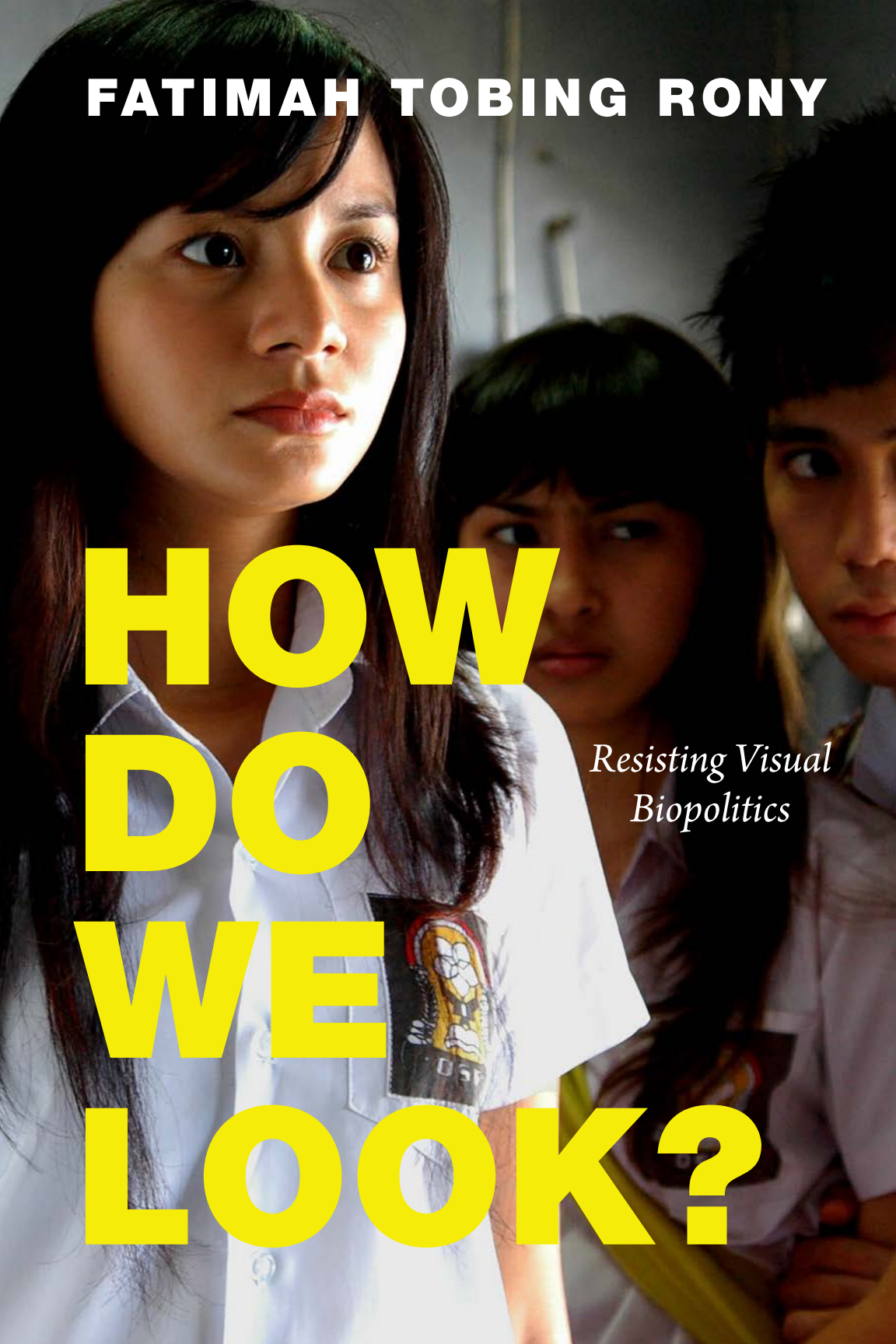
FATIMAH TOBING RONY
HOW DO WE LOOK?
Resisting Visual Biopolitics


HOW DO WE LOOK?


BUY

A CAMERA OBSCURA BOOK

HOW DO WE LOOK?

Resisting Visual Biopolitics

FATIMAH TOBING RONY

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Cover art: Safina (Kirana Larasati) in a faceoff with schoolboy bullies, in a still by Dianti Andajani, from the omnibus film *Perempuan Punya Cerita* (*Chants of Lotus*, 2007), produced by Nia Dinata. Cinematography by Teoh Gay Hian.

To Saenah

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Saenah, it's done.

TONGUE

I hear her voice first, my mother whispering to me to wake up. It is still dark, not yet dawn. She is holding a kerosene lamp, and there is a big black shadow of a man at the door. "Daughter, you must get dressed." "Hurry," the man waiting at the door says. "The boat is leaving soon." My mother takes out her comb and, bending down, parts my hair in the middle and briskly braids it. She wipes my face with a cloth, and then lifts my chin and looks me in the eyes: "Listen to the man. May God bless you." I look up at her, questioning, but I don't speak. She says, "We will be together again soon," but she looks away when the man's coarse hand grabs mine and pulls me away. I can't believe that my feet are moving, but there I am, walking out the door, past my father, who does not get up from his mat, out of the only house I have ever known, past the shadows of my sleeping brothers and sisters. Only much later—as I had all the time in the world to think about it, after countless nights of crying and shivering from the bitter cold as I lay in the black hold of the very large ship that took me away from my small little world to Paris,

France—only much, much later did I realize that my mother had sold me off to pay for my father's gambling debts.

I don't blame her. I was the oldest and I was a girl.

When I arrive in France, I see snow for the first time. I look up at the falling snowflakes as the large man in charge puts a handwritten sign around my neck, and then pushes me out to walk onto the pier. I wait an eternity. Nobody comes to meet me. I return to find the large man, but the ship has left, and I am all alone, until a policeman picks me up and takes me to the station. Later, the servant of Madame comes to collect me.

"What's her name?" he asks the policeman.

"Hell if I know. Call her whatever you want. You can call her Broom for all I care."

The servant looks at me and says, "The mistress has been wanting a *négresse* from the islands. We'll call you Annah. Annah la Javanaise."

And straightaway I lost my name and my mother tongue. I never hear my language again, except in the few instances when I dream that I am back home and free.

INTRODUCTION

How Do We Look?

All your buried corpses are beginning to speak.
—JAMES BALDWIN, *I Am Not Your Negro*

The loss of stories sharpens the hunger for them. So it is tempting to fill in the gaps and to provide closure where there is none. To create a space for mourning where it is prohibited. To fabricate a witness to a death not much noticed.
—SAIDIYA HARTMAN, "Venus in Two Acts"

ANNAH AND JUMILAH

Our story is inspired by a brown-skinned girl, age thirteen, who is called Annah, *une négresse*, or a black girl. The year is 1893; the place is Paris, France. The girl is found wandering the streets with a handwritten sign around her neck stating that she is a package for a certain opera singer, Madame Nina Pack, who had requested "une négresse" from the East Indies to be a maid. Unhappy with Annah's housework, Pack fires her. Annah is sent to the studio of postimpressionist painter Paul Gauguin, known for his predilection for black and brown girls. There she is forced to service him sexually and to provide labor as a domestic servant, until she runs away in 1894. In a painting of 1893, *Aita tamari vahine Judith te parari*, Paul Gauguin painted Annah's nude portrait over the nude portrait of another thirteen-year-old girl, this

one white, Judith Molard, whose mother forbade her from continuing to model for Gauguin (Figure 1.1).

To understand the story that enmeshed the girl who was called Annah, one has to go back to 1889, to four young Javanese girls dancing, at the Javanese Pavilion of the Exposition Universelle, in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower. When the bejeweled Wakiem, Seriem, Taminah, and Soekia danced, French observers mythologized the girls as harem dancers and nubile courtesans from the Solo (Surakarta) court.[1] These girls became so famous that it started a French vogue for "la Java"—*faire la java* still means to have a party, to get wicked—and it is that myth or story that was imposed on the thirteen-year-old girl Annah in 1893. To call Annah "la Javanaise" was to call her "the wicked girl." By metonymy, she was hung with the name, like the title of a circus performer. Except there are two things to point out: Annah was probably not Javanese, and indeed, Annah was most likely not her given name. A visual myth held her in place that justified her exploitation and likely early death, a concept that I call *visual biopolitics.*

Now fast forward to 1965, Indonesia, and the beginning of the autocratic reign of military general Suharto. There is a dancer from Java. Her name is Jumilah, but like Annah, another name is forced upon her. Jumilah is snatched up and tortured at a time when women dancers seen as allied with Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, the Indonesian Women's Movement, and thus unruly feminists, began to be scapegoated as the scourge of a righteous nation. This formative representation, seen in the newspaper media, radio reports, monuments, history books, and later Indonesian cinema, depicts the dancer as a monstrous, sexual communist female. In I. G. P. Wiranegara's documentary film of 2006, *Menyemai Terang Dalam Kelam*, Jumilah testifies how she was seized and forced to confess to crimes that she did not commit (Figure 2.9). The soldiers beat her to force her to confess that she was the supposedly wanton and wanted person named Atikah Jamilah, when her name was actually Jumilah. They forced her to declare that she had castrated and sadistically tortured government military officers and had a sexual orgy with their murdered bodies, when she had done no such thing.

This story, fabricated by the future regime and visualized in film, national monuments, history books, and government speeches, justified the creation of the Indonesian republic under the dictatorship of President Suharto, who used it to legitimize his seizure of power and the subsequent torture, rape, and genocide of up to a million people labeled members of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI, the Communist Party of Indonesia), and the subsequent aftermath for children of political prisoners who are cast out from society

and denied civil rights. But along with committing these heinous acts against humanity, the Suharto regime erased the freedom to question state power. Remaking history and visually archiving life in this way annihilates political imagination and puts fear or apathy in its place.

Since 1965, this image has been constructed and circulated over and over again; even to the present day, it is difficult to erase the taint of communism and its association with a dancing wanton woman from Indonesian minds. Virulently anticommunist and thus firmly in the US camp that supported and abetted the coup, President Suharto exploited the thousands of islands rich in vast resources of oil, tin, coffee, cotton, rubber, tea, timber, and labor. The nation's postcolonial economy embraced a vast expansion of capitalism and inaugurated the reign of homo economicus, the masculinist advocate of free-market capitalism and hyperconsumerism, which was used to justify the military dictatorship, shored up by the story of the PKI dancer as killer woman.[2] The United States has a culture that is violent to the lives of people of color due to the legacy of black chattel slavery, colonization of Indian lands, and American ignorance of history; Indonesia, even under Reformasi (the post-Suharto Reformation), has not adequately confronted its own killings from 1965 onward, and thus the trope of the dancing, murderous, sexual woman is used again and again and became imprinted in the nation's deep unconscious. To see the creation of the Republic of Indonesia is to see the battle against the unruly female dancer by the righteous Suharto-led army, much like the good-versus-evil Balinese dance of the good dragon Barong pitted against the monstrous witch Rangda. Such negative images become, then, what James Baldwin describes as "the fixed star" by which we learn to navigate our worlds.[3]

I begin this book by introducing two mythoi of two girls from two different centuries, both false. The tapestry of images (in painting, photography, historical monuments, film) of how Indonesian women are represented is transnational and globalized. The stories that are told through the network of what I call visual biopolitics, which makes certain populations more vulnerable to child rape, violence, or early death, have only become more entrenched, despite the rise of independence movements and the end of the Cold War. Visual biopolitics is the system, shored up by iconographies of justification found in photography, cinema, television, national monuments, and the internet, that underscores preexisting structural race and gender representations in language, politics, and the unconscious. It is an indictment by sight, to paraphrase filmmaker Ava DuVernay.[4] It is the concatenation and web of imaging networks that systematize who is allowed to live and who is allowed to die and, by extension, who is allowed to be raped and who is not.

In *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle*, I wrote about how colonialism created a divide between the Historical and the Ethnographic, the Civilized and the Savage, and how these divides were inscribed in film, photography, and other visual technologies. These categories served biopolitics by producing a logic whereby the life of one group was nourished at the expense of another. Much to my dismay, more than twenty years on, I find that this divide is just as persistent and pernicious in our era of neoliberalism and globalization. In this book I trace the legacy of one particular aspect of visual biopolitics—the representation of the Indonesian woman—into the twenty-first century of globalization. I chose this particular representation because of my own investment as a filmmaker looking for representations of myself, which I could never find growing up in the United States. To my surprise, this figure is contested, highly vilified, and politicized, and has served the visual biopolitics of the colonial period from nationalism, to postcolonialism, to the present-day era of neoliberalism. I show why these images have such a strong valence and how they still persist.

Building on *The Third Eye*, this book ties critical race theory to a legacy in visual anthropology whose vast and varied archive I identify and interpret. The genealogy of this representation is based in historical and anthropological discourses of primitivism/savagery/colonialism/exoticism/genocide. The specificity of the figure of the Indonesian woman and the reality of Indonesian women artists, including myself, is inextricably tied to the genealogy of colonial/ethnographic discourse, which is why I pay particular attention to ethnographic film pioneer Margaret Mead, whose filming and editing of dancing Indonesian women reveals a particular network of looking that traces its foundations in colonialism, tourism, exoticism, and primitivism. Joshua Oppenheimer, the director of *The Act of Killing* (2012), is the documentary heir to this legacy, and this explains the acts of resistance of the dancing Indonesian woman that I will show in my discussion of Rachmi Diyah Larasati's book *The Dance That Makes You Vanish.* The Indonesian woman (the model, the dancer, the object of display) is not just an example of visual biopolitics: it is a palimpsest like no other, through which the centrality of the visuality of display, painting, photography, and film to biopolitics is established.[5] My goal is to show how discourses of resistance in acts of female creativity and embodiment can undermine and potentially topple such genealogies.

This book, then, is also about acts of resistance to visual biopolitics, specifically but not exclusively using examples from film. While I historicize

and theorize the contexts and mechanisms of visual biopolitics and the archiving of the Indonesian woman and the divides and subjectivities it has perpetuated, I also show how those same tools can be and are being used to challenge power. Our work is to examine the representations so that we can visualize ourselves, in terms of both theory and practice.

In a 2009 interview, Jill Lepore declared that her task as a historian is to understand the vocabulary of justification: "I'm interested in our capacity to justify acts of tremendous, unspeakable cruelty. It's not obvious, at least not to me. And the way I have always tried to puzzle it out is by thinking mainly about language. What, literally, is the vocabulary of justification?"[6] Instead of language and the early eighteenth-century histories of North America that Lepore was describing, this book examines visual representations of and by Indonesian women within the histories of colonialism, postcolonialism, and biopolitics. Instead of words, I trace images across media as diverse as painting, photography, and film to understand visual and textual vocabularies of justification.

Media from Indonesia, the fourth most populous country in the world, and the most populous Muslim country in the world, are largely ignored in the field of film and media studies, and yet studying Indonesian media provides an interesting test case for how visual biopolitics can be dismantled. During the period of relative freedom after 1998, when the country suffered an economic crisis that led to the withdrawal of Suharto from the presidency, the figure of the Indonesian woman became the subject of much innovation in filmmaking, production, distribution, and exhibition, a subject that I explore later in this book. Finally, as a filmmaker who has worked with an Indonesian production house involved in this movement, I also provide a practical perspective on a topic and a field that I know experientially. The broader application of the theory of visual biopolitics is developed through the specific case of the Indonesian woman.

Visual biopolitics does not just produce empty signifiers: these visual myths contain the resemblances of the historical real. Visual biopolitics collapses the effects of the present, past, and future, and it is therein that an artist, a filmmaker, a writer can wield and take back her power. Thus, what shook me about the gorgeous painting *Aita tamari vahine Judith te parari* by Gauguin of Annah la Javanaise, recontextualized more than 125 years later, is the dead girl at the center of the painting, whose real name and origin we do not know, but who called out to me nevertheless.

Do not leave me in the archive.

The genesis of theories of biopolitics lay in an overlooked section of Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, that began to be read closely in the 1990s. The chapter, "Right of Death and Power over Life," described biopolitics as a new form of modern state power. If the sovereign could command deaths with "off with his head" impunity, power under the modern state was more secretive, purporting to foster life but also disallowing it to the point of death. Power was woven into the fabric of the commonplace, inhering in two ways, as disciplinary power over the body as machine (the prison, the police, the military, schools, hospitals, the factory, the plantation) and as regulatory power over the body as species (the medical, scientific, and sociological institutions that regularize population control, mortality, effects of environment, biological disabilities, etc.).[7]

Central to biopolitics is the production of a norm. In a lecture in the book *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault writes, "The norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize."[8] But this presents a conundrum: how does the democracy make in/visible who will be allowed to live and who will be allowed to die? What I call the archiving of life is synonymous with this construction of the norm, seen in the ethnographic film *Trance and Dance in Bali*, directed by anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson (discussed in chapter 2), and the innumerable reels of colonial footage archiving the movements of "primitive" peoples, or colonial films, like those assemblaged together in Vincent Monnikendam's found-footage feature film *Mother Dao* (discussed in chapter 3). This archive reinforces, reassures, and creates an ever-fixed mark of who is allied with life and who is allied with death. And this polarity between the Savage and the Civilized continues even in acclaimed new films, like Joshua Oppenheimer's performative documentary *The Act of Killing* (discussed in chapter 2). Foucault states that it is racism that provides the norm or "the indispensable precondition that allows someone to be killed," a killing that can simply be "the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on."[9] Biopolitics means not just the politics of whether one lives or dies, but the terms upon which one is allowed to live.

Foucault's description of the norm that allows one to be killed is relevant for any person of color growing up in the United States, as well as for the Indonesian New Order regime's systematic use of violent torture, rape, imprisonment, and death against anyone labeled leftist; it also describes women's

sexuality in Indonesia and how the state and the local religious culture make one vulnerable to premature death. The sovereign right to kill still inheres in modern state power through what Giorgio Agamben calls states of exception, in which the law protecting citizens is suspended in declared states of emergency and war.[10] Ironically, although biopolitics' purported goal is sustaining life through regulation, at the crux of biopolitics is this aporia: certain populations are allowed to die at the expense of other populations.

To make that palatable, visual biopolitics interpellates citizens, so that we perceive these norms as a natural, God-given right. Here I find a great source in the critical race theory of thinkers like Sylvia Wynter. Drawing upon Frantz Fanon and neuroscience, Wynter explains that we humans use stories as a way of inventing ourselves as a biological species, with story lines like Darwinian evolution, Malthusian overpopulation, consumerism, and ghetto communities posited as common sense.[11] We are social beings that narrate. Life as seen through biology is undergirded by story. To Wynter, I add that we sew the bios into the mythos, in the visual image web that makes up visual biopolitics. The particular narration that we have chosen, one that undergirds modernity and the secular liberal subject that she refers to as homo economicus, is monohumanism, a Darwinian Malthusian one that narrates the world into symbolic life and symbolic death, or what I have described in my own work as those who are seen as historifiable, belonging to history, and those who are seen as ethnographiable, or belonging to ethnography. Or, plainly stated, the Civilized versus the Savage.[12] The archiving of life in biopolitics informs the way we see and interpret ourselves: it undergirds the story and it makes the story seem like common sense.

Theory itself has its biopolitics: Alexander Weheliye lambasts how critical theory has ignored the work of black feminist theorists Sylvia Wynter and Hortense Spillers, who delineate how the Human is, in fact, the norm: the white male allied with life. The discourse of race functions by determining who is to be conceived of as Human, Subhuman, or Nonhuman, Visible and In/visible.[13] Race is crucial to the subjectivity of what "human" means: Agamben's "bare life," or life reduced to biology and deprived of rights, and Foucault on "biopolitics," naturalize race and overlook what Weheliye terms "the racializing assemblages" that affect difference, creating Man (capital M) or the human as the universalizing Self. The rational individual Subject, in other words, is still aligned with white male subjectivity. To race, I would also add gender and sexuality, extending who is allowed to live and who is let die to who is allowed to be raped and who is not—rape and death often being perpetrated together.

The stories that we tell about ourselves can be classified as genres, and like genres are possibly capable of being transformed. Wynter argues, "We need to speak instead of our *genres of being human*. Once you redefine being human in hybrid *mythoi* and *bios* terms, and therefore in terms that draw attention to the relativity and original multiplicity of our *genres* of being human, all of a sudden what you begin to recognize is the central role that our discursive *formations*, aesthetic fields, and systems of knowledge must play in the performative enactment of all such genres of being hybridly human."[14] This textualization, a kind of weaving or storytelling of life, is part of what I call visual biopolitics. Categories and ideologies work to designate populations that are allowed to die or even encouraged to die. The visual underscores these markers of difference by telling us what to see.

Wynter illuminates that homo economicus is a global phenomenon among middle classes all around the world who have embraced this model from the West in a neocolonial process of interpellation: "The West *reincorporate[s]* us neocolonially, and thereby mimetically, by telling us that the problem with us *wasn't* that we'd been *imperially* subordinated, *wasn't* that we'd been both socioculturally dominated and economically exploited, but that we were *underdeveloped*. The West said: 'Oh, well, no longer be a *native* but come and be Man like us! Become *homo economicus!*'"[15] The Civilized versus the Savage has thus become the enlightened versus the undeveloped (or what Wynter calls the selected versus the "dysselected"). Life became the object of vigilance by the state in modern society, bolstered by visual discourse that renders certain populations more likely to encounter early death and sexual violence.

And now, in the context of neoliberalism and globalization, the colonies are no longer distant but situated within the metropolises. Death-worlds, to paraphrase Achille Mbembe, are contained under and near the overpasses on which those who have, those who matter, drive every day.[16] This is one major way visual biopolitics has changed under globalization: the ghetto of the casbah is no longer walled off from the European quarter, thus making vocabularies of visualization even more important for the state to control and restrain. While the actual walls keeping one group in or out may have crumbled, other structures of power have taken their place. We can understand the persistence of the subjective gaze and the disciplining of the bodies of populations through analyzing visual biopolitics, the visual and aural constructions that govern life and death, the body, subjectivity, and relations of periphery and center. In a sense, the visual—whether it is painting, photography, or film—mythologizes the work of biopolitics. Moreover, biopower

operates through ways of seeing, valorizations of the visual, and hegemonic representational practices.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore's definition of racism expresses the function of racialized biopolitics: "Racism, specifically, is the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death."[17] Visual biopolitics is what shores up this racism so that it appears to be and becomes dominant power's common sense, instinct, and science. In particular, it defines the moment before the trigger is pulled; the moment when a female dancer is grabbed off the street to be tortured and scapegoated; the moment when a child worker is labeled Javanese and thus rape-able. What vocabularies or stories of justification occur in that moment when a person decides that he needs to kill another? Visual biopolitics helps to create the categories of people whose lives and histories should be valued and those whose should not—of whose lives matter.

How do we look? My understanding of visual biopolitics is inspired by two practices of thinking. The first body of theory is by those who engage in what I have called the third eye, akin to Du Bois's double consciousness, or Fanon's third space, emerging from postcolonial theory and black studies, and expanded upon by James Baldwin, Sylvia Wynter, Saidiya Hartman, and Alexander Weheliye, which develop biopolitics into the realms of visual culture and gender and race. In describing paradigms of looking, I turn to critical race theory, a theory derived from the experiential, and thus a living, breathing theory, where the past is always prologue, to paraphrase the title of the book by Sohail Daulatzai.[18] This is the heart of my writing: when denied humanity and thus symbolic life—by language, by culture, by history, by common sense—how does one regain subjectivity or agency? How does that change? So although my topic is ostensibly the figure of the Indonesian woman, what I am describing can be used to interrogate other systems of visualizing power to create other acts of resistance.

Following that purpose, how can one resist visual biopolitics? In particular, I look at the practice of reading in the archive of art history, with the example of Annah la Javanaise; in the missionary archive, with the example of the photograph of Raja Pontas; through dance, in films as seemingly disparate as the ethnographic film of Margaret Mead and the contemporary art documentary of Joshua Oppenheimer; in the found-footage film in *Mother Dao* by Vincent Monnikendam, and in examples from contemporary Indonesian cinema made in the Reformasi (Reformation) period following Suharto's downfall in 1998, which use collective practice to transform the very notion of ideal viewer or auteur filmmaker. Critical to this theory of resistance is one of the most

profound works resisting visual biopolitics that I have ever encountered, the dancer and choreographer Rachmi Diyah Larasati's book, *The Dance That Makes You Vanish: Cultural Reconstruction in Post-genocide Indonesia*.

The "you" in the title refers to both Larasati, a government dancer who was sent around the world to perform Javanese dance during the Suharto regime, and the "you" of her aunts, mother, and "sister" female dancers who went missing in the wake of the killings in Indonesia of 1965. Larasati has herself become, as she poignantly explains, a replica, the whole dancer who replaces those who were disappeared. As Larasati explains, unlike Baudrillard's simulacra of hyperreality, which are empty signifiers, the replicas of the bodies of dancers contain a trace of the dead: "The overlaid 'hyperreality,' despite its purported leveling and destruction of that which came before, is nonetheless inextricably tied to the historical 'real,' which remains embedded as collective unconscious, even as it is wiped from public discourse. Replica bodies, then, while defining the audience's perception of reality, necessarily take on uncanny resemblances to their forebears, creating flashes of vivid connection in which the unseen disappeared becomes visible, even if not always consciously readable as such."[19] I stress that visual biopolitics does not just produce empty signifiers: these visual myths contain the resemblances of the historical real.

My task in this book is to gently unravel the skein of visual vocabularies in media that reinforce biopolitics. My concern is in how visual materials across genre and time reinforce habitual ways of seeing and not seeing, but can also be used as resistance. In particular, I look at what happens when we are put in a place of impossible subjectivity. How can that become a space of empowerment? As I argue in *The Third Eye*, inspired by Frantz Fanon and W. E. B. Du Bois, there is a moment in the person of color's consciousness when we find ourselves sitting in an impossible space, what anthropologist Stefania Pandolfo has described as the Cut, or the thin line of modernity.[20] To constantly have to prove our humanity (to be at once patient and doctor) is exhausting and demoralizing, and yet because of that impossible space of subjectivity, we are able to critique and unsettle the matrix of biopolitics.

FABULATING

The archiving of life is a biopolitical endeavor: from anthropological archives like those of Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson to cross-study so-called primitive tribes, to medical and colonial archives, to the genetic data popularized today for general consumerism and consumption, biopolitics show-

cases the archive as an absolute empirical apparatus. As a historian of media, I have always been aware of the fascinating cannibalism of the media consumer who is entertained by the retelling of the story of savagery.[21] At the heart of one's endeavor lies the history of the image of the dead black girl's face, which is also the image of one's own face. At the center of "Venus in Two Acts," Saidiya Hartman's revelatory essay on the failure of the archive, is a cruelly murdered African girl on a slave ship. She is referred to in the archive and thus the history book as "Venus." As women of color reading the archive, we are also doubly injured: we cannot reach Venus, just as we cannot reach Annah, and so they die another death, one of silence. The tragedy that led to the abuse, exploitation, and sexual violence they experienced is still part of our culture today.

The archive of history is particularly cruel to black girls. As Hartman explains about US historical evidence, female slaves are often called Venus, and the archive has only this distorted trace of their subjectivities, and so the historian is in a dilemma: to write about Venus may be to keep perpetuating the silencing of her story. The Annahs and the Venuses are still present in the fact that thirteen-year-old black girls continue to be exploited and brutalized. They are trafficked for sexual exploitation, with Italy being the primary entry point for a prostitution trade that encompasses all the major cities of Europe. As Father Enzo Volpe, a priest who runs a center for migrant children in Palermo, Italy, states, "There's an extraordinary level of implicit racism here, and it's evident in the fact that there are no underage Italian girls working the streets. . . . Society dictates that it's bad to sleep with a girl of thirteen or fourteen years. But if she's African? . . . They don't think of her as a person."[22] This is the story of Annah and her great-great-granddaughters. This story, of the sale and trafficking of the black girl, has enormous political and economic relevance today.

How do we create subjectivity when it has been erased? Hartman presents a new possibility when the reader searches for stories of Venus in the archive:

> The intention here isn't anything as miraculous as recovering the lives of the enslaved or redeeming the dead, but rather laboring to paint as full a picture of the lives of the captives as possible. This double gesture can be described as straining against the limits of the archive to write a cultural history of the captive, and, at the same time, enacting the impossibility of representing the lives of the captives precisely through the process of narration.
>
> The method guiding this writing practice is best described as critical fabulation.[23]

Therefore, to dissect, analyze, and understand the images of people of color that have left them more vulnerable to premature death or sexual violence is to understand not only how we are mirrored in our societies, but also how to participate and take part in the making of art that will upset, challenge, and in Hartman's words, critically fabulate.[24]

Scholars and filmmakers have focused on many aspects of black representation. The scholarship around representations of black men has shown how D. W. Griffith's cinematic image of Gus, in what is considered the first great Hollywood feature film, *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), as a raping black monster, a bogeyman who lusts after innocent white virgins, continued in later images, such as the 1988 anti-Dukakis political ad that featured Willie Horton as another black monster. These, as scholar Michelle Alexander and filmmaker Ava DuVernay show, have affected the lives of black men and boys, such as seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin, shot by George Zimmerman in 2012 on the pretext of self-defense, or George Floyd, who perished under the knee of Derek Chauvin, a Minneapolis police officer, in 2020.[25] I believe that we can begin a discourse around the study of visual biopolitics in critical race studies, and my project to look at what the representation of Indonesian women does and has done sheds light on visual biopolitics as a whole.

Indonesian film is a relatively understudied field, and yet I find many exciting films from Indonesia that also critically fabulate: diverse forms such as montage video found on YouTube that I compare to the found-footage feature by documentarian Vincent Monnikendam (discussed in chapter 3); or the multistory narrative and omnibus films produced by contemporary Indonesian filmmaker Nia Dinata (discussed in chapter 4), combined with new forms of distribution and exhibition.

I am passionate about examining how media is used to transform our minds and our world, both so that we can understand visual culture and history and so that we can make media that will transform visual culture. I have written this book from the point of view of someone who does film, in every sense of the word, as a film historian and as a filmmaker. Film is a perfect medium for critical fabulation because of its special relationship with time, reality, and realism. Born of the trace of what is recorded by the camera, the shutter opens, and what is fixed on the emulsification of the film is what passed or stood in front of the camera shutter, a ghostly trace. These imprints, these recordings, these traces, are then compiled, stitched, sutured together by an editor, to create an apparently organic beast that is actually inherently full of gaps and holes. "Persistence of vision" is how film theorists have explained how the viewer does not see the black spaces between the

twenty-four frames per second. We put the images together and see the reality of the recording; but in truth, they are compiled by montage. Finally, the film that gets seen is not the one that the filmmaker makes, but the one that catalyzes and provokes the memory-scape of images, experiences, and sounds that make up the viewers' unconscious. Filmmakers can excite that combination and transform it, not merely by changing subject matter and narratives, but by triggering different temporal and spatial limits of the mind, by configuring new subjectivities.

Like Hartman, my goal is to show the limits of the archive: the limits of language that called her Annah, made her Javanese, and still calls her a mistress; the limits of ethnographic film that always already visualizes; the limit of the contemporary documentary film that still produces a subjectivity by and for homo economicus. My work here: to raid the archiving of life to write about critical fabulations, to show how we can make film as a form of critical fabulation.

DAE'ANNA'S EYES

St. Anthony, Minnesota, July 6, 2016. Her name is Lavish, given name Diamond Reynolds. She stares into the camera, her cell phone livestreaming onto her Facebook page: in the backseat behind her is her boyfriend, Philando Castile, dying, his white T-shirt soaked bright red with his blood. Through a window we see the shaking gun held by a police officer. Lavish is talking to him in a calm manner in an effort to de-escalate the policeman's panic. Underlying her attempt to pacify him, however, is another effort: to report to us, the viewer, what has just happened.

Please, officer, don't tell me that you just did that to him. You shot four bullets into him, sir. He was just getting his license and registration, sir.

Lavish calls the man waving a gun at her "sir." She volleys "sir" five times. The horror of this scene is that she cannot allow herself to react normally to the gunning down of her beloved: to scream, to cry, to grieve, to panic, to become angry.

How do we look? We must always be seeing with a third eye, the eye that rises out of one's mind and watches the scene, detached: I am watching myself trying to calm a cop; I am speaking in a clear, calm cadence; I am observing how to protect my four-year-old daughter, Dae'anna, in the backseat from seeing even more violence than Philando's possible death, that of my own death or hers. That is how the third eye works: it involves an interaction with the observer and another, and it is the watching of that interaction, the

awareness of one's responses, that defines a third-eye experience. What happens in that moment when the police officer looks at an African American man and sees and decides that he must be annihilated? Even before the traffic stop, a story has already been impressed upon Philando Castile, to justify his murder, and the vocabulary of the story is the basis of and feeds into visual biopolitics.

There are three temporal zones here: the past, which taught Lavish that to be African American meant to always be faced with the possibility of a violent, dangerous reaction from police officers and other whites (James Baldwin once said to an uncomprehending Margaret Mead that he was born on a slave boat[26]); the present, in which the police officer is shouting and waving his gun at her; and the future, the growing up too fast of the little four-year-old Dae'anna with the impossibly big eyes.

At the end of the video, the police have forced Lavish to leave the car; they have handcuffed her, and she prays out loud for her boyfriend to be spared, not to die. Her calm is fraying: she panics because she cannot see her daughter. The police finally put mother and daughter in the police car.

Dae'anna tells her, "It's okay, Mommy."

"I can't believe they did this," exclaims Lavish.

Calmly her daughter says, "It's okay, I'm right here with you."

Dae'anna is the fourth eye.

Examples of split subjectivities are rife in theories about race, and are important to my discussion of how to resist visual biopolitics. Fanon talks about learning he is black from being pointed at by a little white girl: "Look, a Negro." Du Bois calls it double consciousness. A four-year-old African American girl is forced to grow up and learn about race and biopolitics under the muzzle of a police officer's gun. Unlike Du Bois's and Fanon's world, the twenty-first century has yet more eyes in the form of social media and surveillance. Lavish's video reveals the true consequences of the third eye, the split, cracked identity, but she uses the camera as a record and as a testimony of that experience: it is an example par excellence of resisting visual biopolitics. The fourth eye is the witness, the eye that sees the violence of visual biopolitics, and how one's self is constituted by it. It can be the eye of the child that watches her mother trying to contain the violence of visual biopolitics, but it can also be the artist who refuses that straitjacketing and silencing death, or the historian or scholar. The fourth eye sees the triangulation of the loved one being constituted as Other and thus annihilated, and then this fourth eye, which may retreat and wait for a more opportune time, is able to

resist, attack, and refuse the subjectivity granted to the third eye. The fourth eye comforts, the fourth eye confounds, and the fourth eye survives.

What makes it seem reasonable for police officers in the United States to shoot unarmed black men? Or for Los Angeles County hospital doctors to automatically sterilize Latina women after they are done giving birth, as seen in Renee Tajima-Peña's film *No Más Bebés*?[27] Or for the murders of indigenous women in North America not even to be investigated?[28] How has this cultural logic been produced and reproduced through images? There is actually no justification for using a young girl called Annah la Javanaise as a maid and sexual servant. In the cultural logic of nineteenth-century France, however, this unjustifiable treatment of a child labeled "une négresse" or "la Javanaise" seemed reasonable and natural, so much so that it needed no justification, and continues to inform, given the ways that she is currently regarded in twenty-first-century art history.

In point of fact, justification, which suggests an argument, vindication, plea, apology, excuse, or alibi, suggests a moment of doubt in which an actor (a police officer, a doctor) provides the reason for committing a certain act. This justification does not necessarily occur on a wholly conscious level in the moment when these offenses are committed. Visual biopolitics makes this justification unnecessary or post facto, the articulation of the reason for an act; but the act, once committed, still may require explicit justification. Biopolitics generally, and visual biopolitics in particular, is the predicate; it is what sanctioned the categories of those who matter and those who don't. And if a life does not matter, then one need not have to justify taking it. In a sense, then, visual biopolitics substitutes for justification.[29]

What do I mean by visibility and the visual? First, the visual encompasses categories of seeing around race, gender, class, and sexuality that are signaled by constructed definitions of appearances, such as skin color. Philando Castile is shot because he is seen as a black man. Annah la Javanaise is exploited because she seen as black, "une négresse." Jumilah's difference cannot be racialized. Jumilah is tortured because she is seen as expendable: a poor woman, she could embody the evil feminist leftist dancer necessary for Indonesian historiography. Her difference is made visible by media representations of the venal communist woman. Biopolitics is a visualizing technology, and it must continuously operate and reassure us that, yes, race is empirical, and, yes, the communist is pathological, and, yes, the girl is Javanese. Second, the visual includes those who are not seen. Mechanisms (reglementary, cultural, political) determine who is not seen, as an individual or a community, whose

story is not told, whose individuality is not recognized. One can be marked as black or Mexican or Javanese, and not be seen as an individual. Third, visual biopolitics also determines who engenders an indifferent gaze, those seen as landscape. Visual biopolitics determines who can be visualized and who can't, and how they are visualized; who has subjectivity and what kind (and thus what can happen to them), and for what purposes.

I posit that film and digital media provide critical forums for engaging with the image to rewrite history, to foreground that which was forced to be in the margins or eradicated by discourse. Filmmaking has the potential to undo or resist that, using some of the same tools, techniques, or functions. It is with film that one can reframe both our nonbeing and overpresence. But we cannot write or make film, or create art or music, if we do not begin to understand the visual and textual vocabulary of justification that continues to allow women of color to reside in what are essentially phantom realms of nonrecognition. Visual biopolitics needs to be theorized so we can understand how filmmaking can be used to undo it, so that certain subjectivities can be visualized finally, or anew.

My concept of visual biopolitics differs from the theory that Laura Mulvey set out in her 1976 polemic "Visual Pleasure and Narrative," which posited the male gaze in cinema as sadistic and fetishistic.[30] Mulvey's theory is still the dominant framework through which film studies has understood images of women. Mulvey argued that Hollywood cinema encourages spectators to identify with a male gaze, that Hollywood associates subjectivity with masculinity and relegates women to the position of object (which echoes Foucault's idea of the light that constitutes the viewer's gaze).[31] Visual biopolitics builds on this but goes beyond it, linking this subject/object, viewer/image dichotomy with matters of life and death. Examining how visual biopolitics works matters, because it is intersectional, recognizing that Indonesian women, for example, are framed through the lenses of gender, race, class, sexuality, caste, and disability, and that this produces different effects from those that Mulvey describes. Also, while Mulvey's was a call to action for (white) feminist filmmakers to resist "visual pleasure," I document a very different type of resistant filmmaking, one that is focused not on destroying visual pleasure but on producing a collective subjectivity that works to undo some of visual biopolitics' damaging effects. The power networks of biopolitics work invisibly. But homo economicus must conceive and visualize an enemy, the corrupt, evil monster who must be rooted out. Here is where visual biopolitics comes in. This is part of the weft of society, woven by media, narrative, and politics to become the reality of a culture.

The Annahs, the Jumilahs, the Lavishes, the Dae'annas of the world are both seen and unseen at the same time. They are phantoms relegated to the shadows, the worlds of hidden labor, poverty, the death-worlds that Mbembe talks about, and, on the other hand, they are everywhere, banalized, the dancing native girl, the Budweiser calendar girl, the bare-breasted woman toiling and carrying children on her back in ethnographic film. This improbably impossible oscillation (described in film theory as "I know very well, but just the same") is at the heart of my project, which is to consider the variations, to use Michele Wallace's term, in the visual representation of women of color—in this case, the figure of the Indonesian woman—that can be seen across media and that defy the discursive straitjacket of the ethnographic.[32]

LOOKING BACK

Salty sweat pours into her mouth as Nur raises the rock above her head and smashes it down to break stones, her legs splayed in front of her. Middle-aged and East Javanese, Nur's black hair is cut short in a no-nonsense style, and she wears a blazing red T-shirt, the same color as the blood that wells up on her finger after a stone cuts her. Huge heaps of large stones loom behind her. The sun is unrelenting. Behind her, her young daughter who toddles in a red dress is also playing with the stones. After the work is done, Nur gathers the child up in one hand, a bucket in another, so that she can go home and get ready for her night's work as a prostitute in a Chinese cemetery.

In this scene from *Ragat'e Anak*, the last segment from the Indonesian omnibus film *Pertaruhan* (At Stake, 2008), directed by Ucu Agustin and produced by Nia Dinata, we see Nur as a hardworking middle-aged woman who is simply trying to feed and educate her children, belying the myth of the sexually wanton prostitute. Just as the idealized Annah looked at the viewer from Gauguin's canvas in his 1892 painting *Aita tamari vahine Judith te parari*, director Ucu Agustin presents us with a realist portrait of Nur looking calmly at the camera as she explains what she does for a living in order to feed and educate her children. Instead of being a metonym for an entire, timeless, ahistoric Ethnographic, Nur is firmly rooted in the Historical, her life determined by the transnational labor forces that compelled many wives in East Java to leave Indonesia and work abroad, of which the illegal prostitution in which Nur takes part is a direct result.

The visual is much more difficult to pin down than a text is, since it always requires textual explanation, an act or form of translation or ventriloquism.

As any film historian knows, it is an impossible task to truly or even adequately describe a film in words, like trying to capture an uncontainable beast of moving image, sound, dialogue, music, narrative, and mise-en-scène colliding with the viewer's memory and subconscious, and whose very essence cannot be contained by words. Our memory coils around the body of the film and swallows it whole. And yet we keep on trying to figure film out, seeking to explain it, contain it; and the more films we see, the more we carry within ourselves, like a battered old suitcase of images and sounds and fragments. We speak of the whole film as a unitary thing, but what do we remember? A phrase here, an image there, sometimes a feeling like a punch in the stomach—was that love or a punishment? The effort of describing a film is like that of describing love—impossible, ineffable, and infuriating—but like love, it's urgent.

Lavish Reynolds explained, in an interview conducted following the recording of the death of Philando Castile, that she wanted her story told, and she knew that without her filming it, it would not be told. The camera becomes another eye in the situation, along with her eyes and those of her daughter, Dae'anna. How it is interpreted will be up to the persons who view it; experiences and words cannot be fully contained by film and media, and each of us sees the film with the baggage that we carry in our unconscious.

Long ago, James Baldwin wrote a letter to his nephew in which he advised him that integration is not the issue. He wrote that it is not difficult to be accepted into the society of the white man. What is difficult is for us to accept and love and forgive the white man, for he is not aware of the mask that he wears, while we are always aware of our mask, our third eye. "Try to imagine how you would feel if you woke up one morning to find the sun shivering and all the stars aflame. You would be frightened because it is out of the order of nature. Any upheaval in the universe is terrifying because it so profoundly attacks one's sense of one's own reality. Well, the black man has functioned in the white man's world as a fixed star, as an immovable pillar, and as he moves out of his place, heaven and earth are shaken to their foundations."[33]

How the norm functions as a fixed star is brilliantly stated here. The star can no longer be fixed, and the foundations must be shaken. Visual biopolitics determines subjectivity and reinforces visual vocabularies; it determines the technology of the self, how we learn subjectivity that is individual and ego-based versus collective and community-based, and it shapes how that subjectivity is produced in media, whether it be film, painting, photography, or television, maintaining categories of identity. This book is about visual biopolitics, why certain populations are allowed to live and others are allowed to die, and how that is accomplished with technologies that provide

a visual vocabulary of justification. It is a subject important enough for us to consider across race and gender and sexuality, wherever and whenever people are engaged in a life-or-death battle over how we look.

ANNAH AND HER DAUGHTERS

We begin with the story of Annah la Javanaise, the thirteen-year-old girl found wandering the streets of Paris in 1893 with a sign around her neck. Chapter 1 thus evokes the haunting of gendered visual biopolitics. The title in Tahitian of her portrait *Aita tamari vahine Judith te parari* refers to the name of the original model, the white girl who was Gauguin's neighbor, Judith, the one whose image is painted over with Annah's. In chapter 1, I push the divide between those who are left alone (in this case Judith) and those who are allowed to be raped (Annah) by looking at the relationships between sexuality, visuality, race, and primitivism. Visibility is one of the enabling conditions of the extended, racialized, and gendered concept of visual biopolitics. By scrutinizing archival photographs, texts, and the Gauguin painting itself, I explore the discursive complexity of what it means to be framed, and how Annah is framed through visual biopolitics. In discussing how she poses and performs, I analyze how a subject can exert some agency or resistance against how she is framed. Brown girls that worked for Gauguin were part of an archaic structure: they were there to cook for him and be used sexually by him for a short time, after which he replaced them with new girls. I consider the construction and legacy of the figure of the black maid and la Javanaise as a form of serial equalization of women, as Bliss Cua Lim has explained, which we will see later in other figures of Indonesian women, both colonial and postcolonial.[34]

Dancer, choreographer, and historian Rachmi Diyah Larasati brilliantly goes further with the idea of serial equalization by charging that these replicas of Indonesian women contain a remnant of the murdered one within them. In her masterful book, *The Dance That Makes You Vanish*, Larasati writes a counternarrative that reveals what is at stake with the exoticization of trance, dance, and the Indonesian woman. The second chapter explains the importance of the ethnographic and colonial representation of the dancer as exotic primitive from Margaret Mead's ethnographic film *Trance and Dance in Bali* (1955) and from her heir Joshua Oppenheimer's award-winning documentary portrait of Sumatran gangsters, *The Act of Killing* (2012), to show how visual biopolitics is carefully constructed using nonsynchronous representations of the Savage and the Pathological; this erases the historical and

political presence of the ethnographic and/or documentary filmmaker, even when the filmmaker purports to collaborate with the subjects in the film. Using the focus of the dancer, I show how two seemingly disparate films and genres actually share similar characteristics as examples of visual biopolitics: eliding the implications of colonialism, in the case of *Trance and Dance in Bali*, and US support of the coup in Indonesia in 1965 and the New Order government of Suharto that ruled with a bloody fist for thirty-two years, in *The Act of Killing*. Although Oppenheimer's film criticizes the visual biopolitics of the Suharto regime and subsequent Indonesian governments, it has been highly successful in feeding into the West's own appetite for the entertainment of fascinating cannibalism. Finally, I look at other media made by Indonesians, before and after Oppenheimer, that rewrite the history of the killings of those associated with communism.

Continuing to examine acts of resistance to visual biopolitics such as Larasati's, chapter 3 looks at how one can interrogate the nature of photography and film through unsettling and raiding the archive. In the first example, a YouTube montage of historic photographs of the period after 1965 reveals how official history can be disrupted by video editing and found footage. In the second example, a missionary photograph that also happens to be my great-great-grandfather looks at the shimmering of first contact, an event of missionary photography in 1853, and how that image became codified as a norm that also was used as a form of familial and ancestral history. Vincent Monnikendam's devastating found-footage film *Mother Dao, the Turtlelike* (1995) is the third example. This film, which raided the Dutch colonial archive for images of Indonesia, disregards the authority of the auteur that we saw in chapter 2 with Mead and Oppenheimer, and through recontextualization, editing, and sound juxtapositions, *Mother Dao* draws from the archive and transforms what is previously seen as the pathological. Bringing the past of the colonial archive into the present becomes a form of resistance.

With an emphasis on communing, chapter 4 sets the stage for demonstrating how Indonesian women make film and engender new forms of filmmaking, thus unraveling the fabric of the normalized image of the native woman and sexuality. My particular focus is on the feature films of Nia Dinata. Very little has been written on this innovative filmmaker, whose diverse genres and styles of directing, as well as collaborations with other directors, break new ground in the directing of feature films. Her collaborative practice includes exhibition, in the ways that the films get screened on road shows to nonprofit organizations, local communities, and universities. Although this may appear to be a forward leap, it is with this goal to seek out how one fig-

ures oneself as part of a community that the title of this book is *How Do We Look?* Visual biopolitics determines who has individual subjectivity versus who must always think as a collective subjectivity; and film, in the ways it expresses subjectivity in its subject matter and elicits it in its reception, is part of that storytelling process.

Spanning various eras—colonialism, nationalism, postcolonialism, and neoliberal globalization—I illustrate how history bears the traces of the past in the present and carries them into the future.[35] If I come back to the Indonesian women, who are there to be painted, to be pried open, or to be covered, it is to ask another set of questions than those generally posed in art history, namely, how do we look to you, the viewer? This is the first and most traditional line of inquiry, that of representation, that of framing. How do we (the objects posited in the representation) look to you, the consumers of representation? I add three other lines of inquiry. The first has to do with performance and posing: How do we compose ourselves for your view? Performance and posing are not just a form of subjectivity; they are also a making and a playing of subjectivity. The second has to do with recomposing: How do we take the media offered of ourselves and recombine them, recompose them, reedit them, review them to offer another set of views? And the third line of inquiry has to do with how we—as writers, filmmakers, and producers of art and media—look. There is more than one way to answer the question of how we look in and how we look at photographs, films, painting, media. As Sylvia Wynter writes, "Humanness is no longer a noun. Being human is a praxis."[36]

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1 Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris Worlds Fair*, 168.

2 Sylvia Wynter refers to Man2 or homo economicus as a global phenomenon. The ravaging of the Earth, which has led to climate change, was not accomplished by North America and Europe alone. See McKittrick and Wynter, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?," 20.

3 Baldwin, "My Dungeon Shook," 9.

4 I am inspired by an interview of Ava DuVernay, who said this about her series *When They See Us* on the boys who were unjustly accused in the 1989 Central Park Jogger case, "What kinds of boys truly get to be young and carefree, and what others are indicted on sight?" Kahn, "Let the Record Show," 74.

5 I thank Patricia White for her clarification and insight on this point.

6 Lepore, "The Public Historian."

7 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, 138–39. Foucault writes, "One might say that the ancient right to *take* life or *let* live was replaced by a power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death" (138).

8 Here Foucault alludes to the diffuse nature of killing of biopolitics: "Sovereignty took life and let live. And now we have the emergence of a power that I would call the power of regularization, and it, in contrast consists in making live and letting die." Foucault, "Society Must Be Defended," 67.

9 Foucault, "Society Must Be Defended," 256. The norm that goes into effect is racialization. Foucault declares that racism is a basic mechanism of power: "If you are functioning in the biopower mode, how can you justify the need to kill people, to kill populations, and to kill civilizations? By using the themes of evolutionism, by appealing to a racism" (257).

10 US examples of states of exception would include the incarceration of Japanese Americans in US camps during World War II, and the Patriot Act enacted by George W. Bush in 2001, which allowed the attorney general to take aliens into custody and suspend all their rights. See Agamben, *State of Exception*, 3, 22.

11 McKittrick and Wynter, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?," 11.

12 Rony, *The Third Eye*, 7.

13 Ironically, the limit to Foucault's and subsequent theories of biopolitics is that of race. Alexander Weheliye brilliantly points out that the conceptualization of biopower takes the Holocaust as the exceptional limit. See Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 53–73.

14 Sylvia Wynter in McKittrick, and Wynter, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?," 31. Political scientist Wendy Brown describes how life and death are inextricably linked to homo economicus, the new neoliberal subject, as a formation in which market values are extended to all aspects of social life in Brown, *Undoing the Demos*.

15 Wynter, in McKittrick and Wynter, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?," 20 (emphasis in original).

16 Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 28.

17 Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 261.

18 Daulatzai, *Fifty Years of the Battle of Algiers*.

19 Larasati, *The Dance That Makes You Vanish*, 99.

20 Pandolfo, "The Thin Line of Modernity."

21 Rony, *The Third Eye*.

22 Taub, "We Have No Choice," 47.

23 Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," 11.

24 As Marcia Chatelain argues, the fact that black girls (or Indonesian girls) are undertheorized in history does not mean that they should be ignored. Chatelain, *South Side Girls*, 6.

25 Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*; DuVernay, *13th*.

26 Baldwin and Mead, *A Rap on Race*, 189.

27 The film *No Más Bebés* (dir. Renee Tajima-Peña, 2015) follows Maria Hurtado and others more than forty years later as they visit the place where their lives were ruined: the deserted skeleton of a maternity ward where they were sterilized against their will. What determined that the Latinas in *No Más Bebés* should be sterilized was not just the hospital, the doctors, the administrators, or a government policy, but a whole US culture that was obsessed with population control and saw the Mexican as less than human. African American women, Puerto Rican women, and poor white women in other parts of

the United States were also sterilized against their will, based on the belief that their fertility must be terminated. This is what Foucault describes as both a disciplining of bodies and a focus on the species body, the regulation of populations through intervention and regulatory controls.

28 Another example of the consequences of visual biopolitics is the response of law enforcement to the murders along the Highway of Tears, a section of Highway 16 in British Columbia, where a disproportionate number of indigenous Canadian women have gone missing every year since 1969. The area lacks public transportation, so many locals rely on hitchhiking. Over the decades, many indigenous women have been murdered or disappeared, their bodies found many months or years later, abandoned in the thick forest bordering this highway. Police response has been lackadaisical at best, and for over forty years the cases have gone uninvestigated and the women's deaths officially attributed to accident, suicide, or drug overdose. As the survivors explain, when an Indian woman goes missing, the police refuse to investigate (she remains unseen; no poster is made, no search begun, and she remains unnamed, invisible), but when a white woman goes missing, signs are immediately posted with the woman's name and photo, asking for information (her face is seen, her name made known; she is made visible, a search ensues). See Levin, "Dozens of Women Vanish." The brutal murder of Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind in 2017 sparked protests in indigenous communities in the United States and Canada, leading to the fight for new legislation protecting Native American women. See Monet, "A Native American Woman's Brutal Murder"; Dunne, "No More Stolen Sisters."

29 I thank Kristen Hatch for this insight.

30 Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 837–48.

31 Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*.

32 Michele Wallace decries the invisibility of black female creativity and black female critical thought, and interrogates the notion that the black hole represents the dense accumulation, without explanation or inventory, of black feminist creativity. Wallace, "Variations on Negation," 214–18.

33 Baldwin, "My Dungeon Shook." I thank Gonzalo Lamana for his insight on the letter to James Baldwin's nephew and for bringing my attention to this point.

34 Lim, "Serial Time."

35 The continuation of the Orientalizing myths of Java, Bali, and Sumatra found in nineteenth-century universal exposition pavilions informs Indonesian nationalism as well as contemporary documentaries by US auteurs. For example, the notion of the good mother, extolled under the Suharto regime and a continuing ideal in the present day, was exemplified by nineteenth-century Javanese writer Kartini, known as Ibu Kartini (or Mother Kartini). Ibu Kartini's goodness is the counterpart of the wickedness of the Gerwani sexual dancer; this dyad ultimately upholds and bolsters the state's version of Indonesian history, and it had repercussions for Jumilah. The myth of Java as atemporal, courtly, refined kingdom is key to both anthropological discourse and to the

creation of the Indonesian government post-Sukarno, who borrowed the symbols of Javanese power that were perfected under Dutch colonialism and used them for his own regime. Java was key to the nineteenth century, evidenced by the Javanese village of dancers displayed at the 1889 World's Fair, which was connected to the colonial South Sea adventures necessary for the myth of Paul Gauguin. Another key role is that of the myth of Bali, as the source of modernist European painting (the Russian-born painter Walter Spies, the Mexican painter Miguel Covarrubias) and film (André Roosevelt's *Goona-Goona* and Mead and Bateson's *Trance and Dance in Bali*) and the cover-up of the massacres in Bali during the 1965 killings. I trace the Indonesian woman from the Dutch exoticizing of the colonial image that led to the 1889 Exposition Universelle that eventually named Annah, to the dancer in Mead's and Oppenheimer's films and discussed by Rachmi Diyah Larasati, to the women and men recontextualized in found-footage film of the early twentieth century, to the twenty-first-century omnibus films produced by Nia Dinata.

36 McKittrick and Wynter, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?," 23.

CHAPTER ONE: ANNAH LA JAVANAISE

1 Brettell, "The Return to France," 306–7. I am indebted to Kathleen McHugh, Grace Hong, and Jenny Sharpe for their comments on a paper I gave at UCLA in 2010 on the topic of Annah la Javanaise, as well as to Kellie Jones, Carol Ockman, Angela Dalle Vacche, Bliss Cua Lim, and Kristen Hatch.

2 Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," 13.

3 Frèches-Thory, "The Exhibition at Durand-Ruel," 85.

4 Sweetman, *Paul Gauguin*, 372.

5 Frèches-Thory, "The Exhibition at Durand-Ruel," 87.

6 Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, 173.

7 Slavery was abolished in 1848, so there was no legal slavery in France in the 1890s, but the term "négresse" had the connotation of "female slave." In fact, an example of the use of "négresse" was written by Gauguin's grandmother, Flora Tristan: "It is established that all women can go out alone; most of them followed by a female slave [une négresse], but it isn't obligatory." Tristan, "Les Femmes de Lima" (my translation). The word is currently considered derogatory. When Dominique Strauss-Kahn went to trial for taking part in parties with prostitutes, the women were referred to as "négresses," "material," and "dossiers," by the Lille businessman who had secured the women for his parties, such that "négresses" become indistinguishable from the goods. See Day, "Strauss-Kahn in the Dock."

8 Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, 173.

9 Compare the United Kingdom, which raised the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen in 1885. Hatch, *Shirley Temple and the Performance of Girlhood*, 14.

10 Solnit, *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*, 59.

11 On the serial equalization of women, see Lim, "Serial Time."