analytic lens, forms of violence that accrete and erode more latently. With just enough lived information from past realizations and experiences, an anticipatory-activist mode could recognize how such violence might manifest in order to attempt to predict and mitigate its deleteriously distributed, future pressures.

Ultimately, what I wish to stress here is a mode of artistic activism that not only attempts to address clear sociopolitical injustices in their aftermath, but also engages with the messier, less quantifiable work of imagining and preventing violence as it may recur in a future conditional tense. To halt one instance of violence in one place may not be enough for violence prevention, if one does not also analyze the potentially reanimating logic and symptoms of that violence and anticipate it in other future scenarios. To return to my metaphor of preventive health, this type of necessary but largely immeasurable work looks at densities and distributions of potential harm, armed with the insights of accrued experience and knowledge of past injuries, in order to attend to a better, more equitably apportioned, general public health for as long a future as possible.

One more point regarding time: such a proleptic mode of violence prevention would depend upon the self-reflexivity of publics as publics. I do not mean to glorify self-reflexivity as a principle derived from the modern avant-garde, which, again, worked to catalyze novelty and push beyond the status quo. Instead, I wish to stress self-reflexivity as a type of discursive cross-citationality that leads to a recursive, thoughtful analysis of public matters of concern. Cross-citationality sparks public awareness of a public's being through time, as Michael Warner asserts, and works against a reductive, historicist account of being in "empty, homogenous time," as Walter

Benjamin famously described it.[52] The latter, a type of steadily progressing calendrical and clock time, allows for the formation of national imagined communities, as Benedict Anderson even more prominently borrowed the idea.[53] It might also lead to a type of dangerous, social chrononormativity, or temporal binding of individual human bodies for an end goal of maximum productivity, as Elizabeth Freeman eloquently contends in *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. I more closely analyze the critically recursive time of self-reflexivity in chapter 3, but for now let me place it in relief against an idea of virality.

When images or texts go viral online, they move rapidly and reductively, never changing. Virality sparks an unintelligent jolt of publicity that moves through time, but that requires no self-reflexivity of publics and thus no recursive analytics of violence or possible violence prevention. This is not to equate virality with speed, to place speed and slowness in opposition, or to suggest that through a necessarily longer time and with more information, people will act and that violence will diminish, recalling Thomas Keenan's analysis of violence in a European public sphere. After all, terrorist cells could strengthen through slower, recursive practices of indoctrination, or nonviolent, sentimental public attention could arise through the fast, viral dissemination of cute animal images online.[54] Again, key here is not a question of speed versus slowness, but rather that neither of these publics arguably move beyond a plane of superficial, one-dimensional public discourse, even if virality might ensure that an image reaches a large number of people. Viral movement does not create self-reflexivity in the sense that Warner describes it, where discourse is referenced, quoted, and repeated through a citational, contextual field that always morphs with each future iteration.[55] This builds a much more complex, overlapping social awareness of background conditions, causality, and effects—similar in some sense to what Eyal Weizman terms *field causality* in forensic aesthetics.[56] In its simplification of a field of attention, virality echoes the salutary violence prevention of surveillance and security operations. It would also notionally link to a moral panic, or lightning-quick spreading of fear, one that leans on questions of presumed morality in order to contain or preempt certain social behaviors.[57] Conversely, I employ the term *preventive* in order to think through a type of discourse and general social health that requires continual maintenance and care, checks and balances, collective labor, and recursive and self-reflexive calibrations.

The Idea of Europe

Contemporary Europe stands as an exemplary and urgent site for rethinking the formation of nonviolent publics. Europe is a compendious category that not only signifies almost limitless local variation but also runs across fractious lines of class, nation, ethnicity, race, gender, sex, religion, and generation, and the European Union, in some sense—"united in diversity" as its slogan reads—is perhaps the most politically and economically ambitious preventive project against violence ever to be conceived. Dating from the Treaties of Rome in 1957, the seeds of the EU extend even further to the end of the Holocaust and World War II, and the budding hopes for nonviolence in the wake of such devastation. In 1951, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), for example, was not only forged as an economic pact among six nations (France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) but was also shaped by an implicit mandate to create peaceful, political coexistence on the continent. Coal and steel, after all, were vital resources for any nation wishing to conduct war. The preamble to the Treaty of Paris, which established the ECSC, states in lofty terms that the leaders of the countries were "resolved to substitute for age-old rivalries the merging of their essential interests; to create, by establishing an economic community, the basis for a broader and deeper community among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts; and to lay the foundations for institutions which will give direction to a destiny henceforth shared."[58] In 1957, the Treaties of Rome further solidified the economic ties of these six nations in establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) as well as the European Atomic Energy Community, commonly referred to as Euratom. The purpose of the latter was to pool nuclear resources together to develop a secure form of energy independence, used only for nonmilitary, civil, and peaceful means. Of course, aspirations for a federally or functionally reconstructed Europe were simultaneously mitigated by the political realities of the Cold War and competing ideological interests among nation-states (the United States foremost among them). Historiographies of this nascent period and subsequent reasons for growth of the European Union have been extensively analyzed elsewhere, and this book does not purport to examine the historical nuances of political integration of the continent.[59] My point is that the idea of Europe since the end of World War II and the Holocaust has gone hand-in-hand with hopes for the end of violence and the fruitful cooperation of a border-crossing community. Its last sixty-five years have been a tremendous, singular political and economic

experiment in its attempt to bring harmony and codependence to a region of historically warring nation-states.

Yet now the tendentiously labeled refugee crisis threatens to tear New Europe apart at its seams, with over a million impoverished and war-traumatized asylum seekers streaming across Europe's porous borders along the Mediterranean and the Balkans region. European membership in anti-immigrant political parties has ballooned, and their violent rhetoric has soared across mainstream and alternative media channels. Additionally, post-1980s neoliberal values continue to chip away internally at the traditional European welfare state. Austerity measures, largely advocated by the new German pulse of European commerce, have put many national economies and communities at peril, including the most notorious case of Greece but also, less spectacularly, Ireland, Spain, Italy, and even France.[60] The fault lines of European unification have seriously jolted, as Greece's near exit and the UK's actual exit from the EU (leaving it with twenty-seven members), as well as the influx of global South refugees, have tested both the viability of Europeanization and the egalitarian credibility of a bureaucratically pacifist, public motto *In varietate concordia*, "united in diversity."

As such, Hannah Arendt remains a colossal figure for thinking through the politics and ethics of a European social imaginary. As she famously asserts in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, it is not the abstract human rights of freedom or equality that are the basis of humanity, but rather membership in political communities that are willing and able to guarantee these and any other rights in the first place. In other words, political affiliations are meant to safeguard rights of equality against a tremendous background of real, disquieting human differentiation—the "disturbing miracle" that each of us is "single, unique, unchangeable."[61] The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen was intended to deem certain human rights basic and inalienable, yet, in practice, human life is messy, unique, differentiated, and never fungible as part of a human race or species. Without a political umbrella in the first half of the twentieth century, without concrete ties to a specific state, minorities, refugees, and asylum seekers paradoxically lost the most abstract right to have rights in the first place. The modern figure of the refugee replaced the citizen, and, in the worst case, the internment camp became the "substitute for a nonexistent homeland," with the literal equivalence of a statistical body count replacing the abstract equality of citizenship.[62]

According to Arendt, this was the unique effect of totalitarianism, which radically dehumanized people and designated them within a space of *what*

rather than *who*, a question that became central to her following book, *The Human Condition*. For her, the human condition, rather, describes one's capacity for speech and action within a web of plural human relationships, or one's ability to bring about change through newness and unpredictable events. In many ways, this book hinges upon Arendt's conception of the space of appearance—or the space that contravenes those of the concentration camp or detention center. In such a space of appearance, people may assert their differentiated subjectivities—their plurality—within a gossamer web of messy, mortal life.

Arendt's work has received tremendous scholarly attention in the last decades, her often unclassifiable and nonnormative writings recuperated for their timely and still relevant insights, yet her acumen was also tempered by the historical moment within which she wrote. Not least of all, her public-political space of appearance was conceptualized as one of heteronormative white male privilege.[63] And although many postcolonial scholars such as Edward Said and Homi Bhabha have also leaned on her critical work (not to mention that of other important German Jewish diasporic thinkers such as Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno)—in order to think through ours as an "age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass immigration"—*The Origins of Totalitarianism* is still decidedly Eurocentric in harmful ways.[64] Importantly, Arendt links anti-Semitism, imperialism, and totalitarianism throughout the tripartite structure of her book, shuffling between European and non-European terrain at a moment of increasing anticolonial struggle. Yet, as Holocaust and memory studies scholar Michael Rothberg claims, her account of African subjects is reductive and ultimately dehumanizing.[65] He contends, "Arendt is ahead of her time in grasping the specificity of what would become known as the Holocaust as well as in linking the genocide to European colonialism, but . . . she simultaneously falls victim to tendencies within colonial discourse that she otherwise unveils."[66]

Thus, while Arendt's hopes for a transnational European federation in the wake of extreme violence and her theorization of a liberatory space for public engagement create a through line for this book, it is more so through her sensitive interlocutors—such as Judith Butler and Ariella Azoulay, who rely extensively on Arendt's insights for their own analyses of public sphere formation—that I approach the question of twenty-first-century art making in a European public sphere. It is, however, also due to Arendt's deep commitment to an accounting of historical violence and collective social

vulnerability during the decades riven by the Holocaust and decolonization in Europe, as a theoretical project beholden to questions of plurality (with all of its flaws in mind), that I draw more inspiration from her ideas concerning the public sphere than those posed by Jürgen Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). Published four years after *The Human Condition*, Habermas's seminal book is the cornerstone of public sphere theory for many in terms of Western Europe. It also builds from historical analysis and received much critical, renewed attention when it was finally translated and published in English in 1989. Yet, as chapter 1 outlines in further detail, his ideal model of a bourgeois public sphere based upon rational-critical discourse, along with his view of its decline in the twentieth century through developments such as the mass media, increased consumption, and the welfare state, speaks less directly to the entangled matters of plurality, violence, and social vulnerability upon which this book pivots. In the end, Arendt's hopeful allegiance to notions of newness, unpredictability, and promise—as opposed to Habermas's more pessimistic, midcentury view of the devolution of the public sphere amid advanced capitalism—imbue this book's utopian ideas regarding contemporary art making and the prevention of violence in a twenty-first-century European social imaginary.

Theories of a Social Imaginary: Antagonism, Cosmopolitanism, Vulnerability

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's post-Marxist book on democratic theory, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985), stands as a foundational text for thinking through questions of plurality and antagonism in the formation of social imaginaries. Crucially, Laclau and Mouffe contend that democracies arise not despite antagonisms, but because of them: "Indeed, we maintain that without conflict and division, a pluralist democratic politics would be impossible."[67] For them, antagonism arises from a realization that "the presence of the 'Other' prevents me from being totally myself"; subject positions are both materially and discursively constructed and constantly shifting in relation to one another.[68] This, in turn, provides a limit to the social, as "something subverting [the social], destroying its ambition to constitute a full presence."[69] Laclau and Mouffe attempt to rethink the social field in light of 1960s and 1970s social movements in order to assert that orthodox Marxism can no longer claim class to be the funda-

mental antagonism of society. In this way, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*'s forceful critique has arguably helped pave the way for a more intersectional, liberatory politics to emerge.

It has also gained critical prominence within the discipline of art history, particularly in relation to an understanding of public and/or participatory art, including Thomas Hirschhorn's neighborhood installations, due to the work of scholars such as Rosalyn Deutsche, Claire Bishop, and Shannon Jackson.[70] In her 2004 *October* essay, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," for instance, written as a rebuttal to Nicolas Bourriaud's theory of relational aesthetics, Claire Bishop employs Laclau and Mouffe's ideas to promote Thomas Hirschhorn's neighborhood artworks as critically "antagonistic," in contrast to what she views as more "feel-good" socially oriented pieces by artists such as Rirkrit Tiravanija and Liam Gillick. In *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics* (2011), in turn, Shannon Jackson lays out a nuanced critique of Bishop's use of the classic post-Marxist text, particularly questioning Bishop's emphasis on contextual social friction as the key to antagonism within art pieces by Hirschhorn and Santiago Sierra rather than a type of tensive force that would question a neutral social structuring of the art world to begin with.[71] Jackson highlights the fact that despite Bishop's "own careful attention to the distinctions Laclau and Mouffe make between a physical concept of opposition (the 'car crash model') and a social concept of antagonism," her use of language such as "tough" and "excruciating" to categorize her championed artworks as antagonistic "risks framing antagonism as a quite intelligible—and marketable—crash between two opposing forces."[72] Instead, Jackson reiterates Laclau and Mouffe's emphasis on antagonism as an integral limit to the social, as "something subverting [the social], destroying its ambition to constitute a full presence," or something that fundamentally undergirds and constitutes a politics of democracy and plurality.[73]

What interests me in terms of such an artistic-social imaginary is how antagonism and plurality also necessarily include social vulnerability or, again, this realization that "the presence of the 'Other' prevents me from being totally myself."[74] Rosalyn Deutsche, in her brilliant collection of essays, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (1996), also draws from *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* and its notion of antagonism, but her analysis often hinges it to a matter of social vulnerability as well. Written over the span of a decade, beginning in 1985, Deutsche's essays unpack and denounce a kind of masculinist, neo-Marxist discourse in cultural theory, art history, and urban geography studies that seriously misunderstood, or outright dismissed, the luminous

insights of feminist contemporary art and scholarship concerning the visual world. In attempting to include and listen to a wider diversity of voices against the dominant discourse, Deutsche points to encounters with Others not as an antagonistic recognition of lack, but as a realization of bountiful, and binding, social vulnerability. For her, public space is also a realm of "being-in-common," where we are "presented with our existence outside ourselves."[75] This breaching of a sense of individual self "is a condition of exposure to an outside that is also an instability within, a condition, as Thomas Keenan says, 'of vulnerability.' [The feminist-inspired exhibition] 'Public Vision' implied that the masculinist viewer's claim of disinterest and impartiality is a shield erected against this vulnerability, a denial of the subject's immersion in the openness of public space."[76] Written in her aptly titled chapter "Agoraphobia," the "openness" of public space suggests complex ramifications, explicitly tied to a theory of democracy posited by Claude Lefort, one based upon an "empty place" at the heart of society. Here social space holds instability at its core; there is no foundation of meaning or unity to society. Rather, the exercise of power is constantly interrogated, and political rights are declared.[77] Instability in this sense might presuppose endless contestation against the violence of power, or it might intimate an underlying social vulnerability and precarity in such an insecure, open yet volatile space.

In *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004), Judith Butler embraces vulnerability as a paramount means toward nonviolent, democratic public formation. Similar to Laclau and Mouffe, Butler imagines the basis for such political transformation in an encounter with the Other.[78] They also understand the formation of one's self to be contingent upon such encounters, or one's subject position to be in constant flux through the addressing of and by others, depriving one of one's will in discourse and any solid, unitary ground of identification. Butler stresses the encounter as one of ethics and responsibility, laying the foundation for a nonviolent, democratic public sphere upon bedrocks of plurality and social vulnerability.[79] Exposure to others and the risk of violence may be reframed as the risk of losing our attachments, as cutting us off from socially constituted bodies. Thus, it is not only the bodily precarity of life but also the fragility of social relations with others—and how they "dispossess" us through grief, passion, rage—that may ethically bind people through difference and a sense of interdependence.[80] "This fundamental dependency on anonymous others is not a condition that I can will away. No security measure will foreclose this dependency; no violent act of sovereignty will rid the world of this fact."[81] Here,

of course, their theory poses a more concrete challenge to US policies after 9/11 that attempted to shore up borders, tighten security, and quell criticism in order to reconstitute an "imagined wholeness" for an American national subject and deny vulnerability at any cost, ultimately continuing to stoke the flames of violence.[82] In *The Force of Nonviolence*, Butler extends this critique to the borders of Europe, where thousands of migrants have died and remained ungrievable in a European social imaginary.[83]

In some sense, Butler's *Precarious Life* builds on a discourse of cosmopolitanism that emerged in full force in the late 1990s and early 2000s, questioning possibilities for global affiliation or a mode of plural, political belonging that would acknowledge the lack of privilege, dispossession, and coerced movements for many in an increasingly transnational space. Dipesh Chakrabarty, Homi Bhabha, Sheldon Pollock, and Carol Breckenridge, in their introduction to their co-edited volume *Cosmopolitanism* (2002), mark their age's need to demythologize the cosmopolitan as a universalizable figure of humanity or Kantian "citizen of the world."[84] Instead, a reworked strand of postcolonial cosmopolitanism recognizes that refugees, migrants, and exiles "represent the spirit of the cosmopolitical community" at the turn of the century, characterized according to them by the three main concerns of nationalism, globalization, and multiculturalism.[85] Likewise, Bruce Robbins maintains in his coedited volume with Pheng Cheah, *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation* (1998), "The willingness to consider the well-being of people who do not belong to the same nation as you is not, in other words, something that is mysteriously pregiven by the simple fact of belonging to the human species."[86] Rather, it must be laboriously crafted out of "imperfect historical materials" already at hand in an actually existing cosmopolitanism.[87] Butler's theorization of a border-crossing social imaginary based on vulnerability echoes Robbins's description of this actually existing cosmopolitanism (here echoing Nancy Fraser's famous essay on "actually existing democracy").[88] Robbins explains, "Another way to put the contrast is to say that instead of an ideal of detachment [or a universalizing citizenship of the world], actually existing cosmopolitanism is a reality of (re)attachment, multiple attachment, or attachment at a distance."[89] It is such psychically and materially based, messy attachments to larger social bodies—based on precarity and the risk of violence to such attachments—that "may ethically bind people through difference and a sense of interdependence."[90]

In *The Force of Nonviolence*, however, Butler more explicitly underlines the problems with a discourse of "vulnerable groups" and a potentially uni-

versalizing discourse of vulnerability.[91] Vulnerability cannot be isolated from other terms or serve as the sole foundation for a new politics: "In portraying people and communities who are subject to violence in systemic ways, do we do them justice, do we respect the dignity of their struggle, if we summarize them as 'the vulnerable'?"[92] Here Butler points directly to large numbers of dispossessed peoples abandoned by nation-states and the European Union. Yet, echoing Ariella Azoulay's critique of the facile use of the term "refugee,"[93] they point to a paternalistic ease in categorizing "the vulnerable" for "protection" within systems that actually perpetuate material precarity and differentially distributed vulnerability:

> What if the situation of those deemed vulnerable is, in fact, a constellation of vulnerability, rage, persistence, and resistance that emerges under these same historical conditions? It would be equally unwise to extract vulnerability from this constellation; indeed, vulnerability traverses and conditions social relations, and without that insight we stand little chance of realizing the sort of substantive equality that is desired. Vulnerability ought not to be identified exclusively with passivity; it makes sense only in light of an embodied set of social relations, including practices of resistance. . . . If our frameworks of power fail to grasp how vulnerability and resistance can work together, we risk being unable to identify those sites of resistance that are opened up by vulnerability.[94]

In other words, Butler does claim the need for a new social imaginary, one based upon a recognition of the interdependency of lives and the avowal of vulnerability as a key feature of social relations, but they are careful to reject vulnerability as "an identity, a category, or a ground for political action."[95] Instead, an active demonstration of nonviolent ties of social attachment and vulnerability—too often deemed passive—may serve as an important catalyst for solidarity against forms of affiliation built upon domination, mastery, "heroic individualism," and an idea of strength "as the achievement of invulnerability."[96]

However, Butler's larger corpus of thinking on vulnerability and precarity emphasizes, in the end, the physical body as a primary site of violence and nonviolence. Although *The Force of Nonviolence*, as well as their theorization of assembly in *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, takes into account the importance of media circuits in establishing a larger sphere of appearance, they provide it less detailed attention.[97] Consequently, their understanding of bodily precarity and politicized gathering might seem more

applicable to one of Thomas Hirschhorn's neighborhood installations, for instance, but the following chapters aim to elaborate how both embodied and mass mediated artworks may actively envision a more democratic social imaginary built upon plurality and nonviolence.

Scope and Method

Each case study in this book offers unique and rich ways, across genres and geographies, for thinking through some of the growing complexities of twenty-first-century public formation in a transnational European space. Within the fields of political science, international relations, media studies, and European studies, there is a vast, growing body of literature concerning the Europeanization of the public sphere in Europe and the European Union. Much of this scholarship, in contrast to this book, is grounded in empirical, quantitative research, although it often points to the conceptual groundwork laid by figures such as Habermas and Craig Calhoun. In one study, *Mapping the European Public Sphere: Institutions, Media and Civil Society*, for instance, the editors even refer to their object of analysis with the monolithic moniker EPS, or European Public Sphere.[98] As a counterexample, Thomas Risse's work on the emergence of more robust and heterogenous, transnational public spheres (notably, pluralized) in twenty-first-century Europe—not in some "abstract, supranational space"—resonates more with the ethos of *Don't Look Away*.[99] Critically, Risse attends to nuanced distinctions and/or overlaps between a European community and a European public sphere, which is a key distinction I elaborate on in chapter 3.

Most importantly for this study, Risse and other experts such as political sociologist Jos de Beus contend that an age of "permissive consensus" in the European integration process has come to an end.[100] This is the idea that "a positive or neutral majority opinion of the public allows for elite autonomy and imagination in foreign policy, in particular public action toward the objective of European unification."[101] According to Jos de Beus, the first decades of European integration were achieved mostly through a cloak of secrecy and closure to mainstream public engagement.[102] In later decades, since the end of the Cold War, the European Union has seen remarkable "deepening" with greater integration and strengthening of its supranational institutions, as well as "widening," with increased membership, from twelve nations in 1990 to twenty-seven in 2007. Yet with such expansion, achieved largely through "the closed and secret geopolitics of European great powers," Euro-

pean citizens have increasingly pushed back against a perceived "democratic deficit," claiming that "thin, top-down communication on deals struck at European summits will no longer suffice."[103] This was evidenced in 2005 by French and Dutch voters' rejection of a draft constitution for a new Treaty of Rome, signed by all members of the European Council, which plunged the integration process into crisis. A revised Reform Treaty of Lisbon was then also rejected through an Irish referendum in 2008 but finally accepted in a second referendum in 2009. With these events and the scaling back of further constitutional deepening, many have questioned whether a public sphere deficit exists in Europe.[104] Concomitantly, calls for a European public sphere have strengthened. From 2004 to 2009, the European Commission even included the first commissioner ever devoted to institutional relations and communications, charged with enhancing "debate and dialogue" and improving the EU's exchange and understanding with publics.[105] This multiyear "period of reflection" concerning the Europeanization of the public sphere, from approximately 2004 to 2009, coincides with the timing and installation of most of the artworks analyzed in this book.[106] (In 2009, the euro crisis began and dramatically changed a question of further integration or disintegration.) In brief, the idea of Europe became pronounced, politicized, and increasingly urgent during this handful of years.

In invoking Europe and its historical and contemporary hopes for nonviolent alliance, I do not aim to offer an exemplum of humanities-based area studies.[107] Methodologically, I am instead compelled by literary scholar Julietta Singh's critique of literary and area studies in her book *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglements* (2017). According to Singh, area studies scholarship often relies on a theory and practice of mastery—of languages, authors, bodies of text, areas—in order to convey a sense of authority and legitimacy, but this mode of discursive positioning denies the porousness of disciplined ways of knowing and the vulnerability necessary for expanding one's limited viewpoint.[108] Rather, she advocates a practice of vulnerable reading, or listening—not to abandon a "skilled relationship to our intellectual fields," but rather to reject mastery in order to acknowledge our vast dependencies on other discourses and peoples and to rethink our own entrenched frameworks of thought.[109] Her call echoes that of Butler in another context. Ultimately, it behooves us to radically unthink mastery in how we engage with texts, objects, and images, even if this might be an impossible, utopian project. With such an ambition, what I attempt in this book is a deep dive into discursive concepts, materialities, and social imaginaries

of a small number of artistic projects, which during a unique handful of years worked to confront questions of violence, social vulnerability, and plurality under the weighty heading of the European Public Sphere.[110]

Outline of the Book

In chapter 1, I raise critiques of the traditional bourgeois public sphere as theorized and historicized by figures such as Jürgen Habermas, Craig Calhoun, Nancy Fraser, and Bruce Robbins. I argue that we should revisit this idealized concept of the public sphere, not only as a potential model of civic engagement, but also as a potentially dangerous site of emotionally charged public opinion and slow, recursive violence. Instead of keeping national governments accountable, publics now need to keep themselves in check. Ariella Azoulay's work on "civil imagination," building off Arendt's notion of a public-political space of appearance, aids me in thinking through the social vulnerability and violence of pluralized publics in a twenty-first-century European context.[111] Furthermore, I elaborate on what I mean by preventive and securitarian publics, in terms of slow and spectacular violence, and I relate these ideas to a contemporary sociopolitical situation in Europe and a type of anticipatory art activism working to apprehend such violence. Numerous artists, curators, and art institutions in Europe—often funded by the managerial European Union itself—are attempting to imagine the nonviolent interrelation of mass strangers through more pluralistic and self-reflexive ways.

Chapters 2 through 4 offer in-depth analyses of particular art practices working along these lines, beginning with the recent moving-image work of German artist Harun Farocki. Farocki was a prolific, monumental figure in filmmaking from the late 1960s until his death in 2014, but I focus on his transition to large-scale video installations in the twenty-first century. With this shift came new strategies for engaging with mass audiences connected through a broader screen culture and global media industry. In chapter 2, I compare two of his works from 2007, a film, *Respite*, and a multiscreen video installation, *Deep Play*, which both signal the construction of securitarian publics in Europe, from the Nazi era to the contemporary moment, and the need for more pluralistic, boundary-crossing civil engagement in a visual realm. His pieces expose the dehumanization of stigmatized groups such as Jews, Roma, and French Muslims through optical technologies of surveillance, statistical numbering, and reductive televisual coverage. In his more recent work, he attempts to highlight reanimations of historically recursive

violence in order to mediate and envision stranger-spectator relations in more self-reflexive and nonviolent ways.

Thomas Hirschhorn's neighborhood installations constitute the central interpretative focus of chapter 3. These temporary cultural centers garner publicity for ghettoized, lower-income, and immigrant-based suburbs of major European metropolises. Not quite operative in the sense of counterpublics, as Michael Warner describes them, I argue that these projects, rather, attempt to envision preventive publics.[112] In his summer-long installations, diverse audiences—not communities in the traditional sense—interact through heterogeneous discursive forms and, in so doing, plant the seeds for plural and critically self-reflexive publics. The repetition-with-difference of these neighborhood projects in varying suburbs of major European metropolises recognizes the pernicious material offshoots of imperial violence that have historically and differentially affected many of the most vulnerable peoples on the continent.

Finally, I investigate artworks by the collective Henry VIII's Wives, which operated from 1997 to 2014. The group's six members worked together during this time but lived in different cities throughout Europe—in Germany, Scandinavia, and the United Kingdom. Little has been published about their work, but their practice is paradigmatic of emergent, multimedia-based artist collectives that engage with diverse audiences across territorial and disciplinary borders. I concentrate my analysis on their cross-genre, multiyear project *Tatlin's Tower and the World* (2005–14). This piece hailed preventive publics into being by challenging aggressive, recurring forms of iconicity and populism, working translocally with heterogeneous sites and popular associations in London, Belgrade, Bern, and online. Through these efforts, the collective aimed to relinquish discursive authorship to audiences and to lay the groundwork for nonviolent imaginaries in Europe.

More than ever, amid the ongoing political, social, and economic crises in Europe, we should reevaluate what it means to be a public in a mass mediatized age and how to engage as a public with common matters of concern. How may plural publics—ever more distanced, mass strangers—come together and relate to each other in civil and ethical modes? This book seeks to explore creative propositions for such publics, ones that not only denounce spectacular violence in the wake of atrocity such as Breivik's massacre, but also attempt to apprehend a more attritional, habitual, and recurring violence that may shape the social imaginary and slowly poison the soil of human relations. The broken branches of Effi & Amir's olive tree reach out to us, imploring us to

keep looking, because the slow malnourishment and death of its roots might have been prevented. A more invisible field of violence surrounding it laid the historical groundwork for a constricted "aperture of futurity"—a vanishing vanishing-point—where such violence may easily deform in similar ways. Against this, it is the challenge of the following chapters to investigate how preventive publics might actively imagine a horizon of nonviolence through historically bound, publicly engaged artworks in Europe today.

notes

INTRODUCTION

1 Keenan, "Publicity and Indifference," 18–19.
2 Keenan, "Publicity and Indifference," 36.
3 For further analysis, see Cohen, "*The Vanishing Vanishing-Point*," 1–17.
4 Keenan, "Publicity and Indifference," 37.
5 See for instance Weizman, *Forensis*; Weizman, *Forensic Architecture*; and Keenan and Weizman, *Mengele's Skull*.
6 Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture," 140.
7 Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture," 140, 120.
8 Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture," 120.
9 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 11.
10 In the same interview, Weizman observes a shift to "predictive forensics, turning the direction of analysis from the past to the future, so to speak." Such predictive forensics works with mass data to identify patterns in people's behavior in space and time, and thus, for instance, pinpoint where people might mostly likely be targeted (by missiles) or intercepted (as sea migrants). Forensic Architecture developed a software, Pattrn, to crowdsource

and anonymize uploaded, geo-tagged data in order to map out such relations. The group's shift toward violence prevention is notable, yet it subscribes to the use of empirically bound, data-driven measures, rather than cross-citational discursive efforts, in an attempt to mitigate the vulnerabilities of the public sphere. This is quite different than what I propose. Additionally, its understanding of violence is limited to a realm of the clearly concrete and physical. Bois et al., "On Forensic Architecture," 136–37.

11 "Breivik Manifesto: What Does '2083' Mean?," *International Business Times*, July 27, 2011.

12 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 201.

13 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 10.

14 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 22.

15 Hall, *Familiar Stranger*, 182–86.

16 Hall, *Familiar Stranger*, 183–84.

17 See for instance Mercer, *Travel and See*; Chambers, *Black Artists in British Art*; Bernier, *Stick to the Skin*; and Aikens and Robles, *The Place Is Here*. For an insightful historical contextualization of Rasheed Araeen's important work as an artist, curator, and writer, see Martin, "Rasheed Araeen, Live Art, and Radical Politics," 107–24.

18 See for instance McDonough, *"The Beautiful Language of My Century"*; McDonough, *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*; Feldman, *From a Nation Torn*; and Woodruff, *Disordering the Establishment*.

19 Widrich, *Performative Monuments*, 4–5.

20 Widrich, *Performative Monuments*, 8.

21 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 68–69.

22 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 71.

23 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 75.

24 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 75.

25 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 88.

26 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 89.

27 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 90–94.

28 Stimson, "What Was Institutional Critique?," 35.

29 Alberro, "Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique," 7. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, however, Habermas does not discuss the space of museums or their historical ties to nationalizing, civil discourses in Europe. For another useful anthology on institutional critique, see Raunig and Ray, *Art and Contemporary Critical Practice*.

30 Alberro, "Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique," 12.

31 Alberro, "Institutions, Critique, and Institutional Critique," 8.

32 Stimson, "What Was Institutional Critique?," 22.

33 Feldman, *From a Nation Torn*, 3.

34 For excellent analyses of these gendered, racialized images, see Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World*, 146–54; and Alter, "The Political Im/perceptible in the Essay Film," 165–92.

35 In his book *Enlightenment in the Colony*, for example, Aamir R. Mufti delves into genealogies of Enlightenment thought on alterity, which were bound to the Jewish question on the continent and then propagated and disseminated throughout the world as part of the imperialist project. According to him, the unique status of the Jewish question within the Enlightenment intellectual project—and the striking restrictions on secularism, nationalism, and citizenship that it justified—also spread to governance that suppressed freedoms in the European colonies. Relatedly, Michael Rothberg's *Multidirectional Memory* serves as a critical intervention in terms of comparative memory studies between the violence of the Holocaust and twentieth-century liberation struggles for formerly colonized nations.

36 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*.

37 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 9.

38 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 5, 19.

39 I use the term *New Europe* broadly to refer to a deepening and widening sense of European identity on the continent in the twenty-first century, particularly around the European Union's enlargement in 2004 and 2007. The term originally arose in response to a charged statement by Donald Rumsfeld in 2003 regarding European support for the US war in Iraq, when he flippantly referred to Germany and France as "Old Europe." Yet it has taken on numerous layers of meaning since then, used ubiquitously in literary, filmic, and artistic representations as well as scholarship. Often the term comes to signify more specifically the inclusion of Eastern Europe in a New European imaginary, as in Veličković, *Eastern Europeans in Contemporary Literature*. See also Domínguez's discussion of the term in his introduction to *Cosmopolitanism and the Postnational*, 4–5.

40 I borrow this phrasing from political sociologist Jos de Beus in his essay, "The European Public Sphere," 21.

41 There is an emergent, growing body of literature around issues of care. See for instance the Care Collective, *The Care Manifesto*; TallBear, "Caretaking Relations, Not American Dreaming"; and Hobart and Kneese, "Radical Care."

42 Stoler, *Duress*, 5–6, 353.

43 Stoler, *Duress*, 131, 377–78.

44 I return to this notion in chapter 1. Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*.

45 Stoler, *Duress*, 8.

46 Stoler, *Duress*, 26.

47 Stoler, *Duress*, 25–27, 31.

48 Saint-Amour, *Tense Future*, 24.
49 Saint-Amour, *Tense Future*, 23.
50 For an insightful unpacking of these schemas, see the chapter "Autonomy, Antagonism, and the Aesthetic" in Kester, *The One and the Many*, 19–65.
51 Ellen Barry and Martin Selsoe Sorensen, "In Denmark, Harsh New Laws for Immigrant 'Ghettos,'" *New York Times*, July 1, 2018; John Graversgaard and Liz Fekete, "Denmark's 'Ghetto Package'—Discrimination Enshrined in Law," *Institute of Race Relations*, November 21, 2019, http://www.irr.org.uk/news/denmarks-ghetto-package-discrimination-enshrined-in-law/.
52 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 94–97.
53 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
54 I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for this observation.
55 I employ the term *virality* here in a general sense, without referencing quite specific, quantitative analyses of media concepts such as "structural virality." See for instance Goel et al., "The Structural Virality of Online Diffusion," 180–96.
56 Weizman describes it as a "thick fabric of lateral relations, associations, and chains of actions between material things, large environments, individuals, and collective action. It connects different physical scales and scales of action. It overflows any map that seeks to frame it because there are always more connections and relations to be made in excess of its frame." Weizman's notion of field causality resonates with my analysis, but again, it places more emphasis on questions of material analysis and culpability in the aftermath of violence. *Forensis*, 26–29.
57 I would like to thank another anonymous reviewer for this observation.
58 "Treaty Establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, Paris, 18 April 1951 (Treaty of Paris)," in Blair, *The European Union since 1945*, 121.
59 For a concise synopsis of such historiographical literature, see for instance Dinan, *Europe Recast*, 10–19. Other primers on the topic and related scholarship can be found in Dedman, *The Origins and Development of the European Union*; and Blair, *The European Union since 1945*.
60 The financial landscape of Europe, however, may shift dramatically after the COVID-19 pandemic and calls to centralize Europe's recovery plan. Matina Stevis-Gridneff, "A €750 Billion Recovery Plan Thrusts Europe into a New Frontier," *New York Times*, May 27, 2020.
61 Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 296.
62 Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 284.
63 Many feminist scholars, such as political philosopher Seyla Benhabib, have pointed to the fact that Arendt's theory of political action in *The Human Condition*, inspired by the Greek *polis*, necessarily excluded "large groups of human beings—like women, slaves, children, laborers, noncitizen residents, and all non-Greeks" whose labor made possible the "leisure for politics" that the elite few enjoyed. Benhabib, "Models of Public Space," 75.

64 Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, 174.
65 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 58, 61.
66 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 37.
67 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, xvii–xviii.
68 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 111.
69 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 113.
70 See Deutsche, *Evictions*; Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," 51–79; and Jackson, *Social Works*.
71 Jackson, *Social Works*, 50–57.
72 Jackson, *Social Works*, 56.
73 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 113.
74 Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 111.
75 Deutsche, *Evictions*, 286.
76 Deutsche, *Evictions*, 202.
77 Deutsche, *Evictions*, 272–74.
78 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 130.
79 See in particular their preface and chapters "Violence, Mourning, and Politics" and "Precarious Life" in Butler, *Precarious Life*, xi–xxi, 19–49, 128–52.
80 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 20, 24.
81 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 19.
82 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 40.
83 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 192.
84 Breckenridge et al., *Cosmopolitanism*, 1–14.
85 Breckenridge et al., *Cosmopolitanism*, 2, 6.
86 Cheah and Robbins, *Cosmopolitics*, 6.
87 Cheah and Robbins, *Cosmopolitics*, 6.
88 Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere."
89 Cheah and Robbins, *Cosmopolitics*, 3.
90 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 20, 24.
91 Butler does so to some extent in *Precarious Life* (see 185–87, 192) but largely focuses on this question in their last chapter of *The Force of Nonviolence*, "Postcript: Rethinking Vulnerability, Violence, Resistance," 185–204.
92 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 186–87.
93 Azoulay, *Civil Imagination*, 222–26.
94 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 192.
95 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 201.
96 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 197, 201.
97 Butler, *The Force of Nonviolence*, 202. See particularly their chapter "Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street," in *Notes toward a Performative Theory*, 66–98.
98 Bee and Bozzini, *Mapping the European Public Sphere*.
99 Risse, *European Public Spheres*, 3.

100 Risse, *European Public Spheres*, 13; de Beus, "The European Public Sphere," 23.

101 De Beus, "The European Public Sphere," 23.

102 De Beus, "The European Public Sphere," 17.

103 De Beus, "The European Public Sphere," 29; Risse, *European Public Spheres*, 3.

104 As de Beus writes, "Does a public sphere deficit of sorts exist in the EU? That is the leading question of the research presented in this book" ("The European Public Sphere," 14).

105 De Beus, "The European Public Sphere," 25. As Cristiano Bee and Emanuela Bozzini elaborate, "Between 2005 and 2009 the European Commission initiated an impressive series of concrete measures, targeting journalists and civil society. Codes of conduct, guidelines, training courses for journalists and workshops for civil society actors were organised in order to enhance dialogic interactions and to put Europe on the public agenda. Furthermore, the improvement of the *europa.eu* website and the interactive structures that were set up (for example thematic blogs and fora, the YourVoice in Europe portal, the CIRCA website *Communication and Information Research Centre Administrator*) aimed to give people a say on political matters concerning the EU, and was an attempt to develop a strategic and comprehensive approach to public communication" (*Mapping the European Public Sphere*, 3).

106 De Beus, "The European Public Sphere," 21.

107 For a provocative call to combine the expertise of area studies with a new comparative literature, with all of their historically attendant problems, see the chapter "Crossing Borders," in Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 2–23.

108 Singh, *Unthinking Mastery*, 136. Singh connects a more socially positive conception of mastery, or the skilled acquisition of expertise and knowledge, to historical forms of violence, particularly colonialism. For her, mastery lies at the foundation of anticolonial writings and postcolonial studies, for instance, as figures such as Gandhi and Frantz Fanon had to assume "masterful" positions—linguistic, emotional, psychological, material—to credibly oppose and confront colonial violence in its different manifestations, rooted in the pernicious power of Eurocentrism (8–9).

109 Singh, *Unthinking Mastery*, 17, 90–91, 139.

110 Like Freeman in *Time Binds*, I strive for the unfolding of "slowly, a small number of imaginative texts rather than amass a weighty archive of or around texts" (xvii) with the addendum that I wish to substitute or supplement visuals for or with textual documents as well.

111 For her analysis of Arendt's theoretical work, see particularly the chapter "Rethinking the Political," in Azoulay, *Civil Imagination*, 29–124.

112 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*.