

Assembling Global (Non)Belongings:
Settler Colonial Memoryscapes and the Rhetorical Frontiers of Whiteness in
the US Southwest, Christians United for Israel, and FEMEN

by

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ABSTRACT

Scholars of rhetoric, critical intercultural communication, and gender studies have offered productive analyses of how discourses of terror and national security are rooted in racialized juxtapositions between "East" against "West, or "us" and "them." Less frequently examined are the ways that the contemporary marking of terrorist bodies as "savage" Others to whiteness and western modernity are rooted in settler colonial histories and expansions of US and Anglo-European democracy. Informed by the rhetorical study of publics and public memory, critical race/whiteness studies, and transnational and Indigenous feminisms, this dissertation examines how memoryscapes of civilization and its Others circulate to shape geopolitical belongings in three cases: (1) public memory places in the US Southwest; (2) pro-Israel rhetorics enacted by the US organization Christians United for Israel; and (3) the embodied and mediated protests of European feminist organization FEMEN. In bringing these seemingly unrelated cases together as elements of a larger assemblage, I draw attention to their symbolic and material connectivities, examining the racialized, gendered, national, and imperial logics that move between these sites to shore up the frontiers of whiteness. Specifically, I argue for conceptualizing whiteness as a global assemblage that territorializes through settler colonial memoryscapes that construct "modern" national and global citizen-subjects as those deemed worthy of rights, protection, land, and life against the threatening bodies of Otherness seen to exist outside of the shared times and places of normative democratic citizenship. In doing so, I also examine, more broadly, how assemblage theory extends current approaches to studying rhetoric, public memory, and intercultural communication in global, trans/national, and (post)colonial contexts.

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CHAPTER 1

GLOBAL (NON)BELONGINGS: AN INTRODUCTION

“Those against the United States at the turn of the twentieth century or the turn of the twenty-first century are always already ‘savage,’ ‘terrifying,’ ‘heathen,’ and ‘uncivilized.’”
—Jodi Byrd¹

Nine days after September 11, 2001, as the ash still lingered in the New York City air, US President George W. Bush addressed the nation, offering the following explanation as to the motivations of the attacks: “They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with one another.”² In the days and months following, amidst the national and global outpouring of individual and collective remembrances for those lost, statements regarding terrorist hatred of the United States continued to circulate. In a special radio address delivered two months after the towers fell, First Lady Laura Bush contrasted “the blessings of American life” with the oppression of “women and children by the al Qaida terrorist network.”³ As civilian casualties mounted in the then ongoing surge of US troops into Afghanistan, Laura Bush offered vivid descriptions of the Taliban’s violence, including “beatings” and “pull[ing] out women’s fingernails for wearing nailpolish,” noting that “civilized people throughout the world are speaking out in horror.”⁴ Inviting global listeners into a shared fellowship with US citizens,

¹ Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 148.

² “Text: President Bush Addresses the Nation.” *The Washington Post*, September 20, 2001, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html

³ “Radio Address by Mrs. Bush: November 17, 2001,” The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=24992>

⁴ “Radio Address by Mrs. Bush: November 17, 2001,” The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=24992>.

she stated: “Fighting brutality against women and children is not the expression of a specific culture; it is the acceptance of our common humanity—a commitment shared by people of good will on every continent.”⁵

The emotions circulated in these responses *do* things: as the terrorist enemy is rhetorically articulated as hateful and horrifying, the US nation-state and all members of the international community who embrace the democratic values of freedom, multiculturalism, and equality become rhetorical objects of love. Sara Ahmed argues that hate serves a political function, working to secure collectives, shaping bodies, nations, and worlds.⁶ So too does love for the nation function politically, creating alliances through identification with a particular set of values to form “imagined communities,” or publics.⁷ In this process, certain subjectivities are constructed precisely through the exclusion or elision of other subjectivities; as John Armstrong notes in *Nations Before Nationalism*, “groups tend to define themselves not by reference to their own characteristics but by exclusion, that is, by comparison to ‘strangers.’”⁸ In Ahmed’s language, “thinking of identification as a form of alignment (to bring into line with oneself—the subject as ‘bringing into line’) also shows us how identifications involve disidentification or an active ‘giving up’ of other possible identifications.”⁹ In other words, to imagine oneself as belonging to a community, whether a

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 42.

⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983). For further discussion of love as a political emotion see Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 122-143.

⁸ John A. Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 5.

⁹ Sara Ahmed, “The Organisation of Hate,” *Law and Critique* 12, no. 3 (2001): 354.

local, national, or global public, is to actively align oneself against the Others seen to exist outside of this collective.

As the above examples invoke an “uncivilized” terrorist Other as the strange and haunting presence against which modern, “civilized” geopolitical belongings are articulated, they further reflect what Iris Marion Young has described as the logic of masculinist protection.¹⁰ This logic rhetorically configures the nation-state as masculine protector of vulnerable populations including its own citizens and the “womenandchildren” of the world.¹¹ Young argues that discourses of masculinist protection as they inform the post-9/11 security state rely on a logic that is not “self-consciously dominative” but rather is based on the ideal of the chivalrous and caring masculine man who “faces the world’s difficulties and dangers in order to shield women from harm.”¹² As the United States, as masculine protector, is rhetorically configured as extending its compassion to the global community (through military strength), national belongings are thus reinforced.

Rhetorics of masculinist protection are bi-directional; as national subjects are willingly subordinated into relationships of dependence and obedience in return for the state’s protection, aggression against enemies who threaten the state is seen as an act of sacrifice for the public good. In the above statements this is evidenced in the appeals

¹⁰ Iris Marion Young, “The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State,” *Signs* 29, no. 1 (2003): 1–25. Young writes specifically of the post-9/11 US nation-state, but the logic of masculinist protection is also evidenced in other state formations.

¹¹ Cynthia Enloe utilizes the term “womenandchildren” to describe how women and children perform a rhetorical function in international politics as individual subjects are discursively transformed into a single, helpless, victimized entity in need of rescue and/or pity. (Cynthia Enloe, “Womenandchildren: Making Feminist Sense of the Persian Gulf Crisis,” *The Village Voice*, September 25, 1990.)

¹² Young, “Logic of Masculinist Protection,” 4.

suggesting that the freedom of religion, speech, and assembly warranted under democracy must be protected from terrorist Islamist regimes who not only oppress their own women and children but also “seek to destroy *our* freedoms.”¹³ Drawing parallels between the functions of religion and the nation, Benedict Anderson in his well-known treatise on nationalism argued that nations offer “a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning.”¹⁴ Moreover, he observed that even while nation-states as governing structures might be considered as “‘historical,’ the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, glide into a limitless future.”¹⁵ Masculinist protection, in the above example, is therefore not only about ensuring the safety of one’s fellow citizens or other vulnerable populations, but about the continued existence of the national community, democracy, and the future of humanity itself.

Rhetorics of masculinist protection sediment belongings by contrasting the national against non-national, racialized, and gendered Others. This contributes not only to the building of nations but also to the building of empires. In her analysis of the discursive links between manhood, race, class, and imperialism in US domestic and foreign policy at the turn of the twentieth century, Gail Bederman reveals how seemingly contradictory notions of

¹³ I mark this language in quotation marks to draw attention to its circulation. Having been uttered by numerous US presidents, Members of Congress, the US Justice Department, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—just to name a few—this quote has become common parlance in the “war on terror.”

¹⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11.

¹⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11–2.

masculinity as at once violent and refined perpetuated white privilege and US imperialism.¹⁶ Masculinity was thus a lynchpin around which racialized rhetorics of civilization and its savage Others were organized while, at the same time, “civilization” was central to the ways in which masculinity was defined. This is not only true of US foreign policy; many scholars have examined how “clash of civilizations” rhetorics have functioned as an indispensable component of the Anglo-European imaginary, funding both Western imperialism and European nation building.¹⁷ As civilization is rhetorically juxtaposed against its Others in gendered and racialized ways, identifications are forged with an imagined community precisely through the exclusions of human, geographic, and political bodies seen to exist outside of this community. Love for the nation and hatred for the enemy thus work together to secure collective national and global identities, incorporating certain subjects into the category of normative citizenship, or belonging, while dis/locating Others in “some other ‘other worlds,’ in some other place,” and in some other time.¹⁸

Project Introduction

In this dissertation I examine how rhetorics of civilization and its Others circulate to shape ideas about “modern” trans/national citizenship and geopolitical belonging through chains of signification and affects. Specifically, I argue for conceptualizing whiteness as a

¹⁶ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

¹⁷ For further discussion, see for instance, Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Dana L. Cloud, “‘To Veil the Threat of Terror’: Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the US War on Terrorism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 3 (2004): 285–306; Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978); and Amartya Sen, “How to Judge Globalism,” *The American Prospect* 13, no. 1 (2002): 1–8.

¹⁸ Raka Shome and Radha Hegde, “Culture, Communication, and the Challenge of Globalization,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002): 175.

global assemblage that territorializes through *settler colonial memoryscapes* as they exclude particular bodies through the construction of what Ahmed describes as “border objects.”¹⁹ Drawing from Julia Kristeva’s work on abjection,²⁰ Ahmed describes border objects and the affects they generate as follows:

Borders need to be threatened in order to be maintained, or even to appear *as* borders, and part of the process of ‘maintenance-through-transgression’ is the appearance of border objects. Border objects are hence disgusting, while disgust engenders border objects. As a result, disgust involves a ‘time lag’ as well as being generative or futural. It does not make borders (out of nothing), but responds to their making, through a reconfirmation of their necessity. So the subject feels an object to be disgusting (a perception that relies on a history that comes before the encounter) and then expels the object and, through expelling the object, finds it to be disgusting.²¹

While the abjection of border objects maintains the subject, border objects become meaningful “not simply insofar as they oppose the ‘I’; but through their contact with other objects.”²² Border objects—or the bodies of alterity against which the “Self” is constructed—thus become meaningful through iteration and relation: as part of an assemblage.

¹⁹ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 87.

²⁰ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. L. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

²¹ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 87.

²² Ibid.

Developed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, further elaborated by Manuel DeLanda and Bruno Latour, and deployed by numerous other scholars in ways that resonate with the aims of this project, assemblage theory takes a systems/networks approach toward the assembled connections through which bodies are produced and enacted.²³ Utilizing assemblage theory, I examine whiteness as a relational system of power that organizes material bodies in particular ways. The bodies of assemblage, which Deleuze and Guattari refer to as “Bodies without Organs” (BwO), include human and non-human, organizational, and geo-political bodies.²⁴ BwO are not closed, bounded entities or organisms, but rather are open systems or planes through which assemblages are territorialized. Nor are BwO individual; they are the relational bodies populated by material human bodies (with organs)—gendered bodies, raced bodies, laboring bodies, emotional bodies, thinking bodies.²⁵

To address whiteness as an assemblage that makes certain bodies intelligible as global citizen-subjects through the exclusion of Other bodies (border objects)—both geopolitical and individual—I examine three sites that might be considered, in Mary Louise Pratt’s terms, as “contact zones.” Pratt describes contact zones as “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of

²³ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); Manuel DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (London: Continuum, 2006); and Bruno Latour, “Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory” (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). Assemblage theory, and the authors through whom I route my engagements with it, are more fully explicated in Chapter 2.

²⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

²⁵ Although I do not utilize the terminology of BwO in my discussion of bodies throughout this dissertation, it is this encompassing and relational sense of the body to which I refer when I utilize the term “bodies.”

power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today.”²⁶ The sites I examine include: (1) public memory places in the US Southwest where Native American culture is consumed primarily by a white tourist audience; (2) pro-Israel rhetorics in the US, especially those enacted by the conservative Christian lobbying group Christians United for Israel (CUFI), and the ways they collapse Palestinians into a homogenous Arab terrorist enemy, and (3) the embodied and mediated actions of FEMEN, a feminist organization with participating members in several countries in the European Union and, specifically, the French chapter’s protests against Islam and the veiling of Muslim women. As assemblage directs our attention to spatio-temporal logics and material relationships, I organize my discussion of these cases around three topoi: time, places, and bodies. Bringing these sites together allows me to map relationships between border objects as certain bodies in each of these cases are designated as belonging against those deemed threatening or external to the spatio-temporal bodies of the (white) subject, the nation, and/or the global community.

While the case studies identified above on the surface may not seem directly related either to one another or to the rhetorical responses to 9/11 with which I opened, my aim in this project is to render visible the rhetorical trajectories that connect and move between these various case studies. The opening examples usefully set the stage for the themes taken up by this project given 9/11’s significance as a charged event in contemporary global rhetorical landscapes and politics. Scholars of communication, international relations, and gender studies, among others, have offered productive analyses of the fears mapped onto Arab bodies following 9/11. Of particular interest have been the ways “Muslim women’s

²⁶ Mary Louise Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone,” *Profession* (1991): 34.

oppression,” as symbolized most prominently by the veiled woman in a hijab or burqa, function discursively to justify imperial endeavors.²⁷ The figure of the veiled woman not only emerges as a gendered, sexualized, and racialized location, so, too, does the Muslim terrorist from whom she “must be rescued” emerge as a “generative figur[e],” one who Jasbir Puar argues is “always already sexually pathological.”²⁸ Analyzing this contemporary constellation through her theorization of “terrorist assemblages,” Puar marks the “queer,” racialized, and improperly masculine Arab Other who is seen to embody a threat to western civilization as a contemporary figure in an assemblage of “terrorist corporealities” that support national imperial projects.²⁹

As they generate new corporealities, contemporary rhetorics of race, terror and security rely on and reconfigure longstanding discourses of Orientalism that juxtapose “East” against “West, and “us” against “them.”³⁰ Dana Cloud describes “the idea of an

²⁷ See, for example, Lila Abu-Lughod, “The Active Social Life of ‘Muslim Women’s Rights’: A Plea for Ethnography, not Polemic, with Cases from Egypt and Palestine,” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 6, no. 1 (2010): 1–45; Kevin J. Ayotte and Mary E. Husain, “Securing Afghan Women: Neocolonialism, Epistemic Violence, and the Rhetoric of the Veil,” *NWSA Journal* 17, no. 3 (2005): 112–33; Cloud, “‘To Veil the Threat of Terror’”; Ann Russo, “The Feminist Foundation’s Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8, no. 4 (2006): 557–80; Laura J. Shepherd, “Veiled References: Constructions of Gender in the Bush Administration Discourse on the Attacks on Afghanistan Post-9/11,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8, no. 1 (2006): 19–41; and Young, “Logic of Masculinist Protection.”

²⁸ Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 173.

²⁹ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, xxiii. Puar argues that in the US “war on terror,” race and sexuality are linked with discourses of militarism and national security, producing the US queer homonormative subject as a “good citizen” against Muslim “terrorist” bodies that are both racialized and marked as sexually perverse through Orientalist discourses.

³⁰ See, for example, Cloud, “‘To Veil the Threat of Terror’”; Inderpal Grewal, “Transnational America: Race, Gender and Citizenship after 9/11,” *Social Identities* 9, no. 4 (2003): 546–7; Meghana Nayak, “Orientalism and ‘Saving’ US State Identity after 9/11,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8, no. 1 (2006): 42–61; Kimberly A. Powell, “Framing Islam: An Analysis of US Media Coverage of Terrorism Since 9/11,” *Communication Studies* 62, no. 1 (2011): 90–112; and Medhi Semati, “Islamophobia, Culture and Race in the Age of Empire,” *Cultural Studies* 24, no. 2 (2010): 256–75. For a further discussion of Orientalism, see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

immutable clash between allegedly superior and inferior civilizations” as a necessary component “of the rhetoric of US imperialism since at least the end of the 19th century.”³¹ This project pushes this connection further, attending to how global rhetorics that mark particular bodies as “savage” Others to whiteness and western modernity reproduce, and rely on, settler colonial histories and imperial expansions of US and Anglo-European democracy.³² Informed by the rhetorical study of publics and public memory, scholarship in critical race/whiteness studies, and transnational and Indigenous feminisms, I analyze each of my case studies as a gendered and racialized assemblage in which “modern” national and global citizen-subjects—as those deemed worthy of rights, protection, land, and life—are constructed against the Other(s) seen to exist outside of the shared temporality and places of normative democratic citizenship.³³ In bringing these seemingly disparate cases together to examine them as elements of a larger assemblage, I further draw attention to their symbolic and material connectivities, examining racialized, gendered, national, and imperial logics as they move between these sites to shore up the frontiers of whiteness. In doing so, I also examine, more broadly, how assemblage might be utilized as a methodological heuristic for

³¹ Cloud, “To Veil the Threat of Terror,” 286. See also David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire* (Raleigh-Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993).

³² In making this argument I draw upon Jodi Byrd’s discussion of how “Indianness” serves as a transit for empire. (See Jodi A. Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011].)

³³ While there has been contestation in the field of rhetoric over what should constitute the study of citizenship, here and throughout my focus is not on the legal and political structures that designate formal citizenship statuses but rather on citizenship as a mode of public engagement through which national subjects are discursively and relationally constructed. Of the numerous definitions of “citizen” and “citizenship” that have been proffered, my approach most closely aligns with the conceptualization of the citizen as “a symbolic and collective identity.” (J. David Cisneros, “Rhetorics of Citizenship: Pitfalls and Possibilities,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 100, no. 3 [2014]: 376.)

critical rhetorical inquiry, re/shaping how, as rhetorical scholars, we select and analyze our con/texts, and to what ends.

Employing assemblage as a methodological heuristic, I analyze each of my cases as a flashpoint or articulation within larger memoryscapes of colonialism and racial belonging. Through the juxtaposition of these sites, I therefore approach their rhetoricity as “conditioned on the character of the relational systems within which they function.”³⁴ In addition, my utilization of assemblage as a methodological heuristic aligns with ongoing efforts in rhetorical studies to rethink rhetoric’s relationship to bodies, material objects, and places,³⁵ and to (re)conceptualize rhetoric as experiential and affective.³⁶ As scholars working in this area have argued, ideologies are not only manifested through language and symbols—rhetorical scholars’ longstanding foci—but also through material and spatial enactments and arrangements. Emerging from efforts to rethink rhetoric as it materially unfolds in specific

³⁴ Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 8.

³⁵ See, for example, Carole Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites”; Carole Blair, “Reflections on Criticism and Bodies: Parables from Public Places,” *Western Journal of Communication* 65, no. 3 (2001): 271–94; Kevin M. DeLuca, “Unruly Arguments: The Body Rhetoric of Earth First!, Act Up, and Queer Nation,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 36, no. 1 (1999), 9–22; Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott (eds.) *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010); Darrel Enck-Wanzer, “Trashing the System: Social Movement, Intersectional Rhetoric, and Collective Agency in the Young Lords Organization’s Garbage Offensive,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 2 (2006): 174–201; Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 257–82; and Richard Marback, “Unclenching the Fist: Embodying Rhetoric and Giving Objects their Due,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2009).

³⁶ See, for example, Catherine Chaput, “Rhetorical Circulation in Late Capitalism: Neoliberalism and the Overdetermination of Affective Energy,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 43, no. 1 (2010): 1–26; Gregory Clark, “Rhetorical Experience and the National Jazz Museum in Harlem,” in Dickinson, Blair, and Ott (eds.), *Places of Public Memory*, 113–35; Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2006): 27–47; and Jenny Edbauer Rice, “The New ‘New’: Making a Case for Critical Affect Studies,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 94, no. 2 (2008): 200–12.

places has thus also been a shift from analyzing rhetorical products to engaging with embodied rhetorical processes as they unfold in situated acts and practices. Assemblage assists in this project by drawing attention to the links between the various cases examined, each of which functions within larger symbolic and material landscapes. To attend to “live” rhetorical processes as they unfold within particular places and communities (both actual and virtual), I follow the recent turn in rhetorical scholarship toward the incorporation of field methods.³⁷ However, whereas many rhetorical scholars have utilized field methods to examine specific events such as protests or political organizing, or specific places such as museums and memorials, my use of assemblage as a methodological heuristic extends “the field” of rhetorical field methods beyond a single site or location. Combining participant observation in physical places with an analysis of media texts circulated online and the conversations around these texts and interviews with persons affiliated with my various sites, I approach rhetorical effects and affects as not emerging or collecting around a central authority but rather as moving through a topography.³⁸

As I examine rhetorical movements within and among the sites I have assembled to address whiteness as a global assemblage that territorializes through settler colonial memoryscapes and their exclusions, I am guided by several focusing questions that have

³⁷ Michael K. Middleton, Danielle Endres, and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods: Challenges and Tensions,” *Western Journal of Communication* 75, no. 4 (2011): 388; see also Roger C. Aden, Min Wha Han, Stephanie Norander, Michael E. Pfahl, Timothy P. Pollack, Jr., and Stephanie L. Young, “Re-Collection: A Proposal for Refining the Study of Collective Memory and its Places,” *Communication Theory* 19, no. 3 (2009): 311–36; and Aaron Hess, “Critical-Rhetorical Ethnography: Rethinking the Place and Process of Rhetoric,” *Communication Studies* 62, no. 2 (2011): 127–52.

³⁸ My conceptualization of assemblage as a methodological heuristic is also influenced by, and aligns with Sara Ahmed’s conceptualization of the field of emotions. Arguing that emotions are inherently political, Ahmed’s work draws attention to the relationships between affect, race, nations, and Otherness as they shape individual as well as political bodies. (see Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*).

emerged from my analytic engagements with both the individual sites and the relationships between them. What are the rhetorical landscapes through which a civilized “us” is assembled against an uncivilized “them” in each of these sites? How do hate and love affix to certain gendered and racialized bodies to form a trans/national democratic public based on exclusion even as it claims inclusivity? And how do rhetorics of freedom and democracy bolstered by discourses of multiculturalism and gender equality participate in this assemblage to define what differences make a difference?

In answering these questions, this project extends current approaches to studying rhetoric and intercultural communication in global, trans/national, and (post)colonial contexts.

Scholarly Significance

Above, I have begun to frame my theoretical and methodological entrance points into interrogating the gendered and racialized assemblages through which contemporary Anglo-European “civilization” is contrasted against its constitutive Others. Assemblages, however, are “open wholes”; as Jane Bennett describes, they “pulse with energies, only some of which are actualized at any given time and place.”³⁹ In thinking of the assemblage of sites drawn together here, it is clear that the issues this project addresses exceed this specific constellation. However, featuring these three disparate cases and interrogating them through the lens of assemblage is warranted on several counts.

To begin with, while many scholars have directed their attention toward the gendered, racialized structures of US and Anglo-European empire mobilized by the post-9/11 “war on terror,” one limitation of such work is that it often overlooks or fails to make

³⁹ Jane Bennett, “The Agency of Assemblages,” *Public Culture* 17, no. 3 (2005): 461.

explicit the ways these “new” frontiers of violence are linked with the settler colonial pasts and presents of democratic expansion. Attending to how racialized Arab bodies (both individual and political) are rhetorically constructed as “threats” to global security is a necessary and important task given that the war on terror has justified US exceptionalism and imperialism by dehumanizing and, in the words of Judith Butler, “derealizing” the Arab Other.⁴⁰ However, as Andrea Smith argues, when critiques of the contemporary security state perpetuate a narrative of newness—viewing the actions taken following 9/11 as a decline in US democracy, or as a fundamental shift in the structures of governance—they fail to interrogate “how the state has *always* operated through sovereign power exacted through racial and colonial violence.”⁴¹ Instead, “the argument that we are currently under a resurgence of sovereignty itself normalizes the history of US sovereign power exacted against the bodies of indigenous peoples and peoples of color.”⁴² Critiques of the post-9/11 security state are thus problematic in that they frequently “take the US Constitution as their origin story, presuming the U.S. nation-state even as they critique it,” and, in so doing, perpetuate “the liberal myth that the United States is founded on democratic principles rather than being built on the pillars of capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy.”⁴³ To counter this tendency, the sites of inquiry I have selected illuminate historical and contemporary settler and neo-colonial dynamics as inherent within Anglo-European democratic projects rather than as deviations from them. The significance of such an

⁴⁰ See Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York: Verso, 2004).

⁴¹ Andrea Smith, “American Studies without America: Native Feminisms and the Nation-State,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2008): 310.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Smith, “American Studies without America,” 310–11.

approach for rhetorical studies and, in particular, scholarship on publics and the public sphere is that by normativizing democracy we frequently neglect to fully problematize the ways global inequalities are perpetuated not in spite of but precisely through rhetorics of democracy, equality, and inclusion.

Attending to enduring colonial structures is also important for expanding our theoretical approaches toward analyzing racial formation as a rhetorical process inseparable from structures of empire. While “the generally accepted theorizations of racialization in the United States have, in the pursuit of equal rights and enfranchisements, tended to be sited along the axis of inclusion/exclusion,” the problem with theorizing race in this manner, as Chickasaw scholar Jodi Byrd notes, is that the affective investment “in the dialectics of race,” allows race to “supersede colonialism as the site of originary violence.”⁴⁴ When structures of race and racism are thus disconnected from colonial histories, grievances are addressed to the state in ways that frequently fail to problematize the nation-state’s reliance on colonial control over Other bodies and lands. As I will demonstrate in my analysis of memory places in the US Southwest, white visitors’ engagements with Native Americans as a racial group able to be (re)incorporated into the multicultural United States (as long as they perform as “authentic” cultural representatives) ignore how colonialism continues to constrain and limit Native American mobility. Attending to the settler colonial structures that have enabled, and continue to enable, the expansion of (western) democracy is also significant for understanding the symbolic landscapes and material geographies of whiteness and “civilization” in the contemporary political moment.

⁴⁴ Byrd, *Transit of Empire*, xxiii, 12.

A second compelling warrant for selecting these specific sites of inquiry is to examine the changing signifiers through which “civilization” and progress are enacted, embodied, and staged. According to Cloud, post-9/11 rhetorics are informed by the “clash of civilizations” between Islamic and Western societies, a discursive configuration which has remained firmly embedded in US and Anglo-European imperial imaginaries even as its specific articulations have changed. Mehdi Semati argues that the brown Arab body, once the signifier of exoticism, has instead come to embody the terrorist threat to democracy.⁴⁵ This is seen in the rhetoric of both CUFI and FEMEN, each of which for markedly different political aims emphasize Islam’s threat to democracy. It is intriguing, then, to note that the touristic consumption of Native American culture in the Southwest relies on discourses of exoticism closely tied to Orientalism, as well as on multicultural rhetorics of democratic inclusion. Following Byrd’s call for examining how “the empire of the ‘now’ is temporally tied to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,” I therefore interrogate the shifting configuration of the Muslim Other in contemporary popular and political imaginaries as it relates to “the Indian” as “the original enemy combatant” of the democratic project.⁴⁶ Doing so enables an examination of how contemporary discourses of security and the perceived threats of dispossession and invasion on which they rely enact a “patriarchal white sovereignty [that] manages its anxiety over dispossession and threat through a pathological relationship to indigenous sovereignty.”⁴⁷ As rhetorics of masculinist protection

⁴⁵ Semati, “Islamophobia, Culture and Race.”

⁴⁶ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, 5, xiii.

⁴⁷ Byrd, *Transit of Empire*, xvii; see also Aileen Moreton-Robinson, “How White Possession Moves: After the Word,” In Tess Lea, Emma Kowal, and Gillian Cowlishaw (eds.), *Moving Anthropology: Critical Indigenous Studies* (Brisbane, Australia: Charles Darwin University Press, 2006), 219–32.

perpetuate narratives in which civilization and progress, democracy and its subjects, and the world's vulnerable women and children are under threat by the racialized and gendered terrorist Other, the contemporary framing of Native Americans as a non-threatening cultural group subsumed within the multicultural US nation-state—rather than as separate and sovereign nations within—further naturalizes and makes exceptional the US nation-state and its imperial endeavors.

Tracing rhetorics of civilization and its Others as they move through these sites to demarcate certain bodies as (not) belonging in the places of modernity, I argue for an understanding of whiteness as an assemblage that, even as it incorporates certain bodies, is reliant upon those it excludes.⁴⁸ As I will further unpack in subsequent chapters, focusing specifically on how rhetorics of time perpetuate and uphold whiteness is useful as it draws attention to how the “constitutive outside” of whiteness may not be blackness or brownness but rather that which is rendered non-modern.⁴⁹

My turn to assemblage is warranted by several exigencies in the fields of rhetoric and communication. First, as a heuristic, assemblage offers a means by which to engage the multiple scales of the local, national, and global through which ideas about difference are re/produced. Scholars of rhetoric and public memory have most frequently assumed the nation-state as the scale at which ideology and/or cultural difference become salient.⁵⁰ In

⁴⁸ For more on spatio-temporal assemblages see Sassen, *Territory. Authority, Rights*, 378–98.

⁴⁹ Here, I draw from Judith Butler's interpretation of Jacques Derrida. Derrida's notion of the “constitutive outside” is utilized throughout Butler's work. See Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978). For Butler's use of the concept see, for example, Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

⁵⁰ For further discussion, see, for example, Wendy S. Hesford and Eileen E. Schell, “Introduction: Configurations of Transnationality: Locating Feminist Rhetorics,” *College English*, 70, no. 5 (2008): 463; and Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes, “Introduction: Surveying Global Memoryscapes:

intercultural communication as well, a number of scholars have called attention to the still somewhat pervasive tendencies to approach cultural difference as organized and bounded by geographical terrains.⁵¹ More recent scholarship, however, directs attention both to localized, everyday, vernacular processes,⁵² and to global flows and formations that exceed the boundaries of the nation state.⁵³ By encouraging “the deconstruction of totalities such as ‘the

The Shifting Terrain of Public Memory Studies,” in Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes (eds.), *Global Memoryscapes: Contesting Remembrance in a Transnational Age* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2011).

⁵¹ See, for example, Alberto González and Tarla R. Peterson, “Enlarging Conceptual Boundaries: A Critique of Research in Intercultural Communication,” in Sheryl P. Bowen and Nancy Wyatt (eds.), *Transforming Visions: Feminist Critiques in Communication Studies* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1993), 249–78; S. Lily Mendoza, Rona T. Halualani, and Jolanta A. Drzewiecka, “Moving the Discourse on Identities in Intercultural Communication: Structure, Culture, and Resignifications,” *Communication Quarterly* 50 (2003): 312–27; Dreama G. Moon, “Concepts of ‘Culture’: Implications for Intercultural Communication Research,” *Communication Quarterly* 44 (1996): 70–84; Kent A. Ono, “Problematizing ‘Nation’ in Intercultural Communication Research,” in Dolores V. Tanno and Alberto González (eds.), *Communication and Identity across Cultures* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 243–76.

⁵² See, for example, Gerard A. Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); Gerard A. Hauser and Erin Daina McClellan, “Vernacular Rhetoric and Social Movements: Performances of Resistance in the Rhetoric of the Everyday,” in Sharon McKenzie Stevens and Patricia M. Malesh (Eds.), *Active Voices: Composing a Rhetoric for Social Movements* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 23–46; Aaron Hess, “In Digital Remembrance: Vernacular Memory and the Rhetorical Construction of Web Memorials,” *Media, Culture, & Society* 29, no. 5 (2007): 812–30; Tamar Katriel and Thomas Farrell, “Scrapbooks as Cultural Texts: An American Art of Memory,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (1991): 1–17; Kent A. Ono and John M. Sloop, “The Critique of Vernacular Discourse,” *Communication Monographs* 62, no. 1 (1995): 19–46; and Marie-Louise Paulesc, “Living Relationships with the Past: Remembering Communism in Romania” (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2014).

⁵³ For discussion see, for instance, Wendy S. Hesford and Eileen E. Schell, “Introduction: Configurations of Transnationality: Locating Feminist Rhetorics,” *College English* 70, no. 5 (2008): 461–70; Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes (eds.), *Global Memoryscapes: Contesting Remembrance in a Transnational Age* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2011), 1–26; Raka Shome, “Internationalizing Critical Race Communication Studies: Transnationality, Space, and Affect,” in Thomas K. Nakayama and Rona T. Halualani, *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2013), 149–70; Kathryn Sorrells, “Re-Imagining Intercultural Communication in the Context of Globalization,” in Nakayama and Halualani, *Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication*, 171–89; and Bo Wang, “Comparative Rhetoric, Postcolonial Studies, and Transnational Feminisms: A Geopolitical Approach,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (2013): 226–42.

global,' [or 'the nation'] into contingent realities where society is, even if temporarily, stabilized in networks, institutions and routines,"⁵⁴ assemblage theory offers a heuristic for navigating the relationship between macro structures of power and micro acts of communication, and for rethinking culture itself as an assemblage embedded within, and re/producing, existing structures of power.⁵⁵

Second, assemblage may assist rhetoric and communication scholars in better addressing the complexities of difference in the contemporary moment as raced and gendered identities are rendered significant in ways both old and new. As noted above, the dominant paradigms for thinking about race along the axes of inclusion and exclusion limit rhetorical and intercultural inquiry. This is especially notable in the scholarship that has been produced under the moniker of "intercultural," "contrastive," or "comparative" rhetoric," which, while offering insights into "the importance of unique linguistic practices, self-definition, or the power of negative persuasion," also reaffirms categorical identities by collapsing race and/or culture with a geographically bounded nation-state.⁵⁶ Even in critical rhetorical scholarship, which tends to approach race as a rhetorical production inextricable from structures of power and other axes of identity, Marouf Hasian, Jr. and Fernando

⁵⁴ Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis, "Assemblage Thinking and International Relations," in Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis (eds.), *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 10.

⁵⁵ Rona Halualani and Thomas Nakayama note this as one of the goals of critical intercultural communication scholarship. (Rona T. Halualani and Thomas K. Nakayama, "Critical Intercultural Communication Studies: At a Crossroads," in Nakayama and Halualani, *Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication*, 1–16).

⁵⁶ Marouf Hasian, Jr. and Fernando Delgado, "The Trials and Tribulations of Racialized Critical Rhetorical Theory: Understanding the Rhetorical Ambiguities of Proposition 187," *Communication Theory* 8, no. 3 (1998): 248; see also Mark Lawrence McPhail, *The Rhetoric of Racism* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America), 1994.

Delgado still observed a tendency “to simply invert discursive binaries”⁵⁷ rather than to “actively recognize and seek to transcend the illusory black and white divisions of race, gender, and the language of negative difference.”⁵⁸ When race is reduced to identity and/or difference, it thus becomes “a free-floating signifier acontextually applied to and seen as a marker of oppositionality.”⁵⁹ Thomas West therefore challenges rhetorical scholars to consider how “the ideas in which we often ‘trade’... are still largely based on racial thinking” and on exploitative, reductive, and “monologically determined ... ideologies of difference.”⁶⁰ As Shome argues, such an approach is inadequate for the study of difference as it unfolds in contemporary global processes.

According to Shome, with its insistent focus on “self” and “other,” the framework of identity “takes us only so far when set against the material realities of our transnational times. In these realities, complex planes of exclusion and inclusion are being engendered in ways that far exceed and complicate the dialectic of self and difference.”⁶¹ In other words, thinking about race in terms of identity may limit our interrogations into the political workings of power by taking the spaces and sites of difference for granted and, in so doing, eliding “larger questions about the spatial relations through which difference and otherness

⁵⁷ Hasian, Jr. and Delgado, “Trials and Tribulations,” 245–6.

⁵⁸ Mark Lawrence McPhail, “Complicity: The Theory of Negative Difference,” *Howard Journal of Communications* 3, no. 1-2 (1991): 12, as cited in Hasian, Jr. and Delgado, “Trials and Tribulations,” 246.

⁵⁹ Raka Shome, “Space Matters: The Power and Practice of Space,” *Communication Theory* 13, no. 1 (2003): 42.

⁶⁰ Thomas R. West, *Signs of Struggle: The Rhetorical Politics of Cultural Difference* (Albany: State University of New York, 2002), 46.

⁶¹ Shome, “Space Matters,” 40.

are produced.”⁶² Shome therefore addresses the need for communication scholars “to recognize how our approaches to power may benefit from a contextual and spatial focus where contexts are understood not as static backgrounds but as dynamic relations of force.”⁶³ In mobilizing assemblage to this end, I follow Puar and other scholars who have engaged Deleuze and Guattari’s theorization to examine the vectors along which difference travels.

Narrowing in further, in utilizing assemblage to map the relationships among differently located rhetorics of whiteness and its Others, I build on Thomas Nakayama’s and Robert Krizek’s argument for viewing whiteness as an assemblage. As they note, whiteness is folded into the social fabric of the United States in a multitude of ways; assemblage theory’s “spatial view of power relations that upends traditional, linear histories,” is thus useful for mapping the various points through which whiteness is territorialized.⁶⁴ Moreover, they argue that the spatial politics assemblage draws attention to can function not only as theory, but also as critique.⁶⁵ As they note, however, their study was “limited to the discourses of the late twentieth century in the US; maps of whiteness in other nations at other times may reveal maps constituted within differing lines of power”⁶⁶; my study therefore extends their conceptualization into different geopolitical contexts. In recent years, other scholars have

⁶² Shome, “Space Matters,” 43.

⁶³ Shome, “Space Matters,” 54.

⁶⁴ Thomas K. Nakayama and Robert L. Krizek, “Whiteness: A Strategic Rhetoric,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 (1995): 294.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Nakayama and Krizek, “Whiteness,” 303.

also applied assemblage to rhetorical theory;⁶⁷ however, many discussions of assemblage have failed to explicitly engage with the ways bodies are gendered and racialized within trans/national and political economic global formations.⁶⁸ I argue that doing so can contribute to the process of rethinking rhetorical approaches in ways that matter for contemporary inquiry.

Chapter Preview

Chapter 2, “Mapping the Concepts: Theories and Methods,” discusses assemblage theory in detail, examining how it intersects with and intervenes in the other lines of theory that guide this project: public sphere theory, public memory, critical-race theory, and transnational feminisms. Here, I also offer a more comprehensive description of my methodology and the trajectory of “becomings” that generated the assemblage of interests taken up in this project. Chapter 3, “Assembling Time: Memory and the Preservation of the Present in the US Southwest,” presents my case study of public memory places in the US Southwest. I examine how shifting configurations of memory cast Native Americans as idealized and feminized objects of the past (and thus not as subjects of the present) while reinforcing narratives of (masculine) progress and discourses of democratic multiculturalism. No longer an imminent threat to US settler colonial and imperial hegemonies, Native

⁶⁷ Byron Hawk, “Vitalism, Animality, and the Material Grounds of Rhetoric,” in Jeremy Packer and Stephen B. Crofts Wiley (eds.), *Communication Matters: Materialist Approaches to Media, Mobility and Networks* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 196–207; Aaron Hess, “The Selfie Assemblage,” *International Journal of Communication* 9 (2015): 1629–46; Zornista Keremidchieva, “The Congressional Debates on the 19th Amendment: Jurisdictional Rhetoric and the Assemblage of the US Body Politic,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99, no. 1 (2013): 51–73; Ingrid Volkmer, *The Global Public Sphere: Public Communication in the Age of Reflective Interdependence* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2014); Paul Walker, “A Rhythmic Refrain: Britain’s Mass-Observation as Rhetorical Assemblage,” *Rhetoric Review*, 35, no. 3 (2016): 212–25.

⁶⁸ For an exception, see Jennifer Wingard, *Branded Bodies, Rhetoric, and the Neoliberal Nation-State* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013).

Americans are instead revered as noble relics of a different time, enabling the mapping of “savage” terrorist threats to global democracy onto other bodies. Engaging my second site of inquiry, Christians United for Israel (CUFI), Chapter 4, “Assembling Places: Pro-Israel Rhetorics and the Preservation of the Future,” presents an analysis of how settler colonial memoryscapes and the rhetorics of race and place around which they assemble, coalesce with post-9/11 global security discourses to construct the United States and Israel as the sites of democratic futurity while Palestinians are collapsed into a homogenous Arab terrorist threat. Lacking intelligibility as citizen-subjects, Palestinians become “ungrievable” bodies⁶⁹—necessary casualties to maintain the future of the (settler colonial) nation-state, democracy, and “the West.” Chapter 5, “Assembling Bodies: FEMEN’s Feminism and the Preservation of the Past,” turns to my third site of inquiry, European activist organization FEMEN. I examine how their challenges to statist and religious oppression of women function to reinscribe hegemonic rhetorics of liberal feminism, citizenship, democracy, and western modernity. FEMEN’s performative protests against France’s “Islamization” in particular, and their focus on Muslim women’s oppression cannot be disentangled from France’s colonial history or from contemporary global discourses of security and counter/terrorism. Drawing these case studies together, Chapter 6, “Cascading Becomings: Implications and Conclusions,” details the theoretical and methodological contributions this project offers for rhetorical and critical intercultural communication scholarship. Placing my sites in relation to one another, I conceptualize whiteness as a shifting rhetorical frontier that constructs the borders of contemporary geo-political belongings through racialized and gendered geographies, even while actively disavowing racism and (hetero)sexism through the

⁶⁹ For a further discussion of the structures of grievability in relation to war and terror, see Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable* (London: Verso, 2010).

performative embrace of multiculturalist democracy. I argue that as an assemblage, whiteness mobilizes the topoi of time, place, and bodies as it moves through global landscapes, territorializing lands and bodies as it touches down in different locations. In closing, I outline the implications of assemblage as a heuristic for communication studies, including its disruption of identity-based frameworks for inquiry, rethinking relationships between temporal and spatial becomings, and conceptualizing rhetorical events and effects/affects.

CHAPTER 2

MAPPING THE CONCEPTS: THEORIES AND METHODS

“Where do we start thinking? Which are the encounters that enable new concepts to be sensed?”
—Arun Saldanha⁷⁰

As an assemblage, this project hinges on a series of encounters; encounters that are at once theoretical and methodological, political and personal, symbolic and embodied. These encounters can be thought of as “becomings,” a term which, for Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, encompasses multiple meanings.⁷¹ Becoming is the means by which one element of an assemblage enters the territory of another element through an affective affinity, changing as a result its own elemental make up and that of the larger assemblage; becoming also describes “those individual and collective struggles to come to terms with events and intolerable conditions and to shake loose, to whatever degree possible, from determinants and definitions.”⁷² In this chapter, I offer a conceptual map of several of the becomings that shape this project, beginning with assemblage theory and then turning to other lines of theory that influence the analytic approaches taken here. Next, I briefly narrate some of the intellectual and affective convergences that led me toward specific academic interests, placing myself in relation to the assemblage of ideas and topics gathered here. Following this, I discuss other components of my methodology, describing my use of rhetorical field methods including participant observations and interviews, and then turning

⁷⁰ Arun Saldanha, *Psychedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 1.

⁷¹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

⁷² João Biehl and Peter Locke, “Deleuze and the Anthropology of Becoming,” *Current Anthropology* 51, no. 3 (2010): 317.

to the other choices I made as I assembled the con/texts for analysis. Throughout my engagement with the sites I have chosen, both in the field and on the page, my orientation as a rhetorical critic and researcher most closely aligns with what James Jasinski has described as “conceptually-oriented criticism.”⁷³ In such an approach, theory and method are closely intertwined as the critic moves back and forth between the texts analyzed and the concepts utilized. As one of the conceptual orientations mobilizing this project, assemblage therefore offers a place from where to start thinking.

Assemblage As a Heuristic

Several commonplace definitions of assemblage come to mind when the term is invoked: an assemblage can refer to a collection of people or things, or to a gathering such as a political assembly. In art, assemblage refers to a collage of different materials or of unrelated objects. These meanings are related to the purposes of this project, in which gatherings of people and collections of symbols are important components, as is the idea of bringing seemingly unlike things together. However, a final commonplace definition of assemblage reveals that there is more; an assemblage is a machine made of components that, fitted together, result in a functional capacity. This final definition most closely fits with assemblage theory as first articulated by Deleuze and Guattari, in which machinic assemblages are not only collections or assortments of people and objects, or of nuts and bolts: assemblages *do* things.⁷⁴ In Jane Bennett’s description:

⁷³ James Jasinski, “The Status of Theory and Method in Rhetorical Criticism,” *Western Journal of Communication* 65, no. 3 (2001): 249-270; see also, Barry Brummett, “Rhetorical Theory as Heuristic and Moral: A Pedagogical Justification,” *Communication Education* 33, no. 2 (1984): 97-107.

⁷⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

An assemblage is, first, an ad hoc grouping, a collectivity whose origins are historical and circumstantial, though its contingent status says nothing about its efficacy, which can be quite strong. An assemblage is, second, a living, throbbing grouping whose coherence exists with energies and countercultures that exceed and confound it. An assemblage is, third, a web with uneven topography: some of the points at which the trajectories of actants cross each other are more heavily trafficked than others, and thus power is not equally distributed across the assemblage. An assemblage is, fourth, not governed by a central power: no one member has sufficient competence to fully determine the consequences of the activities of the assemblage. An assemblage, finally, is made up of many types of actants: humans and nonhumans; animals, vegetables, and minerals; nature, culture, and technology.⁷⁵

An assemblage does not constitute a bounded system; rather, any given assemblage functions in tandem with other assemblages, and within and across these multiple assemblages, there are dynamic and uneven trajectories and velocities of movement. Deleuze and Guattari argue that to think in terms of assemblage is thus to ask not what a thing means, “but what it functions with, in connection with what other things it does or does not transmit intensities, [and] in what other multiplicities its own are inserted.”⁷⁶ Assemblages are characterized not by their internal properties but by their relational and affective capacities

⁷⁵ Jane Bennett, “The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout,” *Public Culture* 17, no. 3 (2005): 445. Bennett utilizes Bruno Latour’s term “actant” here to encompass “an ontologically diverse range of actors,” some of which are non-human. (See Bruno Latour, *The Politics of Nature*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 75.

⁷⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 4.

“what they are capable of doing when they interact with other social entities.”⁷⁷ In its emphasis on interacting entities, assemblage theory offers a useful tool for engaging with complex systems, including trans/national and global systems.

In Manuel DeLanda’s conceptualization, assemblage theory suggests an approach to social complexity that counters the enduring organismic model in which social systems are seen as aggregates that—like the human body—consist of already-given parts, each of which is necessary for the whole to function.⁷⁸ While the organismic model suggests that a part taken from the whole would cease to operate, assemblage theory, on the other hand, suggests that systems—which cannot be reduced to seamless wholes—have properties that emerge from the interaction of self-subsistent parts, or capabilities. As capabilities move between assemblages they continue to operate, but in new, and sometimes unpredictable, ways. In examining these vectors, assemblage theory draws attention to geographies of relation, moving the study of social systems from the interiorities that characterize the organismic model toward exteriorities. Assemblage theory thus focuses on the ways heterogeneous elements of open systems affect one another and are affected in their interrelation; from such a perspective it is these relational connections that determine how bodies are articulated and what they are capable of. Based on these relationships, the capability of a given assemblage includes both what it does/can do, and what it might become. Assemblages are therefore both performative and productive, established through the repetition and iteration of well-formed connections but also subject to modification and recomposition. Given its emphases on movement and bodies as not only reflecting but also

⁷⁷ DeLanda, *New Philosophy of Society*, 7.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

producing ideological systems, assemblage theory contributes to ongoing conversations in the field of rhetoric regarding the interrelations of rhetoric, materiality, and power and the means by which we investigate these relationships. I review these disciplinary conversations below in order to frame the intervention assemblage offers. The subsequent section, “Mapping the Concepts,” introduces additional lines of theory that inform this project including public sphere theories, public memory, critical race theories, and transnational and Indigenous feminisms. Throughout, I continue to develop assemblage as the conceptual framework through which I navigate these discussions.

Rhetoric, Materiality, and Power

Questions regarding rhetorics of materiality, the materiality of rhetoric, the power of materiality, and the materiality of power have occupied rhetorical scholars for some time now, informing the ideological turn⁷⁹ and the shift from “rhetorical criticism” to “critical rhetoric.”⁸⁰ How we answer these questions is not just a matter of how we choose to order our words; our answers shape the way we engage in rhetorical inquiry. A number of scholars have called for some form of “material rhetoric,” but what this consists of continues to foster debate.⁸¹ Barbara Dickson defines material rhetoric as “a mode of interpretation that

⁷⁹ See Philip Wander, “The Ideological Turn in Modern Criticism,” *Central States Speech Journal* 34, no. 1 (1984): 1–18; Michael Calvin McGee, “Another Phillipic: Notes on the Ideological Turn in Criticism,” *Central States Speech Journal* 35, no. 1 (1984): 43–50; and Sharon Crowley, “Reflections on an Argument that Won’t Go Away: Or, a Turn of the Ideological Screw,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78, no. 4 (1992): 450–465.

⁸⁰ Raymie E. McKerrow, “Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis,” *Communication Monographs* 56, no. 2 (1989): 91–111.

⁸¹ See, for example, Michael Calvin McGee, “A Materialist’s Conception of Rhetoric,” in Raymie E. McKerrow (ed.), *Explorations in Rhetoric* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1982), 23–48; Richard Marback, “Detroit and the Closed Fist: Toward a Theory of Material Rhetoric,” *Rhetoric Review* 17, no. 1 (1998): 74–92; Ronald W. Greene, “Another Materialist Rhetoric,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 15, no. 1 (1998): 21–41; Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley (eds.), *Rhetorical Bodies*

takes as its object of study the significations of material things and corporal entities—objects that signify not only through language but through their spatial organization, mobility, mass, utility, orality, and tactility.”⁸² While this definition expands the materials that rhetorical scholars might study, it still privileges signification as rhetoric’s defining focus, as evidenced by the fact that Dickson proceeds to analyze representations of pregnant bodies. Engaging the material in this way follows from a social constructivist perspective in which representations have “real” effects.

Dana Cloud suggests that such a claim tends toward idealism. From a Marxist perspective, she argues that a material rhetoric is not one which makes the weaker claim that discourse has real effects or the stronger claim that discourse *is* material reality, but one that keeps political economy at its center, bringing “rhetoric’s considerable repertoire of textual analysis skills to bear on understanding how political and economic power is mediated, reinforced, perpetuated, and challenged in the texts we study.”⁸³ Such a perspective maintains a distinction between the “real” and the mediating effects of ideology, the latter of which is considered to be the province of rhetoric. While Cloud suggests that the turns to postmodern and poststructuralist perspectives promote relativism and idealism respectively, both of which elide the real, Ronald Greene argues that the problem is not the “posts” as such, the problem is rhetoric’s seeming inability “to break free from the logics of

(Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999); and Carole Blair, Contemporary US Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality,” in Selzer and Crowley (eds.), *Rhetorical Bodies*, 16–57.

⁸² Barbara Dickson, Reading Maternity Materially: The Case of Demi Moore,” in Selzer and Crowley (eds.), *Rhetorical Bodies*, 297.

⁸³ Dana Cloud, “The Materiality of Discourse as Oxymoron: A Challenge to Critical Rhetoric,” *Western Journal of Communication* 58, no. 3 (1994): 144.

representation.”⁸⁴ In Foucauldian-inflected language, he proposes a rhetorical materialism that would replace the logic of representation with a logic of articulation, focusing on how rhetoric distributes various elements on a terrain of governance. He maintains that this rhetorical materialism would uphold “the irreducible difference between rhetoric and other material elements (technologies of power, production and the self) in the creation of a governing apparatus.”⁸⁵

I am not convinced that such attempts to clearly distinguish rhetoric from the material are productive, or that they accurately reflect the relationship between rhetoric and materiality. While Greene’s proposal shifts us toward a spatial metaphor, it retains rhetoric’s status as a mediator between other, more “real,” things. In doing so, it upholds a particular type of social constructionism that suggests what is constructed is less real than the materials on which it acts. Despite Greene’s invocation of Judith Butler to refute Cloud, he does not engage with Butler’s demand to rethink “the meaning of construction itself.”⁸⁶ In Butler’s conceptualization, regulatory practices produce the bodies they govern, not through a single speech act but through a forcible materialization over time. Performativity is thus defined as “that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains.”⁸⁷ Repetition and reiteration are key: that reiteration is necessary shows that materiality is never solely an effect of discourse—words alone do not bodies make. But neither is rhetoric simply a mediator of material things.

⁸⁴ Greene, “Another Materialist Rhetoric,” 38.

⁸⁵ Greene, “Another Materialist Rhetoric,” 39.

⁸⁶ Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993), xi.

⁸⁷ Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 2.

The question of the relationship between rhetoric and materiality is further complicated when we turn to real things themselves *as* rhetoric. As Jack Selzer notes, not only do “language and rhetoric have a persistent material aspect that demands acknowledgment, [but] material realities often (if not always) contain a rhetorical dimension that deserves attention: for language is not the only medium or material that speaks.”⁸⁸ This perspective is taken up at length by Carole Blair, who, paralleling Greene’s critique of the logic of representation, argues that the language of symbolicity pervading rhetoric is the first obstacle that lies in the way of thinking about rhetoric as material. In her solution to this problem, however, she departs from Greene, urging rhetorical scholars to attend to a series of questions that emerge from rethinking rhetorical texts as themselves material. Using memorials as an exemplar, Blair considers the significance of their material existence, their durability, their modes of reproduction, and their interactions with other (material) texts. In this framing, rhetoric does not merely mediate or distribute material elements within a terrain of governance. Instead, materiality itself is a rhetorical force that cannot be contained by signifying logics. According to Blair, attending to the materiality of rhetorical texts thus requires that we “ask not just what a text means but, more generally, what it does: and we must not understand what it does as adhering strictly to what it was supposed to do.”⁸⁹ This provocation echoes that offered by assemblage theory.

Deleuze and Guattari contrast assemblage with other theorizations including psychoanalysis and poststructuralism, both of which, in their rendering, place too much weight on the formation of the subject through language. In this turn, assemblage theory

⁸⁸ Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites,” 8.

⁸⁹ Blair, “Contemporary Sites,” 23.

seems to reject core concepts of rhetorical theory such as identification, as well as ideological criticism's emphases on interpellation and subjectivation, as captured in Deleuze and Guattari's assertion, "there is no ideology and never has been."⁹⁰ While their widely-utilized formulation of "machinic assemblages" thus turns from symbolic processes to instead focus on the domain of object relations, in their discussion of "collective assemblages of enunciation," Deleuze and Guattari specifically enter the realm of language and the symbolic.⁹¹ Though this aspect of their theorization has been less frequently taken up, it offers a crucial complement to the concept of machinic assemblages.

In their description of collective assemblages of enunciation, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the primary function of language is not to represent, or to refer, but to repeat. Similar to Butler's arguments regarding the symbolic order as preceding the speaking subject,⁹² they view repetition as an act through which bodies are ordered, and positioned within social worlds: "we are situated within flows of language that precede us, filling our unconscious with national histories, myths, various discourses, and so on."⁹³ Collective assemblages of enunciation are thus conceived of as the performative enactment of subjects through "incorporeal transformations," transformations that exist outside of the bodily realm but which interact with the machinic assemblages of the corporeal order.⁹⁴ This is

⁹⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 4.

⁹¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 7.

⁹² See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, Routledge, 1990).

⁹³ Levi R. Bryant, "Two Types of Assemblages," *Larval Subjects Blog*, February 20, 2011, <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2011/02/20/two-types-of-assemblages/>

⁹⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 85; see also Bryant, "Two Types of Assemblages" for a productive summary of machinic assemblages and collective assemblages of enunciation.

illustrated in Aaron Hess's discussion of selfies as assemblages; Hess argues that while selfies function rhetorically as expressions of the self, they are also characterized by their relationships to material places and digital networks, as well as by the interactions between body and machine. As such, selfies express identities and subjectivities through a constellation of representational and material practices.⁹⁵

Assemblage theory does not privilege either the symbolic or material order or reduce one to the other, but neither does it view them as separate and clearly distinguishable from one another. Instead, assemblage theory attends to the ways in which they intertwine.

Deleuze and Guattari argue:

The independence of the form of expression and the form of content is not the basis for a parallelism between them or a representation of one by the other, but on the contrary a parceling of the two, a manner in which expressions are inserted into contents, in which we ceaselessly jump from one register to another, in which signs are at work in things themselves just as things extend into or are deployed through signs. An assemblage of enunciation does not speak "of" things; it speaks *on the same level as* states of things and states of content.⁹⁶

Against many of its deployments, assemblage does not, therefore, require a wholesale rejection of identity, subjectivity, or the symbolic. Instead, it directs attention toward the multiple symbolic, material, spatial, and temporal processes through which collectivities are organized. Thinking about processes of subjectivity through assemblage—as "a series of dispersed but mutually implicated networks, drawn together by enunciation and

⁹⁵ Aaron Hess, "The Selfie Assemblage," *International Journal of Communication*, 9 (2015): 1629–46.

⁹⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 7.

dissolution,⁹⁷ — thus requires analyzing the shifting, fragmentary, and relational processes through which identities are enacted. Moreover, it illuminates how, through their ongoing circulation, symbols and the affects they generate can increase in magnitude even as they are removed from their initial referents to be combined in new ways.

Mapping the Concepts

In approaching trans/national publics as assemblages that align “modern” bodies and identities against Other human, geographic, and political bodies, this project is informed by additional lines of theory that offer further insight into the formation of affective borders as they generate collective belongings. These include public sphere theory, public memory, critical race/whiteness studies, and transnational and Indigenous feminisms. I address each of these below, sketching in broad strokes how assemblage articulates with and contributes to these areas of study.

Theorizing Publics

Publics, publicity, and publicness have long been central concerns of rhetorical inquiry, leading Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian Ott to argue that “what most clearly distinguishes rhetoric from other critical protocols (cultural studies or literary criticism, for example) is that it organizes itself around the relationship of discourses, events, objects, and practices to ideas about what it means to be ‘public.’”⁹⁸ One trajectory of inquiry that has therefore mobilized rhetorical inquiry is the manner in which “publics,” whether the nation, the state, the globe, the city, or some other kind of community, are formed through the

⁹⁷ Jasbir K. Puar, “Queer Times, Queer Assemblages,” *Social Text* 23, nos. 3-4 (2005): 127.

⁹⁸ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, “Rhetoric/Memory/Place,” 2–3.

circulation of rhetorical texts as well as through collective acts of witnessing.⁹⁹ Public spheres,¹⁰⁰ public screens,¹⁰¹ counterpublics,¹⁰² public modalities¹⁰³—each of these theorizations contributes to our understandings of the ways in which an assemblage of individuals becomes a self-conscious public.

Jürgen Habermas’s influential work traced the historical emergence of the bourgeois public sphere to the salons and coffeehouses of eighteenth-century Europe, where citizens assembled to discuss matters of “public concern” or “common interest.”¹⁰⁴ A civic space demarcated from formal structures of governance, the public sphere was envisioned as an arena in which citizens could critique the state through rational deliberation and hold it accountable via “public opinion,” thereby improving the practice and functioning of democracy. Despite Habermas’s acknowledgement that the public sphere had never fully achieved its utopian potential, he conceptualized the public sphere in its ideal form to be a

⁹⁹ Here, I draw from Michael Warner’s definition of publics. (See Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 [2002]: 50.)

¹⁰⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1989).

¹⁰¹ Kevin Michael DeLuca and Jennifer Peeples, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen: Democracy, Activism, and the ‘Violence’ of Seattle,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002).

¹⁰² See, for example, Rita Felski, “Politics, Aesthetics, and the Feminist Public Sphere,” in *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 154–82 and Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1996), 109–42.

¹⁰³ Daniel C. Brouwer and Robert Asen, “Introduction: Public Modalities, Or the Metaphors We Theorize By,” in Daniel C. Brouwer and Robert Asen (eds.), *Public Modalities: Rhetoric, Culture, Media and the Shape of Public Life* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 1–32.

¹⁰⁴ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*. Although both are limited by their Eurocentric frameworks, Habermas’ account in many ways parallels Benedict Anderson’s description of nation-states as “imagined communities,” particularly in Anderson’s account of the nation as oriented around the fictive construction of horizontal comradeship with one’s fellow citizens (See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*).

site of inclusion: “the discussion was to be open and accessible to all; merely private interests were to be inadmissible; inequalities of status were to be bracketed; and discussants were to deliberate as peers.”¹⁰⁵

While Habermas’ theorization offers a useful conceptual resource for social and political theorists, his formulation of the public sphere has been modified and contested in various ways. To begin with, numerous scholars have observed that “despite the rhetoric of publicity and accessibility, the official public sphere rested on, indeed was importantly constituted by, a number of significant exclusions” along axes including gender, race, and class.¹⁰⁶ These scholars direct attention to the simultaneous existence of multiple publics and to the ways in which persons excluded from or silenced by the norms of public debate frequently participate in “oppositional discursive space[s],” or counterpublics, comprised by their own rules and aesthetics.¹⁰⁷ Against the public sphere’s normativizing constructs such as “rationality,” “civility,” and public debate, counterpublics theory conceptualizes public engagement as occurring through bodily performances, emotion, materiality and more.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 59.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid; for further discussion see Felski, “Politics, Aesthetics, and the Feminist Public Sphere”; Oscar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, trans. Peter Labanyi, Jamie Owen Daniel, and Assenka Oksiloff (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 54–95; and Catherine Squires, “Rethinking the Black Public Sphere: An Alternative Vocabulary for Multiple Public Spheres,” *Communication Theory* 12, no. 4 (2002): 446–68.

¹⁰⁷ Felski, “Politics, Aesthetics, and the Feminist Public Sphere,” 155. See also Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 2005) and Robert Asen and Daniel C. Brouwer (eds.), *Counterpublics and the State* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001).

¹⁰⁸ Daniel C. Brouwer, “Communication as Counterpublic,” in Gregory J. Shepherd, Jeffrey St. John, and Ted Stiphas (eds.), *Communication As...: Perspectives on Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006), 195–207.

Although much inquiry into public spheres and counterpublics has been situated within the nation-state, in recent years scholars have also sought to address the formation of publics that exceed national borders to operate in the scale of the transnational.¹⁰⁹ This has required refining existing models and developing new conceptual resources. While the public sphere has traditionally been approached “from the standpoint of a historically specific political project: the democratization of the modern territorial (nation-) state,”¹¹⁰ in transnational publics “interlocutors are [not necessarily] co-nationals nor fellow citizens.”¹¹¹ Instead, differently located subjects are networked together in global arenas through “multiple mobile relationships.”¹¹² According to John Allen and Allan Cochrane, “the mediated relationships of power multiply the possibilities for political engagement, drawing political actors closer through real-time technologies or reaching out to them through a succession of enrolling strategies.”¹¹³ Reframing the public sphere as “public screen,” Kevin DeLuca and Jennifer Peeples likewise draw attention to the ways in which new technologies intensify the speed of communication and transcend spatial barriers.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Lisa McLaughlin, “Feminism and the Political Economy of Transnational Public Space,” *Sociological Review* 52, no. 1 (2004): 156–75; Nancy Fraser, “Transnationalizing the Public Sphere: On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 24: 7–30; and Susan Brownell, Human Rights and the Beijing Olympics: Imagined Global Community and the Transnational Public Sphere,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 63, no. 2 (2012): 306–27.

¹¹⁰ Fraser, “Transnationalizing the Public Sphere,” 10.

¹¹¹ Fraser, “Transnationalizing the Public Sphere,” 16.

¹¹² Mimi Sheller and John Urry, “Mobile Transformations of ‘Public’ and ‘Private’ Life,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 20, no. 3 (2003): 108.

¹¹³ John Allen and Allan Cochrane, “Assemblages of State Power: Topological Shifts in the Organization of Government and Politics,” *Antipode* 42, no. 5 (2010): 1075.

¹¹⁴ DeLuca and Peeples, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen.”

Assemblage theory offers additional resources for “understanding the new topography of political activity.”¹¹⁵ Ingrid Volkmer utilizes the term “public assemblages” to conceptualize global connectivities unable to be captured within theorizations of the public sphere. Such an approach draws attention to the “multiple scalar layering of different networked public cultures” as well as to the “multidirectional densities of public space.”¹¹⁶ Volkmer draws from Saskia Sassen’s theorization of the emergent “spatio-temporal” assemblages of the global order in which even as “the traditional territoriality of the national” is, in many ways, unbundled; at the same time, “some of the most complex meanings of the global are being constituted inside the national, whether national territories and institutions or national states.”¹¹⁷ In these applications, assemblage theory’s spatial and temporal logics, attention to interacting micro- and macro-forces, and emphasis on emergent becomings offer insight into the ways the imagined geographies of the present are constituted through global networks and spatial imaginaries as well as through “concrete and often place-specific social infrastructure[s].”¹¹⁸ Importantly for this project, these new forms of public assemblages “lead ultimately to new locations of citizenship ‘outside the state’ as the ‘meaning of the territorial itself has changed.’”¹¹⁹ In drawing attention to the shifting and

¹¹⁵ DeLuca and Peeples, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen,” 145.

¹¹⁶ Ingrid Volkmer, *The Global Public Sphere: Public Communication in the Age of Reflective Interdependence* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2014): 57, 62.

¹¹⁷ Saskia Sassen, “Neither Global Nor National: Novel Assemblages of Territory, Authority and Rights,” *Ethics & Global Politics* 1, no. 1-2 (2008): 67, 74.

¹¹⁸ Sassen, “Neither Global Nor National,” 66.

¹¹⁹ Ingrid Volkmer, “Between ‘Publicness’ and ‘Publicity’: Conceptualizing Discourse ‘Assemblages’ of Public Legitimacy in Transnational Spaces,” *The Review of Communication* 10, no. 1 (2010): 55. See also Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

multiple modalities that construct imagined communities,¹²⁰ assemblage theory offers a means by which to navigate various scales of inquiry, attending to the mutual embeddedness of local and global, and national and transnational publics. Assemblage theory may thus expand the analytic terrain upon which publics are mapped.

Theorizing Memory

Memory has been addressed as one of the fundamental modes through which publics come into being. Blair, Dickinson, and Ott describe the field of public memory as oriented around “the stance that beliefs about the past are shared among members of a group, whether a local community or the citizens of a nation-state.”¹²¹ This framing aligns with what Kendall Phillips identifies as “the memory of publics,”¹²² an approach to public memory that emerges from the scholarship of authors such as Maurice Halbwachs and many others who have posited memory as an activity of collectives as opposed to (or in addition to) memory as an action of individuals.¹²³ In this framing, public memory serves several functions. As outlined by Jan Assmann, these include: the construction of identity, the reconstruction of the past, the institutionalization of society’s heritage, specialized practices that “organize” memory, and the engendering of “a clear system of values and differentiations.”¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Here, I draw from Brouwer and Asen’s conceptualization of “public modalities.” See Brouwer and Asen, “Introduction: Public Modalities.”

¹²¹ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, “Rhetoric/Memory/Place,” 6.

¹²² Kendall R. Phillips, “Introduction,” in Kendall R. Phillips (ed.), *Framing Public Memory* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 3–6.

¹²³ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

¹²⁴ Jan Assmann, “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,” *New German Critique* 65 (2001): 131.

Public memory aligns individuals with a collective such as the nation-state by offering a connection to something beyond oneself, a sense of belonging. In fact, as Blair, Dickinson, and Ott observe, public memory is so important for national identity, that “some scholars, like Michael Kammen and John Bodnar, have articulated it directly with patriotism.”¹²⁵ While interrogations of public memory have thus frequently been located at the level of the nation-state, recent analyses have directed attention toward public memory texts not confined within national borders. Drawing from Arjun Appadurai’s discussion of various global “scapes,”¹²⁶ Kendall Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes direct their attention to “global memoryscapes.”¹²⁷ Through this theorization they examine memory as comprised of shifting, fluid, and irregular landscapes. With its geographic orientation, “memoryscape” offers a means by which to conceptualize the interrelationships between particular physical landscapes and the bodies that occupy them while also attending to dynamic flows of memory as they travel across global landscapes. Landscapes are at once material and symbolic; as a popular form of artwork they are hung on walls for enjoyment and consumption, transporting the viewer through the image depicted. Memory, likewise, maps onto geographic terrain as well as onto spatial imaginaries. The suffix “-scape” further calls attention to memories not as objective relations but rather as “deeply perspectival

¹²⁵ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, “Rhetoric/Memory/Place,” 7. See also John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Michael Kammen, *The Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1993).

¹²⁶ Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 7 (1990): 295–310.

¹²⁷ Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes (eds.), *Global Memoryscapes: Contesting Remembrance in a Transnational Age* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

constructs” that change shape depending where one is looking from.¹²⁸ Memories, like other phenomena in the public realm are not only simply handed to publics in the form of always-already-existing ideologies; they are active and experiential in nature.

To draw attention to the active and experiential aspects of memory, Phillips offers a second frame by which to complicate “the memory of publics” frame under which much theorizing has occurred: the “publicness of memory.” In its emphasis on the processual and emergent aspects of memory, this frame aligns with the theorization of assemblage. While the study of the memory of publics has frequently “operate[d] within a general subject-object logic—where publics have memories, contest memories, etc.,” the study of the publicness of memory “opens up the nonsubjective aspects of memories appearing in public—the uncertainty of memories, their elusiveness, their mutability.”¹²⁹ Instead of asking what group identities are authorized through particular memories, what is remembered and what is forgotten, under this framework one might ask: What does remembering in public look like? What are the modalities through which remembering occurs? Through what intensities, and along what trajectories, does memory move?

Approaching public memory through the framework of assemblage further draws attention to memory as an ontological process. Grant Bollmer utilizes assemblage to argue against what has been discussed above as “the memory of publics” approach, which frequently takes for granted the existence of a public, who then remembers, to instead argue

¹²⁸ Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference,” 296.

¹²⁹ Phillips, “Introduction,” 9.

“for the ontological specificity of collective memory beyond the psychic.”¹³⁰ The problem in much contemporary scholarship, he asserts, is that:

*both collective and individual are assumed to possess ontological coherence in advance. The existence of ‘collective’ or ‘psychic’ memory, along with the ‘collectives’ and the ‘individuals’ that could experience said memory, are all assumed to exist ontologically. Their relation is extrapolated as if both are coherent, interacting entities, rather than as entities that are produced, along with their relation, through a specific, contextual organization of matter and discourse.*¹³¹

In other words, the presumption of an already existing public into which individuals are interpellated via public memory may render the material and embodied *doings* of memory less visible.

Through assemblage, we may thus approach memory as a system that is actualized in specific encounters between bodies, objects, and places. Assemblage further draws attention to the multidirectionality of public memories, and to the ways in which “collective memories of seemingly distinct histories ... are not so easily separable from one another.”¹³² Memory, as a collective production—an assemblage—is conditioned by the relational systems in which it functions. Understanding memory as an assemblage is thus important for my analysis of the relationships between the border objects constructed by US Southwest memory places, Christians United for Israel, and FEMEN, given that as memory shifts and

¹³⁰ Grant David Bollmer, “Virtuality in Systems of Memory: Toward an Ontology of Collective Memory, Ritual, and the Technological,” *Memory Studies* 4, no. 4 (2011): 453. While there has been debate in the (inter-) discipline of memory studies over what constitutes a preferable modifier—public memory, collective memory, social memory—I do not enter that debate here.

¹³¹ Bollmer, “Virtuality in Systems of Memory,” 454, emphasis in original.

¹³² Michael Rothberg, “From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory,” *Criticism* 53, no. 4 (2011): 524.

moves through various landscapes and assemblages are de- and re-territorialized, “a given capability can contribute to the formation of a very different relational system from the one it originates in.”¹³³

Theorizing Race

Though elided in many of the canonical works on public spheres and public memory, race, as both a relational and historical system, is central to the formation of national and collective identities and to the ways in which publics remember. Interrupting dominant understandings of race as a stable and unchanging genetic identity, critical race scholars conceptualize race as a dynamic social construct emerging from particular histories of bodies in relation.¹³⁴ In their theorization of racial formation, Michael Omi and Howard Winant identify the contemporary concept of race as a historical formation that developed in tandem with European colonization as a means by which to justify genocide, territorial control, slavery and other coercive labor, and the denial of rights to colonial populations. They argue that the material inequalities of colonialism gave rise to understandings of race as biologically given; such a framework enabled Anglo-Europeans to legitimate their control through the Enlightenment and scientific discourses that classified their race, and

¹³³ Saskia Sassen, *Territory Authority Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 7–8.

¹³⁴ Several of the foundational works in critical race theory emerged from the field of critical legal studies; see, for example, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Race, Reform and Retrenchment: Transformation and Legitimation in Anti-Discrimination Law,” *Harvard Law Review* 101, no. 7 (1988): 1331–87; Richard Delgado, “Rodrigo's Tenth Chronicle: Merit and Affirmative Action,” *Geo. Law Journal* 83 (1994–5): 1711–60; Mari Matsuda, “Looking to the Bottom: Critical Legal Studies and Reparations,” *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, 22 (1987): 323–73; and Patricia Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of A Law Professor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

civilization, as superior to all Others.¹³⁵ Deemed as biologically inferior, the “marked” bodies of Black and Brown peoples could thus be subjected to control, regulation, and exploitation by individuals as well as states.

Critical race theory has also offered a conceptual vocabulary for approaching Whiteness as a racial formation, deconstructing the “naturalness” and invisibility of whiteness, and challenging its normativizing force.¹³⁶ Communication scholars have contributed to this work, mapping the rhetorical spaces of Whiteness,¹³⁷ and approaching Whiteness through lenses of identity,¹³⁸ discourse,¹³⁹ and performance.¹⁴⁰ Although the work

¹³⁵ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994, 2nd ed.). Omi and Winant were not the first to articulate this perspective; their work emerged in concert with the work of other critical race scholars including Kimberle Crenshaw and other Black feminist scholars. For an overview of the development of critical race theory see Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas (eds.), *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement* (New York: The New Press, 1995).

¹³⁶ See, for example, Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (eds.), *Critical White Studies: Looking Behind the Mirror* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997); Ruth Frankenberg (ed.), *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*; Thomas K. Nakayama and Judith N. Martin (eds.), *Whiteness: The Communication of Social Identity* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1999); and Henry Louis Gates Jr. and K. Anthony Appiah (eds.), *White Pages: Black Writers on Whites and Whiteness* (Brooklyn: Soft Skull Press, 2005).

¹³⁷ Lisa A. Flores, Dreama G. Moon, and Thomas K. Nakayama, “Dynamic Rhetorics of Race: California’s Racial Privacy Initiative and the Shifting Grounds of Racial Politics,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 3 (2006): 181–201; Thomas K. Nakayama and Robert L. Krizek, “Whiteness: A Strategic Rhetoric,” *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 (1995): 291–309.

¹³⁸ Ronald L. Jackson, II and Susan M. Heckman, “Perceptions of White Identity and White Liability: An Analysis of White Student Responses to a College Campus Racial Hate Crime,” *Journal of Communication* 52, no. 2 (2002): 434–50; Judith N. Martin, Robert L. Krizek, Thomas K. Nakayama, and Lisa Bradford, “Exploring Whiteness: A Study of Self-Labels for White Americans,” *Communication Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (1996): 125–44.

¹³⁹ John D. Foster, “Defending Whiteness Indirectly: A Synthetic Approach to Race Discourse Analysis,” *Discourse & Society* 20, no. 6 (2009): 685–703; Dreama G. Moon, “White Enculturation and Bourgeois Ideology: The Discursive Production of ‘Good (White) Girls,’” in Nakayama and Martin, *Whiteness*.

¹⁴⁰ Bryant K. Alexander, “Black Skin/White Masks: The Performative Sustainability of Whiteness (with Apologies to Frantz Fanon),” *Qualitative Inquiry* 10, no. 5 (2004): 647–72; Leda M. Cooks and

of critiquing “the seemingly ‘natural’ or ‘common sense’ concept of race,” has by no means been completed, Omi and Winant argue that the central task for scholars today “is to focus attention on the continuing significance and changing meanings of race.”¹⁴¹ This requires attending to the specific contexts in which race emerges as “the meaning and salience of race is forever being reconstituted in the present.”¹⁴²

Feminist scholars of intersectionality have importantly drawn attention to the ways in which the meanings of race are constituted by, and through, a number of other social locations as they accumulate meaning within specific contexts.¹⁴³ Intersectionality theory calls for a conceptualization of identity as always comprised of multiple facets and denies that forms of oppression can be easily cleaved from one another. Inequalities are thus seen as produced within what Patricia Hill Collins refers to as the “matrix of domination.”¹⁴⁴

Jennifer S. Simpson, *Whiteness, Pedagogy, Performance: Dis/Placing Race* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007); John T. Warren, “Doing Whiteness: On the Performative Dimensions of Race in the Classroom,” *Communication Education* 50, no. 2 (2001): 91–108; John T. Warren, *Performing Purity: Whiteness, Pedagogy, and the Reconstitution of Power* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003).

¹⁴¹ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, “The Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race,” in Cameron McCarthy, Warren Crichlow, Greg Dimitriadis, and Nadine Dolby (eds.), *Race, Identity, and Representation in Education* (New York: Routledge, 2005, 2nd ed.), 4.

¹⁴² Omi and Winant, “Concept of Race,” 7.

¹⁴³ When Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term “intersectionality” in 1989 to describe the mutually constitutive relationship between race, gender, and other social locations, she effectively named an existing current of scholarship contributed to by numerous women of color feminist scholars who challenged both the limitations of liberal white feminism and critical race theory. (Kimberle Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics,” *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140, no. 1 (1989): 139–67; see also, for example, Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (New Jersey: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1981); Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, *All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Men, But Some of Us are Brave: Black Women’s Studies* (New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1982); and Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 1984).

¹⁴⁴ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988), 136.

Conceptualizing identity formations as comprised of intersecting locations has fundamentally altered contemporary scholarship, dismantling universalizing and homogenizing single-axis approaches to attend to the shifting and multiple axes along which privilege and oppression are distributed, allowing for more comprehensive analyses of how power is enacted on bodies.¹⁴⁵ From the perspective of intersectionality theory, in order to understand processes of racialization it is necessary to also investigate how representational and institutional systems of race are also inherently gendered, sexualized, classed, and tied to structures of the nation, citizenship, and mobility.

Recently, however, some feminist scholars have drawn attention to the limitations of the ways in which intersectionality has been deployed, including the tendency for intersectional scholarship to produce categorical analyses that reify, rather than deconstruct, separate axes of identity. Nira Yuval-Davis, for example, describes how intersectionality has been taken up in human rights policy, addressing the empirical and analytical complications that arise from the construction of seemingly unambiguous and mutually exclusive categories.¹⁴⁶ Others have further interrogated intersectionality's "mainstreaming," arguing that while its deployment as a research paradigm for social scientific inquiry has productively extended social scientific engagement with multiple social locations, it frequently falls short of its theoretical promise when it comes to methodologically engaging the mutually constitutive relationships through which identities are formed, instead leading, at times, to

¹⁴⁵ Crenshaw most prominently calls attention to the limitations of "single-axis" frameworks for understanding oppression. See Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex."

¹⁴⁶ Yuval-Davis is not arguing that intersectionality theory itself constructs mutually exclusive categories, but rather that it is deployed in what has been commonly critiqued as the "add-and-stir" method. (See Nira Yuval-Davis, "Intersectionality and Feminist Politics," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13, no. 3 [2006]: 193–209.)

“add and stir” kinds of approaches to systems of race, gender, sexuality, class, etc., in which each identity is conceptualized as distinct, and able to be captured through a check mark in a box.¹⁴⁷ Such scholarship “often involves taking imbricated identities apart one by one to see how they influence each other, a process that betrays the founding impulse of intersectionality, that identities cannot so easily be cleaved.”¹⁴⁸

A second critique views intersectionality as too invested in subjects and subject formation. Most forcefully articulated by Jasbir Puar, this line of critique identifies intersectionality as reproducing categorical and identitarian impulses.¹⁴⁹ Puar argues that “theories of intersectionality are indebted in one sense to the taken-for-granted presence of the subject and its permutations in content and form, rather than an investigation of subjecthood itself.”¹⁵⁰ For this reason, she continues, “no matter how intersectional our models of subjectivity ... these formulations may still limit us if they presume the automatic primacy and singularity of the disciplinary subject and its identitarian interpellation.”¹⁵¹ Puar

¹⁴⁷ Rita Kaur Dhamoon, “Considerations on Mainstreaming Intersectionality,” *Political Research Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2010): 230–243; see also Leslie McCall, “The Complexity of Intersectionality,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 30, no. 3 (2005): 1771–1800; Ange-Marie Hancock, “When Multiplication Doesn’t Equal Quick Addition: Examining Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm,” *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 1 (2007): 63–79; and Jennifer C. Nash, “Re-Thinking Intersectionality,” *Feminist Review* 89, no. 1 (2008): 1–15.

¹⁴⁸ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 212; This line of critique in many ways says more about the limitations of quantitative survey methods than it does about the limitations of intersectionality theory; in addressing this incompatibility I have argued that “selecting a priori categories for respondents to locate themselves in can have the side effect of reinforcing rigid categorizations of identity.” (Roberta Chevrette, “Outing Heteronormativity in Interpersonal and Family Communication: Feminist Applications of Queer Theory ‘Beyond the Sexy Streets,’” *Communication Theory* 23, no. 2 (2013): 181.)

¹⁴⁹ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; Jasbir K. Puar, “‘I would Rather Be a Cyborg than a Goddess’: Becoming-Intersectional in Assemblage Theory,” *PhiloSOPHIA* 2, no. 1 (2012): 49–66.

¹⁵⁰ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 206.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

therefore argues that assemblage theory, by focusing on situated enactments and on the ways identities are reconfigured through emergent spatial and temporal becomings, offers a useful intervention.¹⁵² This critique has generated significant debate, however; Devon Carbado argues that criticisms of intersectionality as “identitarian, static, and invested in subjects ... are curious given [that] intersectionality reflects a commitment neither to subjects nor to identities per se but rather, to marking and mapping the production and contingency of both.”¹⁵³ In following Puar’s deployment of assemblage as a useful means by which to interrogate race and interrupt static theorizations of identity, my effort is not against intersectional theorizing and inquiry.¹⁵⁴ Instead, following Puar’s claim that “identities and assemblages” can be viewed “as interlocutors in tension,”¹⁵⁵ I view assemblage theory as productive for disrupting the categorical frameworks of identity that have pervaded both rhetorical and intercultural communication scholarship as identified in Chapter 1.

¹⁵² Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 212.

¹⁵³ Devon W. Carbado, “Colorblind Intersectionality,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 38, no. 4 (2013): 815; For further discussion, see also Anna Carastathis, “The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory,” *Philosophy Compass* 9, no. 5 (2014): 304–14; and Devon W. Carbado, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Vickie M. Mays, and Barbara Tomlinson, “Intersectionality: Mapping the Movements of a Theory,” *Du Bois Review*, 10, no. 2 (2013): 303–12.

¹⁵⁴ Indeed, intersectionality continues to be a needed intervention in feminist communication studies, which remain marked by whiteness and homogenizing assumptions about “women.” For further discussion of feminist communication studies’ whiteness, see Martha Houston, “Difficult Dialogues: Intersectionality as Lived Experience,” in Karma R. Chávez and Cindy L. Griffin (eds.), *Standing in the Intersection: Feminist Voices, Feminist Practices in Communication Studies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012). Of note is the quite recent date of this published volume, the first to directly engage intersectionality with feminist communication studies despite the theory’s long existence. As Griffin and Chávez note in their introduction, this is not to deny a long history of scholarship in communication that has advanced intersectional understandings; however, it does call attention to the ways intersectional and woman of color approaches have been marginalized within the field of communication.)

¹⁵⁵ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 213.

As an analytic, assemblage “is concerned with arrangements of *forces* and *bodies* rather than identities.”¹⁵⁶ Assemblage therefore offers a conceptual vocabulary for attending to the materiality of race as it unfolds through the interactions of bodies and places as they are located within institutional and ideological systems and structures. Moreover, assemblage calls attention to unpredictable emergences; as Elizabeth Grosz argues, bodies inevitably “extend the frameworks which attempt to contain them, [and] seep beyond their domains of control.”¹⁵⁷ Deleuze and Guattari refer to such excesses as the “lines of flight” of a given assemblage, “the deterritorialization[s] according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities.”¹⁵⁸ This is important for shifting communication scholars’ studies of race from a national to a transnational framework, given that race is constructed through a multiplicity of interacting human, geographic, and political bodies. In utilizing assemblage theory, then, my effort is to draw attention to how race—and specifically, whiteness—as a social and historical formation, is both reflected in and emerges from rhetorical landscapes that, as they move across space connecting bodies in various locations, touch down within “the context of the visceral immediacy of bodily encounters.”¹⁵⁹ In analyzing Southwestern memory places, Christians United for Israel, and FEMEN through the lens of assemblage, I therefore attend to the materiality of whiteness as it relates to both specific places as well as

¹⁵⁶ Keith Woodward and Jennifer Lea, “Geographies of Affect,” in Susan J. Smith, Rachel Pain, Sallie A. Marston, and John Paul Jones III (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Social Geographies* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2010), 165.

¹⁵⁷ Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), xi.

¹⁵⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 9.

¹⁵⁹ Woodward and Lea, “Geographies of Affect,” 165.

the imagined geographies of settler colonialism. This effort is further assisted by transnational and Indigenous feminist inquiry.

Theorizing Empire

While transnational feminist inquiry encompasses divergent interpretations and interests, one common thread throughout this work is an interrogation of epistemic and material structures of empire as they affect differently-located women globally.¹⁶⁰ Intervening in monolithic and Western-centric approaches to feminist theorizing and activism, transnational feminisms refuse romanticized notions of “global sisterhood” or “saving Third World women” mobilized by liberal white feminists.¹⁶¹ Transnational feminisms instead address feminist multiplicity, “advocating a transnational and cross-cultural feminist praxis, committed to combating inequalities among women while being sensitive to differences

¹⁶⁰ What I am referring to here as “transnational feminist inquiry” is rooted in, and aligns with, the aims of postcolonial, decolonial, and anti-racist feminisms. Although there has been debate about which of these labels is preferred, I focus here on the convergence of these theories around their interrogations of race, gender, nations, and empire. See, for example, Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (eds.), *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Mino Moallem (eds.), *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalisms, Transnational Feminism, and the State* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” *Feminist Review* 30 (1988): 65–88; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles,” *Signs* 28, no. 2 (2005): 499–535; Uma Narayan, *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminisms* (New York: Routledge, 1997); and Trinh T. Minh-Ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989).

¹⁶¹ For a call to “global sisterhood,” see Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood is Global: The International Women’s Movement Anthology*. (New York: The Feminist Press at City University New York, 1984); for a critique see Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience,” in Michèle Barrett and Anne Phillips (eds.), *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992). See also Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes,” for a summary and critique of hegemonic feminist discourses of “saving Third World women” and Lila Abu-Lughod’s recent discussion of Western discourses of “saving” Muslim women. (Lila Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013]).

arising from cultural, social, and global geopolitical locations.”¹⁶² Transnational feminisms thus call for thinking differently about gender/sexual difference as it unfolds in specific contexts, and for problematizing the location of the speaking/knowing feminist subject in relation to the Other(s) of whom s/he speaks.¹⁶³

However, transnational feminist inquiry is not only concerned with “feminism” proper or with women as its subjects; transnational feminisms instead offer ways of theorizing relationships between gender, race, nation, empire, human rights, political economy, and neo/colonialism. In so doing, transnational feminist perspectives bring a critical dimension to globalization studies: the gendering of the nation-state and international, or what Robert Stam and Ella Shohat call “intercolonial,” systems.¹⁶⁴ Drawing attention to “the continuous repetition of gender and sexuality and their symbolic power both in the historicity and temporality of the nation, as well as in the repetition of raced ethnicities,”¹⁶⁵ transnational feminisms provide crucial insights into the processes through which difference is mapped onto human, political, and geographic bodies. Interrogating how gendered, racialized legacies of nationalism and colonialism shape symbolic and material locations past and present, transnational feminisms at the same time problematize binary

¹⁶² Janet Conway, “Geographies of Transnational Feminisms: The Politics of Place and Scale in the World March of Women,” *Social Politics* 15, no. 2 (2008): 209.

¹⁶³ See, for example, Linda Alcoff, “The Problem of Speaking for Others,” *Cultural Critique* 20 (1991): 5–32; Caren Kaplan, “The Politics of Location as Transnational Feminist Practice,” in Grewal and Kaplan (eds.), *Scattered Hegemonies*, 137–52; Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes”; Gayatri C. Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), xiv.

¹⁶⁵ Norma Alarcón, Caren Kaplan, and Mino Moallem, “Introduction: Between Woman and Nation,” in Kaplan, Alarcón, and Moallem (eds.), *Between Woman and Nation*, 9.

distinctions such as West/East and First World/Third World, calling attention to the “scattered hegemonies” that complicate center-periphery frameworks.¹⁶⁶

In relation to the assemblage of concepts addressed above, transnational feminisms call attention to national and global belongings as “not just matters of an ‘imagined community,’” (e.g., already existing publics who remember) but also as “active processes that are highly spatialized” (e.g., publics formed precisely through the material alignments of bodies in place).¹⁶⁷ Aligning with assemblage theory’s geographic vocabulary, transnational feminisms thus offer a means of attending to “the very real and material ways in which space constitutes a site and a medium for the enactment of cultural power.”¹⁶⁸ This forces a productive rethinking of key concepts such as identity; as Raka Shome points out, “identities occur not just anywhere, but *somewhere*.”¹⁶⁹ Examining the connections between identities and spaces—or in Sherene Razack’s words, the ways “*place becomes race*,”¹⁷⁰—requires scholars “to engage in a complex historical mapping of spaces and bodies *in relation*, inevitably a tracking of multiple systems of domination and the ways in which they come into existence in and through each other.”¹⁷¹ In calling attention to these multiple systems, transnational feminisms thus “confront how histories, geographies, nations, cultures, and economies remain simultaneously *connected* and *disconnected* in complex and unpredictable ways in the

¹⁶⁶ Grewal and Kaplan, *Scattered Hegemonies*.

¹⁶⁷ Raka Shome, “Space Matters: The Power and Practice of Space,” *Communication Theory* 13, no. 1 (2003): 49.

¹⁶⁸ Shome, “Space Matters,” 40.

¹⁶⁹ Shome, “Space Matters,” 42.

¹⁷⁰ Sherene H. Razack, “When Place Becomes Race,” in Sherene H. Razack (ed.), *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* (Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines, 2002), 1, emphasis added.

¹⁷¹ Razack, “When Place Becomes Race,” 15.

continual making and unmaking of [identities] across diverse (and often incommensurable) times and spaces, modernities, and histories.”¹⁷² Thinking through publics, memory, and race from transnational feminist perspectives thus necessitates an examination of global dis/connections as they unfold in emergent processes.

Indigenous feminisms share similarities with transnational feminisms while also challenging them in productive ways. Indigenous feminisms challenge feminist scholars to think of the transnational as not simply “a code word for ‘elsewhere,’” and to think of transnational feminism as more than “a geographic descriptor naming women’s activism that occurs anywhere else but ‘here.’”¹⁷³ As noted by Karen Leong, Roberta Chevrette, Ann Hibner Koblitz, Karen Kuo and Heather Switzer in their introduction to a special issue of *Frontiers: A Journal of Women’s Studies* on transnational feminisms, such “imagined geographies ignore the complexity of communities that transcend nation-state borders, as well as the existence of transnational processes and communities in sites not readily acknowledged to be transnational.”¹⁷⁴ Indigenous feminisms call attention to Indigenous nations as “nations within,”¹⁷⁵ denaturalizing the assumed pasts, presents, and futures of settler colonial nation-states and illuminating links between democracy and empire. Indigenous perspectives further interrupt existing imagined geographies in that Indigenous concepts of land and place are

¹⁷² Raka Shome, “Transnational Feminism and Communication Studies,” *The Communication Review* 9, no. 4 (2006): 255–56.

¹⁷³ Karen Leong, Roberta Chevrette, Ann Hibner Koblitz, Karen Kuo, and Heather Switzer, “Introduction,” Special Issue on Transnational Feminisms, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women’s Studies* 36, no. 3 (2015): vii-xv.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Vine Deloria, Jr., and Clifford M. Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

not fully encompassed by the notion of geographically bounded and demarcated spaces. As argued by Seneca scholar Mishuana Goeman, the “bounding” of Native places and identities is instead directly tied to the process of “colonial spatializing” in which nationalist discourses “ensconce a social and cultural sphere, stake a claim to people, and territorialize the physical landscape by manufacturing categories and separating land from people.”¹⁷⁶

Indigenous feminisms also complicate transnational feminisms by interrupting the “post” of postcolonial theorizing, asking for whom is the colonial “post”? Arguing that “decolonization is not a metaphor,” Indigenous feminists have critiqued the erasure of the continued colonial occupation of Native lands and Indigenous sovereignty within broader discussions of colonialism.¹⁷⁷ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang argue that the question: “‘What is colonization?’ must be answered specifically, with attention to the colonial apparatus that is assembled to order the relationships between particular peoples, lands, the ‘natural world’, and ‘civilization.’”¹⁷⁸

These relationships—between peoples, lands, and rhetorics of civilization—are at the heart of this project. As a theoretical and methodological heuristic, assemblage is not inherently decolonial; however, the ways in which I deploy assemblage in this project align with the intellectual and political challenges raised by transnational and Indigenous feminisms. Disrupting ideas of identities, nations, or transnational systems as already defined, coherent entities or bounded geographies, assemblage theory draws attention to

¹⁷⁶ Mishuana Goeman, “(Re)Mapping Indigenous Presence on the Land in Women’s Literature,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2008): 296.

¹⁷⁷ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40.

¹⁷⁸ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 21.

“multiple and layered temporalities, multiple histories and futures,” and to the points of contact between them.¹⁷⁹ Such a framing is useful for interrogating how settler memoryscapes move, shaping global (non)belongings through articulations of white sovereignty and its “pathological relationship to indigenous sovereignty.”¹⁸⁰

Background and Becomings

As with any scholarly project, my selection of sites of inquiry is informed by my own personal history and experiences as they have unfolded in an ongoing process of becoming. For Deleuze and Guattari, becoming is a site of possibility, a means by which assemblages are reterritorialized but also, importantly, deterritorialized as individuals potentially follow the lines of flight from a given assemblage of institutional powers and practices toward a not-yet-known future.¹⁸¹ While the “becomings” mobilizing this particular project are far more than can be recounted here, in this section I offer a few flashpoints.

Having grown up in a small Gold Rush town established in 1848 in the foothills of Northern California on Miwok lands, I was surrounded by “mythico-histories” of cowboys, Indians, and the Wild West from an early age.¹⁸² Annual parades commemorating the area’s history featured groups like the Kit Carson Mountain Men who rode through the streets bedecked in fringe leather jackets, cowboy hats, and long white beards. At my own family

¹⁷⁹ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, xxii.

¹⁸⁰ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xviii.

¹⁸¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations, 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press).

¹⁸² In her discussion of Hutu refugees, Liisa Malkki defines a “mythico-history” as the “recasting and reinterpretation of [the past] in fundamentally moral terms,” a definition that resonates with the historical construction of the U.S. American West. (Liisa H. Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995], 54).

gatherings, a local family friend who built wagons and led wagon tours throughout the West frequently joined us, arriving in his 10-gallon hat, guitar in tow, to play cowboy songs we would all sing together. My high school, whose mascot was “The Buffaloes,” was located eight miles away from Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park, where many tourists stop to visit the largest collection of bedrock mortars in North America before heading to area gold mines, wineries, and other attractions. Storefronts in my town and surrounding areas featured wooden statues of Native Americans in feathered headdresses, large silver and turquoise jewelry items, woven blankets, baskets, dream catchers, and other Native goods (or mass reproductions of these items), available for the tourists travelling through the area to purchase. Many storefront windows further sported the red, white, and blue stripes and stars of the US flag.

As an undergraduate at Sacramento State University I majored in anthropology, where I further—and, at first, uncritically—engaged with Indigenous cultures as a spectator. I took numerous archaeology courses that examined Native artifacts and “prehistorical” cultural practices. I studied cultural anthropology with professors whose worldly travels were evidenced by their dress and jewelry, and fantasized of the day that I too would travel to “exotic” places to study Indigenous cultures and return to teach my own students. As my studies continued, however, my exposure to the “crisis of representation,”¹⁸³ writings on ethnographic reflexivity,¹⁸⁴ and the works of feminist, postcolonial, and poststructural scholars led me to question my interests in the “exotic” practices and cultures of Native

¹⁸³ George E. Marcus and Michael M. J. Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

¹⁸⁴ See, for example, James Clifford and George E. Marcus (Eds.), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

Americans and other Indigenous tribes past and present. As my dreams of unproblematically documenting Other cultures unraveled, I began to also notice the representational “poetics and politics” at play in my immediate environment.¹⁸⁵ Looking around my classes, I saw that despite being at one of the most racially diverse universities in the nation, the majority of my classmates were white.

Numerous scholars have written about the significance of Native America for the white imagination. From pop culture to public memory places to literary canons to children’s games to sports mascots, one does not have to look far to find the evidence of white settler colonial fascination with Native Americans. The field of anthropology itself is undeniably tied to the longstanding infatuation with “going native”¹⁸⁶ or “playing Indian”¹⁸⁷— performative practices in which white US settlers attempt to take on Native identities as their own.¹⁸⁸ Norman Denzin describes “the presence of Native Americans in the collective white imagination” as “almost entirely a matter of racist myth,” a “performative, contextual, and historical” racial minstrelsy that “simultaneously place[s] Native Americans within and outside white culture.”¹⁸⁹

As I became more aware of this racial imaginary in which I was complicit, I was simultaneously completing coursework for a second undergraduate major in women’s

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ See Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

¹⁸⁷ See Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

¹⁸⁸ A plethora of critiques regarding the relationships between anthropology, settler colonialism, and racism in the US exist; for an especially well-known example see Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1988/1969).

¹⁸⁹ Norman K. Denzin, “Indians in the Park,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 5, no. 1 (2005): 11, 13.

studies—a field to which I was drawn by a felt understanding of the injustices of patriarchy I had already experienced as a young white woman. Self-identified as queer, critical of the sexualization of women in pop culture, concerned with reproductive rights and sexual violence, and aware of inequities in work and pay, here too was I largely unaware of my own racialized location. Instead, I understood women everywhere to be universally oppressed by specific men and by The Man in general—save for, perhaps, in the Native cultures of the past that I was studying in my other courses.¹⁹⁰ As I was exposed to women of color, queer, and postcolonial feminisms, however, so too did the lenses through which I was able to understand and analyze intersecting structures of oppression and privilege begin to shift.

A further significant moment shaping my scholarly trajectory was invoked in the introductory chapter: September 11th and the subsequent “war on terror.” Still awakening to my own political consciousness and armed with new analytical tools through which I was seeking to better understand systems of injustice, I was alarmed by the ways “women’s rights” were utilized to promote and justify war in the US media. Public sentiments like “[e]ither you are with us, or you are with the terrorists”¹⁹¹ as well as more “private” displays of public emotion such as the novelty flag displayed over my neighbor’s door (in the suburban white neighborhood in which I resided at the time), “Kill them all, let God sort them out,” filled me with a sense of urgency regarding the blatant injustices of US military actions, and I took to the streets with many of my peers and professors in anti-war

¹⁹⁰ See, for example, Evelyn Blackwood, “Sexuality and Gender in Certain Native American Tribes: The Case of Cross-Gender Females,” *Signs* 10, no. 1 (1984): 27–42; Laura F. Klein and Lilian A. Ackerman (eds.), *Women and Power in Native North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995).

¹⁹¹ “Text: President Bush Addresses the Nation.” *The Washington Post*, September 20, 2001, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html.

demonstrations and protests. Increasingly critical of the surge of US (consumer) patriotism that emerged as a response to the “terrorist threat,” and disturbed by the growing visibility of the conservative religious Right who mobilized narratives of terrorism and rhetorics of fear to gain media and political support for sexist, homophobic, and racist platforms, I began to comprehend and question in new ways the discursive intersections of religion, nation, race, gender, capitalism, neo/colonialism, imperialism, and militarism, and their material effects and affects.

These interests continued to drive me when I began my graduate studies nearly a decade later. At the time I was accepted into the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University I expressed an interest in discourses of alterity as they related to the still ongoing “war on terror” and the raced and gendered construction of the Islamic Other as a “savage” threat to (white) western civilization. It was for this reason that, during my graduate studies, media texts produced by CUFI, and then later FEMEN, initially caught my eye. But as my day-to-day life unfolded in the Southwest, I found myself, again, as in my childhood, surrounded by the consumption of Native American culture, symbols, and material items. As controversies unfolded over SB1070 and HB2281, Arizona’s Ethnic Studies ban, Arizona’s racist political climate in tandem with its geographic and cultural appeal for white tourists, retirees, and “snow birds,” further attuned me to the ways in which dominant practices of remembering and celebrating the Native “past” serve to sediment, rather than interrupt, settler colonial histories and structures of whiteness.

I could fill many more pages with further personal, political, and intellectual encounters and “becomings” that contributed to the conceptualizing of this project. My effort, however, is not to offer a full account of the past(s) that led me here, nor would such

an account be possible, because as many scholars of public memory have noted, the pasts we conjure are artifacts of the present. What I hope this decidedly partial narrative accomplishes is to offer further insight into the affective constellation of discourses, structures, and experiences that led me to assemble these sites together and to approach them in particular ways. Thinking about my placement within the assemblage is also useful in terms of reflexivity, which—though not traditionally a concern of rhetorical scholars—has been one subject of renewed discussion in the field’s recent turn toward rhetorical field methods.

Entering “the Field” and Assembling the Con/Texts

So far, this chapter has established assemblage as the conceptual framework through which I approach my sites, and has also identified some of the embodied and affective becomings that have led me toward specific lines of theory and topical interests. In the tradition of conceptually-driven criticism, it would not be unusual to end my discussion of method there; as Barry Brummett notes, rhetorical criticism frequently utilizes “concepts rather than distinct methodological tactics as the categories of analysis around which the study is formed.”¹⁹² In rhetorical criticism, theory is therefore not distinct from method; a rhetorical method is instead, in many instances, the application of a theory or analytic, what Brummett describes as “the exercise of a trained sensibility . . . to certain kinds of utterances which one can then look for in public discourse.”¹⁹³ While this is in many ways true for this project, what is different about the approach I have chosen is that I engage assemblage not simply as a theory through which I interpret or analyze a given rhetorical artifact or process but also as a methodological heuristic for rhetorical inquiry.

¹⁹² Brummett, “Rhetorical Theory as Heuristic and Moral,” 99.

¹⁹³ Brummett, “Rhetorical Theory as Heuristic and Moral,” 99–100.

Assemblage theory counters longstanding tendencies that view the act of criticism as one of uncovering the meanings that lie beneath finished rhetorical products to instead engage with the movements of rhetorical processes unfolding across space. I therefore take a geographic orientation toward criticism that, as described by Davi Johnson, “does not seek below the surface of discourse for hidden content or the prior intentions of a speaking subject, but stays at the surface, tracing connections and mapping disassociations.”¹⁹⁴ In bringing seemingly disparate sites of inquiry to examine what rhetorical trajectories move between them, this project addresses “a cacophony of informational flows, energetic intensities, bodies and practices,”¹⁹⁵ taking a constellation of imagined and material geographies as its starting point. Approaching my case studies as flashpoints within a larger assemblage of symbolic, material, and embodied elements, and as opportunities for interrogating the colliding scales of local, national, and global, led me to make further methodological choices about the field and con/texts of my inquiry.

Earlier in this chapter, I discussed how relationships between rhetoric, materiality, and power have been theorized by scholars of critical rhetoric, and the types of questions that have emerged from the consideration of these issues. One result of these ongoing conversations has been a shift in the types of “texts” rhetorical scholars engage: no longer confined to scrutinizing great speeches and great speakers—a trend in rhetoric most notably interrupted by the 1965 publication of Edwin Black’s germinal volume *Rhetorical Criticism*,

¹⁹⁴ Davi Johnson, “Mapping the Meme: A Geographical Approach to Materialist Rhetorical Criticism,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 4, no. 1 (2007): 31.

¹⁹⁵ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 222.

and which has been loosening its ground ever since¹⁹⁶—critical rhetorical scholars have instead turned their attention to vernacular rhetorics, embodied rhetorics, digital rhetorics, places as rhetoric, material objects, and more. Increasingly, this has led rhetorical scholars to augment more traditional approaches with embodied and participatory approaches in order to study material and embodied rhetorics as they unfold in the field, *in situ*.¹⁹⁷ Michael Middleton, Danielle Endres, and Samantha Senda-Cook argue that by combining critical rhetoric with tools from qualitative methods as well as performance studies, critical rhetoricians can better explore lived, on-the-ground “texts” and experiences.¹⁹⁸ My utilization of rhetorical field methods in this project, including data collection methods such as participant observation and interviews as well as analytic methods such as open coding and thematic clustering, thus emerged as part of the endeavor to connect micro with macro, material with symbolic, lived experiences with larger discursive structures.

The recent turn toward “the field” and field methods in rhetoric aligns with a now several decades-long shift in the field itself as rhetorical scholars have moved from approaching rhetorical texts as already-finished products, or wholes, to analyzing the unfinished, emergent, fragmented, and processual elements of rhetoric. This has implications

¹⁹⁶ Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965).

¹⁹⁷ See, for example, Michael K. Middleton, Danielle Endres, and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods: Challenges and Tensions,” *Western Journal of Communication* 75 (2011): 388; Gerard A. Hauser, “Attending the Vernacular: A Plea for an Ethnographical Rhetoric,” in *The Rhetorical Emergence of Culture*, edited by Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 157–72; Aaron Hess, “Critical-Rhetorical Ethnography: Rethinking the Place and Process of Rhetoric,” *Communication Studies* 62, no. 2 (2011): 127–152; Sara L. McKinnon, Robert Asen, Karma R. Chávez, Robert G. Howard (eds.), *Text + Field* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2016); and Michael Middleton, Aaron Hess, Danielle Endres, and Samantha Senda-Cook, *Participatory Critical Rhetoric: Theoretical and Methodological Foundations for Studying Rhetoric In Situ* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015).

¹⁹⁸ Middleton, Endres, and Senda-Cook, “Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods.”

for how the act of rhetorical criticism and the role of the critic are conceptualized as well as for the ways we understand relationships between the texts selected for analysis and the contexts in which they are situated. Highlighting the active role of critics in assembling their analytic con/texts, Michael Calvin McGee notes that texts are “larger than the apparently finished discourse that presents itself,” and that critics are not merely skillful interpreters but rather “*make* discourses from scraps and pieces of evidence.”¹⁹⁹ As I make the discourses in this project, through an assemblage of scraps and pieces, I approach my con/texts from a rhetorical perspective, but with an ethnographic/qualitative research sensibility that resonates with my deployment of assemblage as an analytic.

Assemblage is compatible with an ethnographic/qualitative research sensibility in several important ways. Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba, well known for their 1985 publication *Naturalistic Inquiry* that challenged the reigning post-positivist paradigm in the social sciences, describe qualitative methodology as focused on the interconnected and “dynamic process[es] of interaction” by which information is distributed throughout systems, “rather than concentrated at specific points,”²⁰⁰ a description resonant with the theorization of assemblages as open, dynamic, interactive, and processual systems. Jane Bennett’s discussion of an assemblage as a “sticky web”²⁰¹ of intertwined elements further aligns with anthropologist Clifford Geertz’s theorization of cultures as “webs of

¹⁹⁹ Michael Calvin McGee, “Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture,” *Western Journal of Communication* 54, no. 3 (1990): 279.

²⁰⁰ Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1985), 56, 59.

²⁰¹ Bennett, “The Agency of Assemblages,” 456.

significance” spun of symbols and myths,²⁰² but also emphasizes elements elided in Geertz’s discussion, including affective intensities, material and spatial arrangements, and non-human actants. Finally, assemblage shares with ethnographic and qualitative research an emphasis on relationality and emergences; both take us into the “contact zones” in which culture and rhetoric are created.²⁰³ Of note then is that while I did not undertake a long-term ethnographic immersion in any of my sites, my use of field methods was therefore not simply a means by which to access “‘live’ rhetorics”²⁰⁴ as they unfolded on the ground in a particular place and then “read” them through the trained eyes of a rhetorical critic. Instead, in approaching my sites as a rhetorical scholar with an ethnographic/qualitative sensibility, I directed my attention toward the relational, “on the ground,” everyday social encounters through which identities, relationships, and belongings are forged while also remaining attuned to “sources of invention, argument construction, persuasive tactics, and message strategies” as they emerged “in, or in relation to, the public sphere” in each of my sites.²⁰⁵

I utilized an assortment of artifacts as the “texts” for my analysis: brochures, websites, and media texts; embodied and material engagements within my different field sites; field note and interview data; and social media and other online media. Because each of my research sites enacts its publicness differently and with varying degrees of temporal

²⁰² Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretation of Culture,” in Michael Martin and Lee C. McIntyre (eds.), *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science* (Cambridge, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1994), 214.

²⁰³ Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone.”

²⁰⁴ Middleton, Endres, and Senda-Cook, “Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods,” 388.

²⁰⁵ Karma R. Chávez, *Queer Migration Politics: Activist Rhetoric and Coalitional Possibilities* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 15.

permanence (for example, a museum which exists in “real” time versus a protest image as the “capture” of a moment in time), the methods utilized and degrees of engagement in “the field” vary across my sites. In making choices about what to analyze in my sites, I therefore followed many of the qualitative research principles of emergent design while also being guided by the assemblage of theories I brought with me as “sensitizing concepts.”²⁰⁶ Below, I briefly summarize what comprises the data set for each chapter.

Chapter 3, “Assembling Time: Memory and the Preservation of the Present in the US Southwest,” engages in rhetorical analysis of three memory places in the US Southwest: the Pueblo Grande Museum and the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, and Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado. I conducted over fifty hours of ethnographic/rhetorical fieldwork at these sites with an emphasis on the Pueblo Grande Museum.²⁰⁷ During my fieldwork in these sites, I took photographs, went on tours, attended lectures and events, and took extensive field notes, capturing dialogue overheard while at the museum. I talked informally with visitors and conducted semi-structured interviews with seventeen visitors, which were tape-recorded and transcribed. I initially analyzed my data using open coding methods; I then narrowed my codes with specific attention toward the discourses of race, civilization, and belonging that mobilized my interests in the site. In the iterative approach that qualitative research takes, the themes from this coding subsequently informed further rhetorical analysis in each of these sites. In addition, my residence in Arizona throughout my engagement with these sites brought further opportunities for analysis and reflection on the

²⁰⁶ Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1967).

²⁰⁷ See Roberta Chevrette and Aaron Hess, “Unearthing the Native Past: Citizen Archaeology and Modern (Non)Belonging at the Pueblo Grande Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 12, no. 2 (2015): 139–58.

rhetorical landscapes of the US Southwest in which Native Americans frequently serve as the border objects against which dominant settler colonial structures are consolidated.

Chapter 4, “Assembling Places: Christians United for Israel’s Rhetorics and the Preservation of the Future,” is primarily based on my engagement with the Christians United for Israel (CUFI). Unlike memory places, whose publics are constructed on-site as visitors move in and out of them, CUFI, as a national organization with over three million members, does not have a specific physical material location in which its publicness is enacted. Engaging with this site therefore required different methods and data sources. My first encounter with this site was thus a rhetorical analysis of a video of Glenn Beck’s speech at the 2011 CUFI Summit as well as videos of speeches and various promotional materials for his Restoring Courage rally in Israel the same year. Through a thematic analysis, Lisa Braverman and I identified the ways discourses of masculinist protection assembled with discourses of religion and brotherhood to construct US-Israel unity against a gendered and racialized terrorist Other.²⁰⁸ Of particular interest as it related to my analyses of US Southwest memory places was “the construction of Israel as a Jewish place by abjecting the Arab Other from Jerusalem’s physical and cognitive landscape.”²⁰⁹

With my interests sparked, I attended the 2014 Christians United for Israel National Summit held July 21-23 in Washington, D.C. with the intention of doing additional fieldwork. At the summit I spoke with many visitors, saw keynote speakers including Pastor John Hagee, Charles Krauthammer, Bill Kristol, and several US senators including Michele Bachmann, and attended a meeting where several CUFI members met with their

²⁰⁸ Roberta Chevrette and Lisa C. Braverman, “Brothers, Fathers, Terrorists: Masculine Assemblages in Glenn Beck’s Rhetoric of US-Israel Unity Post-9/11,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 2 (2013): 81–106.

²⁰⁹ Chevrette and Braverman, “Brothers, Fathers, Terrorists,” 96.

Congressional Representative to argue CUFI's "talking points." Given that the summit occurred during Israel's "Operation Protective Edge," a military initiative resulting in the loss of 2,191 Palestinian lives,²¹⁰ I also witnessed protests that occurred during the event. During this time I took extensive fieldnotes (representing around 15 hours total) and photographs; however, due to a non-disclosure agreement signed there, I decided to only analyze events from the summit that are publicly available. As a non-member of the organization whose beliefs do not align with the members of CUFI—who on many occasions during the 3-day summit stood on their feet passionately cheering for Israel's military actions and demanding US military action—I left more than one passionate speech on the verge of tears. After similar experiences at a local CUFI event in Arizona where I took fieldnotes (2 hours) and conversed with attendees, I decided that the majority of my additional engagements with CUFI would be from a distance due to my affective responses. I did, however, still practice an ethnographic/qualitative sensibility as I entered "the field" of CUFI as an online public where I examined their web presence including their website, Facebook page, and other recorded media. As a Facebook follower, I analyzed the threads that came through my news feed on a regular basis; I also analyzed comments left by supporters and challengers on YouTube videos and other postings as a means by which to address not only the official discourses created by the organization but to also examine how publics are formed, through affective identifications, from the ground up. My analytic methods included coding, thematic clustering, and rhetorical analysis of the texts I assembled.

²¹⁰ "Statistics: Victims of the Israeli Offensive on Gaza since 08 July 2014," September 16, 2014, *Palestinian Centre for Human Rights*, http://www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10491:statistics-victims-of-the-israeli-offensive-on-gaza-since-08-july-2014&catid=145:in-focus.

Chapter 5, “Assembling Bodies: FEMEN’s Feminism and the Preservation of the Past,” is based on my engagements with FEMEN. In this site, I was again able to use field methods to collect data *in situ*. I attended FEMEN’s 2013 Spring Training camp in Paris, a 5-day long immersion and training in FEMEN’s “sextremism,” which was attended by women from France, Spain, Ukraine, Quebec, Holland, Sweden, and myself (as well as a journalist) from the United States. During this time, I collected data in the form of extensive fieldnotes (representing approximately 60 hours of participant observation), photographs, and FEMEN paraphernalia. Following the close of the official camp, I stayed for a couple of additional days in Paris during which time I was able to interview three of the attendees from the camp. Upon my return, I interviewed three additional activists on Skype, for a total of six interviews ranging between one and two hours in length. My data set also includes FEMEN’s website, images of FEMEN events, news stories about FEMEN, a book released by FEMEN, and other media clips. In addition to following the “formal” pages of different international branches of the organization, I also became Facebook friends with many of the activists I met, and was thus witness to the aspects of their lives shared on their personal pages. While I have not included as “data” things shared by activists on their personal pages, this does point to the more enduring relationships I formed in this site than in the other cases I analyze, which impacts my identity as a rhetorical critic with regard to this site, generating questions about rhetorical field methods and ethics that will be taken up in Chapter 6.

Analyzing my individual sites as assemblages as well as components of a larger assemblage, I examine complicities and resistances that circulate between and among them. A brief example is useful in order to set the stage for the case studies presented in the following chapters. Closely paralleling Laura Bush’s assertion in her 2003 speech regarding

the necessity of protecting Muslim women, which was delivered amidst escalating US military action over a decade later, FEMEN's description of their objectives, appearing on their website beneath a picture of several topless activists standing proudly with their fists in their air, in jean shorts with flower crowns atop their long blonde hair, includes the following claim: "FEMEN urges the civilized democratic world to help Muslim women get out of the position of slavery."²¹¹ A different image from a FEMEN protest in France shows five women standing outside the doors of a mosque with slogans including "Don't Fear Freedom," "Fuck Islamism," "No Masters No Slaves," and "Freedom to All Women" written on their signs and exposed bodies. Inna Shevchenko, FEMEN's most public figure, elsewhere states, "in [Muslim women's] eyes its written 'help me.'"²¹² In these and other circulated words and images, FEMEN activists inadvertently position themselves as saviors of the world's women, a position heavily critiqued by postcolonial and women of color feminists, and in many ways reproduce Islamophobic discourses that have proliferated in new ways since 9/11. Advocating democracy as the (only) path to gender equality further rhetorically positions "the West" as superior to "the Rest."²¹³

While FEMEN's geographic location, tactics, and political aims are radically different from CUFI, which is comprised primarily of members of the conservative US Religious Right, similar statements are asserted by CUFI supporters, who describe Israel as the only country in the Middle East where individuals of all races, sexes, and religions have equal

²¹¹ Femen.org, "FEMEN," <http://femen.org/about>

²¹² Eline Gordts, "Muslim Women Against Femen" *The Huffington Post*, April 5, 2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/05/muslim-women-against-femen_n_3023052.html

²¹³ Stuart Hall, "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power," in Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (eds.), *Formations of Modernity: Understanding Modern Societies* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992), 275–332.

rights. In his speech at CUFI's 2014 National Summit, Texas Senator Ted Cruz argued that Hamas' disregard for civilian life leads them to put "women and children on top of the rockets."²¹⁴ Reframing Israel not as attacker but as masculine protector, Cruz and other Israel supporters argue that it is Israel who seeks to protect her own civilians, the women and children of Gaza, and the existence of democracy itself in a region of the world otherwise trapped in a different time. This sentiment is well captured in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's 2015 address to the US Congress. "In [Iran and ISIS's] deadly game of thrones," Netanyahu argued, "there's *no place* for America or for Israel, *no peace* for Christians, Jews or Muslims who don't share the Islamist medieval creed, *no rights* for women, *no freedom* for anyone."²¹⁵ Netanyahu's statement reveals how place, democracy, and time are rhetorically entangled in pro-Israel rhetorics in ways that are both gendered and racialized.

Narratives of saving women and children from the Others who oppose democratic civilization also play an important role in the popular imaginary of the US Southwest and West. As just one example, during the time I conducted the fieldwork for this project the Heard Museum in Phoenix featured an exhibit titled "Beyond Geronimo: The Apache Experience." In the room devoted to this exhibit, historical objects and photographs filled glass cases in the center of the display area while the surrounding walls featured old posters from Hollywood Westerns, a configuration of space that itself mirrors how stories of

²¹⁴ David Weigel, "Inside the Most Insanely Pro-Israel Meeting You Could Ever Attend," *Slate*, July 22, 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2014/07/christians_united_for_israel_the_most_insanely_pro_israel_conference_of.2.html.

²¹⁵ "The Complete Transcript of Netanyahu's Address to Congress," *The Washington Post*, March 3, 2015, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2015/03/03/full-text-netanyahus-address-to-congress/>, emphasis added.

Geronimo contribute to and are embedded in larger cultural mythologies that rely on and perpetuate the notion of saving (white) women and children from merciless “savages.” The circulation of such mythologies is further reflected in the ways “Geronimo” was taken up as a World War II era parachutists cry and, at the time of my childhood, something that was yelled out before doing anything daring and, more recently, as a code word in the US military operation to execute Osama bin Laden.

As it relates to the construction of the settler colonial US nation-state, rhetorics of saving women and children are not only reflected in or perpetuated by Hollywood movies or Old West tourist landmarks and towns—they are also written into the founding documents of the nation itself. The Declaration of Independence, in its assertion of reasons for the colonies’ demand of political independence from Britain, states: “He [King George] ... has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.” In highlighting the “Indian Savages”’ disregard for life, what is indirectly upheld in this statement is the necessity of defending the nation from these racialized and temporal Others. The necessary annihilation of Native populations in order to protect US citizens is thus written into the structures of US democracy itself.

Such paradoxes inform the arguments offered in this project. In each of my sites, I examine how rhetorics of democracy and freedom circulate transnationally in ways that support and uphold (settler) colonial and imperial processes, mapping national and global belongings, rights, and recognition through gendered and racialized rhetorics of civilization and temporal difference. In each of the con/texts I analyze, group belongings are articulated through diachronic and synchronic processes. In my case studies I therefore attend to the histories of discourse and geo-political relationships that contribute to present constellations;

however, my primary focus in bringing these three case studies together is to examine the sites in synchronic relation to one another. This requires, to a certain extent, dislodging the specific cases “from their particular historically constructed encasements” to instead examine the rhetorics that traverse between them in the contemporary geo-political moment.²¹⁶

In tracing connections and mapping conceptual relationships within and among my case studies, I examine the larger rhetorical landscapes within which rhetorics of civilization and its Others circulate shaping ideas about “modern” trans/national citizenship and geopolitical belonging. Each case study is thus a snapshot, a moment for examining these landscapes as they touch down, or territorialize, in specific ways before being swept back up, and into, the larger constellation. Through this assemblage of cases, I build an argument for conceptualizing whiteness as a global assemblage reliant upon what I refer to as *settler colonial memoryscapes* and the “border objects” they exclude.²¹⁷ I turn first to the US Southwest, a rhetorical landscape that propels a particular kind of remembering in which Native American nations and peoples are frequently imagined as existing in “some ‘other worlds,’ some other place” outside of the present.²¹⁸ I examine how, invoked as relics of an always-already-before “our” time, Native American histories become the collective past of (white) visitors to public memory places. More a “haunting” than a “forgetting,” Native Americans thus serve as the spectral figures upon which settler colonial narratives are re/enacted.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Saskia Sassen, *Territory Authority Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 5.

²¹⁷ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 87.

²¹⁸ Raka Shome and Radha Hegde, “Culture, Communication, and the Challenge of Globalization,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002): 175.

²¹⁹ For further discussion see Renée L. Bergland, *The National Uncanny: Indian Ghosts and American Subjects* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000).

CHAPTER 3

ASSEMBLING TIME: MEMORY AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE PRESENT IN THE US SOUTHWEST

“Settler colonialism is naturalized not only in Native people’s seeming ‘disappearance’ from a modern, settled landscape, but also in indigeneity’s recurrent appearance within and as settler subjectivity.”
—Scott Lauria Morgensen²²⁰

Introduction

In mapping the connections between memoryscapes in the US Southwest, Christians United for Israel (CUFI), and FEMEN, this project examines how racialized and gendered rhetorics of civilization and democracy articulate collective belongings. Across these sites, through the repetition and reiteration of settler narratives of progress and masculinist protection, borders between nations, places, bodies, and temporalities are re/inscribed. The previous chapters have described the theoretical and methodological significance of bringing these case studies together as an assemblage while also identifying other prominent lines of theory informing my approach. In this chapter, I now turn to the US Southwest, a trans/national border space and contact zone shaped by enduring legacies of imperial conquest, settler colonial expansion, and Native dispossession. This chapter is informed by rhetorical fieldwork in three public memory places where I examined performative repetitions in the signs and affects circulated through the fleeting encounters of bodies in place.

This chapter unfolds in several sections. In the first section, I address how theories of settler colonialism productively complicate understandings of the US Southwest as a border space. The next section offers a brief discussion of rhetorical approaches to public

²²⁰ Scott Lauria Morgensen, *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 18.

memory places to ground the case study. Here, I focus on how, by propelling rhetorical scholars into “the field,” memory places have provoked attention to the symbolic, material, and social dimensions of remembering that shape publics. Through this framework, the third section turns to the US Southwest as a rhetorical and material memoryscape. I address the historical context through which the preservation of “the Native past” established the US Southwest as a destination for the physical and imaginary wanderings of Euro-American settler society and the reinforcement of masculinized narratives of civilization’s progress. I then turn to an analysis of the rhetorical fieldwork I conducted in three specific memory places to further examine Southwest memoryscapes as an assemblage of relationships, destinations, objects, and encounters. Pulling these threads of discussion together, the chapter conclusion argues that as the bodies of primarily white tourist visitors brush up against Native bodies, memories, land, and objects, whiteness is re/produced through the non-threatening Indigenous bodies (human and otherwise) now subsumed by the nation as “our” collective past.

The US Southwest as Trans/National Border Space

The US Southwest as both a geographic and imagined place is built around national borders at once material and symbolic. Demarcated on maps and made “real” through fences, walls, signs, and checkpoints, national borders clearly divide geographic territories and their human occupants in materially consequential ways. National borders are also inherently rhetorical. “Imagined projections of territorial power” and reflections of the political construct of the nation-state, “borders are the ultimate symbol.”²²¹ As Victor

²²¹ Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” *Journal of World History* 8, no. 2 (1997): 211.

Villanueva observes, they are “a fiction within the fiction of a nation.”²²² In their defining of nations, people, and geographic places as different, borders create belongings through exclusion in affective ways. J. David Cisneros identifies the “obsession over the literal and symbolic border between American and foreigner, between us and them” as motivated by “a deep public anxiety about the integrity of the nation.”²²³ As discussed in Chapter 1, it is thus precisely the in/stability of borders that requires their ongoing maintenance.

The appearance of border objects—those whose difference threatens the subjects of the nation as well as the nation as subject—is therefore necessary for maintaining the collective.²²⁴ As borders are mapped onto territories, they are mapped onto bodies as well, rendering certain bodies as belonging in place against the threatening Other bodies marked as out of place. A number of scholars in the field of communication and beyond have examined the ways that the bodies of Mexican immigrants are rhetorically mapped as fearful and out of place within the US nation-state.²²⁵ But while the US-Mexico border has been the focus of much borderlands scholarship and theorizing,²²⁶ less focused on in discussions of

²²² Victor Villanueva, “Metonymic Borders and Our Sense of Nation,” in Barbara Couture and Patti Wohjan (eds.), *Crossing Borders, Drawing Boundaries: The Rhetoric of Lines Across America* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2016), 34.

²²³ Josue David Cisneros, “(Re)Bordering the Civic Imaginary: Rhetoric, Hybridity, and Citizenship in *La Gran Marcha*,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 1 (2011): 26.

²²⁴ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*.

²²⁵ See, for example, D. Robert DeChaine (ed.), *Border Rhetorics: Citizenship and Identity on the US-Mexico Frontier* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2012); D. Robert DeChaine, “Bordering the Civic Imaginary: Alienization, Fence Logic, and the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 1 (2009): 43–65; Lisa A. Flores, “Constructing Rhetorical Borders: Peons, Illegal Aliens, and Competing Narratives of Immigration,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 4 (2003): 362–87; and Otto Santa Ana, *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002).

²²⁶ Gloria Anzaldúa’s influential theorization of Chicana/mestiza identity as a borderlands identity is, of course, one reason that scholarship deploying the term “borderlands” frequently focuses Mexican-

the US Southwest as borderlands are the internal borders between the US nation-state and Native American “nations within.”²²⁷ It is these borders that are of particular interest to this project, centered as it is on the ways material and symbolic structures of settler colonialism inform global assemblages of whiteness.

While dominant imaginaries of the US nation-state link the nation’s origins with tales of “intrepid white men who bravely conquered the Wild West,” theories of settler colonialism challenge nationalist ideologies that conceptualize the conquering of Native peoples and settling of their lands as “the merely unfortunate birth pangs of [the nation’s] establishment.”²²⁸ As Patrick Wolfe has described, settler colonialism is an enduring structure, not an event.²²⁹ Settler colonialism complicates a discussion of national borders because in settler colonial nation-states, the colonizers have come to stay, which requires the ongoing epistemic and ontological disappearing of Indigenous peoples from the land. The borders of Native nation-states are thus indistinct, “drawn across spatial and temporal borderlines.”²³⁰ While the formal borders of reservations resemble national borders in their geographic demarcation of “us” and “them,” not only do they encompass a mere fraction of

American identity and on US-Mexico relations. Anzaldúa also addresses the complex relationships between Mexicanness and Indigeneity (Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* [San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987]).

²²⁷ Vine Deloria, Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). It should be noted that in making this statement my intention is not to erase the complex relationships between Mexicanness and indigeneity, however, the treatment of this relationship exceeds the scope of this discussion.

²²⁸ Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 12.

²²⁹ Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (New York: Cassell, 1999).

²³⁰ Hsinya Huang, Philip Deloria, Laura Furlan, and John Gamber, “Special Forum: Charting Transnational Native American Studies,” *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 2.

Indigenous peoples, places, and symbolic and material resources, but the idea of land as bounded property is itself a result of “colonial spatializing.”²³¹

Settler colonialism also complicates postcolonial theory. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang argue that settler colonialism is not adequately explained by either of the two forms of colonialism predominantly dealt with in theories of colonality: *external colonialism*, in which plant, animal, and human resources are extracted from the colony to build the wealth of the metropole, and *internal colonialism*, in which the biopolitical control of land and humans through processes including imprisonment, ghettoization, surveillance, and criminalization “within the ‘domestic’ borders of the imperial nation ... authorize the metropole and conscribe her periphery.”²³² Instead, Tuck and Yang argue, what is unique about settler colonialism is that it “operates through internal/external colonial modes simultaneously because there is no spatial separation between metropole and colony.”²³³ As settlers make their home on Indigenous lands, they rely upon unique justifications for the enduring violence of this act. Tuck and Yang note that because:

everything within a settler colonial society strains to destroy or assimilate the Native in order to disappear them from the land – this is how a society can have multiple simultaneous and conflicting messages about Indigenous peoples, such as all Indians are dead, located in faraway reservations, that contemporary Indigenous people are

²³¹ Mishuana Goeman, “(Re)Mapping Indigenous Presence on the Land in Women’s Literature,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2008): 296.

²³² Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 4–5.

²³³ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 5.

less indigenous than prior generations and that all Americans are a 'little bit Indian.'"²³⁴

Each of these messages appears in the rhetorical and material memoryscapes of the US Southwest, where tourist visitors picture themselves as traveling back in time to catch a glimpse of the Native past.

This chapter explores these memoryscapes as they circulate within and in relation to three public memory places in the US Southwest: the Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park, a small museum and archaeological site located in Phoenix, Arizona; the Heard Museum, a large museum, also in Phoenix, featuring both Native American cultural artifacts and contemporary Native art; and Mesa Verde National Park, the largest archaeological preserve in the United States, located in Montezuma County, Colorado. Through rhetorical and qualitative analysis grounded in over fifty hours of fieldwork in these sites, I engage the US Southwest as a rhetorical landscape where settler futurity as well as present inequalities are performatively stabilized through the affects circulated as tourist visitors seek encounters with Indigenous places, bodies, and objects.

Rhetorical Approaches to Public Memory Places

Given their "self-nomination" as sites "of significant memory of and for a collective,"²³⁵ and their role in re/presenting the past for present purposes, rhetorical scholars have frequently approached public memory places with attention to their symbolicity: "collective memory, after all, is publicly shared and negotiated through symbols,

²³⁴ Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization," 9.

²³⁵ Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian L. Ott, "Rhetoric/Memory/Place," in Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott (eds.), *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 28.

a process that lies at the heart of what constitutes rhetorical theory.”²³⁶ Public memory places, frequently owned and operated by state or federal governments, are—in their very existence—national symbols. However, as three-dimensional, emplaced objects, public memory places exhibit characteristics that are distinct from many traditional rhetorical “texts.” A key distinction concerns the difficulty of engaging them from a distance. As such, they have propelled rhetorical scholars into the field where, increasingly, arguments have been made to move beyond analyzing symbols and representations to also attend to rhetoric’s materiality and the rhetoricity of place.

As argued by Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, Brian Ott, Eric Aoki, and numerous others, public memory places exert influence on—or quite literally *move*—visitors through their sheer physicality including their materials, design, and organization, and their placement within larger landscapes.²³⁷ Memory places thus make arguments “not only on a symbolic level through the practices of collection, exhibition, and display, but also on a material level by locating visitors’ bodies in particular spaces.”²³⁸ Places exist in relation with the bodies that inhabit them; place is thus more than just a backdrop for rhetorical endeavors—it is an inextricable part of material and affective experience. As memory places prescribe particular

²³⁶ Roger C. Aden, Min Wha Han, Stephanie Norander, Michael E. Pfahl, Timothy P. Pollack, Jr., and Stephanie L. Young, “Re-Collection: A Proposal for Refining the Study of Collective Memory and its Places,” *Communication Theory* 19, no. 3 (2009): 311.

²³⁷ See, for example, Carole Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality,” in *Rhetorical Bodies*, ed. Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 16-57; Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, “Rhetoric/Memory/Place”; Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2006): 27-47; Richard Marback, “Unclenching the Fist: Embodying Rhetoric and Giving Objects Their Due,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2008): 46-65; Kenneth S. Zagacki and Victoria Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality in the Museum Park at the North Carolina Museum of Art,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 2 (2009): 171-91.

²³⁸ Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering,” 29.

pathways, they act directly on the bodies that move through them, influencing visitors' reception and engaging "the full sensorium."²³⁹ Attending to the rhetoricity of public memory places thus requires attention to place not just as a container inside which rhetorical events unfold but as a rhetorical actor itself.²⁴⁰ However, despite many instrumental analyses of memory places as material and embodied sites, fewer rhetorical scholars have situated their analyses within an ethnographic engagement that includes visitor interviews and sustained attention to the conversations and actions of visitors inside memory places.

Public memory places are fundamentally social arenas. As they narrate important community histories, they also enable visitors to become part of an embodied collective with other visitors. Furthermore, as people engage with these sites they do so less as spectators or audience members than as active participants involved in intersubjective meaning-making. While public memory places serve as symbolic and material locales where "official" pasts are represented and interpreted, they are also places where the past is negotiated and re-worked by the members of society. In this manner, memory places "are inevitably multivocal" not only through the polysemy of the rhetorical artifacts they include but also through visitors' multiple and embodied interactions within.²⁴¹ And yet, as Richard Handler and Eric Gable observe, an extensive amount of museum research focuses on "already produced messages" in the form of analyses of exhibits, printed texts, and audience survey data, while "very little of it focuses on the museum as a social arena in which many people ... continuously and

²³⁹ Blair, Dickinson, and Ott, "Rhetoric/Memory/Place," 29.

²⁴⁰ Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, "Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 257–82.

²⁴¹ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 16.

routinely interact to produce, exchange, and consume messages.”²⁴² The movement of public memory scholars into the field thus encourages closer attention to memory places as “sites where individual members of the remembering collectives experience – and interact with – the rhetorical representations of the past.”²⁴³ Before turning to the symbolic, material, and social dimensions of remembering as they create an assemblage of places, times, bodies, and objects in the specific public memory places in which I did fieldwork, the next section addresses the historical context of settler tourism and the national imagination in the US Southwest.

Rhetorical and Material Memoryscapes in the US Southwest

From street signs to place names to souvenir shops to staged “Old West” towns to the patterns and images that appear on billboards, buildings, and freeway overpasses, residents and visitors to the US Southwest encounter a landscape saturated with Native American symbols. Designated places of public memory including museums, ruins, and other historical sites further infuse the region with symbolic importance. This rhetorical landscape propels a particular kind of remembering in which Native American nations and peoples are frequently imagined as existing in “some ‘other worlds,’ some other place” outside of the present.²⁴⁴ More a “haunting” than a “forgetting,” Native Americans serve as

²⁴² Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 9–10.

²⁴³ Aden et al., “Re-Collection,” 321.

²⁴⁴ Raka Shome and Radha Hegde, “Culture, Communication, and the Challenge of Globalization,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002): 175. Shome and Hegde utilize this phrase in their description of how “difference” has been imagined as the marginalized Other cast against a presumed “self,” and located as external to the communities where the “self” resides.

the spectral figures upon which dominant settler colonial narratives are re/enacted.²⁴⁵ And yet, even as many public memory places in the contemporary US Southwest depict a “vanished” Native American past evidenced only by its material traces, Native American peoples endure within present-day Southwest landscapes, negotiating the commodification of their cultures, working to retain (or re/acquire) rights to land, water, and sacred places, and individually and collectively narrating their own versions of history. The Southwest is thus an important location for engaging contestations of public memory as racialized and gendered settler colonial structures seek to erase Native Americans from and/or incorporate them into the US nation-state in ways that do not require its undoing.

As part of the greater Old West, the Southwest forms an important component of the frontier mythos that constructed Native Americans as “the ‘savage’ opposite to Anglo-Americans’ ‘civilization’ and culture.”²⁴⁶ However, the region’s extensive settlement by Indigenous peoples with sedentary lifestyles prior to Euro-American contact also imbued Southwestern memoryscapes with unique characteristics. In contrast to the Hollywood trope of “wild Indians” in feather headdresses with fierce battle cries, Native Americans of the Southwest have instead historically been portrayed as gentle individuals living in agricultural societies typified by the Pueblos.²⁴⁷ With its dense communities of “peaceful Indians”

²⁴⁵ For further discussion see Renée L. Bergland, *The National Uncanny: Indian Ghosts and American Subjects* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000).

²⁴⁶ Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Memory and Myth at the Buffalo Bill Museum,” *Western Journal of Communication* 69, no. 2 (2005): 97.

²⁴⁷ See, for example, Barbara A. Babcock, “A New Mexican Rebecca: Imaging Pueblo Women,” *Journal of the Southwest* 32, no. 4 (1990): 400–37.

imagined to reflect earlier stages of human progress, the Southwest powerfully contributed to historical discourses of the “noble savage.”

This paternalistic portrayal of the Southwest’s Indigenous inhabitants and the national imaginary to which it contributed were heavily influenced by the interrelated enterprises of tourism, anthropology, and archaeology. Due to the preservation of artifacts enabled by its arid climate, the still-standing physical structures that offered evidence of the region’s long occupancy, and the artisanry of its inhabitants, the Southwest has been “one of the most intensely anthropologized areas of the globe.”²⁴⁸ As material cultures were codified through archaeological collections and displayed in museums, the Southwest attracted professionals and tourists alike seeking to excavate remnants of the past, including the region’s Native peoples. Cast as “living relics,”²⁴⁹ Natives of the Southwest were viewed through the lens of primitivism, or “the ideology that noble savages live in a highly desirable state of purity and harmony.”²⁵⁰

Primitivism involves what Renato Rosaldo describes as imperialist nostalgia, in which “people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed.”²⁵¹ According to Leah Dilworth, the imperialist nostalgia that informed historical tourism in the Southwest reflected a yearning not for an actual past but for an Indian that never was, a version of

²⁴⁸ Anthony Shelton, “The Imaginary Southwest: Commodity Disavowal in an American Orient,” in *Les Cultures à L’Oeuvre: Recontres en Art*, eds. Michèle Coquet, Brigitte Derlon, and Monique Jeudy-Ballini (Paris, France: Maison des Sciences De L’Homme, 2005), 76.

²⁴⁹ Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 3.

²⁵⁰ Richard A. Rogers, “Deciphering Kokopelli: Masculinity in Commodified Appropriations of Native American Imagery,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 4, no. 3 (2007): 236.

²⁵¹ Renato Rosaldo, “Imperialist Nostalgia,” *Representations* 26 (1989): 108.

Native life that reflected the anxieties and desires of the US [white] middle-class.²⁵² The meanings tied to Native Americans through primitivism featured the romantic idealization of simplicity, appealing “to modern desires for tradition, authenticity, and the spiritual associations ‘primitive’ people held with the natural world.”²⁵³ Viewed as a “vanishing race” or as “living fossils” from a previous time, Native peoples of the Southwest were seen as offering a (quickly disappearing) window into the childhood of Anglo-European civilization.²⁵⁴ As such, archaeologists, anthropologists, and tourist visitors alike sought to collect and “preserve” this past in the form of objects, stories, and embodied experiences with the nation’s own internal “primitive” Other. The Southwest and its Native lands and inhabitants has thus long been a site for the re/enacting of settler fantasies.

Connecting the expansion of tourism in the Southwest at the turn of the nineteenth century with the proliferation of representations of the area’s peoples as disappearing relics of the past, Dilworth argues that renderings of “Southwest Indians”²⁵⁵ in advertising materials for the railroad and other burgeoning tourist companies played a central role in the imaginaries of the American West and greater United States, producing the Southwest as a

²⁵² Dilworth, *Imagining Indians*.

²⁵³ Mark Neumann, *On the Rim: Looking for the Grand Canyon* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 36.

²⁵⁴ Numerous scholars have examined the associations made between Native Americans and extinction through depictions of Native Americans as a “vanishing race,” or as “living fossils.” See, for instance, Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died For Your Sins* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1969); and Lora Romero, “Vanishing Americans: Gender, Empire, and New Historicism,” *American Literature* 63, no. 3 (1991): 385–404.

²⁵⁵ Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997).

symbolic and material “national playground” for American (self) discovery.²⁵⁶ Visitors flocked to the Southwest to view what was promoted as a kind of “American Orient,” a land where “foreign people, with foreign speech and foreign ways, offer[ed] spectacles ... equaled in very few Oriental lands.”²⁵⁷ Given the feminization of “the Orient” by travel writers and colonial authorities, this historical comparison is clearly gendered; depictions of “the natives as passive, ignorant, irrational, outwardly submissive but inwardly guileful, [and] sexually unrestrained” served as a trope defined “in opposition to the self-mastery and openness that the hypermasculinized colonizing Westerners ascribed to themselves.”²⁵⁸ And like the disciplinary formation of Orientalism described by Edward Said, in which the East was discursively created as the West’s mirror,²⁵⁹ popular conceptions of the Southwest have long reflected a vision of white Euro-American settler society—and its mastery over the land—back to itself.

Contrasting the Native Other against the Euro-American self, primitivism’s “backward gaze of nostalgia was thus far more than a consolatory leisure escape into the simpler times of a ‘bygone era.’”²⁶⁰ Instead, nostalgia established Natives of the Southwest as spectacles for the national gaze while simultaneously functioning “to legitimize new political orders, rationalize the adjustment and perpetuation of old social hierarchies, and construct

²⁵⁶ D. H. Lawrence as quoted in Marta Weigle, “From Desert to Disney World: The Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company Display the Indian Southwest,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (1989): 132.

²⁵⁷ Erna Fergusson as quoted in Dilworth, *Imagining Indians*, 58.

²⁵⁸ T. M. Luhrmann, “The Good Parsi: The Postcolonial ‘Feminization’ of a Colonial Elite,” *Man* 29, no. 2 (1994): 333.

²⁵⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1978).

²⁶⁰ Neuman, *On the Rim*, 45.

new systems of thought and values.”²⁶¹ As “a pose of ‘innocent yearning,’ [imperialist nostalgia served] both to capture people’s imaginations and to conceal its complicity with often brutal domination.”²⁶² Inextricable from moralizing gendered and racialized discourses of civilization’s progress, primitivism thus masked the genocidal and imperial practices on which the nation was founded. For the mobile settler subject, travel to the Southwest on the US railroad (itself a symbol of the civilized nation’s great technological advancements) reinforced racial and gender hierarchies and fostered American pride in the nation’s “antiquities” while configuring Native Americans as the nation’s objects rather than its subjects. These colonial discourses not only inform contemporary interpretations of culture and civilization but continue to be actively circulated in many areas of society, and especially at institutionalized museum sites and memory places.

Visiting the Places of the Past

As travel destinations, public memory places “demand physical labor of a would-be audience member,” including the travel required to get there.²⁶³ As rhetorical “texts,” public memory places are therefore necessarily experienced in relation to larger symbolic and material environments given that on their journeys to any given place, vacationing visitors experience the physical surroundings within which the places are embedded. Moreover, vacationing visitors frequently travel to other related memory places, the meanings of which “spill over” into their experiences of any given place.²⁶⁴ In the interviews I conducted with

²⁶¹ Michael Kammen, as cited in Numan, *On the Rim*, 45.

²⁶² Rosaldo, “Imperialist Nostalgia,” 108.

²⁶³ Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites,” 46.

²⁶⁴ Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering,” 29.

museum visitors, I found that many were on larger Southwest tours; when asked what her favorite place she had visited was, one woman said, “I can’t even remember its name! We’ve been a lot of places.” Public memory places are thus enfolded within an assemblage of places and meanings.

As symbolic and material structures, the three memory places in which I did fieldwork for this project are quite different from one another in size, scope, and stated aims, and yet each is in some way mobilized by the desire to collect, preserve, and/or experience Native Otherness. Each site was also established in the historical time period discussed in the preceding section, and, as such, even as the assemblage of meanings and objects contained within have shifted over time they still carry material remnants of this historical legacy. In the following section, I briefly describe the encounters that initially brought me to each of the sites and identify elements of the “official” rhetorical frames offered by the museums in their self-descriptions and material structures.²⁶⁵ Rather than analyze each memory place individually, I offer these descriptions and maps to orient the reader to the sites before proceeding in the subsequent section with a thematic analysis of the sites in relation to one another. Interrogating these memory places together as an assemblage offers further insight into the imaginative and material geographies of US settler colonialism as they inform the memoryscapes of the US Southwest.

²⁶⁵ In labeling the museum’s rhetorical frames as “official,” I reference John Bodnar’s distinction between official and vernacular public memory. The utility of the distinction in this context is that, as numerous scholars of public memory have observed and as rhetorical fieldwork helps to demonstrate, visitors to public memory places also create their own meanings and these meanings do not always align with those authored by museums themselves (Bodnar, *Remaking America*).

Pueblo Grande

I first encountered The Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park in Phoenix, Arizona when my mother JoAnn and our close family friend Steffi visited during my first year at Arizona State University in Spring 2010. Our trip to the museum, a small adobe structure adorned with petroglyph-style designs and a larger outdoor grounds containing a preserved archaeological site, was just one of several tourist-oriented activities we did during their visit, which also included a trip to Tombstone, a staged Wild West town where we window shopped, visited an old brothel, watched a gun show, and ate dinner; a visit to Mission San Xavier del Bac (“White Dove of the Desert”), a Spanish Catholic mission located outside of Tucson that contains the oldest intact European colonial structure in Arizona, and the Desert Botanical Gardens in Phoenix (which includes a hiking trail titled “Plants & People of the Sonoran Desert” and features Native storytellers and performers at many of its events). This context points to the placement of the museum within a larger realm of tourist destinations, as well as gestures to the demographic to which the museum appeals; on my subsequent visits to the museum (as well as to the other memory places here) I found that aside from local school groups that contained a number of Chicano/a individuals, the majority of visitors I encountered were white couples and families, many of whom were of retirement age.²⁶⁶

The small museum, which is also a working archaeological site, offers visitors a chance to tour an excavated platform mound once occupied by the region’s Indigenous peoples, enter recreated living structures, and examine artifacts on display. Under the

²⁶⁶ As a popular destination for national as well as international tourists, Mesa Verde National Park had the most visible racial diversity of any of the three memory places studied here (during the times that I observed), with the majority of its non-US visitors (who I encountered) coming from Asian and Anglo-European countries.

headline, “Explore the Ancient Heart of Phoenix,” the City of Phoenix website describes the museum as follows:

Pueblo Grande Museum is located on a 1,500 year old archaeological site left by the Hohokam culture located just minutes from downtown Phoenix next to Sky Harbor International Airport. This National Historic Landmark and Phoenix Point of Pride has been a part of the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department since 1929, and is the largest preserved archaeological site within Phoenix...

A fully accessible 2/3 mile trail takes you through a prehistoric Hohokam archaeological village site with a partially excavated platform mound, ballcourt, and replicated prehistoric houses. There are three galleries to visit while at the Museum. The main gallery displays artifacts of the Hohokam and discusses the Pueblo Grande village site. The children’s hands-on gallery has activities to help kids learn about the science of archaeology. And the changing gallery features exhibits on various topics from archaeology, southwest cultures, and Arizona history. For authentic Native American gifts, art, and jewelry, visit our Museum Store.²⁶⁷

Also of note is the description of purpose that appears in one of the museum’s brochures, which explains that the museum is dedicated to “promoting a greater understanding of *other* cultures past and present.” Figure 1 depicts the entrance to the museum.

²⁶⁷ “Pueblo Grande Museum & Archaeology Park,” City of Phoenix.
<https://www.phoenix.gov/parks/arts-culture-history/pueblo-grande>



Figure 1. Pueblo Grande Museum Entrance

Heard Museum

After beginning an initial ethnographic study of Pueblo Grande in a qualitative research methods class in the spring of 2012, I visited the nearby Heard Museum in order to compare the two sites. Because I had argued that Pueblo Grande’s focus on archaeology impacted visitor experiences within the museum, I wanted to see how similar/different encounters were in the context of another area museum with a different focus: art. The larger Heard Museum, located in downtown Phoenix in a large Spanish-style building, offers an extensive collection of contemporary Native American art in addition to its collections of artifacts and historical objects. It is also the site of many cultural events and performances.

The Heard Museum was opened in 1929 by Maie Heard after the death of her husband Dwight Heard, as a small museum in which to display their wide collection of Native art. During Maie Heard's life, many artworks were added to the collection, and after her death in 1951, the museum underwent several significant expansions, becoming one of the largest collections of Native artworks. The museum website offers the following description under the headline, "The Heard Museum Today":

Since its founding by Dwight and Maie Heard in 1929, the Heard Museum has grown in size and stature to become recognized internationally for the quality of its collections, its educational programming and its festivals. Dedicated to the sensitive and accurate portrayal of Native arts and cultures, the Heard is an institution that successfully combines the stories of American Indian people from a personal perspective with the beauty of art.

Through innovative programs, world-class exhibitions and unmatched festivals, the Heard Museum sets the standard nationally for collaborating with Native people to present first-person voices. Partnerships with American Indian artists and tribal communities provide visitors with a distinctive perspective about the art and cultures of Native people, especially those from the Southwest.²⁶⁸

The museum's mission statement states, "The mission of the Heard Museum is to educate visitors and promote greater public understanding of the arts, heritage and life ways of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, with an emphasis on American Indian tribes and other cultures of the Southwest."²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ "History of the Heard Museum," *Heard Museum*, <http://heard.org/about/history/>

²⁶⁹ "About the Heard Museum," *Heard Museum*, <http://heard.org/about/>

Figure 2 shows the entrance to the museum’s main building, while Figures 3 and 4 depict the museum’s indoor floor plans and identify two of the museum’s most notable permanent exhibits, “HOME: Native People in the Southwest” (Ground Floor), and the Boarding School Exhibit (Second Floor). The other gallery rooms house changing exhibits, contemporary Native artworks, and the Heard’s original collections. Figure 5 offers a map of the outdoor grounds.



Figure 2. Heard Museum Courtyard and Entrance



Figure 3. Heard Museum Map of Ground Floor

Second Floor

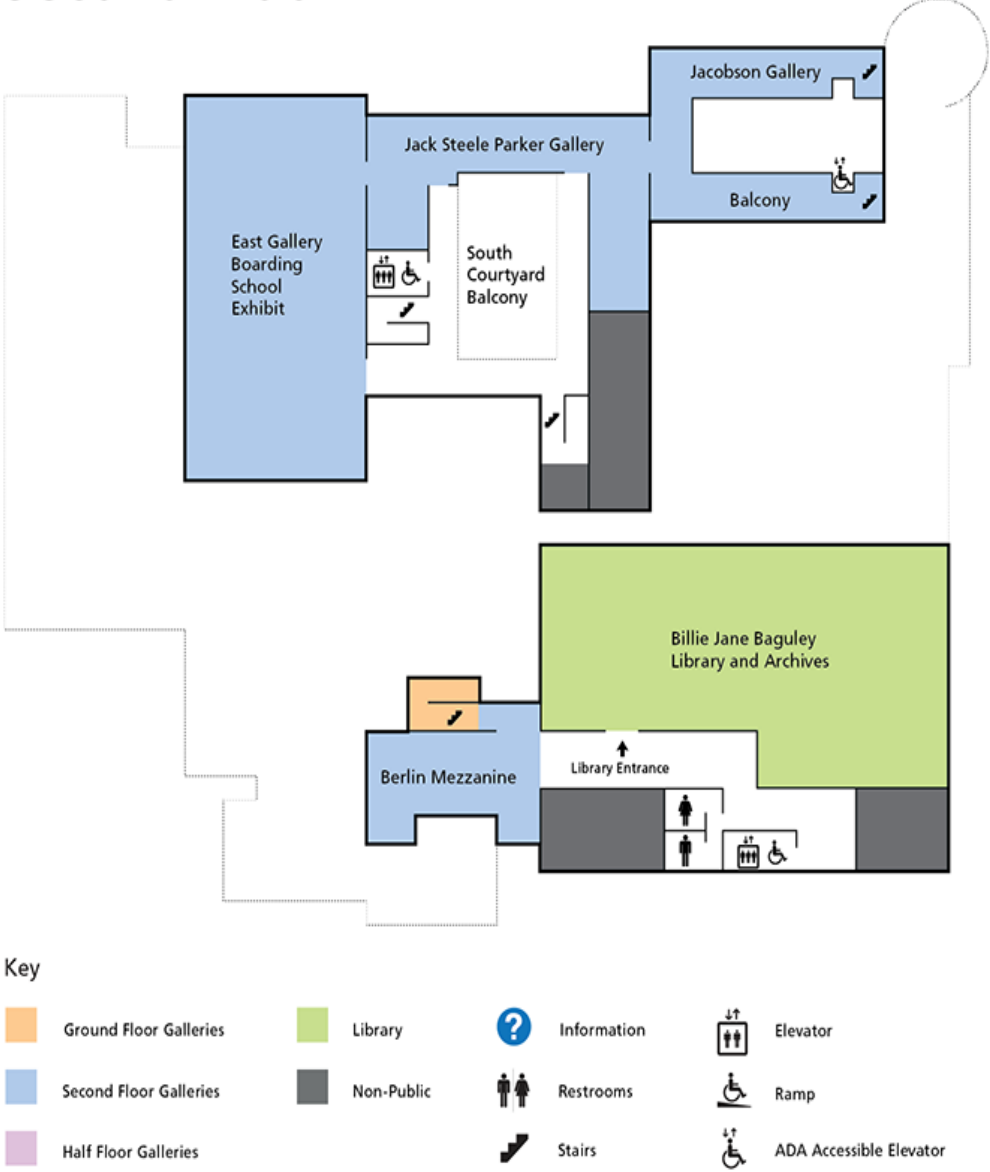


Figure 4. Heard Museum Map of Second Floor

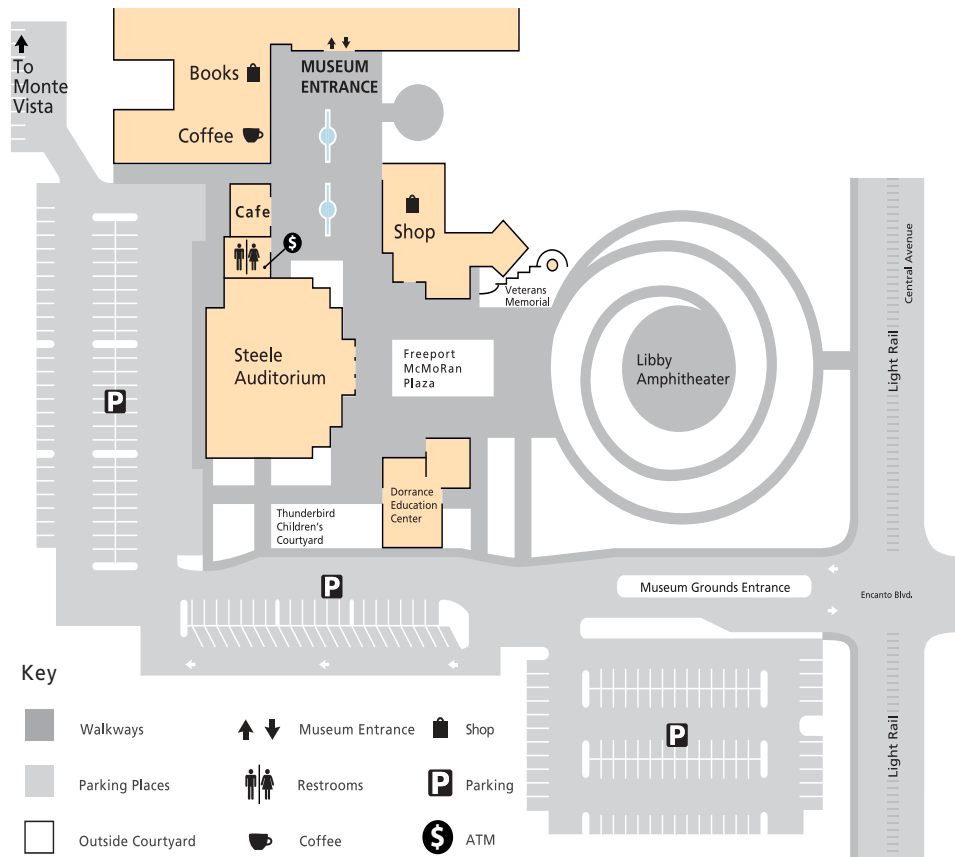


Figure 5. Heard Museum Map of Grounds

Mesa Verde National Park

I visited Mesa Verde in the summer of 2012, this time on the quintessential US-American family road trip accompanied by my mother, sister, and cousin. My mother had wanted to go for a long time, and now that I was living in the Southwest, it seemed like the perfect opportunity. After spending a few days together in Arizona (where we again visited the Desert Botanical Gardens and other local attractions), we piled into the car for our trip to Colorado, a drive that would take us across the Native lands of the O’odham, Apache, Hopi, Navajo, and Ute on our way to the National Park site. While I approached our visit with an academic interest given my study of memory places in Phoenix, my group quite

resembled most of the other tourist groups, individuals who had come from near and far, many with their families, to see the famous Ancestral Puebloan structures that remain in hundreds of cliff dwellings stretching out over more than eighty square miles.

Mesa Verde was established on June 29, 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt. Under the headline, “Preserving the ‘Works of Man,’” the National Parks Service website offers the following description of the park:

Mesa Verde, Spanish for green table, offers a spectacular look into the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people who made it their home for over 700 years, from AD 600 to 1300. Today the park protects nearly 5,000 known archaeological sites, including 600 cliff dwellings. These sites are some of the most notable and best preserved in the United States.²⁷⁰

On a different page, describing the Ancestral Pueblo People of Mesa Verde, the park service states:

About 1,400 years ago, long before Europeans explored North America, a group of people living in the Four Corners region chose Mesa Verde for their home. For more than 700 years they and their descendants lived and flourished here, eventually building elaborate stone communities in the sheltered alcoves of the canyon walls. Then, in the late A.D. 1200s, in the span of a generation or two, they left their homes and moved away. Mesa Verde National Park preserves a spectacular reminder of this ancient culture.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ “Preserving the ‘Works of Man,’” Mesa Verde National Park, *National Park Service*, <https://www.nps.gov/meve/index.htm>

²⁷¹ “People,” Mesa Verde National Park, *National Park Service*, <https://www.nps.gov/meve/learn/historyculture/people.htm>

Figure 6 is a map of the entire park, while Figure 7 is a close up of the Southern region.

Figure 8 is an image of the Cliff Palace, the largest cliff dwelling in North America.

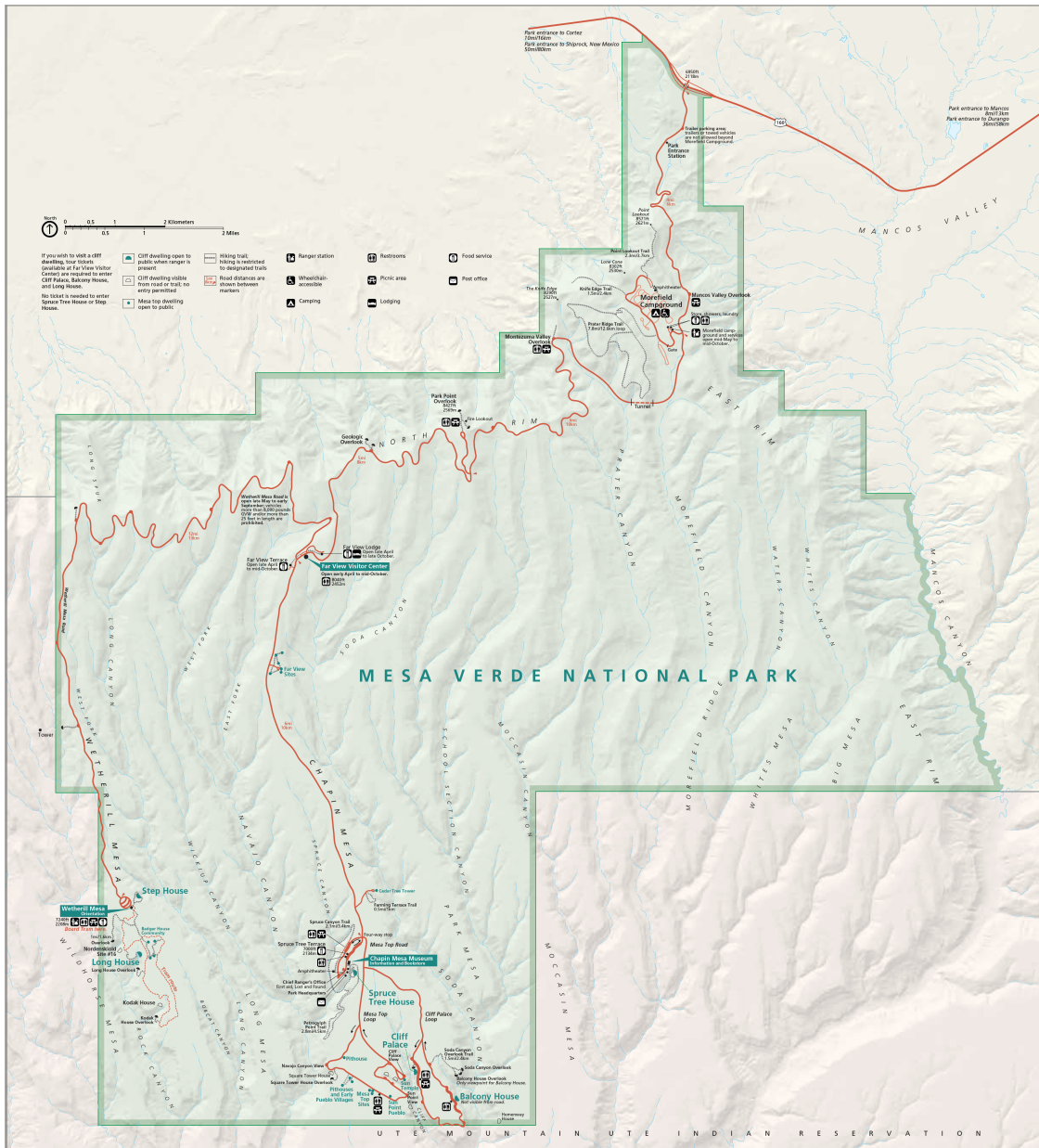


Figure 6. Mesa Verde National Park

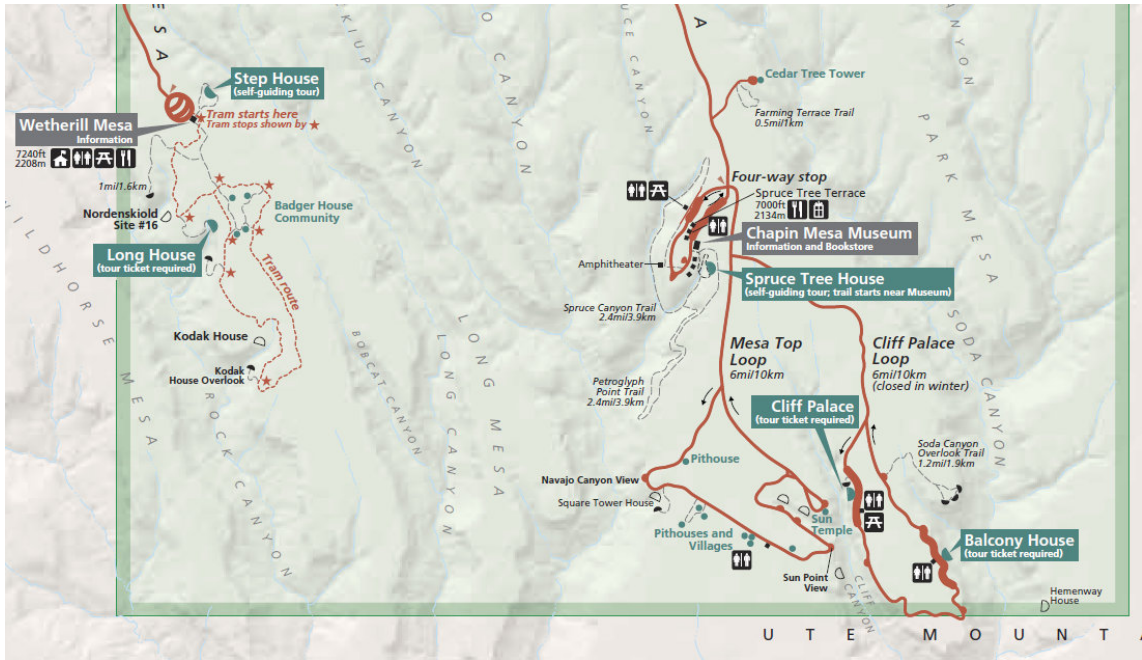


Figure 7. Southern Region of Mesa Verde National Park



Figure 8. Cliff Palace

Settler Moves to Innocence

I have offered brief introductions to the three memory places that inform this analysis in order to ground the reader with a conceptualization of the places being discussed. My purpose in what follows, however, is not to “read” these sites in the form of “memory place as text”²⁷²; instead, my use of rhetorical field methods including ethnographic field notes and visitor interviews draws attention to visitors’ active participation in these rhetorical landscapes, illuminating the “range of memorized images” visitors bring with them, shaping embodied and emplaced encounters.²⁷³ Such an approach highlights how Southwest memoryscapes are created through a network of places, bodies, affects, and “intertextual relations or ‘codes,’”²⁷⁴ that “emerge and dissolve in particular contexts of action.”²⁷⁵ To analyze the data collected in these sites, I utilized qualitative analytic methods including open coding and thematic clustering to make connections across different sites and different types of data.

The first theme I discuss is Going Back in Time; I argue that this rhetorical move of either traveling “back” in time is central to the spatio-temporal assemblage that places Native bodies outside of the present. As Native peoples are rhetorically positioned in the past, the

²⁷² Elsewhere, I critique rhetorical approaches to “memory place as text,” an approach in which even as qualitative methods are deployed as “tools” the symbolic and material inducements of the memory place are “read” without corresponding attention paid to how visitors themselves experience the site. (See Roberta Chevrette, “Holographic Rhetoric: De/Colonizing Public Memory at Pueblo Grande,” in Sara L. McKinnon, Robert Asen, Karma R. Chávez, and Robert Glenn Howard [eds], *Text + Field: Innovations in Rhetorical Method* [University Park: Penn State Press, 2016].)

²⁷³ Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering,” 30.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Richard Handler, “Is ‘Identity’ a Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?” In John R. Gillis (ed.), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 30.

settler colonial nation state and its futurity are maintained. I have organized the remaining themes, all of which support and uphold the assemblage that naturalizes settler colonialism, in relation to what Tuck and Yang call “settler moves to innocence.”²⁷⁶ These themes are: Disappearance (“all Indians are dead”²⁷⁷); Playing Indian (“settler adoption fantasies”²⁷⁸); In/Authenticity (“contemporary Indigenous people are less Indigenous than prior generations”²⁷⁹); and We’re Here to Learn (“free your mind and the rest will follow”).

Going Back in Time

The idea of traveling “back” in time was one of the most prominent rhetorical inducements evidenced within each of the sites but particularly within Pueblo Grande Museum and Mesa Verde National Park, which contain preserved archaeological sites. Within these places, timelines and references to time featured prominently throughout the displays. At Pueblo Grande, as visitors step through a doorway flanked by Kokopelli and other petroglyph-style designs to arrive at the start of the outdoor interpretive trail, they encounter this sign: “A Special Place: Welcome to Pueblo Grande, a prehistoric Hohokam Indian village. For the next half hour your walk along this trail will take you back in time when this place was very different.” Pueblo Grande and Mesa Verde’s promotional materials further play up this idea (as seen in the references to the “ancient” cultures that appear on their website descriptions included above).

²⁷⁶ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” 9.

²⁷⁷ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 9.

²⁷⁸ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 13.

²⁷⁹ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 9.

These invitations take up a life of their own in the words and actions of staff and visitors. At Mesa Verde, a young tour guide dressed in the uniform of the Park Service led a group on a tour of the Balcony House, one of the larger cave dwellings within the site. As we sat on benches applying sunblock and snacking while we waited for all of the group members to arrive, our guide casually conversed and joked with the visitors. Once the full group had gathered, he led us to the metal gate at the trail entrance. As he removed the chain separating the space accessible to the public and the space requiring accompaniment of a park guide, his affect changed. In a hushed voice, he told the group, “I am now taking you back to 500 A.D. When you step through this gate you are going back in time.” The spatially demarcated border separating the road from the cliffside trail thus became a temporal border between present and past.

In Pueblo Grande, juxtapositions between present and past visibly unfold in the material location of the site itself. In terms of its immediate surroundings, one of Pueblo Grande’s most remarked upon attributes is its proximity to downtown Phoenix. Against the freeway overpasses and light rail tracks that mark the “modern” urban present, the entrance sign calls visitors to “Explore the Ancient.” Within the site, visitors stroll through “ancient” grounds while planes descend into neighboring Sky Harbor airport. These surroundings influence how visitors experience the site: “It’s pretty phenomenal that all this is still here after all these years, and we see it’s in ... downtown Phoenix,” one man noted in awe. Another, descending from the platform mound, told me, “pretty neat stuff up there! ... Pretty amazing that it exists in the middle of a city.” One sign proclaims Pueblo Grande to be “a prehistoric island in a sea of urban development,” situating the museum in a different place-time from the surrounding cityscape.

Other sensory experiences at Pueblo Grande further construct the “ancient” past of Native Americans as tied closely to nature. Birds chirp as visitors tour the mound under the heat of the Arizona sun. The temperature shifts upon entering the recreated living structures. Painted lizards point down a path teeming with real lizards, jackrabbits and other animals. Small placards identify various plants and animals while dynamic tour guides and static signs describe how Native Americans lived off the earth. As the represented Native past is connected with embodied experiences of the natural environment against the sights and sounds of the city, time transforms into difference through visitors’ embodied experiences as they unfold in relation to the museum’s material landscape and surroundings.

At Mesa Verde, visitors—many of whom travel from long distances and across state and national borders in cars, planes, and other “modern” forms of transportation—get an even more dramatic interruption from the hustle bustle of “modern” life; as they follow the established pathways that direct their bodies through the cave dwellings it is not only the ruins that beg for attention but also the cliffs that stretch in either direction over the canyon floor below. Thick green foliage extends as far as the eye can see, a dramatic contrast against the reddish earth. In contrast to the urban areas many visitors called home, there is an embodied and sensory stillness of the rhetorical landscape that makes the spoken invitation to step into another time and place almost unnecessary: It *feels* different here.

Unlike Pueblo Grande and Mesa Verde, the Heard Museum’s official materials do not describe the cultures portrayed within as “ancient”; instead, the Heard makes an effort to directly recognize the continued lifeways of Indigenous peoples. Although visitors encounter archaeological objects from the past in some of the Heard’s collections, they are not asked to travel back in time by museum signs or brochures nor affectively moved to do so through their encounters with ruins or the quietude of the natural environment. The Heard is

distinctively urban in its well-polished grounds and its vibrant, colorful, and brightly-lit interior as well as its multimedia displays. And yet, within the Heard explicit contrasts between modern/contemporary and Native peoples still emerged. During one of my visits, as an elderly white museum docent led our tour group through one of the galleries centered on present-day Native American artists, he stopped in front of one especially large and colorful painting. Describing the artist's training, he explained that "the influences on his style weren't other Indian artists, they were people like Picasso: *contemporary, modern* painters." After we examined some of the other artwork done by other artists in this same gallery, the tour guide returned to the large painting, stating, "so this is what happens if you are an artist and you happen to be invested strongly in the culture, the religion, but your artistic influences *aren't Indian* at all. They're *contemporary American* artists." In these statements, being "Indian" and contemporary/modern are presented as mutually exclusive identities. The second statement—in which Picasso is now described as an American—reveals a conflation between Anglo-Europeanness and US Americanness, both of which are modern and contemporary locations contrasted against non-modern "Indianness."

Another way that Native Americans were depicted as non-modern was through extensive references to their "advanced" cultures. In one visit to the Pueblo Grande, I stood with a tour guide and group of high school students before a map of tangled blue lines depicting the canals that were constructed and maintained by the Indigenous peoples of the area in the twelfth century. Clearing his throat to get the attention of the students who had begun talking amongst themselves, the tour guide explained that "we think of ancient people as unsophisticated, backward ... but to be able to know that water needs to go faster to go around curves ... that takes sophistication. You have to be brilliant, very bright to get this to happen." On a different visit with a different tour guide, she described how the canal

gradients had to be very precise: too shallow and the water would not run fast enough, too steep and it would be uncontrollable. “They had to be very clever to do that,” one of the women on the tour stated. Another woman joked: “it’s too bad they didn’t know backhoes were coming.”

Technology, as both a visible signifier and material manifestation of progress, has been a key element of the US national imaginary, constructing the US nation-state as different from—and superior to—its Others. Moreover, as “progress” was equated both with technological advancements and with white racial dominance, it further “justified Western paternalism toward its ‘less developed’ neighbors, a sentiment that paved the way for imperial expansion at the close of the century.”²⁸⁰ In this manner, “exhibits of ‘primitive technologies’—whether the building of complex irrigation systems or structures as seen at Pueblo Grande, or the construction of villages in cliff walls as seen at Mesa Verde, or the crafting of fine arts as seen at the Heard—reflect this historical constellation, reinforcing “the (white) nation’s achievements by showing how far civilization ha[s] evolved in relation to ‘less developed’ (usually a synonym for nonwhite) peoples, civilization’s still living ancestors.”²⁸¹ References to the “advanced” cultures of early peoples thus actually assume the opposite. Rather than negate enduring stereotypes of Native peoples as uncivilized, backward, or less-progressed than their Euro-American counterparts, they instead relegate Native Americans to a space of existence before western society and its advancements. In so doing, they not only reinforce “modern” settler colonial identities against their racialized and

²⁸⁰ Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 24.

²⁸¹ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 27.

temporal Others, they also render the loss of Indigenous lifeways as merely “the lamentable casualties of national progress.”²⁸²

Progress narratives and the temporal distinctions they create gain further symbolic/affective power through frequent discussions of consumer items. Jokes made within these sites—about the tools used to construct a canal, or the lack of elevators to get up to the cliff dwellings, or the difficulty in painting with just one horse hair—compare Native and Western technologies, and by implication Native and Western societies. In doing so, they further naturalize “technological progress as the universal ‘law of life.’”²⁸³

Disappearance

As the settler nation-state is naturalized through the forward moving progress of time, Native bodies are further abjected from this symbolic landscape through rhetorics of disappearance, which perpetuate the longstanding fascination with the “vanishing Indian” and the related anthropological impulse to excavate, collect, and preserve this history for white settlers. Museum texts within Pueblo Grande emphasize the mystery of the disappearance of the culture represented within. Despite the direct lines of ancestry to the area’s surviving Indigenous peoples one museum sign asks, “Did They Disappear?” before offering three scientific interpretations regarding the site’s “abandonment.” The introductory video also poses the question of why the site was abandoned, stating that while archaeological findings provide “fascinating clues,” “the great mystery” still remains. This sense of a vanished people leaving only a mystery behind is reinforced in tour guides’ presentations; one guide, for instance, describing transitions in dwelling styles stated, “We

²⁸² Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xx.

²⁸³ Ibid.

don't know why they started building these kinds of compounds and not the others. They didn't leave an explanation; they didn't leave a note.”

Another tour guide, dressed in a cowboy hat with an eagle feather tucked into his beaded hatband, stood before a large timeline that stretches across a bright red wall in the entrance to the galleries. The occupation of Pueblo Grande began in 450 AD, he told us, but that was not the interesting part. Walking to the other end of the timeline he reached his index finger out to the final mark on the line, 1450 AD. “*This* is the interesting part,” he said, tapping his finger against the empty space on the wall. “This is when they disappeared mysteriously.” Visitors as well took up this narrative in different ways. One stated, “I think they were kind of like the Mayans ... very mysterious. Now all of a sudden they're gone.” Ignoring the enduring existence of area peoples, such statements reinforce the idea of settlers arriving in an empty landscape from which any previous inhabitants had already disappeared. Rhetorics of disappearance are thus inherently connected to possession of the land; as Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill note, “in order for settlers to usurp the land and extract its value, Indigenous peoples must be destroyed, removed, and made into ghosts.”²⁸⁴

In tandem with the references to an “ancient” people already discussed—which presumes a people not of this time, or—put bluntly by Tuck and Yang—that “all Indians are dead,”²⁸⁵ the emphasis on archaeological discovery and preservation in both Pueblo Grande and Mesa Verde further reinforce the narratives of disappearance that serve as settler moves to innocence. During my visit, one Mesa Verde tour guide stated, “let's do some archaeology

²⁸⁴ Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 12.

²⁸⁵ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” 9.

while we're here. Climate plays a big part in what happened here." He proceeded to explain how, given a changing and inhospitable climate, people would have had to abandon these sites; he failed to mention that they resettled on the valley floor, where they still live today. While other tour guides did mention peoples' resettling in other communities, an emphasis on archaeology as the most accurate way of knowing the past reiterates the science made possible through progress as superior to other ways of knowing and positions white settlers—rather than Native peoples—as the preservers of both Indigenous histories and cultural items. A sign at one of the cliff dwellings, the House of Many Windows, further reinforces this idea, noting that the iconic view has been the subject for many photographers and artists who travel to the site. "While the inhabitants of these dwellings are gone," it states, "their works live on through the admiration and inspiration of modern writers and artists." Positioning non-Native travelers as those responsible for commemorating and carrying on the represented culture elides Native survivance. Again, the settler colonial nation-state is positioned as a natural consequence of the evolution of society and the endurance of Native peoples in the present is erased. Moreover, the loss of Native lifeways is seen as a "casualt[y] of progress rather than of violence."²⁸⁶ Considering that Mesa Verde was established by President Theodore Roosevelt adds another dimension to the act of discursive violence that occurs as settler narratives relentlessly attempt to disappear Native peoples from the land; Roosevelt's frontiers-man approach to Indian policy embodied narratives of progress and masculine protection. In *The Winning of the West, Vol. 1*, he states, "the settler and pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game preserve for squalid savages. Moreover, to the

²⁸⁶ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 58.

most oppressed Indian nations the whites often acted as protection, or, at least, they deferred instead of hastening their fate.”²⁸⁷

Narratives of disappearance, however, were not monolithically expressed by exhibits, staff, or visitors at these memory places; instead, they at times emphasized a narrative of cultural continuity and called attention to the endurance of Native cultures and lifeways. This was most evident at the Heard Museum, given its focus on contemporary Native art in addition to the older artworks and artifacts collected by Dwight and Maie Heard. On its website, the museum notes its “dedicat[ion] to the sensitive and accurate portrayal of Native arts and cultures,”²⁸⁸ and describes its exhibitions as “lay[ing] the foundation for learning about the cultures and experiences of the people—past and present.”²⁸⁹ The signature exhibit, “HOME: Native People in the Southwest,” includes the voices of Native artists and community members throughout, enabling reflection on Indigenous survivance and cultural continuity by connecting historical and contemporary practices. At the same time, however, the museum also describes its activities as “revolv[ing] around collecting, preserving and presenting,” activities closely connected with ideas of Native disappearance as well as empire.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West, Vol. 1* (1883). Gail Bederman offers an in-depth analysis of President Roosevelt’s performance of US American “manhood” at the turn of the 19th-century, and the ways in which Roosevelt’s embodiment of Western hero, ranchman, as well as bourgeois Victorian masculinity intersected in his role as “the manly advocate of a virile [US American] imperialism.” (Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 171.

²⁸⁸ “About the Heard Museum,” *Heard Museum*, <http://heard.org/about/>

²⁸⁹ “History of the Heard Museum,” *Heard Museum*, <http://heard.org/about/history/>

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

Playing Indian

Another settler move to innocence described by Tuck and Yang, is what they refer to as “settler adoption fantasies” or the “desire to *become without becoming [Indian]*.”²⁹¹ Citing Sara Ahmed, they state: “to ‘become without becoming,’ is to reproduce “the other as ‘not-I’ *within* rather than *beyond* the structure of the ‘I.’”²⁹² In this process, “difference becomes the conduit of identification.”²⁹³ This settler fantasy—of becoming Indian without really becoming Indian (e.g., giving up racial, gender, and settler privilege) appears in the longstanding US American infatuation with “going native”²⁹⁴ and “playing Indian”²⁹⁵ through the adoption of Native ways. Literary narratives of the white man ceremoniously adopted by the Natives represent settler adoption fantasies in their most fully-realized form. The adoption fantasy, Tuck and Yang argue, “is the mythical trump card desired by critical settlers who feel remorse about settler colonialism, one that absolves them from the inheritance of settler crimes and that bequeaths a new inheritance of Native-ness *and claims to land* (which is a reaffirmation of what the settler project has been all along).”²⁹⁶

Numerous practices within the memory places discussed here reflect the settler adoption fantasies of “playing Indian,” or “going Native.” Visitors and docents frequently arrived costumed in turquoise and silver, wearing beaded belts and hatbands, or adorned in

²⁹¹ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” 14.

²⁹² Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” 13; see Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Postcoloniality* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 132.

²⁹³ Sherene Razack, “Stealing the Pain of Others: Reflections on Canadian Humanitarian Responses,” *The Review of Education, Pedagogy and Culture Studies* 29 (2007): 379.

²⁹⁴ See Huhndorf, *Going Native*.

²⁹⁵ See Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

²⁹⁶ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” 14.

cowboy hats, denim, leather fringe, and cowboy boots. Videos and exhibits at Pueblo Grande and Mesa Verde invited visitors to “imagine what it was like” and to “let your mind roam.” Children played with mortars and pestles while adults wistfully romanticized what it would have been like to live during a time when you had to survive off of “only what nature provided.” You would be “back to the basics, food, shelter, and warmth,” one visitor put it. That tourists visit these memory places and seek out these kinds of experiences to begin with itself reflects this longing; as Carole Blair has argued, memory places require their “would-be audience member[s]” to engage in the motions that get them to the site in the first place; in this manner, the site itself becomes an object of desire.²⁹⁷

On one visit to Pueblo Grande, I encountered an anthropology undergraduate constructing an atlatl, a “prehistoric” hunting device. Dressed in earth tones, he wore bone jewelry and handmade leather sandals, dark hair falling past his shoulders from underneath a plaited hat. As he worked with his hands, he removed a wadded up a bunch of sinew from his mouth and placed it on his knee. He explained to the small audience that had gathered while we probably thought he was crazy, he liked the taste. An almost too-perfect enactment of the trope of anthropologist “gone Native,” he consumed Native culture in his dress, his work, and—quite literally—in his mouth.

The desire to “become without becoming [Indian]”²⁹⁸ is also reflected in the consumption and collection of Native objects. At the Heard Museum, following an Apache storytelling event, visitors flocked to the table where the speaker displayed his family cradle board and other items from his childhood. Visitors to the various memory places left with

²⁹⁷ Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites,” 46.

²⁹⁸ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” 14.

bags containing neatly-wrapped pottery, jewelry, and other Indigenous artifacts. Some, as they examined various items in the museum gift shops, discussed where the items would be displayed in their house. The cost of various items were discussed, with many mentioning the items they had purchased at other sites or on other trips, and what a “good deal” they had received. Walking through a pottery display at Pueblo Grande, one woman told her companion about a course she had recently taken in Native-American pottery where they had constructed their own pots. “I’d like to make one like this,” she stated, pointing to one of the pieces on display. As visitors consume, make, and wear Native objects this further reflects longstanding settler desires “to capitalize on what they understand as their country’s own ‘native’ resources, which include Indigenous cultures and peoples themselves.”²⁹⁹

In/ Authenticity

Another theme that relates to visitors’ engagements with this assemblage of memory places can be seen as a simultaneous longing for and repulsion of Otherness. During interviews with museum visitors, many expressed great admiration for “ancient” Native American cultures. Some noted their amazement at how people survived without access to modern consumer goods while others emphasized the cooperation required by living in a past where individuals had to rely on each other and on nature. One university student stated that “back then” you were “busy living with a purpose.” In this romanticized narrative—one that closely aligns with primitivist imaginaries of the US Southwest but did not emerge from a rhetorical analysis of the museum itself—Native peoples of the past are imagined to have lived more “authentic” lives than those allowed by contemporary civilization.

²⁹⁹ Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism,” 19.

The desire to experience authenticity has been theorized in relation to ethnic tourism, in which people seek out “exotic” experiences with members of other racial and cultural groups. Dean MacCannell noted that tourists desire an “original” and unadulterated cultural experience.³⁰⁰ This search for authenticity further demands that cultural representations adhere to stereotypic understandings of culture, and that this cultural essence must be penetrable to the outside viewer. In the Heard Museum, for example, tour guides and visitors portrayed contemporary artworks as “authentic” as long as a clear relationship could be traced to Native American culture. Standing before a grey sculpture that looked like it was composed of cement, or possibly sandstone, one of the tour guides said: “You see nothing here. How does this relate to their background at all?” He paused, and then pointed to the divisions in the sculpture, that created five layers, each stacked above the previous. He explained, “Well this represents the five Hopi worlds. The Hopi believe that we emerged from one world into another as things have gotten too corrupt in one world a new world opens up.” He emphasized that once one knew more about the culture, the artworks could therefore be appreciated on a different level as their relationships to the people would be revealed.

As visitors sought the feeling of authenticity in the form of a transparent and unbroken line from past to present, emphasis was also placed on the construction of artworks using only traditional methods. In the pottery gallery, as the same tour guide stood before a glass display case containing pots of different shapes and sizes, each with intricate patterns, he pulled out his cell phone to show us a picture of the brush they were painted

³⁰⁰ Dean MacCannell, “Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings,” *American Journal of Sociology* 79, no. 3 (1973): 589–603.

with, which was constructed of a single yucca fiber. He beamed as he told us that he took this picture in the kitchen of the artist, an encounter which reinforced the “truth” of the object and its crafting methods by revealing to the audience what MacCannell refers to as a “backstage” experience.³⁰¹

As Native American difference is fetishized as a site of non-Native consumption, even cultural resistance is available for reframing as authentic cultural performance. In a Heard exhibit focusing on Geronimo, our tour guide informed us that “raiding parties were a *traditional* way of hunting and gathering.” According to this logic, Geronimo did not like living on a reservation because “that’s not his lifestyle.” Active resistance to colonization is here re/framed not as a deliberate political act, but as an adherence to traditional ways. Our tour guide noted, “he’s a *good* hunter-gatherer and so he’s going to adapt to conditions, so if you’re out in the wild and you’re a hunter-gatherer and there’s no food in one supply, one place, you move on.” In this manner, Geronimo’s resistance against the settler colonial nation-state is recast as an apolitical “lifestyle” difference, his inability to leave behind his “authentic” ways. As they inform the symbolic, material, and social landscapes of the US Southwest, these contradictions “both conceal and betray white America’s colonial past and its hegemonic aspirations.”³⁰²

Authenticity is fundamentally tied to temporality as well as to place; the notion of authenticity presupposes an original that is located in the past, and in place. As John Taylor states, “fundamental to the authenticity concept is a dialectic between object and subject,

³⁰¹ Dean MacCannell, “Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings,” *American Journal of Sociology* 79 (1973): 589–603; see also Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959).

³⁰² Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 12.

there and here, then and now.”³⁰³ Authenticity (or the lack thereof) is therefore also a site for anxiety: Some visitors wondered aloud how authentic certain objects, cultural practices, or the memory places themselves really were. Noting that Pueblo Grande’s platform mound had been reconstructed, one man referred to the “white man’s drains” that had been installed in the mound to help prevent erosion. “After I saw those, it was over for me,” he stated.

Because visitors seek an authentic performance, the ability of contemporary Indigenous peoples to enact “modern” identities while still remaining intelligible as cultural representatives is limited. This was evidenced in visitors’ occasional juxtapositions of praise for past Native culture with dismissals of, and even disdain for, present-day Native Americans who lack “authenticity.” One Pueblo Grande visitor, for example, followed her glowing description of the culture portrayed in the museum with a disparaging reference to the “Casino Indians” she had encountered elsewhere. “The Indians need to get involved with their own damn culture,” she said. “They don’t even speak their languages anymore, these kids, they don’t care.” “They want to be white,” her date interjected. Revealed in these types of comments is that “despite Euro-American settler society’s long fascination with ‘playing Indian,’... contemporary Native Americans cannot similarly “play civilized’ and still be ‘Indians.’” Instead, the regulating discourses of primitivism subject Native Americans to ‘a kind of purism in which [their] value lies in their ability to elude westernization.’”³⁰⁴ As these visitors’ comments reveal, the reverence for “authentic” Native American culture does not necessarily correspond with even the most basic respect for contemporary Native

³⁰³ John P. Taylor, “Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism,” *Annals of Tourism Research* 28 (2008): 8.

³⁰⁴ Chevrette and Hess, “Unearthing the Native Past,” 151.

Americans. Instead, the imperialist nostalgia reflected in these comments demands that “authentic” Native Americans speak the language, live off the land, and practice the traditional ways. As authenticity is relegated to the past within a racialized and spatialized assemblage of (non)belonging in which contemporary Native peoples are seen as increasingly less Indigenous than previous generations, Native peoples are simultaneously denied full intelligibility in the present.

We're Here to Learn

While less theorized than the desire for authenticity, the desire to learn more about Native culture reflects another of the moves to settler innocence described by Tuck and Yang, which is “to allow *conscientization* to stand in for the more uncomfortable task of relinquishing stolen land.”³⁰⁵ I suggest that this move is evidenced in visitors’ sense-making that learning about Native people is a means by which to undo inequalities. As I asked visitors about their desires—what drew them to visit these memory places and others like them—many responded with statements such as, “I think the more you learn about Native culture, the more ... respect you give to those people.”

One particularly memorable encounter occurred on one of my visits to the Heard Museum. I had decided to get lunch at the café outside of the entrance and, as I sat waiting for my meal, I strained to hear the nearby conversation over the clinking of silverware. An older white couple was talking to their younger waitress, who appeared to be Latina or

³⁰⁵ Chevrette and Hess, “Unearthing the Native Past,” 19. Tuck and Yang direct this element of their critique primarily toward academics; in deploying it here to discuss the practices of museum visitors, I do not intend to deflect this part of their critique and its unsettling nature. They state: “We are asking them/you to consider how the pursuit of critical consciousness, the pursuit of social justice through a critical enlightenment, can also be settler moves to innocence – diversions, distractions, which relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility, and conceal the need to give up land or power or privilege” (21).

possibly Native American, as they finished up their meal. They had come from the “Highlights” tour, which ends in an exhibit titled: “Remembering Our Indian School Days: The Boarding School Experience.” This renowned exhibit offers a glimpse into many facets of Native American boarding school life from 1879 into the 1990s, highlighting the forced removal and separation of children from parents, and the attempted erasure of their “Indianness,” while providing memorabilia and narrative accounts that capture other “everyday” elements of boarding school life, including participation in music and sports, and the forging of new relationships and friendships. What is notable about this exhibit is that it privileges Native American voices in the form of first-person recollections; quotes intermingle with images on the wall, while audio recordings reveal fragmented and overlapping narratives, words spoken by Native American survivors of the boarding school experience. As I ate my “dreamcatcher” salad, the couple spoke in excited, sympathetic tones about the exhibit. When they settled their check, they thanked their waitress profusely. It had come up during their conversation that she had never been to Sedona, where the couple lived. As the desert sun pouring through the window danced on the older woman’s diamonds and gold, she spoke warmly to the young, plainly-dressed woman in the black apron. “We’re serious about you coming up to Sedona,” she said. “We’d love to have you.”

Watching this encounter unfold, I was struck by how the couple’s friendliness with their waitress following the violences they had just witnessed in the boarding school exhibit might reflect the desire to distance themselves from feelings of complicity in the enduring conquest of Native America or the ongoing racism endured by Native and other brown peoples, which Shari Huhndorf describes as “one of the primary impulses behind going

native.”³⁰⁶ As she describes, “over the last century, going native has become a cherished American tradition, an important—even necessary—means of defining European-American identities and histories. In its various forms, going native articulates and attempts to resolve widespread ambivalence about modernity as well as anxieties about the terrible violence marking the nation’s origins [and also, as theories of settler colonialism point out, the nation’s continued existence].”³⁰⁷ In doing so, “going native articulates and supports other forms of imperial, gender, and racial domination, within the broader American culture,” and also beyond its borders.³⁰⁸ In this manner, “while those who go native frequently claim benevolence toward Native peoples, they reaffirm white dominance by making some (usually distorted) vision of Native life subservient to the needs of the colonizing culture.”³⁰⁹

Visitor descriptions of violence enacted against Native Americans as a regrettable part of the US past also reflect this move to innocence. For example, one visitor said: “in the past we know that the Native Americans in the United States were not treated fairly.” Such a statement serves as another form of *conscientization* through which settler visitors can be absolved of any guilt for or implication in the destruction of Native American communities. The US nation-state’s violence against Native Americans is thus—just like Native cultures—seen as something that existed long ago. In this manner, as colonialism’s enduring violences are perpetuated even in the very quest for cultural knowledge that visitors are engaging in—

³⁰⁶ Huhndorf, *Going Native*.

³⁰⁷ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 2.

³⁰⁸ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 15.

³⁰⁹ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 5.

an endeavor that emerges from and reflects the colonial enterprise—visitors fail to see themselves as participating in these structures.

Conclusion

I argue in this chapter that as settler colonial memoryscapes de- and re-territorialize geographic and human bodies within the border spaces of the US Southwest, a central means for doing so is through public memory practices that remake time and temporalities in ways that reify the settler-colonial nation-state as the natural and inevitable consequence of human progress. As visitors participate in affective encounters within public memory places, the notion of going back in time reinforces Native disappearance enabling white visitors to become the judge of contemporary Indigenous peoples' authenticity, to "play Indian," and to position themselves as the owners of Indigenous cultures and knowledges. As Indigenous lands are "remade into property and human relationships to land are restricted to the relationship of the owner to his property," Indigenous peoples and their relationships to the land are "made pre-modern and backward. Made savage."³¹⁰ This remaking and remembering of Native peoples as belonging to a time before the present enables the settler to be naturalized as not the destroyer of lands or people but rather the inheritor—indeed, the masculine protector—of them. In the settler colonial imagination, "the Native (understanding that he is becoming extinct) hands over his land, his claim to the land, his very Indian-ness to the settler for safe-keeping."³¹¹

In their material existence, public memory places rhetorically re-enact settler control over Native lands, reinforcing the nation's ownership over Native bodies, memories, and

³¹⁰ Yang and Tuck, "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor."

³¹¹ Yang and Tuck, "Decolonization is not a Metaphor," 15.

material cultures, all of which become border objects through which “modern” (read: non-Native) belongings are reinforced. This occurs not only through the circulation and reproduction of signs, but also through the affective and bodily encounters that unfold within these spaces. As public memory places represent Native bodies through their absence, visitors are able to come close to these bodies before sliding away, “becoming relieved in their apartness.”³¹² As Sara Ahmed describes, it is in this moving apart that the integrity of the social body is thus redefined.³¹³

In this manner, even as Native American culture is infused into the symbolic and material landscapes of the US Southwest, in the memory places examined here and in numerous other public memory places throughout the Southwest, the greater United States, and the world, visitors are not fully required to engage the present presences of the Indigenous peoples living as “nations within” the settler state.³¹⁴ Instead, the nation is reinforced “as a closed system of differences” defined by that which it excludes.³¹⁵ Invoked as relics of an always-already-before “our” time, Native American histories become the collective past of (white) visitors while Indigenous cultures are located elsewhere, beyond the shared time of contemporary civilization’s imagined communities. In this process, Native peoples are positioned as objects of US American national history rather than the subjects of their own sovereign nations, rendering any challenge that their continued existence poses to

³¹² Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 53.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Vine Deloria, Jr., and Clifford M. Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

³¹⁵ Barnor Hesse, “White Governmentality: Urbanism, Nationalism, Racism,” in Sallie Westwood and John Williams (eds.), *Imagining Cities: Scripts, Signs, Memories* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 96.

the democratic nation state obsolete. Moreover, as Native pasts are incorporated into the nation's heritage, the historical and contemporary violences producing the settler state are erased as the nation's past is extended into a time preceding its existence. Whiteness is thus re/produced through the non-threatening Indigenous bodies (human and otherwise) now subsumed by the nation as "our" collective past. In this manner, "the death of the primitive, staged over and over, enables the birth of the Western subject as spectator, conqueror," and inheritor of the land.³¹⁶

As Jodi Byrd notes, "That the continued colonization of American Indian nations, peoples, and lands provides the United States the economic and material resources needed to cast its imperialist gaze globally is a fact that is simultaneously obvious within—and yet continually obscured by—what is essentially a settler colony's national construction of itself as an ever more perfect multicultural, multiracial democracy."³¹⁷ In the next chapter I examine the relationships between settler colonialism and imperialism through an analysis of pro-Israel rhetorics circulated by the organization Christians United for Israel, examining the assemblage of memory, place, time, and bodies through which Israel becomes a site for the territorialization of US settler desires, reinforcing post-9/11 landscapes of the racialized terrorist threat to democracy.

³¹⁶ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 115.

³¹⁷ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, 122.

CHAPTER 4

ASSEMBLING PLACES: CHRISTIANS UNITED FOR ISRAEL'S RHETORICS AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE FUTURE

“The ordinary white subject is a fantasy that comes into being through the mobilization of hate, as a passionate attachment closely tied to love. The emotion of hate works to animate the ordinary subject, to bring that fantasy to life, precisely by constituting the ordinary as in crisis, and the ordinary person as the real victim. The ordinary becomes that which is already under threat by imagined others whose proximity becomes a crime against person as well as place.”
—Sara Ahmed³¹⁸

Introduction

In Chapter 3, I examined how, as public memory places rhetorically position the US nation-state as an inevitable consequence of the forward progression of time, Indigenous cultures in the US Southwest are commemorated not as external threats to democratic civilization but rather as its stepping stones. As Native American symbols, objects, places, and people are affectively incorporated into US memoryscapes as elements of the nation-state's own heritage and past, they are rendered as possessions belonging to the settler nation. This enables the discursive erasure of Indigenous claims to land and sovereignty, an erasure materially etched into public memory places and larger surrounding landscapes. As E. Cram observes, in the United States, “the naming of routes and trails taken by pioneers, places of outlaw myth, and scenes of romanticized violence” reflect and mobilize “a cartography of settler desire in which settler memory's affective purchase is romance—for the land and its violent transformation.”³¹⁹ In this cartography of desire the romanticization of the “primitive” works in tandem with frontier narratives of “savage” Indian threats to

³¹⁸ Sara Ahmed, “The Organisation of Hate,” *Law and Critique* 12, no. 3 (2001): 346.

³¹⁹ E. Cram, “Archival Ambience and Sensory Memory: Generating Queer Intimacies in the Settler Colonial Archive,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 13, no. 2 (2016): 116.

democracy to reaffirm (white) settlers as the rightful inheritors/masculine conquerors of the land. The rhetorical effectivity/affectivity of this process exceeds national borders; as the specter of “Indianness” circulates in the imperial imagination, it further justifies and fuels the racialized trans/national frontiers of the US nation-state, serving as what Jodi Byrd calls “the transit of U.S. empire.”³²⁰

In this chapter I turn to rhetorical circulations of desire as they relate to another geographic and political body shaped by the violences of settler colonialism: Israel. More specifically, this chapter attends to how memoryscapes of Israel assemble racialized (non)belongings within US and global democratic imaginaries. Using rhetorical field methods, I analyze pro-Israel rhetorics from Christians United for Israel (CUFI), a US-based political lobbying group whose 9th Annual National Summit I attended in the summer of 2014 during the politically and emotionally charged “Operation Protective Edge,” a seven-week military assault by Israel on the Gaza strip. While the previous chapter was oriented around physical memory places and their publics, this chapter expands its conceptualization of the places of memory to examine CUFI’s online presence, social media networks, and other media texts as they construct and enact a trans/national public. In the first section, I discuss the role of public memory in connecting race with place in national memoryscapes. The next section identifies the various media texts, fragments, and encounters that comprise the data set for this chapter, connecting my methodological approach to the study of embodied and vernacular rhetorics. Turning to the analysis, I examine CUFI’s pro-Israel rhetorics through a framework that connects discourses of terror and security to settler colonial territorializations. I examine three themes: (1) the construction of Israel as

³²⁰ Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), xxi.

homeland for a “chosen” people; (2) racialized memoryscapes of civilization and progress; and (3) rhetorics of masculinist protection. I contend that as these themes mobilize rhetorical affects of love and hate to connect the United States and Israel as partners in the preservation of democracy’s future, they reinforce what Rey Chow terms “the ascendancy of whiteness.”³²¹

Territorializing the (Settler) Nation as Homeland and Destiny

In his introduction to *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson asks a simple and yet strangely compelling question: What makes people feel so intensely for the nation that they are willing to kill, and die, for its survival? Among the answers he posits is that, while much has been said about nationalism as a racist project inspiring fear and hatred of non-national Others, “it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love.”³²² Through the feeling of identification inspired by love for the nation, national subjects become a part of something larger than themselves, a collective. And a central means of inspiring this feeling of collectivity is public memory.

As “a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand its past, present, and by implication, its future,”³²³ public memory enables the mapping of human and geographic bodies into imagined communities of discrete nations comprised of persons who share an identity. In this process, according to Barnor Hesse,

³²¹ Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 2–3. Jasbir Puar further elaborates on this concept in Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

³²² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (New York: Verso, 2006/1983), 145.

³²³ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 15.

“two narrative structures are particularly significant.”³²⁴ The first of these is that “generations which succeed one another over centuries on a reasonably stable territory, under a reasonably univocal designation, have handed down to each other an invariant substance.”³²⁵ Anthony Smith argues that as modern political constructs, nations are inextricably tied to the “ethnic imagination” through which geographic territories become ancestral “homelands”;³²⁶ so too are individuals’ feelings of what Homi Bhabha calls “nationness” tied to ideas about/experiences of belonging in a place.³²⁷ As evidenced in the phrase, “national soil,” in the rhetorical construction of the nation “the territory itself is made more human.”³²⁸ As land becomes a bounded nation tied to a specific group of people, this also ascribes relational meanings to the bodies that occupy this space. This process of meaning ascription, or “territorialization,” to borrow an appropriate term from Deleuze and Guattari, occurs not only through signs but through a variety of forces: humans, animate and inanimate matter, abstractions and symbols are all means—as well as objects—of territorialization.³²⁹ In the establishment of the nation, bodies, matter, symbols, and place stick together in particular

³²⁴ Barnor Hesse, “White Governmentality: Urbanism, Nationalism, Racism,” in Sallie Westwood and John Williams (eds.), *Imagining Cities: Scripts, Signs, Memories* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 89.

³²⁵ Etienne Balibar, as cited in Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 89.

³²⁶ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1986), 183–84).

³²⁷ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994); see also Aida Hoteit, “Role of the Landscape in the Preservation of Collective Memory and the Enhancement of National Belonging,” *Canadian Social Science* 11, no. 3 (2015): 1–8.

³²⁸ Liisa Malkki, “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees,” *Cultural Anthropology* 7.1 (1992): 26.

³²⁹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* (London: Verso, 1994).

ways, as an assemblage. Assemblage theory thus usefully draws our attention to the internal composition and holding-together of elements that gives the nation-state material agency.

While the first narrative structure about the nation and its origins links “a people” with a geographic as well as imagined place through the idea of a past inheritance, the second structure described by Hesse is forward looking: the nation-state is envisioned as destined to be. As Anderson notes, the nation-state is rendered timeless not only through the “immemorial past” it is seen to emerge from but also by the “limitless future” into which it glides: “It is the magic of nationalism,” he states, “to turn chance into destiny.”³³⁰ In settler colonial nations this is especially important; as seen in Chapter 3, public memory—in its selective remembering—allows US settler subjects to imagine the nation as the only possible outcome, viewing violence as an unfortunate part of the nation’s distant past rather than as an enduring and materially consequential element of the nation’s present. Moreover, as mastery over the land is positioned as one of civilization’s accomplishments, settler control over a territory is justified under the guise of a (falsely) universal humanity.

As public memory assembles the settler nation as the inheritance and destiny of a specific people in a specific place, it also reinforces material structures of difference both within and outside of the nation. Settler colonial nations as well as other forms of colonialism and neocolonialism have relied on Enlightenment discourses of social progress envisioned as the forward-marching movement of peoples “from savagery through barbarism to civilization.”³³¹ In this mode of thinking, racial and cultural differences were conceptualized as “various stages of universal human development,” in a hierarchical stair-

³³⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (2nd ed.) (London: Verso), 11–2.

³³¹ Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization* (New York: Henry Holt, 1878).

step model with Anglo-European civilization positioned at the top.³³² Aligning with the rise of empiricism and the symbolic and material classification and cartographization of not just animals and plants but all of the peoples and regions of the globe, this racial hierarchy also relies on gender difference and masculine control. As seen in the preceding discussion of memoryscapes in the US Southwest, as the racialized Other is placed in a “primitive” past feminized by its associations with nature and its lack of “advanced” material and social structures it becomes an object for the masculinized gaze of scientific inquiry.

The centrality of structures of race and gender in assembling the US settler nation is evidenced in the key role “the management of Indigenous peoples’ gender roles and sexuality [played] in remaking Indigenous peoples into settler state citizens.”³³³ This management also was important for the ordering of other bodies into citizen and non-citizen in early US American history. Gail Bederman argues that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, male supremacy was explained and negotiated through “white racial dominance” while white supremacy was explained and negotiated through “male power.”³³⁴ The political implications of this gendered and racialized construction of the white heteropatriarchal nation allowed not just for the differential treatment of bodies within the territorial nation-state but also extended beyond its borders: “What physical strength

³³² Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 29.

³³³ Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 14–5.

³³⁴ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 4.

accomplished for the [masculine] individual, imperialism (as a form of physical and racial dominance) accomplished for the nation.”³³⁵

The enduring racializing and gendering of citizenship as well as the linking of masculinity and neo/colonial structures in a globalized world have been the topics of much important inquiry. However, less frequently are they directly tied to the territorializing processes required by the settler colonial nation-state, processes that, I argue, continue to inform trans/national rhetorical landscapes of democracy and rights. In the analysis, I further examine these themes—the construction of the nation as homeland and destiny, racialized discourses of civilization and progress, and rhetorics of masculinist protection—each of which is central to the establishment of the settler nation of Israel as well as to the ways CUFI mobilizes Israel to arrange bodies both within and beyond the US settler state.

Examining Christians United for Israel through Embodied and Vernacular Approaches

Founded in 2006 by John Hagee, a longstanding figurehead of the Evangelical Christian Right, CUFI has strengthened the Christian Zionist movement and deepened alliances with Israel leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.³³⁶ As I attend to CUFI through a rhetorical lens, I examine how the organization utilizes Israel to further its own political agenda within the US nation-state. However, in keeping with the larger project, my interest in this chapter is not only on the symbolic inducements produced by rhetors within the organization and the organization as rhetor; I also seek to examine the affective

³³⁵ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 68.

³³⁶ Brian Wood, “The Second Annual CUFI Conference, July 2007: The Christian Zionist Coalition Hits Its Stride,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 37, no. 1 (2007): 79–87.

memoriscapes that move members to identify as part of a collective not just with one another, but also with the citizens of Israel and a global community of “democratic” nations (read: white, non-Muslim, territorial states). As Benedict Anderson reminds us, nationalisms are “cultural artefacts of a particular kind,” especially in their ability to “command such profound emotional legitimacy” and to “arous[e] such deep attachments.”³³⁷ Put differently, national myths and symbols “are not simply ‘instruments’ of leaders ... They are potent signs and explanations, they have capacities for generating emotion.”³³⁸ As will be demonstrated in the analysis, emotion is, in fact, central to the rhetorical strategies of CUFI and its members. And in the words of Sara Ahmed, “emotions *do things*, and they align individuals with communities—or bodily space with social space—through the very intensity of their attachments.”³³⁹

Rhetorical field methods have been one means by which rhetorical scholars have attempted to access rhetoric’s affective and embodied qualities. Field methods also align with the rhetorical study of the “vernacular.”³⁴⁰ In rhetoric, the turn from studying elite and official rhetorical productions of the state (e.g., the great speeches and great speakers model) to studying vernacular, everyday rhetorics emerged as a means of attending to “the concrete, immediate, and material needs of ordinary human beings.”³⁴¹ Marouf Hasian, Jr. and

³³⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 4.

³³⁸ Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 201.

³³⁹ Ahmed, “The Organisation of Hate,” 348-9.

³⁴⁰ Kent A. Ono and J. M. Sloop, “The Critique of Vernacular Discourse,” *Communication Monographs* 62, no. 1 (1995): 19–46.

³⁴¹ Marouf Hasian, Jr. and Fernando Delgado, “The Trials and Tribulations of Racialized Critical Rhetorical Theory: Understanding the Rhetorical Ambiguities of Proposition 187,” *Communication Theory* 8, no. 3 (1998): 248. A similar distinction has also been made in the field of public memory; in

Fernando Delgado argue that attending to the vernacular is important for rhetorical theory because “if rhetoric is concerned with the symbolic influence of discourse in the public sphere, then expanding the range of social actors who are potentially involved in the coproduction of belief and value systems make sense.”³⁴² Addressing the vernacular therefore requires that we attend “to the ways that rhetors, audiences, and their fragments are all related in the process of knowledge production.”³⁴³ Field methods correspond with this aim, enabling rhetoricians to examine what Clifford Geertz refers to as “local knowledge,”³⁴⁴ the knowledge—or rhetorical experiences—created and engaged “by ordinary citizens through the pragmatic and particular experiences of life.”³⁴⁵ Examining CUFI through a framework influenced by rhetorical approaches to the vernacular is useful because, while the study of the vernacular in rhetoric often assumes a kind of “oppressed/non-oppressed” binary, members of dominant groups clearly also participate in the everyday embodied re/production of knowledges, ideologies, and structures.

In keeping with the methods I utilized to analyze public memory places in the US Southwest, my first impulse for this portion of this project was thus to go physically “into the field,” by finding a material place where I could study CUFI’s rhetorics unfolding as bodies interacted in real time. I decided to attend CUFI’s 9th Annual Washington Summit at

John Bodnar’s influential work he contrasts “official” and “vernacular” memory. (Bodnar, *Remaking America*).

³⁴² Hasian, Jr. and Delgado, “Trials and Tribulations,” 248–9.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

³⁴⁵ Hasian, Jr. and Delgado, “Trials and Tribulations,” 248.

the Walter Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. in the summer of 2014. However, one notable hitch emerged in this plan: CUFI's registration materials required I sign a non-disclosure agreement. Press passes for the event were also heavily regulated; David Weigel—a *Slate* political reporter whose articles on the Summit were among the only articles published by a mainstream and non-sympathetic outlet—described CUFI's careful approach with media attendees:

The reporters who showed up—many from conservative or pro-Israel media—were guided through a metal detector to a filing center, away from the main conference. At the appropriate times, we were guided from the first floor hideaway to the third-floor ballroom where the plenary sessions were being held. When the sessions ended, we were given time to wrap up, then politely guided back downstairs.³⁴⁶

For this reason—although I did attend the Summit, which certainly served as what has been referred to in qualitative inquiry as a “sensitizing” device informing my preliminary theoretical framework—when discussing the summit in this chapter, I incorporate only events that took place outside of the Convention Center and/or that are publicly available online.

The Summit's headlining event, “A Night to Honor Israel,” was a two-hour and 40-minute production featuring an invocation from Rabbi Arnold Scheinberg, numerous speakers including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (via webcast), Pastor John Hagee, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina), and Israeli Ambassador to the United States Ron Dermer, as well as musical performances from the CUFI singers. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas)

³⁴⁶ David Weigel, “Inside the Most Insanely Pro-Israel Meeting You Could Ever Attend,” *Slate*, July 22, 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2014/07/christians_united_for_israel_the_most_insanely_pro_israel_conference_of.html

and then-Sen. Michele Bachmann (R-Minnesota), among others, spoke the next morning. “A Night to Honor Israel” streamed live to an international audience, further expanding the public reach of the Summit, which was attended by nearly 5,000 CUFI members and religious leaders from across the United States and internationally.³⁴⁷ Along with this event, I transcribed, coded, and analyzed 20 YouTube videos, including user comments.³⁴⁸ Several were excerpts from other events of the 2014 Summit; others were related media that I followed the links to after watching the initial videos. The videos ranged in length from 30 seconds to about a half hour in length. While a few had the comments section disabled, the others contained anywhere from five to hundreds of comments. Together, the videos had a total of nearly 400,000 views. I approached these videos as “digital objects,” paying attention not only to the speech/text they contained, but also to the use of images and sounds.³⁴⁹ While I did engage in discussion with CUFI members outside of the D.C. Summit and also attended a local event in Scottsdale, Arizona, acquiring the majority of my data online required reconceptualizing “the field” not as a physical place or event but as a multiplicity of circulating texts. This conceptualization productively corresponds with how CUFI establishes itself as a public.

According to its official webpage, “CUFI is the largest pro-Israel organization in the U.S., with over 2.5 million members and 1.2 million Facebook fans.”³⁵⁰ Following CUFI on

³⁴⁷ Eagle Mountain Church, “CUFI Washington Summit Monday PM 7-21-2014,” *Livestream*, <http://livestream.com/EagleMountain/Nighttohonorisrael/videos/57237365>

³⁴⁸ When quoting YouTube user comments, I elected to fix typos and misspellings for the purposes of readability.

³⁴⁹ For a conceptualization of digital objects, see Yuk Hui, “What is a Digital Object?,” *Metaphilosophy* 43, no. 4 (2012): 380–96.

³⁵⁰ “Christians United for Israel,” *Christians United for Israel*, http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=about_AboutCUFI

Facebook, I received the organization's posts as part of my daily newsfeed (the most recent of which at the time of this writing announces that they have just met the 3 million member mark). Observing CUFI's Facebook presence offered further insight into the memoryscapes created by the organization and its members. Along with promotional materials for various events, daily posts also marked Jewish holidays, celebrated and commemorated soldiers in the Israeli Defense Forces, reiterated slogans associated with the Holocaust such as "Never Again," and mourned the deaths of innocent Israeli citizens—frequently revisiting older stories to create an enduring climate of peril, of a nation and a people under threat. Blessings, amens, and love for Israel were issued profusely, frequently by hundreds of followers on a single post. While YouTube is a site where a lot of people engage in "trolling," or the posting of inflammatory comments, the majority of comments on CUFI's Facebook posts appear to be from individuals who identify with the organization and its aims. Facebook, as a digital place, is thus one of the means by which CUFI is articulated as a trans/national public, or an imagined community in which individuals who do not know one other share a common identity and "appear to inhabit the same homogeneous, empty time and an identifiable space."³⁵¹

Examining online texts also offers another means by which to address the relationships between institutions and everyday practices, or official and vernacular rhetorics. According to Aaron Hess, "participatory media creates a hybridity of authority between vernacular and institutional spaces."³⁵² Moreover, as Yuk Hui notes, digital objects, or

³⁵¹ Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 10; for further discussion of the formation of a national public through (print) media, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

³⁵² Aaron Hess, "Democracy through the Polarized Lens of the Camcorder: Argumentation and Vernacular Spectacle on YouTube in the 2008 Election," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 47, no. 1 (2010):

objects on the Web including YouTube videos and Facebook profiles, “pervade our everyday life online, and it is in fact very difficult for us to separate what is online and offline anymore.”³⁵³ In digital environments, places are reorganized: “physical localities tend to be newly connected with each other as well as connecting digital places and encounters.”³⁵⁴ Attending to CUFI through media texts therefore offers insight into the ways in which CUFI as a public connects individual members in different localities with Israel as both a material place and imagined geography and, in so doing, reinforces rhetorical landscapes of the US nation-state as the global protector of democratic values. In the following analysis, I interrogate the assemblage of connections CUFI and its members make between the United States and Israel, beginning with a discussion of how the annual Washington Summit not only deploys “place-based arguments” but is also consequential in its mobilization of “place-as-rhetoric.”³⁵⁵

Place-As-Rhetoric at the 9th Annual CUFI Washington Summit

The 9th Annual CUFI Washington Summit, which I attended July 21–22, 2014 in Washington, D.C., came at a highly politically and emotionally charged moment: two weeks earlier Israel had launched “Operation Protective Edge,” a military operation whose stated aim was to stop rocket fire into Israel from the Gaza strip. After nine days of air strikes, Israel had expanded its offensive to a ground invasion; by July 21, the first day of the

114; see also Robert G. Howard, “The Vernacular Web of Participatory Media,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 25, no. 5 (2008): 490–513.

³⁵³ Hui, “What is a Digital Object?,” 380.

³⁵⁴ Sarah Pink, Heather Horst, John Postill, Larissa Hjorth, Tania Lewis, and Jo Tacchi (eds.), “Digital Ethnography: Principles and Practice” (Los Angeles: Sage), 17.

³⁵⁵ Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 258.

summit, the death toll in Gaza was approaching 500 casualties, the majority civilian, generating an international response.³⁵⁶ The Summit as well as CUFI's agenda of "talking points" that members would speak about to their Representatives in Congress was already well established prior to the escalating violence in Israel and Gaza. However, the gathering of approximately 5,000 CUFI members in the nation's capital to call for US support for Israel seemed to take on extra significance in this context. Speaker after speaker referenced the recent events, denouncing the United Nations as anti-Semitic and adamantly insisting that Israel, like any sovereign nation, had the right to defend itself against the threat of terror.

Oriented around their support for Israel as a territorial nation-state, the pro-Israel rhetorics circulated by CUFI and its members clearly mobilize what rhetorical scholars Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook describe as place-based arguments, or the invoking of "a discursive description of a specific place as support for an argument."³⁵⁷ But also important for grounding the following analysis of CUFI in terms of its material rhetoricity and affective resonance is the ways the organization and its members utilize "place-as-rhetoric," which Endres and Senda-Cook define as "the material (physical and embodied) aspects of a place having meaning and consequence, be it through bodies, signage, buildings, fences, flags, and so on." While "place-as-rhetoric" is a part of local CUFI events held at churches and on college campuses across the nation (places which enable members to position their arguments and envision their collective identity and purpose as

³⁵⁶ Karen Yourish and Josh Keller, "The Toll in Gaza and Israel, Day by Day," *The New York Times*, August 8, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/15/world/middleeast/toll-israel-gaza-conflict.html?_r=0.

³⁵⁷ Endres and Senda-Cook, "Location Matters," 264.

grounded in values such as faith, community, leadership, and education), the political mobilization of place is especially evident at the annual Washington Summit. Convening in the already rhetorically charged location of the nation's capital allows CUFI's leaders and members to build on the pre-existing meanings of the place—as a site where legislators make important political decisions, as a place of memory and monuments demonstrating the nation's great accomplishments,³⁵⁸ as a place where citizens can (ostensibly) come to get their voices heard, etc.—as well as to temporarily reconstruct place through the critical mass of bodies that come together for the event. John Hagee addresses this goal directly, stating, “One of our goals is to bring representatives from every state in the union to Washington, DC. . . . We want them to know there is a strong voter base of people who are pro-Israel and we are watching how they respond to the issues that affect Israel.”³⁵⁹

The format of the event follows a similar structure each year. Special events, including a dinner for CUFI's largest donors, take place in the evening when members are arriving. On the first full day, attendees begin bright and early at the convention center, where they listen to speakers, interact with exhibits, lunch together, and pray, dance, and sing. Other breakout and special events include CUFI on Campus training for college students and Camp CUFI for kids, where children learn about Israel's history and significance. As attendees assemble inside the convention center, they transform it into what one reporter describes as an “utterly surreal” scene: “Young, black Southern Baptists women

³⁵⁸ See Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

³⁵⁹ The Christian Broadcasting Network, “Stakelbeck on Terror: From the Annual CUFI Summit – CBN.com,” YouTube video, 28:39. Posted July 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RF5nKWCDzo>

join white, old Minnesota Lutheran church ladies in hora circles; high-on-life college boys don *talises* and blow *shofars*; Texan church choirs lead the crown in singing Israeli folk songs in their original Hebrew.”³⁶⁰ On the second day of the convention, after a day spent learning, celebrating, and creating community, (“fun!” was the way many attendees, especially college students, described their experience), dedicated members make their presence felt directly on the Hill as they break into smaller groups to urge their own representatives to support Israel.

Outside the Convention Center, place is also reconstructed as attendees fill the sidewalks and nearby restaurants, wearing badges and carrying bags with the CUFI logo. On the day I arrive, perhaps most visible is the approximately 40 foot-long blue banner stretching down one side of the Walter Washington Convention center just a few blocks away from the Congressional offices. At the busy intersection, car, bus, bicycle, and foot traffic alike are confronted by the words “Christians United for Israel,” which fill the bottom half of the sign. Above this is an image of a gold seal in front of the waving flags of the United States and Israel and the words: “For Zion’s sake, we will not be silent.”

Also quite visible is a “Truth Truck” with Colorado plates, which is parked on the block for the duration of the convention. The truck’s hand-painted red, white, and blue signs feature slogans including “Fight Tyranny or Goodbye America,” “9-11 Again,” “Secure Our Borders,” “Repent or Perish,” and Bible quotes such as “Prepare to meet thy God, Amos 4:12,” and “Purge The Evil From Among You, Deut 19:19,” while images of the United States flag and the burning towers of the World Trade Center assault passersby. Painted blood drips down the word “Terrorist” on the side of the truck that is facing the sidewalk;

³⁶⁰ Steven Weiss, “The Uncircumcised Israel Lobby,” *Slate*, August 24, 2010, http://www.slate.com/articles/life/faithbased/2010/08/the_uncircumcised_israel_lobby.html

on the back of the truck a cartoonish figure of President Obama as a vampire bites into the neck of the Statue of Liberty. That the signs are removable, tacked to the truck's black-painted boxy sides as well as propped atop the truck, suggests that the truck has featured other messages as well, perhaps changing the signs for different events. The truck's owner is not in sight, but several convention attendees smile and nod their heads appreciatively as they walk by.

Less enthusiastically welcomed are the few protestors who stand near the steps of the convention center on opening morning. One wears a gravestone and holds a Bible; another holds a sign that says "Who Would Jesus Bomb?" "Gaza! That's who!," shouts one attendee without a hint of sarcasm as she walks toward the entrance continuing to mutter under her breath. Anger flashes in her eyes as she glances around, perhaps looking for signs of affirmation that other attendees share the feeling of disgust she is experiencing. This exchange is suggestive of the emotional rhetorics of love for Israel and the United States and hate for their common enemies that are circulated throughout the convention as well as in other CUFI media, as promotional materials, CUFI figureheads, and members repeat the same slogans time and time again. Sen. Michele Bachmann calls for "peace through strength"—meaning military strength, a call that reverberates throughout CUFI materials. The words "God bless you, God bless America, and God bless Israel," seem to echo off of every glossy, lit up surface as attendees wave US and Israel flags, smile and pray. Impassioned calls to "know the enemy"—and to make a preemptive strike against Iran before civilization as we know it is annihilated—draw standing ovations, cheers, whistles, and smiles from the Christian audience.

One particularly charged event during the Summit, documented by the Jewish Voice for Peace organization and available online, occurred during Israeli Ambassador to the

United States Ron Dermer's address at "A Night to Honor Israel."³⁶¹ Several protestors—referred to as "jeering leftist trolls," "liberal terrorist-lovers," and "liberal scum" by CUFI supporters on YouTube³⁶²—had planted themselves discretely throughout the audience. As Dermer expresses his concerns regarding "the destruction of the Jewish state and the genocide of the Jewish people," I hear commotion on the other side of the room. A young woman, standing in the main aisle, shouts "war criminal!" She holds a cloth sign reading "Netanyahu: War Criminal." Next to her, a man holding another sign, "Stop Bombing Palestine," joins her chant. "Get out of here!" an audience member yells at them. The audience begins to cheer and clap, drowning the protestors out and expressing support for Dermer. As a Security Guard quickly emerges to escort the protestors down the long aisle, a middle-aged blonde woman dressed in her Sunday best follows closely behind, seething with anger as she yells and shakes her finger at them.

A few minutes later, Dermer is again interrupted. "I especially will not tolerate criticism of my country at a time when Israeli soldiers—" Shouts erupt as two protestors stand, one on a chair, this time in the middle of the center section: "Free, free Palestine!" "End the occupation now!" "Long live Palestine!" A man in the audience pushes one of the protestors off the chair, holding him in a neck hold, "sit down, sit down." Audience members begin to blow their *shofars*. As the protestors continue to yell, another audience member helps to push them down the row toward the aisle where security guards take over and drag them out. Another few minutes pass and there is another interruption by a young

³⁶¹ Jewish Voice for Peace, "Protest at CUFI Conference," YouTube video, 3:11. Posted July 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Np670kauxxI>.

³⁶² Ibid.

man standing on a chair. Audience frustration appears to be building; this time an audience member tears the cloth sign, which says something about children in Gaza, out of the protestor's hands before another attendee pulls him, violently, from the chair and begins to push him down the main aisle toward the exit himself.

The final interruption captured in the video comes as Dermer states "But Hamas also uses its strategy of human shields for another reason. Because it works." "Like the children that you murdered on the beach," the protestor cries. "What about the children on the beach? What do you say about it?" The camera spins out of control as he is pushed down; as the picture, now pointing toward the floor, wall, ceiling, continues to jostle a struggle is heard: "Get your hands off of me. Why are you assaulting me," the protestor asks. A muffled voice says "Shut the fuck up."

The tensions highlighted in these encounters between CUFI members and the protestors reveal how the antagonism of unwanted Others served to further unite the community. Moreover, the online description of the protestors as "liberal terrorist lovers," when juxtaposed against the anger and violence seen in CUFI members' responses demonstrates a slide between figures: as the protestors are folded into a larger assemblage of terrorist bodies, their bodies become threatening through their alignments with Other bodies. Ahmed argues that hate intensifies through identification: "the attachment to others becomes divided as negative and positive (hate and love) precisely through imaging the faces of the community made up of other 'me's', of others that are loved *as if they were me.*"³⁶³ CUFI members' attachments to their religious and political communities, and to the nations of the

³⁶³ Sara Ahmed, "The Organisation of Hate," 353-4.

United States and Israel, are thus expressed through the emotions of love for the members of these “chosen” communities, a love that is only strengthened by the emotion of hate.

Manifesting Settler Colonial Memories: Israel as Destination for US Desires

In this section, I address three themes that emerged in my analysis of online materials documenting CUFI's 9th National Summit along with other CUFI media and audience comments on video posts and Facebook: (1) the construction of Israel as homeland for a “chosen” people; (2) racialized memoryscapes of civilization and progress; and (3) rhetorics of masculinist protection. These themes, I argue, circulate as affective intensities in a spatio-temporal assemblage linking the United States and Israel as essential for the preservation of democratic futurity.

Israel as Homeland for a “Chosen” People

In an era where symbolic and material landscapes have been transformed by global flows, it is clear that nation-states are not assembled of homogenous groups of people occupying a single geographic area and sharing a common heritage. And yet, as scholarly inquiry has turned toward flows, transnational movements, glocalities, and hybridities, rightfully rejecting both the notion of nations as discrete and models of inquiry that approach them as such, nations continue to be conceptualized in popular and political trans/national imaginaries as different geographic territories containing different peoples, languages, cultures, and traditions. So too does land remain central to the nation; even as refugees and diasporic peoples redefine and recreate notions of “home” and “homelands,” a nation without land lacks tangible thingness, making it unintelligible within the global community of nations and international structures of governance. The heritage of the Jewish people and their connection with the land is therefore a central means by which their rights as a nation are articulated.

CUFI's "Israel Pledge" thus begins here: "We believe that the Jewish people have a right to live in their ancient land of Israel, and that the modern State of Israel is the fulfillment of this historic right."³⁶⁴ In addition, as CUFI members note in various ways, Israel also protects and maintains these sacred sites for Christians and US Citizens, unlike Israel's enemies who "defame other peoples' religious sites."³⁶⁵ "Since Israel has been in charge of the holy sites of the world," Sen. Graham notes, "they're available to all of us. There was a day when you couldn't go. So we owe a lot to the Israeli government and people for allowing us to walk in Jesus' footsteps safely."³⁶⁶ And walk there, they do. CUFI leaders and figureheads draw upon their visits to Israel in their speeches and members make frequent references to their own life-changing trips to "The Holy Land." Events organized by CUFI such as The Jerusalem Summit further bring members to Israel as a collective.

As "The Holy Land," Israel's existence is, of course, already symbolically overdetermined for Evangelical Christians who believe in the Bible as fact. Religion is thus—clearly—a central motivation for CUFI as they call for protecting the nation of Israel and her people. For CUFI members, the rights of the Jews to the land of Israel is indisputable: "When you honor Israel you honor a nation blessed by God Almighty himself."³⁶⁷ Moreover, as the frequently repeated refrain of Genesis 12:3—"I will bless those

³⁶⁴ "Christians United for Israel," *Christians United for Israel*, http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=about_AboutCUFI

³⁶⁵ USSenLindseyGraham, "Graham Addresses Christians United for Israel 'Night to Honor Israel' Banquet," YouTube video, 19:34. Posted July 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXP16OhoxiY>

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

who bless you and curse those who curse you”—reminds CUFI members, it is only through their blessing of Israel that our own heavenly future (as individuals and as a nation) may be ensured. Sen. Graham finishes his speech emphasizing how his support for Israel will ensure his entrance into the holiest of places: “My political goal is to go to heaven and work backwards,” he pronounces, receiving appreciative cheers from the audience. “Between now and the day that comes and I meet my maker—just as surely as everybody in this room will meet their maker. When they ask you, what did you do with the time God gave you on earth, you can say ‘I sinned. I’m sorry. But when it came to Israel, I was there.’”³⁶⁸ Aligning oneself with Israel is, for the members of CUFI, clearly a redemptive act.

According to CUFI members, not only is the nation of Israel “blessed” by God, it is, in fact, “*given* to them by God.”³⁶⁹ “Israel is not an occupier, Israel is an owner,” Bachmann states emphatically, drawing cheers from her audience.³⁷⁰ This emphasis on the land as possession is rhetorically consequential; Cheryl Harris convincingly argues that notions of ownership and property in the United States are racial formulations inscribed with white privilege given that “possession—the act necessary to lay the basis for rights in property—was defined to include only the cultural practices of whites.”³⁷¹ As CUFI members rhetorically lay claim to the lands of Israel they therefore also reinforce US settler colonial

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Official CUFI, “Christians United for Israel Overview,” YouTube video, 6:51. Posted Jan 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS3SmEj5r9g>.

³⁷⁰ פייגלין משה, “Michele Bachmann: Israel can be strong without the US,” YouTube video, 18:29. Posted May 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq4BZ4sHWq8>.

³⁷¹ Cheryl I. Harris, “Whiteness as Property,” *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 1721.

memoriscapes and the claims of chosenness by white US evangelicals; appropriating Jewish cultural heritage to reinforce their own national belongings and possession of Native lands.

CUFI members can further denote their support of the Jewish people's ownership of the land of Israel through their own possessions. Among the objects for sale in the CUFI store—which include pendants and keychains depicting the city of Jerusalem, Star of David jewelry, olive wood items, replicas of Jewish cultural objects, and the “CUFI Logo Symbol of Remembrance”—what CUFI advertises as a “clay land grant necklace.” The necklace, which emblemizes the land grant “given to Abraham and his seed through Isaac and Jacob with an everlasting and unconditional covenant,” is further authenticated by virtue of its materials. Made in Israel from Israeli clay, the necklace enables members to wear a piece of “the Holyland” around their necks. In this manner, Israel's culture and its objects—much like Native American cultures and objects in the US Southwest—become a site for the enacting of (white) American desires.

Racialized memoriscapes of the Jewish people's “chosenness” and of their god-ordained ownership over the land closely parallel the rhetorics of Manifest Destiny undergirding the settler colonial establishment of the United States. This parallel is sedimented by other elements in the assemblage: for example, one YouTube user claimed that “the Jews tamed the land.”³⁷² CUFI promotional materials further emphasize the Jewish people's transformation of a bleak, empty desert into a prolific and vibrant landscape. Much as settler narratives depict the United States as transforming the “wilderness” of the continent into a civilized nation even when faced by danger from the continent's Others who would seek to interrupt this forward-moving progress and material growth, Sen.

³⁷² Max Blumenthal, “Is Rapture Ready: The Christians United for Israel Tour,” YouTube video, 9:57. Posted July 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjMRgT5o-Ig>.

Bachmann describes the Jewish people as building their land from the ground up even as they are forced to fight off the enemies that wish them harm: “with a trowel in one hand and with a sword in the other. That’s been Israel’s story since May of 1948.” “But,” she continues, “Look at the miracle.” The Jewish state “again is a land and a people.”³⁷³

The Jewish people’s belongingness is further etched onto the land through reference to their ancient heritage. One YouTube post notes, “Israel is a Hebrew land and has been a Hebrew land since ancient times.” On the same forum, hottamale02, whose icon pictures Jesus on the cross against a backlit sky, states, “Israel has always belonged to the Jews. Their Holy Temple and ancient cities, are underneath Jerusalem.”³⁷⁴ Within this rhetorical landscape, Palestinians, not Jews, are the ones who do not belong: “They speak not the native tongue of Hebrew. They stole the land from the Jews.”³⁷⁵ “The meaning of Palestine = invader,” another YouTube user affirms.³⁷⁶ Palestinians’ lack of access to a formal nation-state affirms their lack of legitimacy on the land in the eyes of CUFI and its supporters. “There never has been an official Palestinian state nor true Palestinians!” reads another post. “They only called themselves that starting in 1948 when the Arabs were welcomed to join Israel and become citizens there but most refused.”³⁷⁷ “The few Muslims who were in Israel

³⁷³ פייגלין משה, “Michele Bachmann: Israel can be strong without the US,” YouTube video, 18:29. Posted May 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq4BZ4sHWq8>.

³⁷⁴ Official CUFI, “Christians United for Israel Overview,” YouTube video, 6:51. Posted Jan 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS3SmEj5r9g>.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Max Blumenthal, “Is Rapture Ready: The Christians United for Israel Tour,” YouTube video, 9:57. Posted July 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjMRgT5o-Ig>.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

volunteered to leave,” a different poster argues.³⁷⁸ Together these assertions vanish Palestinian peoples from the land in ways similar to how Indigenous peoples in the Americas were symbolically and materially vanished from the land, creating a rhetorically “empty” land upon which the nation could establish its roots. In so doing, they also erase the complexities of competing claims to the land and the direct involvement of US and European powers in drawing the lines of the Israeli nation-state. Moreover, as these final statements further position the nation-state of Israel as beneficent and ready to welcome Arabs with open arms, they further assemble the United States and Israel as linked by the inclusive structures of democratic citizenship.

This model—of rhetorically ridding the land of its occupants while also ridding them of their humanity in order to justify the material violence of settlement—is central to the ways settler colonial states navigate the enduring violences on which they are built. As described by Peter Gran in his introduction to Steven Salaita’s important work, *The Holy Land in Transit*:

The settler colonial model explained in a sense how a community could make a new beginning in a new land and, free from much of the past, embrace democracy, doing so however at a very high cost of embracing at the same time the crimes of those who procured the land that became the new country. This model would explain, as various writers have pointed out, the basis of Chosen People-ism, the attraction to the story of Moses and Exodus and much else.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁸ Official CUFI, “Christians United for Israel Overview,” YouTube video, 6:51. Posted Jan 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS3SmEj5r9g>.

³⁷⁹ Peter Gran, in forward to Steven Salaita, *The Holy Land in Transit: Colonialism and the Quest for Canaan* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), vii.

Salaita argues that this narrative, which “tacitly pervades the American consciousness because of the United States’ own grounding in Holy Land pathos,” informs the United States’ financial and philosophical support for the state of Israel, specifically, because of “the covenantal relationships these nations share.”³⁸⁰ As CUFI members embrace this relationship in the name of God and faith, they embrace the land of Israel as not only a place upon which the Jews can realize their national aspirations but also as a place upon which US Christians can realize their own individual aspirations.

Racialized Memoryscapes of Civilization and Progress

The affective intensities that construct the Jews’ deservingness of the land against Palestinians’ undeservingness reveal a deep “alliance between United States and Israeli settler colonialisms”³⁸¹ that reiterates deeply racialized memoryscapes of civilization and progress. Like the discourses that justified the settling of the Americas, “the historical bases of Zionist thought” envisioned the Jewish people as “settlers on a land believed to be either previously uninhabited or merely tenanted by an inferior people without nationhood or national aspirations.”³⁸² (Settler) colonialism and imperialism, as Edward Said has noted, are “supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people *require* and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination.”³⁸³ This is clearly evidenced throughout the historical era of Anglo-European nation building and imperial conquest as “‘civilized’ European-

³⁸⁰ Salaita, *The Holy Land in Transit*, 14–5.

³⁸¹ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xvi.

³⁸² Edward W. Said, “An Ideology of Difference,” *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985): 50.

³⁸³ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 9.

American identities took shape in contradistinction to particular images of Indians, the detested embodiments of ‘savagery.’”³⁸⁴ Likewise, in CUFI’s and other globally circulated pro-Israel rhetorics, Palestinians embody the “savage” and threatening Otherness that seeks to destroy democratic civilization. Rhetorical landscapes of civilization are also spatial and temporal landscapes; as Palestinians are abjected from the land of the settler colonial nation-state they are rendered not only as not belonging to the nation, or to the land, but also as not belonging to the modern era.³⁸⁵ As one YouTube commenter puts it, “Arab countries are ... a bit back in time.”³⁸⁶

The power of this assemblage gains traction in relation to the historical development of Zionism as a means by which to remodel the new Israeli Jew in a manner reflecting European norms of whiteness. According to Daniel Boyarin, Zionism operated as a form of mimicry in which Ashkenazi Jews attempted to escape persecution and stigmatization by modeling themselves after European colonial nations.³⁸⁷ In this manner, Zionism became the

³⁸⁴ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 6.

³⁸⁵ Although it exceeds the scope of the discussion in this chapter, of note as it relates to the assemblages of whiteness and Otherness I examine throughout this dissertation is that Native American alterity—which as I have discussed in Chapter 3 relies on the temporal placement of Native Americans in the past—is also a means through which Jewish individuals in the United States are made white, or as Kaplan puts it, “if not white enough then whiter than others.” (Caren Kaplan, “Beyond the Pale?: Rearticulating U.S. Jewish Whiteness,” in Ella Shohat [ed.], *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age* [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press], 467). For further discussion of how participation in colonial violence allowed Jews in settler colonies to “become white,” see Sander L. Gilman and Milton Shain (eds.), *Jewries at the Frontier: Accommodation, Identity, and Conflict* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

³⁸⁶ JewTube, “Michele Bachmann to CUFI: ‘Obama abetting Muslim Brotherhood against Israel, & ultimately USA,’” YouTube video, 20:01. Posted July 2012.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2i8aHCmS0Tk>

³⁸⁷ Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

primary vehicle through which Israeli Jews both “whiten[ed] their image” and entered modernity through the articulation of a modern nation-state.³⁸⁸ Many scholars have written about the complicated relationship between Jewish people of European descent and whiteness,³⁸⁹ examining “the complex interplay between power and marginality” inscribed within this relationship.³⁹⁰ As Caren Kaplan writes, “asking questions about the process whereby a racially-marked group in Europe eventually gains access to whiteness in another country inevitably raises related concerns about the historical stakes in racialization in the modern nation-state in general but also queries who gets left out of that configuration.”³⁹¹ In

³⁸⁸ Corey Balsam, “The Appeal of Israel: Whiteness, Anti-Semitism, and the Roots of Diaspora Zionism in Canada.” Master’s thesis, University of Toronto, 2011, 24.

³⁸⁹ It is important to note when discussing Jewish whiteness that this discussion tends to elide the existence of non-European Jews, including Arab, African, Asian, and Latino Jews. This frequent conflation of Jewishness with European ancestry further reflects the Anglo-Eurocentric discourses through which certain Jews have gained access to whiteness while others have been excluded.

³⁹⁰ Kaplan, “Beyond the Pale,” 453. Discussing her own Jewish identity, Kaplan writes of the feeling of confusion produced by her lived experience of simultaneously accessing whiteness while also experiencing the threat of racialized violence and discrimination. Resisting the tendency to refute Jewish access to white privilege through claims of anti-semitism, Kaplan notes, “In calling attention to the cognitive dissonance of whites experiencing racism directed against them I am not claiming that anti-semitism, even when it is expressed in unremittingly biological or essentialized terms, renders Jews of European origin non-white” (Ibid). For further discussion of Jewish whiteness see also Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 171-200; Karen Sacks, “How Did Jews Become White Folks?”, in Steven Gregory and Roger Sanjek (eds.), *Race* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 78-102; Erella Shadmi, “Gendering and Racializing Israeli Jewish Ashkenazi Whiteness,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 26, no. 3 (2003): 205-19; and Lisa Tessman and Bat-Ami Bar On (eds.), *Jewish Locations: Traversing Racialized Landscapes* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

³⁹¹ Kaplan, “Beyond the Pale,” 474. Although my focus is on Israeli Jews’ access to whiteness through Zionist discourses and the discursive construct as well as material structure of the nation-state, James Baldwin writes that for European Jews who migrated to the United States, the “price” of admission to the nation was “becoming white,” a price that prevented the alliance between Jewish migrants who “opted” to be white and African migrants brought to the United States as slaves. (James Baldwin, “On Being ‘White’...And Other Lies,” *Essence* 14, no. 2 [1984]: 90.)

this case, the Jewish nation-state gained access to whiteness precisely through its exclusions; whereas older discourses of Orientalism included Jews as Oriental Others, Zionism remodeled Jewish racial identity by constructing the nation-state of Israel as a western outpost fighting against the vagaries of barbarism.³⁹² Zionism also contrasted Israeli Jewish masculinity against the construction of the feminized diasporic Jew.³⁹³ These gendered and racialized discourses thus positioned Israel as a place where, as Edward Said describes, “a handful of European Jews” could hew “a civilization of sweetness and light out of the black Islamic sea.”³⁹⁴ As Israeli nationalism thus drew from longstanding clash of civilization discourses in which Islam is fixed in opposition to the West,³⁹⁵ it constructed a national public “under attack from people who live beyond the physical and temporal borders of civility.”³⁹⁶

Dana Cloud describes the rhetorical configuration of a clash of civilizations as “a verbal and visual ideograph linked to the idea of the ‘white man’s burden,’”³⁹⁷ in which

³⁹² While Arab citizens in (and beyond) Israel are the primary group against which Israeli Jewish belongings are rhetorically contrasted both within the nation-state of Israel and in transnationally circulated discourses, Arabs are not the only border objects against which Jewish whiteness is stabilized. In her research, Orna Sasson-Levy focuses on ethnic conflicts within the Jewish population of Israel, arguing that Ashkenazi Jews, as the dominant group, access whiteness through the racial and socioeconomic exclusion of Mizrahim (Asian, Middle Eastern, and North African) Jews. (See Orna Sasson-Levy, “A Different Kind of Whiteness: Marking and Unmarking of Social Boundaries in the Construction of Hegemonic Ethnicity,” *Sociological Forum* 28, no. 1 (2013): 27-50).

³⁹³ For further discussion see Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct*.

³⁹⁴ Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 25.

³⁹⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998).

³⁹⁶ Ania Loomba, Suvir Kaul, Matti Bunzl, Antoinette Burton, and Jed Esty, “Beyond What? An Introduction,” in Ania Loomba, Suvir Kaul, Matti Bunzl, Antoinette Burton, and Jed Esty (Eds.), *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 24.

³⁹⁷ Dana L. Cloud, “‘To Veil the Threat of Terror’: Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 3 (2004): 285–306.

Islamic societies are rendered as “backward,” “barbaric,” and “savage” in their cultural practices. Supporters of Israel eagerly take up such rhetorics to denounce arguments regarding Palestinians’ persecution by the Jewish state. In response to one YouTube user who argues for Palestinians’ rights, user Ritchloui Ritch responds sarcastically: “You know, the pitiful, persecuted Muslims who just want us to keep accommodating their rather psychotic and obscene lifestyle of multiple wives, sex slaves, chopping off limbs, crucifying people.” Continuing, he argues, “You’d better get that burka on - oh and have your clitoris chopped off. Get used to paganism and idolatrous rituals, public maimings, beheadings, crucifixions and floggings. Oh, and slavery and forced marriage of prepubescent girls. It all comes as a package.”³⁹⁸ Another poster states, “I don’t see Israelis decapitating Christians and posting the videos on YouTube. I don’t hear of Jews blowing up Shiite mosques in Kuwait.”

As these repeated references mark Muslims and Muslim nations as violent and in need of containment in contrast to the peaceful, Jewish people and nation-state, Muslims bodies are territorialized as both the agents and objects of hate within CUFI’s rhetoric. “They hate everything we stand for. Their hatred knows no bounds,” states Sen. Graham. One YouTube poster notes that “in their hateful frenzy, these Jihadists don’t just target Israel and the west, but they often target their fellow Muslims and even each other. It’s just how hate works. You begin to see the entire world as your enemy.”³⁹⁹ Filled with

³⁹⁸ JewTube, “Michele Bachmann to CUFI: ‘Obama abetting Muslim Brotherhood against Israel, & ultimately USA,’” YouTube video, 20:01. Posted July 2012.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2i8aHCmS0Tk>

³⁹⁹ Official CUFI, “Christians United for Israel Overview,” YouTube video, 6:51. Posted Jan 2011.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS3SmEj5r9g>

“Islamofascists” (to use a term deployed by many CUFI members including Hagee), the Muslim countries that threaten Israel on all sides are depicted as incapable of reason. This further sediments that Palestinian land and rights are a non-issue for CUFI members: as YouTube user Toosmart puts it: “EVEN if we vacated the West Bank and Gaza these low lifes, many of them, would still kill Israelis because they won’t accept the State period and want every Jew dead.” One particularly powerful trope that is emblematic of the terrorist Other’s inhumanity is the suicide bomber, or worse—the penultimate violation, as it represents both the destruction of the innocent as well as of the future—the strapping of suicide vests to children. This trope is taken up by CUFI speakers including Glenn Beck,⁴⁰⁰ and repeated in web forums. One post reads, sarcastically:

You Hamas fans may want to help get them through this crunch time by sending them some gifts. They need all the weapons they can get their hands on. Fortunately, I ran across this site that has children’s suicide vests on sale. Specifically, the sale is called the “Timers for Twins Sale.” It’s buy one get one free. Smaller sizes are cheaper because the toddlers can’t carry the big loads. Just go to www.boomgoesbaby.eu.

Marked within this affective economy as “a murderous race of mindless fanatics,”⁴⁰¹ Palestinians are not only denied existence within the modern nation-state of Israel, their very existence—and by extension, the existence of any Islamic nation—becomes a threat to Israel, and to the global future of democracy, security, and peace.

It is therefore not surprising that as CUFI articulates a bond between Christians and

⁴⁰⁰ See Chevrette and Braverman, “Brothers, Fathers, Terrorists,” 92.

⁴⁰¹ Said, “An Ideology of Difference,” 40.

Jews, and between the United States and Israel, their rhetoric draws heavily from post-9/11 security discourses driven by emotion-laden narratives of terror and emergency and anxiety over the United States' declining dominance in global affairs. As Sherene Razack notes, "The United States' 'war on terror' and its inextricable links to American support of Israel have converged to produce a particular geopolitical terrain in the post-9/11 period."⁴⁰² It is notable that each eruption of Israeli–Palestinian violence, including Israel's 2013 "Operation Protective Edge," has been accompanied by US congressional statements of Israeli support that cite unilateral, Palestinian terrorism as a major concern. As Netanyahu addressed CUFI at the 9th National Summit, he noted, "You've been supporting Israel through and through and that's important on any day but especially on this day when Israel is targeted by the force of darkness and terror and all our cities are being rocketed."⁴⁰³ A CUFI supporter under the YouTube moniker of RevGNR echoes Netanyahu's statement: "Christians know that Hamas follows the path of the darkness."⁴⁰⁴ One CUFI Summit attendee states: "We are fighting what is behind the Muslim people which is Satan. Because Satan is the one who is actually trying to destroy the Jewish race."⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰² Sherene H. Razack, *Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law & Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 84.

⁴⁰³ Official CUFI, "CUFI Washington Summit 2014 - Greeting from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu," YouTube video, 2:36. Posted September 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUnM_RoL9nw

⁴⁰⁴ Official CUFI, "Christians United for Israel Overview," YouTube video, 6:51. Posted January 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS3SmEj5r9g>.

⁴⁰⁵ Max Blumenthal, "Is Rapture Ready: The Christians United for Israel Tour," YouTube video, 9:57. Posted July 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjMRgT5o-Ig>.

References to the destruction of the Jewish race gain affective currency by invoking memories of the Holocaust, rhetorically bringing the prospect of complete Jewish annihilation to the fore. As members of the CUFI public repeat the sentiment of “Never Again” in speeches, in digitally-circulated images and memes, and in Facebook and YouTube comments responding to rocket attacks in Israel, Palestinian resistance is conflated with the Nazi persecution of the Jews. In CUFI’s rhetoric, however, it is not only Palestinians who threaten Israel; it is the entire Middle East and all Muslim nations collapsed into a homogenous Arab terrorist Other who threaten to destroy both the Jewish people and the United States. As rhetorics of terror thus strengthen bonds between the United States and Israel, Israel-Palestinian conflicts are rendered not as a struggle for territory and rights but rather as a struggle of “good” and “evil,” discourses that are further sedimented by the aforementioned covenantal relationship between the two settler colonial nation states. Moreover, this suggests that any violent action taken by the United States or Israel against this evil is therefore both moral and just.

Many postcolonial authors have written about the racialized and gendered underpinnings of rhetorics of “good” and “evil,” rhetorics which, as Sherene Razack notes, “invite us to understand ourselves racially as well as nationally.”⁴⁰⁶ In fact, she claims, “the story of an encounter with unfathomable evil is only intelligible through race.”⁴⁰⁷ The mapping of evil onto racialized terrorized bodies is evidenced in a speech delivered by Glenn Beck at the 2011 CUFI National Summit. He states:

Evil is taking the mask off. Evil always wears a hood like the KKK. It rarely comes

⁴⁰⁶ Sherene H. Razack, “Stealing the Pain of Others: Reflections on Canadian Humanitarian Responses,” *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (2007): 380.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

in in a nice snappy uniform, but it has in the past. Only when it has scared everyone else into the shadows does it take the mask off. In Iran the mask is off. There is no amount of cloaking after a while, nothing, no mask can hide it from those people who have the courage to open their eyes and to stare the truth in the face. (27:13)

Beck's language of hoods, cloaking, and masking, alongside the conveniently (mis)placed reference to Iran, invokes the Western image of the robed and masked Arab terrorist. Through this move, not only the Palestinians, but also the homogenized Arab male-terrorist Other becomes the persecutor of the Jews.

CUFF's rhetorics thus reiterate as well as reconfigure racialized memoryscapes, drawing upon the aforementioned clash of civilizations ideograph and the discourses of Orientalism on which it is based. And yet, while the notion of a clash of civilizations—or to put it in terms more closely aligned with CUFF's logic, a clash between civilization and those who seek to annihilate it—remains firmly embedded in US national discourses, the signifiers through which the Islamic male Other is articulated have changed. In Said's interrogation of "the East" as an imagined geography created by "the West," he documents how the Eastern, often Islamic, male Other was represented in European colonialist discourses as exotic, primitive, gullible, and incapable of dominance—and therefore easily dominated.⁴⁰⁸ Perhaps precisely because it has elided domination and containment, the Islamic Other figures somewhat differently in contemporary US popular and political imaginaries. Mehdi Semati argues that brownness, once the signifier of exoticism, has instead come to signify the

⁴⁰⁸ Said, *Orientalism*.

menacing threat of the terrorist Other,⁴⁰⁹ a process that Bloodsworth-Lugo and Lugo-Lugo refer to as “the browning of terror.”⁴¹⁰

The racial underpinnings of CUFI’s alignments against the terrorist Other are given their most hostile expression on YouTube, given the nature of the digital space as a place where people anonymously express many incendiary opinions. “Muslims can GO TO HELL!!!” one poster shouts.⁴¹¹ “Oh my God, another filthy Balkan Muslim. Fuck you ... You are SATANIC.” “FUCK OFF WITH YOUR TAQIYYA,” reads another emphatic post in response to another user’s comment. “I KNOW HOW MUSLIMS LIE, I KNOW ABOUT YOUR GAMES. YOU WANT TO MAKE YOUR ENEMIES—JEWS & CHRISTIANS—FIGHT WITH EACH OTHER AND SUPPORT YOU, BUT WE WON’T DO THIS GAME WITH YOU! GET OUT OF HERE!”⁴¹² This emotionally-laden charge of “get out!”—the same charge leveled against the protestors who interrupted Sen. Graham’s address by calling attention to the violences enacted on Palestinian bodies—is the same charge that, on a larger level, sustains the settler colonial states of both Israel and the United States.

Interrogating racialized narratives of terror through a framework that emphasizes settler colonialism not as an event of the past but as an ever-present structure that continues

⁴⁰⁹ Mehdi Semati, “Islamophobia, Culture and Race in the Age of Empire,” *Cultural Studies* 24, no. 2 (2010): 256–75.

⁴¹⁰ Mary K. Bloodsworth-Lugo and Carmen R. Lugo-Lugo, *Containing (Un)American Bodies: Race, Sexuality, and Post-9/11 Constructions of Citizenship* (New York: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2010).

⁴¹¹ Official CUFI, “Christians United for Israel Overview,” YouTube video, 6:51. Posted January 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS3SmEj5r9g>.

⁴¹² Ibid.

to organize bodies, lands, and ideologies, therefore adds an important and often overlooked component in post-9/11 assemblages of terror and security. In the words of Jodi Byrd:

The non-discriminating, proto-inclusive ‘merciless Indian Savage’ stands as the terrorist, externalized from ‘our frontiers,’ and functions as abjected horror through whom civilization is articulated oppositionally. This non-recuperative category, a derealization of the Other, serves as a paranoid foundation for what Jasbir Puar defines in *Terrorist Assemblages* as ‘monster-terrorist-fags,’ the affectively produced and queered West Asian (including South Asian, Arab American, and Muslim) ... targeted for surveillance and destruction.”⁴¹³

That some bodies, lands, and nations are deserving of preservation while others are deserving of destruction is clear in CUFI’s rhetoric, which suggests that unlike the pathological violence of the enemy Other, state-sanctioned violence against the dark forces of terror is necessary, moral, and just. “Sanctioning certain acts of violence as ‘rational,’ while condemning others as ‘irrational’ can be discerned as a primary instrument of power insofar as perceived rationality becomes misconstrued with legitimacy.”⁴¹⁴ As divisions are made between Israel’s legitimate right to self-defense and Palestinian’s illegitimate resistance, “such a dichotomy becomes a dividing line between ‘civilization’ and ‘barbarism,’ one that is given spatial license through imaginative geographies.”⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xxi; see also Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*.

⁴¹⁴ Simon Springer, “Violence Sits in Places? Cultural Practice, Neoliberal Rationalism, and Virulent Imaginative Geographies,” *Political Geography* 30, no. 2 (2011): 93.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

In CUFI's imaginative geographies, which operate "by demarcating conceptual partitions and enclosures between 'the same' and 'the Other,'"⁴¹⁶ Israel sits on the frontlines of terror—fighting our enemies there, so that we do not have to fight them here. This further bolsters the sense of identification, and sameness, and the affective rhetorics of love that fuse the United States and Israel together in CUFI's rhetoric, a love which relies on its counterpart of hate for the common enemy. As the nation-state of Israel protects its own citizens from the dark and evil forces of terror, they also protect the United States, and all of western civilization. This is the note Netanyahu closes his address on at the Washington Summit. Locking his hands together, he emphasizes the unbreakable unity between the US and Israeli nation-states. "I know you know that bond, this civilizational bond between us and our common heritage is what's at stake here,"⁴¹⁷ he affirms. CUFI members, waving their US and Israel flags, erupt in applause.

Rhetorics of Masculinist Protection

As the nations of the United States and Israel are constituted as under threat from their Muslim enemies and neighbors, a call resounds throughout the speeches at CUFI's National Summit, and echoes in other CUFI media: CUFI members must stand, they must stand together, and they must stand now. Sen. Graham states, "the people Israel is fighting are the enemies of the United States as much as they are Israel. Be glad, be proud, and be thankful that you have a friend in Israel, and thank god every day that these radical Islamists can't come here as quickly as they can come to Israel. Please understand that our friends in

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Official CUFI, "CUFI Washington Summit 2014 - Greeting from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu," YouTube video, 2:36. Posted September 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUnM_RoL9nw

Israel are surrounded by people who hate their very being and would kill everybody in that country if they could. And they would kill everybody in this room if they could. And the only reason they won't is because somebody's gotta stand up to 'em."⁴¹⁸ This call to stand takes many forms: to "stand with strength, unapologetically and with complete force;"⁴¹⁹ to stand against "barbarism"⁴²⁰ and terror; to stand for democracy; to stand up to our political representatives; to stand for truth against the anti-Israel sentiments that proliferate on college campuses across the nation; to stand "and say 'enough is enough.'"⁴²¹

The practice of standing is itself rhetorically enacted through a variety of means that extend far beyond the three days during which members come together each year in Washington, D.C. In a scene documented by the Christian Broadcasting Network from a 2014 CUFI trip to Israel's "Rocket Town," fifty pastors and religious leaders stand atop an observation point with Israel's flag waving in the wind and barbed-wire fences visible in the distance. "To be here, to stand, to look over, it really embeds it deep within your soul as to the dangers Israel faces every day of her life," Pastor Jay Bailey notes. He says he will tell his congregation, "I'm going to let them know that I looked over the place where those rockets originate from, stood on the observation point in which tunnels are being developed and dug underneath, and this community here ... the dangers these precious people face every

⁴¹⁸ USSenLindseyGraham, "Graham Addresses Christians United for Israel 'Night to Honor Israel' Banquet," YouTube video, 19:34. Posted July 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXP16OhoxiY>

⁴¹⁹ פייגלין משה, "Michele Bachmann: Israel can be strong without the US," YouTube video, 18:29. Posted May 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq4BZ4sHWq8>.

⁴²⁰ Official CUFI, "CUFI Washington Summit 2014 - Greeting from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu," YouTube video, 2:36. Posted September 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUnM_RoL9nw

⁴²¹ Ibid.

day of their lives.” Standing on Israel’s sacred ground and standing witness thus become a means of embodied knowing as well as a means of authorizing the message.

A different video, vlogged by Pastor John Hagee in 2012, features Hagee in a red coat as he stands on the Israel-Lebanon border flanked by army-green clad machine-gun carrying members of the IDF to address his primarily US American audience about the dangers Israel faces from Iran. Iran, he argues, has trained, manned, and financially supported Hamas and Hezbollah. “These soldiers stand on this border to defend Israel and to alert Israel of any kind of military action being initiated,” he states as the video footage shifts to army tanks: one atop an observation point, two patrolling the roads, another parked by a sign that says in Hebrew, English, and Arabic, “Stop. Border Ahead.” The language of standing for, and in, Israel has also been taken up by Glenn Beck, a frequent speaker at CUFU Summits, who organized a “Courage to Stand” event in Jerusalem in 2011 that was attended by many CUFU members. Elsewhere, Lisa Braverman and I argue that Beck’s “call to stand together, and his subsequent enactment of standing, functions as both a literal descriptor and metaphor. Beck does indeed physically stand, but the practice of standing is easily mapped onto other territorial structures in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. Settlement houses stand, as do checkpoints and strategically planted trees. Beck’s affirmation thus aligns with Israeli policies on a variety of levels.”⁴²² Moreover, as CUFU figureheads directly engage the politics and practice of standing on contested ground while proclaiming a pro-Israel stance, they also craft the act of “standing” as requiring a particular kind of bravery that is associated with the militarized and masculinized body of the soldier. In doing so, they invoke

⁴²² Chevrette and Braverman, “Brothers, Fathers, Terrorists,” 96.

the logic of masculinist protection in which the nation-state is configured as masculine protector.

In the settler colonial imaginaries that link the histories of the United States and Israel as well as inform broader memoryscapes of democracy and rights, the exceptional nation is built around a “chosen”—namely, white, modern, arms-bearing—race of chivalrous men who tame and possess the primitive land (and its occupants) under the progress narrative of Manifest Destiny. In doing so, the nation, as masculine protector, virtuously stands with bravery and whatever degree of military might is required against any dangers that threaten the safety of its own citizens, especially its women and children. To understand how modernity and military strength hold together with religious rhetorics of Jewish peoples’ “chosenness” to create the nation-state of Israel—and the racialized underpinnings of this assemblage—it is useful to briefly address the historical context in which Zionism masculinized the Jewish male body.

Daniel Boyarin argues that in pre-modern Jewish society, the rejection of Western gender roles, including aggressive, violent masculinity, was a way of maintaining cultural autonomy in the face of an ever-growing Roman Empire. In the modern period, however, the link between anti-Semitism and the feminization of Diaspora Jews constructed the raced and the nonnormatively gendered Jewish male body as primitive and Other.⁴²³ Because of the historical feminization of the Jewish male, which Sander Gilman describes as being at the “very heart of Western Jew-hatred,”⁴²⁴ early Zionist activists sought to create a new model of masculinity. According to Yohai Hakak, “[t]he body of the new Jewish male was supposed to

⁴²³ Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct*.

⁴²⁴ Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 4.

be tall, muscular through exercise and tanned from physical labor under the hot sun; the Jewish male was supposed to be assertive and self-confident.”⁴²⁵ Through this discourse, Zionism reconfigured Jewish masculinity, inscribing self-defense and military prowess as prized masculine values, militarizing both Jewish male bodies and the nation-state of Israel itself. As Zionism ascribed the values of the modern Anglo-European nation onto Jewish male bodies and onto the land of Israel it thereby also served to whiten the nation and its occupants through a “civilizing” project that mobilized Anglo-European settler colonial and imperial discourses to enable the entrance of Israeli Jews into political modernity. Creating a false binary between Jews and Arabs by stigmatizing Arabs as effeminate, superstitious, and weak, Zionism reconfigured the relationship of the Jewish people with Orientalist discourses, rendering Jews as European by casting them against the exotic and inferior Palestinian Other.

As discussed above, the racialized memoryscapes that render Palestinians—and all the Muslim nations that threaten Israel—inferior in CUFI’s rhetoric strongly intersect with the rhetorical landscapes of terror circulated in the United States following 9/11. Central to these terror narratives and their affective power have been the gendered rhetorics that configure Muslim men as violent and Muslim women as in need of saving. “Muslims love to kill women and children. Muslims treat their dogs better than their women,” states a YouTube user under the name of RapsDeadly.⁴²⁶ Another poster runs down a list of

⁴²⁵ Yohai Hakak, “Haredi Male Bodies in the Public Sphere: Negotiating with the Religious Text and Secular Israeli Men,” *Journal of Men, Masculinities and Spirituality* 3, no. 2 (2009): 106.

⁴²⁶ JewTube, “Michele Bachmann to CUFI: ‘Obama abetting Muslim Brotherhood against Israel, & ultimately USA,’” YouTube video, 20:01. Posted July 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2i8aHCmS0Tk>

Muslims’ “psychotic and obscene” practices—“multiple wives, sex slaves, chopping off limbs, crucifying people”—referring to Muslim nations as places “where they would rather chop off women’s heads publicly than see their faces.” “How many women in the Arab world would love to have a free moment?” Sen. Graham asks. As the trope of the terrorist Other is mapped onto Muslim male bodies it renders them as sexually perverse and irrationally hyper-masculine in a manner distinct from the “proper” and “civilized” masculinity mapped onto Zionist bodies through gendered, racialized discourses of religion and modernity. Jasbir Puar argues that this contributes to the queering of the improperly masculine terrorist in the rhetoric of the post-9/11 security state.⁴²⁷ The “terrorist corporealities”⁴²⁸ that CUFT’s rhetorics call forth are made possible through assemblages that—at the same time as they link the United States and Israel together through settler colonial memoryscapes of land and chosenness, constructing these sacred homelands as under threat from the terrorists who seek to threaten democratic civilization—simultaneously also position the United States as the paternal protector of the world’s women and children.

Against repeated references to Muslim (terrorist) men’s and Muslim (terrorist) nations’ oppression of their women, the nation-state of Israel is assembled as a truly democratic nation where difference is welcomed rather than rejected. “An Arab woman serves on the Knesset. An Arab serves on the Supreme Court. Compare the fate of Arab women in Israel to other places in the Muslim world. Thank God for Israel on behalf of all the women who are lucky enough to live there,” states Sen. Graham, a sentiment frequently

⁴²⁷ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*.

⁴²⁸ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, xxiii.

echoed by CUI supporters on YouTube and Facebook. Unlike Muslim countries, Israel is thus constructed as a place where all people have equal rights regardless of gender, race, or religion. And yet, while discourses of multiculturalism offer compelling promises of “increasing liberty through pluralization,”⁴²⁹ they also rely on the constitutive difference of the subject/object imagined as exterior to the nation-state. As Sandoval argues:

By incorporating a small, tidy portion of difference, the good citizen/subject does not have to accept its depth or enormity and thus can remain as is. Middle-class, liberal, and Western citizen/subjects do admirably express a ‘tolerance’ of difference ... but such tolerance is only a means to control its final impact. Difference is recognized, taken in, tamed, and domesticated. Indeed, this form of consciousness keeps its practitioners safe yet stimulated, for difference is treated as a controlled substance: to be enjoyed in small doses, always under conditions of moderation and restraint.⁴³⁰

Through the incorporation of difference, discourses of multiculturalism “make it easy to assume that all minorities and ethnic groups are different though working toward inclusion and equality” in the state.⁴³¹ In this manner, multiculturalism works to maintain settler colonialism by failing to challenge the terms of the settler nation itself, and the border objects on which it relies.

⁴²⁹ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xxvi.

⁴³⁰ Chela Sandoval, “Theorizing White Consciousness for a Post-Empire World: Barthes, Fanon, and the Rhetoric of Love,” in Ruth Frankenberg (ed.), *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 88–9.

⁴³¹ Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections Between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 10.

As CUFI's rhetoric constructs Israel as a multicultural democracy embracing the rights of women and minorities, this is further bolstered by other claims to equality, individuality, and progress. "When you support Israel and when you honor her you honor the rule of law not the rule of the gun," Sen. Graham continues. Moreover, "Israel is a free-market economy and some of the greatest innovations in technology are coming out of the smallest country in the world, because of freedom. The freedom to think. The freedom to invest. The freedom to lose everything you have in trying to make something of yourself." "Israel is the only state where u can be whoever you wanna be,"⁴³² echoes a CUFI supporter. In CUFI's rhetoric, it is freedom itself that the racialized terrorist Other seeks to dismantle: "The day that we said 'all men are created equal and endowed by our creator with inalienable rights,' we made every radical Islamist mad as hell," Graham states as the live webcast camera zooms in on two young black women in the audience. "The day we allowed people to choose their leaders and court of law to decide cases, not the most radical vicious people on the planet, we became their enemy." As the racialized terrorist as the common enemy of the United States and Israel rejects "our" systems of governance, "our" values, and, indeed, civilization itself, we return to where we began—to the affective intensities and collective identifications that inspire love for the nation. This love for the nation, by extension, transforms into hate for the enemies who threaten to undo all that the nation—and therefore, "I," as a subject of the nation—stand for.

As these narratives are mobilized by Israel's leaders and by CUFI members, they render both the United States and Israel exceptional. As masculine protectors of

⁴³² Max Blumenthal, "Is Rapture Ready: The Christians United for Israel Tour," YouTube video, 9:57. Posted July 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjMRgT5o-Ig>.

women and children, their citizens, their lands, democracy, and the world, any force required from either nation in order to defeat the dark threats that they face is rendered not as an act of violence but, rather, as an act of love. Denouncing accusations of violence even in the face of the quickly increasing death toll in Gaza at the very moment of his speech, amidst cheers, *shofar* blowing, and flag waving from an impassioned audience, Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer argued that “the Israeli Defense Forces should be given a noble peace prize for fighting with unimaginable restraint.” In this assemblage, as rhetorics of masculinist protection converge with racialized memoryscapes of progress and civilization and the construction of Israel as the homeland of a chosen people, this enables the “liberation of a war-fighting masculinity from the constraints of multilateralism and diplomacy in order to ‘get the job done.’”⁴³³ In CUF’s rhetorics, Israel’s honorable fight against a shared terrorist enemy who threatens not only the citizens of Israel but also the citizens of the United States and the future of democracy itself thus moralizes the militarization that is necessary to get the job of US imperialism done. As Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill observe, “justice is often put in terms that coincide with the expansion of the settler state.”⁴³⁴

Conclusion

I argue in this chapter that as settler colonial narratives de- and re-territorialize geographic and human bodies, a central means for doing so is through public memory’s remaking of place in relation to time and bodies. “The “territorial nation” “takes its basis from a sense of territory, and from the effects of interaction within clear cut geographical

⁴³³ Gearóid Tuathail, “The Frustrations of Geopolitics and the Pleasures of War: *Behind Enemy Lines* and American Geopolitical Culture,” *Geopolitics* 10, no. 2 (2005): 361.

⁴³⁴ Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism,” 10.

boundaries.”⁴³⁵ As CUFI’s pro-Israel rhetorics map stories onto territories and territories onto stories, they organize bodies precisely through the visibility of the threatening border object who resides—quite literally in the case of Israel—just outside of these governing systems of land and intelligibility. The spatial and temporal placement of Palestinians as external to both the nation-state as well as to the national order of things (an order which requires territorial possession) also places Palestinians as external to the global order of citizenship and collective belonging. In this manner, as the “rights and privileges of spatial ownership are asserted as a heritage and strategies of social closure are deployed as a right,”⁴³⁶ the material and symbolic evictions of Other bodies “help to create and sustain a racial and neoliberal order in which white people come to know themselves as a superior people, a community that must fortify itself against pre-modern racial Others who do not share its values, beliefs, practices, and level of civility.”⁴³⁷ Connecting the United States and Israel as the places in which democracy’s future and civilization’s progress will be preserved, this assemblage reinforces what Chow has termed “the ascendancy of whiteness.”⁴³⁸

Chow’s concept addresses the flexibility of whiteness, “denoting the multiple ways that the condition of being white, and enjoying the often nationalist privileges of that whiteness, is made to seem neutral and inviting or inclusive or racial, sexual, and other minorities.”⁴³⁹ As an assemblage, whiteness aligns certain human, political, and geographic

⁴³⁵ Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 135.

⁴³⁶ Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 88.

⁴³⁷ Sherene H. Razack, *Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law & Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 7–8.

⁴³⁸ Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic*, 2–3.

⁴³⁹ Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism,” 11.

bodies through rhetorics of democracy, equality, and freedom while retaining the racialized settler colonial structures from which these concepts emerge. As Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill note, “by being included (whether by choice, coercion, or force) in whiteness, a wide array of Indigenous peoples, people of color, and queer communities are given the ‘opportunity’ to take part in the settling processes that dispossess just such ‘other-ed’ peoples globally.”⁴⁴⁰ It is thus imperative to address whiteness as not simply an identity, or even as a racial formation that gains power within national contexts, but as a global assemblage formed, extended, and reified through settler colonial relationships and memoryscapes.

This chapter has demonstrated that as a geopolitical formation, the US-Israel alliance is held together not only through political economic factors but through affective economies of whiteness held together by notions of a homeland for a “chosen” people, memoryscapes of civilization and progress, and the gendered and racialized rhetorics of masculinist protection. As evidenced in the analysis, CUFI’s rhetorical claims to Israel—while grounded in the emotions of love and fraternal community with the Jewish state—also serve an instrumental role that in many ways erases the human bodies of not only the Palestinian people but the Jewish people as well. As CUFI members mobilize Holocaust memoryscapes and rhetorics of terror for their own political aims, there is a rhetorical slippage between the persecution of Jews and the persecution of Christians, the United States, and US American (Christian) values. Similarly to the processes discussed in Chapter 3, in which white visitors to public memory places in the US Southwest re-envision Native pasts as US America’s own collective past—in the process extending the nation’s claim to rootedness in the land, CUFI and its members redefine the Jewish people’s history of persecution as the United States’s

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

persecution, extending the nation's claim to global territorial control. Israel thus becomes both a geographic and imagined destination for Christian and US national/imperial desires.

In attending to the ways that public memory assembles racial/placial belongings, this chapter has further addressed how settler colonial memoryscapes create trans/national publics through alliances and dis/identifications that assemble bodies, places, and times in specific ways. The next chapter, through a case study of FEMEN as a trans/national public, will continue to examine how race and gender intertwine in the complex relationships between memory, identity, and territory that organize national and global relationships as spatio-temporal assemblages.

CHAPTER 5

ASSEMBLING BODIES: FEMEN'S FEMINISM AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE PAST

“A comparison between western feminist self-presentation and western feminist re-presentation of women in the third world yields significant results. Universal images of ‘the third-world woman’ (the veiled woman, chaste virgin, etc.), images constructed from adding the ‘third-world difference’ to ‘sexual difference’, are predicated on (and hence obviously bring into sharper focus) assumptions about western women as secular, liberated, and having control over their own lives. This is not to suggest that western women are secular and liberated and have control over their own lives....I am suggesting, in effect, that the one enables and sustains the other.”

—Chandra Talpade Mohanty⁴⁴¹

Introduction

The previous chapters have examined how memoryscapes of settler colonialism circulate within and beyond the United States to assemble trans/national identifications through racial, spatial, and temporal arrangements of geographic and human bodies. I have argued that narratives of progress which render the exceptional (white, democratic) nation, like human civilization writ large, as ever marching forward closer to a state of perfection, haunt the rhetorical landscapes of both the primitive Native “past” in the US Southwest and the geopolitical configuration of a “savage” terrorist threat to Israel’s, and by extension the United States’, present existence. As the nation state is affectively constituted as an object of love and futurity and its symbolic and material groundings are inscribed as exceptional, this justifies its (masculinist) protection from the threatening and hateful bodies of Otherness that seek to unsettle it. I have further argued that within settler colonial memoryscapes, rhetorics of multiculturalism, equality, and freedom are mobilized in ways that maintain inequality. Following Jodi Byrd’s claim that contemporary multicultural liberal democracy is

⁴⁴¹ Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” *Feminist Review* 30 (1988): 81-82.

aligned with the assemblage of “‘Indians,’ ‘savages,’ land, and possession” that emerged in the United States and travelled “across Atlantic and Pacific worlds” serving as a transit for empire,⁴⁴² this chapter turns to a final case study to analyze the colonizing force of this global assemblage in a different trans/national context: the protests of FEMEN, a feminist organization with branches in several European countries and Canada.

Through data collected at FEMEN’s 2014 Spring Training Camp in Paris, France, as well as other rhetorical artifacts circulated through news media and FEMEN’s social media networks, this chapter examines how FEMEN’s protests assemble bodies, images, words, and places, and the rhetorical effects/affects of these assemblages. In the first section, I discuss FEMEN’s history as a movement as it relates to their engagement of embodied rhetorics and the visual spectacle of white femininity. Given that FEMEN’s headquarters and many of its most active members including leader Inna Shevchenko are currently located in Paris, France, the second section focuses primarily on FEMEN France’s actions and their circulation through media networks. Locating my analysis with a discussion of how histories of Anglo-European imperial expansion shape political ideologies of race and nation in France, I examine how FEMEN France’s actions mobilize gendered rhetorics of civilization/barbarism, democracy, terror, and Muslim women’s oppression, reinforcing the universalisms of liberal white feminism that justify imperial actions in the Middle East as well as fueling racist national policies. The final section of the analysis draws primarily from my rhetorical fieldwork at FEMEN’s Spring Training camp to further examine how body rhetorics create identifications between individual members, the collective body of FEMEN,

⁴⁴² Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 3; see also Andrea Smith, “American Studies without America: Native Feminisms and the Nation-State,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2008): 309-315.

and global audiences. This on-the-ground analysis complicates a strictly mediated reading, revealing at least the possibility for anti-racist solidarity within FEMEN. Pulling these threads together, the chapter conclusion argues that these decolonial lines of flight are limited by the movement's mobilization of settler colonial and neo-colonial memoryscapes which link individual freedom with rhetorics of ownership/individualism and inclusion in the state, failing to account for the different mobilities and desires of differently-racialized bodies.

The FEMEN Imaginary: Visual Spectacles and Digital Assemblages

FEMEN was founded in Kyiv, Ukraine in 2008 by university students Anna Hutsol, Sasha Shevchenko, and Oksana Shachko, with Inna Shevchenko, who is now recognized as the movement's leader, joining shortly thereafter. Initial protests began with a focus primarily on prostitution, sex tourism, and gender inequality in Ukraine, issues which FEMEN members drew attention to through the mode of activism they branded as "sextremism." Early protests took the form of street performances, including a staged media event outside the home of Dominique Strauss Kahn, former head of the International Monetary Fund, where activists dressed as "'sexy chambermaids', and engaged in intentionally provocative sexual maneuvering and undressing."⁴⁴³ Other early actions included demonstrations against sexism in university settings, where provocatively dressed group members re-enacted "'x-rated scenes of inequality' in the classroom."⁴⁴⁴ While these protests featured members in various stages of (un)dress, topless protests became FEMEN's signature strategy beginning in 2009. The use of the body as a site of performance and

⁴⁴³ Theresa O'Keefe, "my body is my manifesto!: Slutwalk, FEMEN and femminist protest," *Feminist Review* 107, no. 1 (2014): 9.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

resistance has long characterized feminist activism; however, FEMEN's use of the body also deviates from earlier feminist uses of the body in its focus on a particular kind of hypersexualized body resonant within post-feminist discourses.⁴⁴⁵ As described by Theresa O'Keefe, the public face of FEMEN in its early years consisted of "roughly forty topless activists who resemble high-fashion models in appearance—mostly white, with long blond hair, able-bodied, conventionally attractive, with striking facial features and tones, slender, hairless bodies that make them statuesque figures or 'Amazons' as they call themselves...and wearing little beyond make-up and a *vinok*, the traditional Ukrainian garland of flowers worn on the head."⁴⁴⁶

Through their images and discourses of "sextremism," FEMEN's strategies of protest in their emergent years—strategies which continue to characterize the movement in its various trans/national locations—purposefully mobilized the male gaze in order to (potentially) trouble it and call attention to Ukrainian women's subordinate social position.⁴⁴⁷ They also, however, relied on hegemonic discourses of white femininity as emblematic of the nation, a move that even as it sought to recreate women's position within the state failed to recognize national patriarchy as also tied to racial (non)belongings. Nira Yuval-Davis and others have argued that in national discourses women are positioned as both biological and

⁴⁴⁵ As Theresa O'Keefe describes, in postfeminist discourses, popularized in western contexts, the sexual body is constructed as the 'free body'. "Yet this construction of femininity," she notes, "comes 'straight out of the most predictable templates of male sexual fantasy.'" (Ibid; see also Rosalind Gill, "Supersexualize me!: Advertising and the midriffs," in Feona Attwood (ed.), *Mainstreaming Sex: The Sexualization of Western Culture* (New York: I.B.Tauris, 2009), 93-110.

⁴⁴⁶ O'Keefe, "my body is my manifesto," 8.

⁴⁴⁷ For further discussion of Ukrainian women's social position see Donna M. Hughes, "The 'Natasha' Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women," *Journal of International Affairs* 53, no. 2 (2000): 625-651; and Tatiana Zhurzhenko, "Free Market Ideology and New Women's Identities in Post-socialist Ukraine," *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 8, no. 1 (2001): 29-49.

cultural reproducers of the nation and its virtues.⁴⁴⁸ As Ukrainian women's bodies are constructed "as the symbolic bearers of the collectivity's identity and honor,"⁴⁴⁹ and subjected to national control, they are thus also subjected to "the logic of whiteness that underwrites all (hetero)gendered narratives of the nation."⁴⁵⁰ The flower crown, for example, is associated in Ukrainian folklore with virginity and purity, values which are central to national symbolism.⁴⁵¹ Through their utilization of this symbol in order to challenge oppressive gendered and sexual systems by juxtaposing the nation's professed values with the reality of sex tourism and prostitution in Ukraine, FEMEN therefore "claims an universality of its position only through its gendering of very *particular* bodies—the white female upper class heterosexual body, and that body's imagined relation to Anglo patriarchy."⁴⁵² As O'Keefe explains, "FEMEN's nudity as performance functions through the inclusion of particular types of bodies, dressed and moving in certain ways. Bodies

⁴⁴⁸ Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997).

⁴⁴⁹ Katarina Mattsson and Katarina Petterson, "Crowning Miss Sweden—National Constructions of White Femininity," *Nordic Journal of Women's Studies* 15, no. 4 (2007): 238.

⁴⁵⁰ Raka Shome, "White Femininity and the Discourse of the Nation: Re/membering Princess Diana," *Feminist Media Studies* 1, no. 3 (2001): 324.

⁴⁵¹ Postcolonial feminist scholars have examined how women are positioned as both the biological and cultural reproducers of the nation state, a process that subjects women's bodies to state control and management at the same time it elevates the virginal and "pure" woman as symbolic of the nation. (See, for example, Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Mino Moallem [eds.], *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalisms, Transnational Feminisms, and the State* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999]; Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* [Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997]; and Nira Yuval-Davis, Floya Anthias, and Jo Campling [eds.], *Woman, Nation, State* [Macmillan, 1989]). For further discussion of the management of virginity and purity in relation specifically to Anglo-European nation-states, see Alison Bashford, *Purity and Pollution: Gender, Embodiment and Victorian Medicine* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); Sara Moslener, *Virgin Nation: Sexual Purity and American Adolescence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion, and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004).

⁴⁵² Shome, "White Femininity," 328.

deemed visually appealing by hegemonic standards are feminized and sexualized to express the political in an erotic fashion through well-placed clothing, make-up, hair, posture and general presentation.”⁴⁵³ Because FEMEN has always positioned its protests to reach a global audience—as evidenced by its early framing of its message as global and its use of English slogans—the spectacle of white femininity in FEMEN’s protests is further saturated by the global hegemonic status of “the white female body as the marker for beauty,”⁴⁵⁴ a body that “emerges in, and through, its subject/ification in white patriarchy.”⁴⁵⁵

As FEMEN took their protests to other locations outside Ukraine, gaining members and allies in other countries and continuing to use their strategy of sextremism to address a range of issues, such as abortion, homophobia, dictatorship, fascism, religious oppression, and the wearing of the hijab, “the movement’s expanded focus and geographical reach...led to changes in the activist imaginary. As pointed out by Jessica Zychowicz, [t]en minute street-performances in real-time were traded for five-second photo ops that the group could frame with comments and disseminate in virtual space.”⁴⁵⁶ As FEMEN formalized its tactics it also formalized its ideology, identifying dictatorship, sexual exploitation of women, and religion as the three pillars of global patriarchy. Their manifesto, available online as well as in the book *FEMEN*, identifies the following as their “Demands”:

⁴⁵³ O’Keefe, “my body is my manifesto,” 10.

⁴⁵⁴ Mattsson and Petterson, “Crowing Miss Sweden,” 242-243.

⁴⁵⁵ Shome, “White Femininity,” 328.

⁴⁵⁶ Camilla M. Reestorff, “Mediatized Affective Activism: The Activist Imaginary and the Topless Body in the Femen Movement,” *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 20, no. 4 (2014): 480.

- The immediate political reversal of all dictatorial regimes that create intolerable living conditions for women; in the first place, the rule of theocratic Islamic states practicing *sharia* and other forms of sadism vis-à-vis women.
- The total eradication of prostitution, the most brutal form of women's exploitation, by criminalizing the clients, investors and organizers of this slave trade.
- The absolute and universal separation of Church and state, with a ban on any interference on the part of religious institutions in the civil, sexual and reproductive lives of modern women.⁴⁵⁷

FEMEN's growth and attention from the press brought them face to face with the question of patriarchy as it related to their emphasis on white, heteronormatively beautiful bodies as the canvas for their protest slogans. The movement's credibility was shaken by the 2013 release of the film *Ukraine Is Not a Brothel*, in which it was revealed that the leader of the movement was a man, Victor Svatsky. As described by filmmaker Kitty Green, "It's his movement and he hand-picked the girls. He hand-picked the prettiest girls because the prettiest girls sell more papers. The prettiest girls get on the front page... that became their image, that became the way they sold the brand."⁴⁵⁸ Green further notes that Svatsky would scream at the female activists and call them bitches; in the film he states: "These girls are weak... They don't have the strength of character. They don't even have the desire to be

⁴⁵⁷ FEMEN and Gail Ackerman, *FEMEN* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2014), x.

⁴⁵⁸ Kate Dries, "The Man Behind FEMEN Is No Friend of the Movement," *Jezebel*, September 4, 2013, <http://jezebel.com/the-man-behind-femen-is-no-friend-of-the-movement-1251310779>

strong. Instead, they show submissiveness, spinelessness, lack of punctuality, and many other factors which prevent them from becoming political activists. These are qualities which it was essential to teach them.”⁴⁵⁹ The film’s release therefore resulted in much sensational press discrediting FEMEN’s activists as merely pawns in a patriarchal game.⁴⁶⁰

Following this exposé and the media attention it garnered, Inna Shevchenko published a response in *The Guardian*. In it, she clarifies that while FEMEN was started by a group of female students after Svatsky became involved he took a leadership role, proclaiming himself, in fact, as the “father” of the movement. She states:

When he presented himself as the father of our new feminism, I was taken aback by such a brave declaration – one that only a man could make in my country. I was surprised: why have we suddenly acquired a father? Where is the mother? Having been born in a country in which feminism was unknown, in the best traditions of patriarchal society we just accepted the fact of a man taking control of us. We accepted this because we did not know how to resist and fight it. From that moment on, I realized that the patriarchy was not somewhere outside. It was right in front of us, in Femen’s office. And our global fight with patriarchy started with the fight in our own private life.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ While it is beyond the scope of this analysis, another area of media criticism that has discredited the movement for some members of the public and former FEMEN members including Tunisian activist Amina Sboui is FEMEN’s failure to disclose their sources of funding with some speculating that they receive funding from Israel and the United States to support their anti-Islam stance.

⁴⁶¹ Inna Shevchenko, “Femen Let Victor Svyatski Take Over Because We Didn’t Know How to Fight It,” *The Guardian*, September 5, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/05/victory-svyatski-femen-man>. An alternative reading of Victor Svatsky’s role in the FEMEN movement is presented in the movie *I Am Femen*, in which Svatsky appears and is described by activists as a friend and supporter of the

Shevchenko describes Svatsky's control—as well as a kidnapping incident and the death threats she and other activists had begun receiving—as influencing FEMEN's decision to move to France where they had opened an international training center in Paris (without Svatsky) a year before the film's release. Granted political asylum in France in 2013, Shevchenko explains her relocation as a “strategic choice.”⁴⁶² “To develop the movement,” she stated, “we need a place, we need a country.”⁴⁶³

Shevchenko's statement that the movement needs “a place” and “a country” offers further insight into both FEMEN's tactics and structural organization. FEMEN's protests unfold as an assemblage of bodies, images, and words located within specific places; they also frequently use national flags and other national imagery in their protests and mobilize monuments in political ways as seen in direct actions such as Shevchenko's cutting down of a cross in central Kiev or the banging of a church bell inside Notre Dame by activists with the slogan “Pope No More” written on their bodies. As discussed in Chapter 4, rhetorical scholars have examined how (re)constructions of place operate as rhetorical tactics conjoined with other tactics more traditionally associated with social movements such as speeches, marches, and signs; in the analysis I further attend to the ways FEMEN utilizes place in their performative actions. This also relates to the ways they engage memory; as Steven Hoelscher and Derek H. Alderman note, “while the constitutive relationship between memory and place is most obvious in the realm of material culture—in landscapes—it is

movement, not as its leader. (Alain Margot, *I Am Femen* [Lausanne, Switzerland: Caravel Production, 2014]).

⁴⁶² “France Grants Asylum to Ukrainian FEMEN Activist,” *France 24*, July 8, 2013, <http://www.france24.com/en/20130708-france-grants-ukrainian-femen-activist-shevchenko-political-asylum>

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*

also, and no less, performative. Through bodily repetition and the intensification of everyday acts that otherwise remain submerged in the mundane order of things, performances...serve as a chief way in which societies remember.”⁴⁶⁴ In other words, memories are not only inscribed upon the physical landscape as place; the repetition and ritual of performative bodies is also an inscription—an act of cultural memory.

Addressing the places of FEMEN’s protests and the ways their performative spectacles gain traction as they mobilize and construct memoryscapes also requires addressing the online networks that link activists together. Chapter 4 addressed social media platforms as one of the places where communities are “imagined”; for FEMEN, social media is not just a means of distributing their message nor simply even a forum through which audiences might identify and/or participate as part of the FEMEN public. As the “new frontier of public space”—at least for those in the global North—cyberspace in many ways supersedes material space as the places in which publics assemble.⁴⁶⁵ FEMEN is comprised of a network of activists working on the ground in different countries—activists whose participation range from direct actions (which nearly always result in arrest), to staged image events (which take place in public but primarily for the purpose of distributing online, meaning they occur quickly and typically do not result in arrest), to publishing topless photos from the privacy of their own homes. Social media platforms thus digitally link individuals who may never have met in person, also creating the conditions for the emergence of new FEMEN activists in different locations.

⁴⁶⁴ Steven Hoelscher and Derek H. Alderman, “Memory and Place: Geographies of a Critical Relationship,” *Social & Cultural Geography* 5, no. 3 (2004): 350.

⁴⁶⁵ Don Mitchell, “The End of Public Space? People’s Park, Definitions of the Public and Democracy,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85, no. 1 (1995): 121.

While FEMEN's webpage notes that "FEMEN is responsible only for those acts of sextremism information of which is shared on official web resources of the movement,"⁴⁶⁶ activists in other countries affiliate themselves with the movement through their use of the FEMEN brand and recognizable strategies of protest. At the time of this writing Facebook pages self-identify movement "branches" in over thirty countries. While some of these are recognized and officially tied to the FEMEN headquarters, others are not, nor is there necessarily agreement between local groups and the official organization. In some cases, a Facebook page and/or official branch of FEMEN may largely reflect the actions of only a single individual. FEMEN Sweden, for example (which is recognized by headquarters), is Jenny Wenhammer, who at 46 is currently the oldest FEMEN activist who regularly engages in direct actions, often acting alone in her home country of Sweden. In other cases, such pages are more indicative of support for FEMEN than they are of the presence of on-the-ground activists who engage in direct actions in their own nation-state.

FEMEN's transnational reach is further extended through formal media channels and their strategic manipulation of media logics. Mariam Betelmidze highlights how "despite the low number of FEMEN protesters per event, their images still manage to saturate the Internet through its myriad platforms and networks. These young, attractive female activists crowned with colorful flowers and painted with aggressive slogans on their bare breasts effectively utilize iconic city views, multimedia production, and PR skills to create unexpected and affective events."⁴⁶⁷ As FEMEN seeks to mobilize political change through

⁴⁶⁶ "About Us," *FEMEN*, <http://femen.org/about-us/>

⁴⁶⁷ Mariam Betelmidze, "Mediated Controversies of Feminist Protest: FEMEN and Bodies as Affective Events," *Women's Studies in Communication* 38, no. 4 (2015): 374.

spectacular performance their “embodied rhetorics, ‘confer visibility on [the] movement’ and dramatize the scene in ways words alone might not make possible.”⁴⁶⁸ FEMEN’s tactics are thus well-suited for what Kevin DeLuca and Jennifer Peeples’ refer to as “the public screen.”

DeLuca and Peeples argue that as the contemporary media environment has reoriented the public sphere toward visual publicity it has “transformed the rules and roles of participatory democracy.”⁴⁶⁹ In such an environment, where people are moved by media, sound bites, and the sensational, individuals and groups “utilize mass media to their advantage to capture the attention of larger publics.”⁴⁷⁰ Through what DeLuca calls “image events,”⁴⁷¹ activists engage in spectacles that “strategically position their protest[s]”⁴⁷² to be noticed and memorable amidst “an unceasing flow of images and entertainment.”⁴⁷³ The shift from an information economy to an attention economy impacts how rhetorical effects/affects are distributed. Emotion-laden images and spectacles mobilize identification through “a backdrop of feeling that resonates with histories, rhetorics, and images that are

⁴⁶⁸ Darrel Enck-Wanzer, “Trashing the System: Social Movement, Intersectional Rhetoric, and Collective Agency in the Young Lords Organization’s Garbage Offensive,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 2 (2006): 178.

⁴⁶⁹ Kevin Michael DeLuca and Jennifer Peeples, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen: Democracy, Activism, and the “Violence” of Seattle,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002): 127.

⁴⁷⁰ Aaron Hess, “Democracy through the Polarized Lens of the Camcorder: Argumentation and Vernacular Spectacle on YouTube in the 2008 Election,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 47, no. 1 (2010): 107.

⁴⁷¹ Kevin Michael DeLuca, “Unruly Arguments: The Body Rhetoric of Earth First!, Act Up, and Queer Nation,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 36, no. 1 (1999): 9-21.

⁴⁷² Hess, “Democracy through the Polarized Lens of the Camcorder,” 107.

⁴⁷³ DeLuca and Peeples, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen,” 134.

not evoked directly, but that circulate to connect our memories and bodies.”⁴⁷⁴ Moreover, “as images and stories of FEMEN’s protests circulate digitally they constitute “global fields of rhetorical action.”⁴⁷⁵ I therefore analyze FEMEN’s protests not as stand-alone rhetorical texts but as assemblages that accumulate meaning as they travel through digital space, inspiring differently-located audiences to respond in different ways.

Traces of Empire: Assembling Global Belongings in FEMEN’s “Topless Jihad”

Recalling Michael Warner’s definition of a public as a “social space” constituted by the reflexive circulation of discourses and requiring only one’s “mere attention” to those discourses,⁴⁷⁶ as a trans/national public FEMEN is comprised of an assemblage of groups and individuals, members and audiences, connected through different scales of local, national, and global interaction. As the web functions as a social space for transnational rhetorical engagement, within this context rhetorical effects/affects occur within networks of actors, meaning, and interaction. Attending to FEMEN’s rhetorical productions through the lens of assemblage thus shifts the focus of inquiry from deliberation or intent to what Jessica Ouellette, drawing from Sarah Ahmed, calls “affective circulation,” a process by which rhetorics gain emotional charge from intertextual social and historical linkages as they move through different contexts.⁴⁷⁷ In this section, I examine the circulation of several

⁴⁷⁴ Jennifer Wingard, *Branded Bodies, Rhetoric, and the Neoliberal Nation-State* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), 9.

⁴⁷⁵ Mary Queen, as quoted in Wendy S. Hesford and Eileen E. Schell, “Introduction: Configurations of Transnationality: Locating Feminist Rhetorics,” *College English* 70, no. 5 (2008): 467.

⁴⁷⁶ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2002), 89-90.

⁴⁷⁷ Jessica Ouellette, “Enduring Affective Rhetorics: Transnational Feminist Action in Digital Spaces,” Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 2016.

FEMEN France protests targeting Islam, Muslim women's oppression, and Muslim men, addressing the range of rhetorical effects/affects they generate as they relate to French and Anglo-European (settler) colonial memoryscapes as well as to contemporary global discourses of terror and securitization.

Racial Landscapes and Spatial Anxieties in (Post-)Colonial France

As previous chapters have addressed, rhetorics of progress and civilization have been a primary means of rationalizing the violence of settler colonial and imperial expansion. At the beginning of the twentieth century, at the same time that US American travelers were rushing to the Southwest to participate in the spectatorship of "exotic" Native American cultures (US America's own homegrown "Others"), European identities were "synonymous with Imperialism."⁴⁷⁸ Mary Louise Pratt describes the intersections of travel, science, and Enlightenment discourses as central to empire: producing what she calls "Europe's 'planetary consciousness,'" a global vision oriented around territorial exploration and mappings, and "the descriptive apparatuses of natural history."⁴⁷⁹ Given that the hierarchical and racial ordering of different bodies and places not only justified but also, to an extent, seemed to mandate Anglo-European rule over Other lands, the gaining of formal independence by formerly colonized nation-states in the post-colonial period in Europe required an adjustment in discursive maps.

A number of scholars have discussed the ways decolonization uniquely informs racial landscapes in Europe. As the formal end of imperial rule reconfigured global and national

⁴⁷⁸ Barnor Hesse, "White Governmentality: Urbanism, Nationalism, Racism," in Sallie Westwood and John Williams (eds.), *Imagining Cities: Scripts, Signs, Memories* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 91.

⁴⁷⁹ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (2nd ed.) (New York: Routledge, 2008/1992), 15.

territories and borders, the movement of bodies from the colonies to the metropole corresponded with what Barnor Hesse describes this as “the movement from the politics of ‘race’ as Empire to the politics of ‘race’ as nation.”⁴⁸⁰ Stuart Hall argues, in the context of Britain, that contemporary racism paradoxically “begins with this attempt to wipe out and efface every trace of the colonial and imperial past.”⁴⁸¹ Expanding on this argument in the context of his work on British cities, Hesse contends that “it is precisely the trace of Empire” that structures racial identities in Britain today;⁴⁸² a process also evidenced in France and other (post-)colonial European countries. These traces, however, are obscured through memory practices that Hall refers to as the “forgetting of Empire”: the idea that race, and racism, are not intrinsic to the (post-)colonial nation-state.⁴⁸³ One such trace, in which the link between European colonialisms and US and other settler colonialisms is formalized, appears in the French Empire’s use of the term “Indigenous” (*Indigènes*) to refer to colonial populations everywhere during colonial times. In 2005, amidst racial tensions, a group of French scholars from immigrant backgrounds established the group *Indigènes de la République* with the goal of decolonizing France, stating: “we are still living in colonial times even though we live in France.”⁴⁸⁴ Within dominant national landscapes in France, however, it is the values of multicultural democracy that are proudly proclaimed to be unique to the

⁴⁸⁰ Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 91.

⁴⁸¹ Stuart Hall, as quoted in Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 91.

⁴⁸² Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 91.

⁴⁸³ Stuart Hall, as quoted in Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 92.

⁴⁸⁴ Houria Bouteldja, “White Women and the Privilege of Solidarity,” *Decolonial Translation Group*, October 22, 2010. <http://www.decolonialtranslation.com/english/white-women-and-the-privilege-of-solidarity.html>

nation. FEMEN as well has mobilized these ideals in their relocation to France: along the ribbons of the colorful Ukrainian flower crown tattooed on Inna Shevchenko's stomach appear a re-rendering of the words of France's national motto: "*Liberté, Égalité*,"—and, instead of "*Fraternité*"—"Femen."

The failure to recognize empire and its racial and gendered underpinnings as the establishing condition of the French nation-state—and democracy itself—could be considered, a "profound historical forgetfulness," a loss of historical and cultural memory that Hesse calls "white amnesia."⁴⁸⁵ Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian Ott, however, challenge public memory scholars to interrogate the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, suggesting that this simplistic pairing "obscures what may be more complicated relationships among various memories and the operations that make possible their relationships."⁴⁸⁶ They suggest thinking through public memory as accumulative. From the perspective of assemblage theory we might therefore ask what discursive configurations—or in Deleuze and Guattari's words, "assemblages of enunciation"⁴⁸⁷—cause certain memories to circulate with greater intensity and velocity than others.

In the context of France, FEMEN's anti-Islam campaigns are particularly charged by the (post-)colonial landscapes that are reflected in contemporary political struggles. As French colonial rule came to an end and the nation's racial landscape was altered by

⁴⁸⁵ Hesse, "White Governmentality," 91.

⁴⁸⁶ Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian L. Ott, "Introduction: Rhetoric/Memory/Place," in Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott, *Places of Public Memory* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 19.

⁴⁸⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 7.

immigration, demographic shifts led to what could be considered a crisis of national identity.

As Aimee Carillo Rowe notes:

Because immigration is that process through which the Third World comes to occupy the space of the 'First World,' the boundary between world and nation becomes blurred. The very presence of the Third World in the first ('we are here because you were there') threatens to expose this contradiction, especially as populations shift, producing a new [or the threat of a new] white minority.⁴⁸⁸

The spatial proximity of the nation's colonial Others in post-colonial France has therefore produced new racial, spatial, and commemorative landscapes as the nation continually seeks to re/define its borders. Moreover, the formal incorporation of some (but not all) Others as citizens allows for the management of difference within a liberal vision of the multicultural nation-state, a vision that serves to reaffirm "the myth of the 'white nation' that is full of those who are kind and willing to grant those who are not white 'the gift of becoming citizens' or 'like whites.'"⁴⁸⁹ While official national rhetorics regarding France's Muslim population thus profess inclusivity, they are countered by immigration policies that formalize "a racist ideal of national belonging"⁴⁹⁰ and seek to limit new migration.

Controversies over Muslim cultural practices in France further reflect tensions over racial and cultural belonging as they enter into the public sphere and legislative realm. On March 15, 2004, a law banning the wearing of religious symbols in France's public schools

⁴⁸⁸ Aimee Carillo Rowe, "Whose 'America'? The Politics of Rhetoric and Space in the Formation of U.S. Nationalism," *Radical History Review* 89, no. 1 (2004): 128.

⁴⁸⁹ Jennifer Wingard, *Branded Bodies, Rhetoric, and the Neoliberal Nation-State* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), 15.

⁴⁹⁰ Hesse, "White Governmentality," 92.

was widely seen as an attack on the practice of *hijab* specifically. In her explanation of the law and its precedents, Ruth Mas states,

The so-called religious symbol at stake was, of course, the *hijab* (the veil or headscarf) worn by Muslim schoolgirls, much debated since 1989 when *l'affaire du foulard* [the scarf affair] first broke. The controversy over the hijab, which would extend throughout the 1990s as one of the most vitriolic debates in French society, eventually culminated in the law of March 15, 2004 that took the right away from Muslim girls to wear the *hijab* to school.⁴⁹¹

Given that opposition to veiling in France routinely slips into an uncomplicated derision of Islamic cultural practices, Mas argues for reading the moves to legislate hijab “as principled responses to the attempts of *laïcité* to counter the religious ‘excess’ of Islam with its own excess.”⁴⁹²

Embedded in these types of controversy are anxieties over racial density as it relates to national citizenship. A PEW Research Center report from 2010 identified the Muslim population of France as 4.7 million;⁴⁹³ a 2014 report identifies the number as 6.13 million or 9.6% of the total population, the majority of whom live in urban spaces.⁴⁹⁴ As national identity is “valorized as whiteness, whiteness becomes nationally spatialised and the

⁴⁹¹ Ruth Mas, “Compelling the Muslim Subject: Memory as Post-Colonial Violence and the Public Performativity of ‘Secular and Cultural Islam,’” *The Muslim World* 96, no. 4 (2006): 586.

⁴⁹² Mas, “Compelling the Muslim Subject,” 587.

⁴⁹³ Conrad Hackett, “5 Facts About the Muslim Population in Europe,” *Pew Research Center*, November 17, 2015, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe/>

⁴⁹⁴ “Europe Muslim Population in 2014,” *Muslim Population*, <http://www.muslimpopulation.com/Europe/>

racialisation of residential co-presence enters the ‘organization and meaning of space (as) a product of social translation, transformation and experience.’”⁴⁹⁵ The nation’s cityscapes thus become contact zones as “configurations of cultural identity, locality and neighborhood became icons of national contestation.”⁴⁹⁶ Within this context of racial anxiety and politically-charged meanings of place, FEMEN’s protests are rhetorically consequential in how they position Muslim bodies as (non)belonging within larger landscapes of the nation, democracy, and feminism.⁴⁹⁷

Affective Rhetorics and Feminist Hegemonies in FEMEN’s Anti-Islam Protests

As evidenced in their manifesto, FEMEN activists view religious institutions as one of the pillars through which patriarchy is maintained. While they claim to be against all religions equally and many of their protests in Europe have been against the Catholic Church, it is their protests against Islam in France that have generated the most attention and controversy as they have circulated through media and feminist networks. FEMEN first came to my attention following their “International Topless Jihad Day,” a topless march through a predominantly Muslim neighborhood in Paris’ 18th arrondissement in the fall of 2012. I was immediately drawn in by an image of two white women, one of whom I would

⁴⁹⁵ Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 91.

⁴⁹⁶ Hesse, “White Governmentality,” 92.

⁴⁹⁷ While it exceeds the scope of this analysis, race relations in France are also of course conditioned by longer histories of cultural conflict between Islam and Christianity in Europe. For further discussion see, for example, Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Amy G. Remensnyder, “Christian Captives, Muslim Maidens, and Mary,” *Speculum* 82, no. 3 (2007): 642-77; Amy G. Remensnyder, “The Boundaries of Christendom and Islam: Iberia and the Latin Levant,” in John H. Arnold (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 93-113; John Victor Tolan, *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam* (New York: Routledge, 2000); and John Victor Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

soon come to recognize as Inna Shevchenko, mouths open in chant, with the words “I Am Free” and “Freedom for Women” painted across their naked bodies. Beside them stand two Arab women, one with the words “Naked War” and “Sextremism” painted across her torso, the other with the message “Muslim Let’s Get Naked” written on her body, and the word “*Laïcité*” (which refers to the separation of church and state in the French constitution) written on her arm, which is raised into a fist.⁴⁹⁸ Another image reveals her other arm also lifted into a fist: “*Liberté*.” She stands next to one of the Ukrainian founders of the movement, Alexandra Shevchenko, beneath whose long blonde hair appear the words, “My Body is My Freedom.” All of the women wear flower crowns. Other images show other topless activists carrying signs including “Intégrisme Dégage” (“Get Rid of Fundamentalism”), “I am a woman not an object,” and the message, “Naked War,” behind which red paint drips down the white canvas. The signs are all marked with the FEMEN logo Φ, a Cyrillic letter, the shape of which—as described by FEMEN—“is similar to women’s breasts that are the key symbol of the women’s movement FEMEN.”⁴⁹⁹ “Our God is a Woman,” “Bare Breasts Are Our Weapons,” “FEMEN France,” and “*Femen Est le Nouveau Feminisme*,” (“Femen is the new feminism”), read the black-painted words across other activists’ bodies. Struck immediately by the power of the images and the assemblage of messages equating freedom with democracy, nakedness, feminism and the nation-state—all

⁴⁹⁸ The principal of *laïcité*, or French secularity has a complicated relationship with colonialism and racism; for further discussion, see Mas, “Compelling the Muslim Subject”; Max Silverman, “The French Republic Unveiled,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 4 (2007): 628-642; and Natalya Vince, “France, Islam and Laïcité: Colonial Exceptions, Contemporary Reinventions and European Convergence” in Tony Chafer and Emmanuel Godin (eds.), *The End of the French Exception?: Decline and Revival of the “French Model”* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 153-170.

⁴⁹⁹ “About Us,” *FEMEN*, femen.org/about-us/

of which, here, seem to stand in opposition to Islam—I began to look online for other images and stories of FEMEN.

My search led me to images of another FEMEN protest that took place in March of 2012. In these images, topless protestors, who seem to predominantly be white, stand in front of the Eiffel tower, a prominent symbol of the nation of France. The star and crescent symbol associated with Islam adorns some of their breasts and arms while messages on their bodies and signs feature slogans such as: “Islamist,” “Sadist,” “No Sharia,” “Nudity is Freedom,” and “Naked War.” Many of the pictures focus on Inna Shevchenko, FEMEN’s charismatic and photogenic leader. In one widely circulated image Shevchenko appears to stand alone in front of the Eiffel Tower holding the sign “Muslim Women Let’s Get Naked.” Her long blond hair streams down her back as the ribbons of her flower crown, bright against the tower’s muted grey, stream down from one of her raised fists. “Nudity” reads one arm, “Freedom” states the other. “I am Free” reads the message across her torso. A crescent moon circles her right breast and a star appears just above her nipple.⁵⁰⁰

The call for Muslim women to “get naked,” which gains affective value against the nakedness of activists’ bodies, clearly speaks to the already discussed controversies over the practice of hijab in France. As FEMEN’s rhetorical productions are taken up locally they are thus connected to discourses of racial belonging in the nation. In their local instantiations and broader circulation they further reference the ways the veil is rhetorically taken up as evidence of the “clash of civilizations” between West and East, and more specifically between Anglo-European and Muslim nations. These rhetorics have reemerged in

⁵⁰⁰ Kenzo Tribouillard, Digital image, *Getty Images*, <http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/topless-activist-of-the-ukrainian-women-movement-femen-inna-news-photo/453906080>

increasingly homogenized ways in the years following 9/11 as “the oppression of Muslim women” is mobilized as one of the justifications for the global “war on terror.”

FEMEN’s actions as they occur in particular places and then are distributed to a broader audience thus fold the local, national, and global together, referencing debates over tradition versus assimilation and fears over the “Islamist threat” to French society and secularity. In this context, both the veil and its wearer become symbols of larger debates in the public sphere, debates which Talal Asad argues are most fundamentally “about the structure of political liberties—about the relations of subordination and immunity, the recognition of oneself as a particular kind of self—on which this state is built and the signs that properly refer to it.”⁵⁰¹ At stake in such debates, which FEMEN’s protests emerge both as part of and in reference to, are larger questions about relationships between colonialism, globalization, and immigration, manifested as “the secular management of multiculturalism in European states.”⁵⁰²

Another image, from a protest that FEMEN staged outside of the Saudi Arabia embassy in Berlin following a demonstration in Saudi Arabia in which sixty women challenged the law against women being able to get driver’s licences by driving through the streets, depicts four light-skinned women with bright red lipstick framing their open mouths as they stand up through the windows and sunroofs of a parked vehicle. Topless and painted with the color of the Saudi Arabian flag, the messages appearing across their chests include “No Women No Drive,” and “Too Fast Too Furious.” One photograph, taken from behind shows one of the activists with her arms raised in a V, both hands giving the middle finger in

⁵⁰¹ Talal Asad, as quoted in Mas, “Compelling the Muslim Subject,” 587.

⁵⁰² Mas, “Compelling the Muslim Subject,” 587.

the direction of the embassy, while the other activists hold up their signs and raised fists. The black signs, in white paint, read: “Faster than Your Development,” and “Camels for Men Cars for Women.”

As these and other FEMEN protests circulate through various media they call forth the memoryscapes of Muslim women’s oppression that have long justified US and Anglo-European imperial endeavors. Implicit in these memoryscapes is the idea that Muslim nations are temporally “behind” western nations in their progress toward civilization. The second image, especially, clearly draws upon the discourses Chandra Mohanty critiques in her discussion of the western feminist construction of the monolithic third world woman Other. As Mohanty notes,

When these structures are defined as ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘developing’ and women are placed within these structures, an implicit image of the ‘average third-world woman’ is produced. This is the transformation of the (implicitly western) ‘oppressed woman’ into the ‘oppressed third-world woman’. While the category of ‘oppressed woman’ is generated through an exclusive focus on gender difference ‘the oppressed third-world woman’ category has an additional attribute — the ‘third-world difference’! The ‘third-world difference’ includes a paternalistic attitude towards women in the third world.⁵⁰³

Mapping settler colonial narratives of “civilizing” Natives onto the bodies of immigrants and foreigners, FEMEN’s deployment of rhetorics of time in this context reinforce “the assumption that people in the third world just have not evolved to the extent that the west

⁵⁰³ Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes,” 80.

has,”⁵⁰⁴ and furthermore, that they require the west’s “help” to do so. One cartoon, shared by FEMEN on their Facebook page on October 8, 2014, offers an easily recognizable illustration of evolution depicting the progression from ape to human as the ape slowly stands and loses its body hair, with one key difference: at the front of the line is a naked blonde, white woman carrying a FEMEN sign. “Evolve. Become FEMEN,” the caption states.

In these representations, FEMEN sustains the idea of western civilization’s superiority through the opposition between modernity and tradition while also positioning Muslim women as victims needing to be rescued by “enlightened” western women, men, and nation-states.⁵⁰⁵ It is therefore not surprising that FEMEN’s efforts to “liberate” Muslim women have been actively condemned by Muslim feminist communities. The feminist group Muslim Women Against FEMEN (MWAF) emerged as an organized response to FEMEN’s Topless Jihad Day and circulated their own images through social media networks. These photos feature fully-dressed Muslim women, some in *hijab* some not, holding signs with messages such as “FEMEN stole our voice,” “Islam is my choice,” “hijab is my right,” “nudity is not freedom,” “Do I look oppressed to you?” and, “there is more than one way to be free” with the hashtags #Muslimahpride and #Femen. Criticizing the assumption that

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ FEMEN’s reproduction of victim discourses are not only evident in their targeting of Muslim women’s oppression but also in their protests against the sex industry, one of their primary targets. As Christine M. Jacobsen and Dag Stenvoll note in their discussion of how “Muslim women” and “foreign prostitutes” are constructed as victims in popular discourse, “victim discourse, when tied to the transnational proliferation of the sex industry and of (radical) Islam, has depoliticizing effects because it places nonindividual causes of victimization outside of ‘our’ polity and society and casts the state as protector and neutral arbiter of national and global inequalities, marginalization, and social conflict.” (Christine M. Jacobsen and Dag Stenvoll, “Muslim Women and Foreign Prostitutes: Victim Discourse, Subjectivity, and Governance,” *Social Politics* 17, no. 3 [2010]: 270.)

FEMEN speaks for all women, or that there is only one way to be a feminist, MWAF states in a 2013 interview,

We don't need FEMEN and their saviour complex FEMEN does not represent a large number of Muslim women, although they claim they want to 'free' us from our religion. They argue for liberation and speak for us but do it in the wrong way For them, the more you strip, the more of a feminist you are – that's Western feminist ideology. That's not liberation for us, but that doesn't make us anti-feminist.⁵⁰⁶

In a speech at the 4th International Congress of Islamic Feminism, Houria Bouteldja, spokesperson for the *Parti des Indigènes de la République*, addresses the question: “Is Islam compatible with feminism?”⁵⁰⁷ She states:

This question is purely provocative on my behalf. I can't stand it. I am asking this question to imitate some French journalist who believes they are asking a really pertinent question. As for me, I refuse to answer out of principle. On the one hand, because it comes from a position of arrogance. The representative of civilization X is demanding that the representative of civilization Y prove something. Y is, therefore, put in dock and must provide proof of her/his 'modern-ness', justify her/himself to please X. On the other hand, because the answer is not simple when one knows that

⁵⁰⁶ Umberto Bacchi, “Anti-Femen Topless Jihad Day: Muslim Women Slam ‘Racist’ Feminist Activists,” April 5, 2013, IBTimes UK, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/femen-muslim-women-protest-topless-jihad-454131>

⁵⁰⁷ Houria Bouteldja, “White Women and the Privilege of Solidarity,” *Decolonial Translation Group*, October 22, 2010. <http://www.decolonialtranslation.com/english/white-women-and-the-privilege-of-solidarity.html>

the Islamic world is not monolithic....Myself, I cut to the chase by asking X the following question: Is the French Republic compatible with feminism?⁵⁰⁸

Bouteldja clearly addresses the assumptions of cultural inequality underlying such questions, challenging the notion of a feminism that is unable to encompass plurality.

Amidst such debates, however, FEMEN quite literally stands its ground. At the time I attended FEMEN's Spring Training Camp in 2014, FEMEN's headquarters was located in a primarily Muslim neighborhood of first and second generation immigrants, as was their previous "International Training Center." Because FEMEN takes up residence as squatters in abandoned buildings, this may have more to do with the racialized economies that lead to the uneven upkeep of buildings in different areas of France; nonetheless, FEMEN's presence and visibility in these areas is rhetorically striking. As racial and economic divisions are socially and materially enacted in the informal segregation of space, "the street or a series of streets and places of residence, recreation and worship" become, as Hesse puts it, "the terminus of the 'white city's' limits."⁵⁰⁹ Frequently placed not only on the geographic borders of the city but also on the metaphorical borders of the city and nation, immigrant neighborhoods are thus charged with contested meanings as they relate to national and racial landscapes and belongings.

Not only does FEMEN reside in immigrant neighborhoods and march through them topless calling for Muslim women's liberation, FEMEN has also organized several protests in front of mosques, protests that clearly draw upon the affectively charged intersections of race, religion, and places of memory. Photos from one international action

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Hesse, "White Governmentality," 86.

which took place in front of the Ahmadiyya-Moschee, Berlin's oldest Mosque, feature six activists. Among them is Alexandra Shevchenko, one of the movement's Ukrainian founders who took up residency in Germany to build the movement after fleeing Ukraine for her safety. As they stand in front of the building's distinctive architecture with slogans reading, "Arab Women Against Islamism," "No Masters No Slaves," "Fuck Islamism," "Fuck Your Morals," and "Don't Fear Freedom," the activists directly engage the historical meanings of the site as a place of Muslim worship. In so doing, they also challenge notions of cultural belonging. As Sallie Westwood and John Williams note, while "the arrival within the cityscape of *erwin*, temples and mosques might be construed as a nostalgic response to displacement—nothing could be more misguided. These religions buildings and practices are constituted in the present with a vision of the future, one in which the designated visibility of people of Jewish and South Asian descent in racist discourses has been re-inscribed in the urban landscape."⁵¹⁰ By situating their action at the doors of the mosque, FEMEN thus not only blocks the entrance of Muslim worshippers into their material place of worship, they also symbolically block the entrance of Muslim citizens into the nation and its future, suggesting that the practice of Islam has *no place* in the modern, free nation.

Although its specific location is unclear, another image circulated by FEMEN even more directly engages the racial overtones of FEMEN's protests against Islam. An activist from FEMEN France kneels on an orange mat on the sidewalk, a brick wall on one side of her and the snowy curb on the other side. A green towel is wrapped turban-style around her head, her eyebrows are penciled into a unibrow, and a fake thick black beard and mustache are attached to her face. As she raises her arms in an Islamic prayer position her chest reads

⁵¹⁰ Sallie Westwood and John Williams, "Imagining Cities," in Sallie Westwood and John Williams (eds.), *Imagining Cities: Scripts, Signs, Memories* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 10.

“Viva Topless Jihad.” Crescent moons flank both of her breasts and stars cover her nipples. In another image, the same activist stands together with another activist who wears a black mask with only the eyes cut out, an image that has come to be associated with terrorism, ISIS, and suicide bombing. Cartoons produced by Femen’s allies at the French magazine Charlie Hebdo also draw upon the racialized imagery of the long-bearded Muslim man; one cartoon depicts a woman wearing a flower crown coming out from under a burqa to light the beard of her male companion on fire. Beneath the image, which was shared by FEMEN on their Facebook page, one poster comments, “this is racist!” Another responds, “how is this racist? They kill in the name of Islam and Allah your god, just like ISIL, Boko Haram and Alshabaab do.” One FEMEN member, in response to another poster’s charge of racism, states: “Being able to mock everybody in patriarchy but not mocking Islam with its male God would just be racist.”

Like all texts, however, “images acquire social value and symbolic overtones from larger frames of reference.”⁵¹¹ Regardless of FEMEN’s intentions, the circulation of their images elicits feelings within wider racist discourses, as is clearly evidenced in one (of many) conversations related to FEMEN that unfolds on the White Pride World Wide Web forum. Under an initial post, which describes the “Topless Jihad” march already discussed above, one user states, “I like to see Muslims in Europe upset, and I also like tits. So no complaints from me.” Echoing this sentiment, another member of the forum states, “if it pisses off the muslims, then its fine by me.” Another proclaims, “Good for them...Make Muzzies uncomfortable and *long* for their enslaved and sandy home land.” A different poster argues,

⁵¹¹ Wendy S. Hesford, *Spectacular Rhetorics: Human Rights Visions, Recognitions, Feminisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), 8.

“Basically our white euro brothers should round up these child raping goat f**ckers and send them back to the used litter box called the ME...while we rebuild our shattered nations.”⁵¹² Clear in these racist messages are the notions that Muslims are not true national subjects, nor do they deserve the comforts of freedom. In FEMEN’s embodied protests as they take place in particular locations as well as in the images that are subsequently circulated through digital space and mobilized for different means, Muslim bodies are marked as foreign and non-belonging within European lands. In this manner, they are rendered “as ‘bodies out of place’, through economies of vision” and the strong feelings they generate.⁵¹³

FEMEN’s rhetorical productions render the bodies of Muslim men in particular as not only as non-belonging in either the places or temporality of modernity but also less than human. In one Facebook post FEMEN refers to Muslim men as “inhuman beasts for whom killing a woman is more natural than recognizing her right to do as she pleases with her own body.” Another Charlie Hebdo cartoon shared on FEMEN’s Facebook page depicts two topless white women in flower crowns, hair streaming behind them as they ride darker-skinned Muslim men, dressed in grey robes and white caps, like horses, the women holding the reins as the black-bearded men bare their teeth around the bits in their mouth. Supporters of FEMEN further reinforce these animalistic depictions in their responses on various posts, with comments such as “these beasts are the scum of the earth.” In one exchange in the comments section of a Facebook post, user Christopher Oswald states: “Give em hell girls! Fuck those primitive bearded fuckwits!” Rose Michael responds, “what

⁵¹² “The Ultimate Provocation to Islamists: Ukranian FEMEN Feminists March Topless in Muslim Area of Paris,” *Stormfront.org*, <https://www.stormfront.org/forum/t914373/>

⁵¹³ Sara Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 16.

do u have against beards,” to which Oswald retorts, “Nothing if they are worn by gentlemen and not vile pigs like these assholes.” Muslim men, branded as animals, are thus portrayed as driven by their less-than-human instincts, becoming “by virtue of being non-rational, not of the modern.”⁵¹⁴ Much like the rhetoric of Christians United for Israel discussed in Chapter 4, as Muslim men are circulated as objects of emotion in FEMEN’s rhetorics, they are marked as “evil savages” and cast into the time of “primitivism” and “barbarism.” These terms, frequently utilized by both FEMEN and their followers, function as intensities within larger assemblages of terror and security, positioning Muslim men as both objects to be feared and as targets for death.

Further reinforcing this assemblage are the rhetorics of sexual violence mobilized by both FEMEN and their followers. In one post, FEMEN states,

You’ve turned innumerable women into slaves around the world. You’ve kidnapped them under false evil religious promises. You’ve raped them; you’ve taken away their condition of human beings. You’ve murdered women systematically without fearing any divine or earthly punishment. You’ve exhibited the heads of the women who faced you with the same weapons you think only your faithful men can shoot. You’ve covered women until they were less than an imperceptible shadow.

While this specific post is directed at ISIS, it circulates within broader discourses that conflate terror, Islam, and Arab male bodies through rhetorics of women’s oppression and violent excess. This is evidenced in the way FEMEN Facebook followers respond to posters who attempt to defend Islam. Refuting one user’s claim that “Islam is a peaceful religion,” another responds, “Yeah keep all these women peaceful without a clit.” Muslim women also add their voices to the

⁵¹⁴ Sherene Razack, “A Hole in the Wall; A Rose at a Checkpoint: The Spatiality of Colonial Encounters in Occupied Palestine,” *Journal of Critical Race Inquiry* 1, no. 1 (2010): 105.

conversation as certain Facebook posts gain traction beyond the FEMEN community through shares by other users. As they proclaim their freedom in the comments section, however, they face responses such as “you have the freedom of choice between getting stoned or disowned or wearing a tarp.” Rejecting one poster’s claim that FEMEN needs to address the problems on “their own soil,” another Facebook user states, “if you hear of women being buried alive, bashed to death in the streets in front of police, stoned, hung from trees, burnt with acid and gang raped and mutilated...as often and as openly as I hear of this happening on ‘other soils’ – let somebody know, it will probably make the news.” Violence, seen to reside in places beyond the nation-state, thus maps on to the bodies marked as Other within the nation, bodies whose racial difference marks them as not truly of this land.

As rhetorics of sexual violence in Other nations are taken up in Anglo-European imaginaries, non-western nations “become seen as a site of barbarism in relation to which western modernity and civility are upheld.”⁵¹⁵ Implicit in these rhetorics of sexual violation as they relate to Islam’s uncontainable excesses is also the threat to the white female body as national subject, a narrative which has “historically been deployed in a variety of contexts to reassert colonial domination in the face of potential disruption to such relations.”⁵¹⁶ In this narrative, white feminine bodies—such as those of FEMEN activists—serve as symbols “of the Western nation in which the white male self and the racialized other are construed as violently opposed...with regard to the ownership of, access to, and protection of this fragile body.”⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁵ Raka Shome, “Gender, Nation, and Colonialism: Twenty-First Century Connections,” *Cultural Studies* <—> *Critical Methodologies*. Published online before print March 22, 2016.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ Carillo Rowe, “Whose ‘America’?,” 126.

In the next section, I utilize my fieldwork from FEMEN's training camp to further examine how FEMEN's embodied actions create feelings of agency and empowerment for individual members as well as collective identifications among the FEMEN public.

Attending FEMEN's training camp allowed me to better understand the rhetorical effects/affects generated by FEMEN's protests not just from the perspective of observer but as a participant, complicating a strictly mediated reading of FEMEN and revealing at least potential lines of flight from the colonial assemblages addressed above. These lines of flight, however, are limited by FEMEN's emphasis on individual freedom as the path to liberation, a discourse which fits neatly into hegemonic rhetorics of democratic multiculturalism and the settler colonial memoryscapes on which they rely.

“I Am FEMEN”: Collective Movements and Trans/National Body Politics

The naked, or semi-naked, female body is a richly affective symbol in publicly-circulated images of FEMEN's protests. However, the body is not only rhetorical in its instrumentality in image events generated by FEMEN's rhetorical tactics of “sextremism,” it is also the site on which various struggles and forms of identification are materially enacted for members of the FEMEN public. Emotions are central to the generation of attachments, whether to a nation, public, place, or individual, and these attachments begin at the level of the body. As Sara Ahmed describes, “what attaches us, what *connects us* to this place or that place, to this other or that other is also what we find most touching; it is that which makes us feel.”⁵¹⁸ It is not surprising that when asked in interviews what initially drew them to the movement, FEMEN activists often responded with descriptions of an emotional connection: “I think it was first the feeling,” a woman from Holland stated. A Belgian woman noted, “I had already

⁵¹⁸ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 4.

sympathy through my guts I would say; I sometimes think more with my guts than with my brain.”

FEMEN’s origin story regarding the movement’s birth also draws from the language of feeling enacted in, and upon, the body. This is depicted in Figure 9, an image from one of the walls in FEMEN France’s Headquarters, the words of which also appear in their website description.

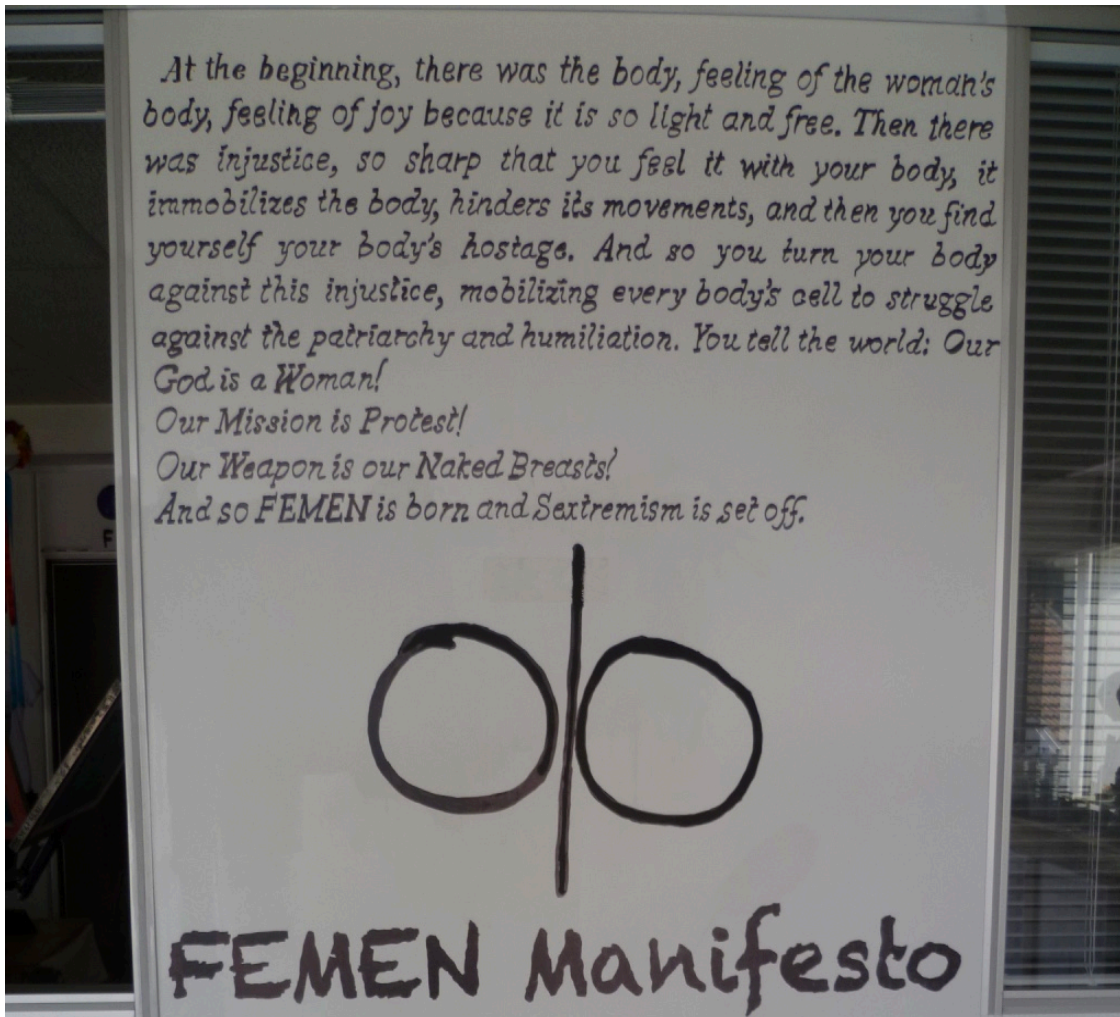


Figure 9. FEMEN Manifesto

In this narration, FEMEN describes a felt sense of injustice that occurs at the level of the body, a sentiment echoed by activists. As one woman put it: “I had a lot of anger inside, waiting to get out.” Another woman described, “I was always suffering in my life...because I was a woman.” Among the activists with whom I spoke, there was a shared sense of having been objectified and reduced by men to bodies with nothing to say. “They want us to keep our mouths shut and our vaginas open,” one French activist stated. The body thus becomes the site of FEMEN’s actions not merely for the purpose of capturing media attention. Instead, the body is also a direct and individual means by which members speak against their objectification and reclaim their freedom. As FEMEN puts it, “You tell the world: Our God is a Woman! Our Mission is Protest! Our Weapon is our Naked Breasts!”

Several activists described a visual encounter with an image as their initial source of feeling connected with FEMEN and its aims. As rhetorical artifacts, FEMEN’s images participate in what Ben Anderson refers to as “affective atmospheres”; they are “‘open’ to being ‘apprehended’ through feelings or emotions,” and moreover, “because of their constitutive openness...they are always being taken up and reworked in lived experience.”⁵¹⁹ The leader of one of FEMEN’s national branches described having come across a photograph somewhere. “It spoke to me,” she said, so she cut it out and tucked it into her journal. Laughing, she noted that she had no idea back then about the path that this would lead her down. A woman from Spain described:

One day I was just going through a newspaper.... I found this blonde amazing woman with a tattoo of a tiara on her side with a pose and the background was almost empty and bleak, super grey with a whole building, a grey building, behind

⁵¹⁹ Ben Anderson, “Affective Atmospheres” *Emotion, Space and Society* 2, no. 2 (2009): 79.

and I found it like so attractive, so beautiful. Like for me it was talking about a strong woman...and I read the footnote and it was like Femen activists who fight against prostitution in Ukraine. And I thought “I like it,” so I took it out and I put it on my wall. Yeah, this kind of thing, teenage—I mean I was not a teenager but this kind of thing that you do with your teenage room.... She was beautiful like hell and she was fighting. I can identify.

One woman argued: “FEMEN is really good. Because around me people mostly think like feminism is something aggressive against men and feminists are stupid. Like it doesn’t have a good, uh, image, and I don’t feel like that.”

As seen in these quotes, members largely identified their interest in FEMEN as beginning with an affective resonance, including the desire to be both strong and beautiful like the women in the images they encountered and also a desire to take action against the oppressions they felt. In the origin story offered above, FEMEN as well takes up this language of in/action through their claim that patriarchy “immobilizes the body, hinders its movements, and then you find yourself your body’s hostage.” Reclaiming the body and its right to move through public space thus becomes a strategy of empowerment and resistance for FEMEN members, of freeing oneself from the constraints society attempts to impose on women’s bodies. Tying this explicitly to FEMEN’s tactic of “sextremism,” one woman stated: “Like you can be feminine but they use it as a weapon. And I think that is really powerful....Like, wear that lipstick, wear those high heels, but do something with it—don’t let it be your prison, don’t let it be the chain that, um, that captures you. You steal the chain away and slap other people with it.”

“Making That Body Move:” Creating the FEMEN Collective



Figure 10. Spring Camp Schedule

While I was unsure of exactly what would take place when I attended FEMEN’s Spring Training Camp in 2014, one thing I knew I could expect was physical training. As described in both the promotional materials for the training camp and in various media, FEMEN activists engage in regular fitness training in order to create the movement’s “strong warriors.” At the nearly week-long camp we engaged in rigorous physical training, running, push-ups, sit-ups, squats, and more, exercising until our bodies hurt. We also

trained our voices, practicing shouting slogans in unison at high volume and being able to respond to other members' vocal cues. We practiced conveying emotion through the use of our bodies, making our voices aggressive with facial expressions further demonstrating our anger.



Figure 11. Training Poster, “Don’t Smile, Be Aggressive”

At one point, we engaged in a shout off. Face to face with another line of activists, we screamed slogans including “Homophobe shut up!,” “In gay we trust!,” “*Aborto es sagrado!*,”

and “Not a sex toy!” into one another’s faces. At the end, if any activist said she did not feel aggression from her partner, that person would move into the center of the room to practice screaming slogans while receiving critique and advice from other FEMEN members.

The camp also included training in the FEMEN aesthetic; attendees learned to make flower crowns and discussed the wearing of red lipstick as not only a strategic manipulation of the tools of patriarchy but also as a means of dramatizing the expression of activists’ open mouths on camera. Emphasized throughout the discussion of the FEMEN aesthetic was the importance of appearing visually unified as a team during actions. There should not be any details that call attention to themselves detracting from the overall action, it was explained. “There are no individual personalities in FEMEN, we act as one, synchronized,” one of the FEMEN France activists stated. Through the repetition of these various activities over the course of the camp we not only learned how to appear as a collective, we *became* a collective located in time and place, whether shouting in unison, doing push-ups in unison, or jogging with journalists following closely behind. As a non-member of FEMEN attending the training camp largely for the purposes of research, I nonetheless noticed that as we ran through a neighborhood park with many members dressed in FEMEN gear drawing attention to our embodied spectacle, I felt proud of us: a team of feminist warriors, preparing our bodies for the fight. Other members as well seemed to feel this collective pride and resistance as they avoided making eye contact or exchanging smiles with the individuals we passed, instead staring straight ahead with determined concentration.

Back at Headquarters, as she continued to bark out physical orders, Inna reminded us: "Femen is not about taking off your top, it's about making that body *move*, invade buildings, do things." As the body and its ability to move becomes the source of agency, in this process community belongings are formed through the repeated synchronization of bodies

and actions. As Ahmed argues, “emotions shape the very surfaces of bodies, which take shape through the repetition of actions over time.”⁵²⁰ These relationships are further evidenced in Figure 12, a hand-painted sheet with instructions for direct action that FEMEN uses in their training; as individual bodies perform agency and defiance, they become part of a united team resisting their enemies.

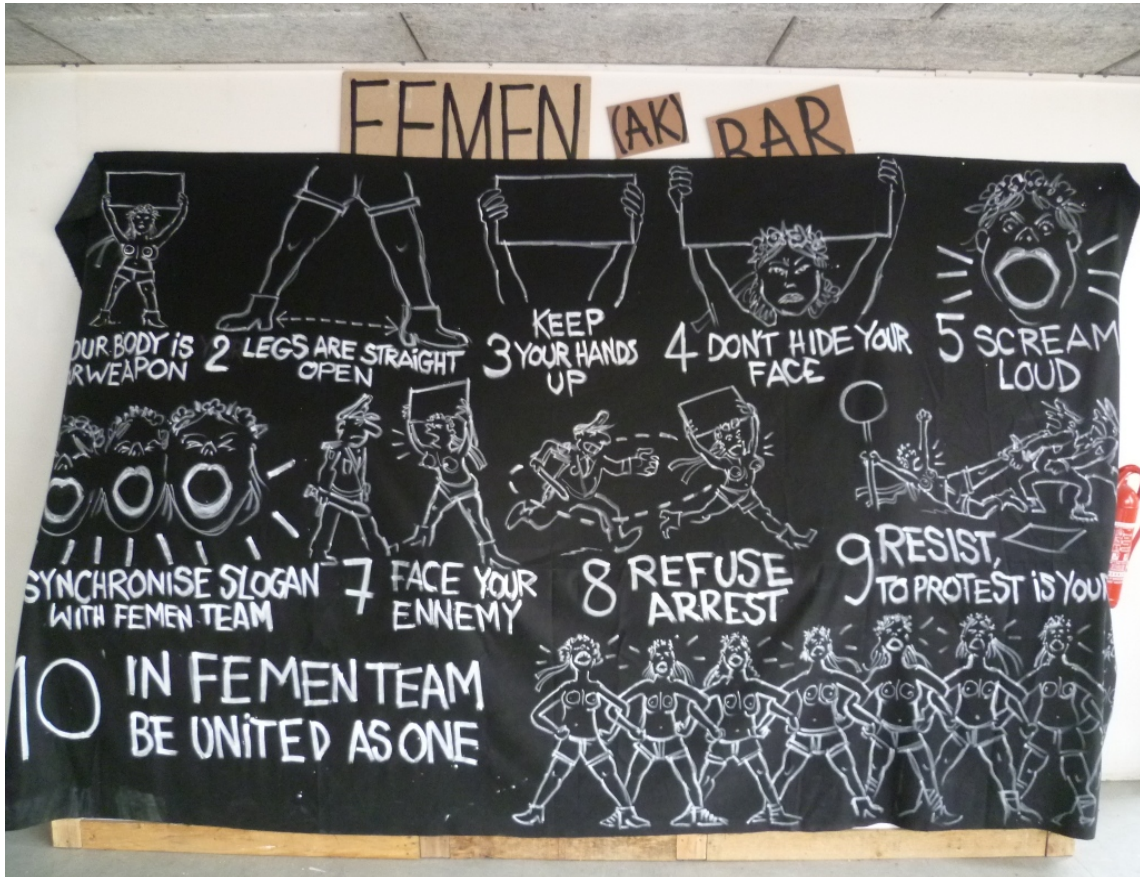


Figure 12. Instructions for Direct Action

In FEMEN’s case, the most direct enemy they frequently face is the police. In the next section I describe how the act of resisting the police further sediments the feeling of collective belonging.

⁵²⁰ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 4.

“Arresting Us, You Support Fascism!”: Sedimenting Collective Belongings through Resistance

Though it was unknown to those of us for whom the training camp was our first direct involvement with FEMEN, it was quickly decided by active FEMEN members that we would utilize the opportunity of having many individuals together from different countries (France, Ukraine, Spain, Belgium, Holland, and the United States) to do a direct action. The chosen target was Marine Le Pen, a member of the European Parliament and President of the National Front, a national-conservative party in France. Le Pen was scheduled to hold a press conference during the time we were at the camp. After a workshop on resisting arrest, during which we practiced confrontation with some activists acting as cops and others as activists, and learned strategies to “stay the place” and continue our action until the last second (see Figure 13), we planned the action.



Figure 13. Instructions for Resisting Arrest

Together, activists came up with the action’s various components: the slogan “Fascist Epidemic”; the designs we would paint on our bodies—a European Union flag with the stars

arranged in the shape of a swastika; our appearance—hair pulled back into buns and wearing black pants and military boots with Hitler mustaches made from mascara; and the formation we would take, marching through the street like an army. The idea of wearing wigs to look like Marin Le Pen was also suggested and looked into, but it was decided it would be too expensive. During the brainstorming of the action, when members disagreed, different ideas would be talked through and a vote would be taken. One interesting source of disagreement came when debating the placement of one of FEMEN's black activists in the center of the front row; some activists argued that it was tokenism--“it's like saying, ‘oh look, we have a Black one,’” one girl stated. Other activists from FEMEN France argued that she should be visible for the cameras precisely because she was a French citizen who deviated from the National Front's vision of the “ideal” citizen. These behind-the-scenes debates offer insight into the ways members plan their actions for the public screen; they also reveal dissident voices within the planning of FEMEN actions, voices that are not reflected in the captured images circulated by the press.

As new FEMEN members (or at least those who were in attendance considering becoming members) prepared for the action, it came up that being topless in public was a source of discomfort for some. When asked to raise our hands if we planned to participate, one girl hesitated. Inna asked her, “Why? Do you support Marin Le Pen?” “No,” she said, “but I don't know if I'm comfortable with taking off my shirt.” “Well, let's do it here,” Inna responded. Standing in a circle, we all took off our shirts. As we looked around at one another, and at the various bodies there—many of which deviated from the hegemonic beauty standards for which FEMEN has been criticized—Inna said, “There, is that so bad?” “I guess not,” the woman who had initially hesitated responded, agreeing that she would participate. I too, initially felt uncomfortable, as mentioned in the following extended excerpt from my field notes. Here, I offer a first-hand account of the direct action that took place on April 22, 2014, rooted in my

own experience. The purpose of this extended reflection is not only to offer the reader a sense of the event, but also to narrate the felt sensations I experienced during the encounter with the police, sensations that further reinforced feelings of collective belonging with fellow activists.

As we prepare ourselves at headquarters, the more seasoned activists do most of the painting, working together to quickly prepare all twenty-two of our bodies for the action. One activist runs off paper copies of our passports, which we tuck into our boots along with a few euros. Those activists who are not wearing makeup, or who do not own makeup, are made up by other members. There is some conversation, but mostly the room is quiet, serious and focused with an air of anticipation. Surrounded by fully-clothed journalists, I find myself uncomfortable with my nakedness. When everyone is ready we get dressed but without bras, shirts, or sweaters; we wear only jackets or zip-up sweatshirts that will be easy to quickly discard. Riding the train to the Champs Élysées, I continue to feel nervous. Conversation occurs in smaller clusters of the group, but—at least for those of us who have never participated in an action before—we remain serious. Once we are off the train and approaching the hotel where the press conference is located, we are signaled by Inna that it is time: “Let’s go.” We quickly add our Hitler mustaches to our faces with a flick of two mascaraed fingers, and then we drop our jackets into a pile at the curbside.

We begin to march in the direction of the hotel, sound echoing through the street and off the buildings. Stomp stomp stomp stomp, our boots pound against the pavement. It is a powerful sound. Here, naked in the street, with a purpose, I find I am no longer uncomfortable. We feel strong, almost formidable. Strength in numbers, I find myself thinking over and over during the course of the next twelve hours—eight of which will be spent in custody. We begin to shout: “Fascist Epidemic!” As we approach the journalists documenting our action, we keep marching—they have to move quickly, ducking out of our way. I DO feel powerful. We are like a flu or a virus, I realize. We don’t stop for anyone, we just keep going. After chanting in our formation in the street for a while,

Inna moves to the hotel windows and begins shouting. We follow. I am right by a gray-haired, bearded security guard who is on his radio, expressionless. And I am yelling. Loudly. Right in his ear it seems. My naked breasts almost touching him, but not. I look at his face to see if he is smirking, but I see no discernible reaction. It is as if we establish mutual respect for one another. He is doing his job. We are doing ours. When Inna starts beating on the windows, so do we. I get a few pounds in, keeping them fairly light, not wanting to damage anything—just to make a point. The windows give a little as we hit them.

When Inna marches back to the street, still yelling, we follow. Now we form one long straight line. We are yelling up to the balcony where journalists have left the press conference to come photograph FEMEN.

“Marine, Come Out! Marine, Come Out!”

I am definitely no longer nervous, I am caught up in it. Though it is a fairly cool day, I begin to perspire after just a few minutes of yelling, sweat dripping down my bare skin.

“Marine, Fascist! Marine, Fascist!” we yell.

Finally, after about twenty minutes of yelling, we begin marching out, back down the middle of the street, still screaming, a long stream of girls with Inna at the helm (much like during running, just now in a different context): “Fascist Epidemic! Fascist Epidemic!”

After a short distance down the street and back around the corner, Inna stops the chanting. Breaking from the line, she walks down the street normally at the front of the group, and we begin to relax. There is an air of excitement and pride in her voice as she looks back and says to us laughing with a gleam in her eye-liner laden eyes, “now we just need to find our jackets.” The police are in front of us now, facing us and walking backwards as we walk. When we get to the spot where we left our jackets, they are no longer behind the car where we left them. We are not able to get on to the

Metro without them and we are now surrounded by police. "It looks like we are going to be arrested," the more seasoned activists tell us.

We form chains as practiced in training (see Figure 12), arms linked together and held behind our backs as Inna explains the purpose of our action to a journalist. We are chained in straight lines at first, all of us behind Inna. After a few minutes, we are advised to chain up in a circle, making us more difficult to break apart. Once in our circle we again begin to shout: "Don't Be Scared of Our Breasts!" We follow other members' cues to periodically change up our slogan, "Arresting Us, You Support Fascism!" This goes on for a long time while the police wait for back up. My throat hurts now and I am becoming exhausted physically from all the yelling. I cough occasionally or stop for a round or two periodically to recover, but I feel good, strong, stronger than the police. My face is stern, angry as I yell. Serious and unrelenting, jaw clenched, spitting fire. ("The loud American," the other activists would call me for the remainder of the camp.) I feel like I am actually making a difference. High on adrenaline. More powerful than "THE MAN."

"Fight Fascists, Not Feminists!"

"Don't Support Fascism!"

People exiting the metro stop to take photos until, eventually, the police shut down this exit from the inside and people stop coming up. We are now surrounded by police blockades, and the protest continues. My sweat mingles with the woman my arms are locked with, rolling down our bodies together.

Before they start arresting us, the cops direct all the journalists to the other side of the street, blocking the journalists' view of us with their police vans. They surround us and as they push us together our circle folds in on itself, still chained. Lacking the ability to move in any other direction, one activist begins jumping up and down. We follow suit, yelling, "Shame, Shame, Shame!" Some

of the officers seem amused, others seem angry. They are wearing gloves. I see my paint is rubbing off of my chest onto the officer's uniform in front of me. The black fabric is thick and rough against my skin. When one of the other officers points to the paint on his clothes, he steps back. The others as well, step back and we are able to spread back out into our circle.

When they finally begin arresting us, they go straight for Inna first. She screams, a high pitched wail, as she is carried into the van. We keep chanting, resisting, relinking our circle as members are taken one by one and carried into the vans. As we get smaller, some of the girls "melt" to the ground, as we learned to do in training to make it more difficult to grab us. A different part of the circle stays standing. One of the activists looks at me as if to say get down, and I tell her I can't. I am stuck between those on the ground and those standing. We are staying the place. Keeping the action going until the last second. I watch as they grab other activists. Male cops, four per women because of the way we are holding ourselves together. They grab Jenny from FEMEN Sweden by her hair, others they take by their throats and nostrils. It looks violent. And painful. I am not looking forward to being taken.

At one point after I am down on the ground, in an entirely different place in the circle now—though I have no recollection of how I got from one place to the other—one of the police manages to catch my arm. I remember a statement from training: "If you lose your arms you have nothing!" I wrest my arm back and lock it behind me with another activist. This keeps me there awhile longer until finally it is just two of us. They break us apart and I keep my head down as someone had advised, hoping this will prevent them from grabbing me by the neck or nostrils. Something gets caught in my hair and I feel some of it rip. As I am carried through the air, I keep yelling, one hand in a fist. I give a struggle of my legs toward the end, really just for impact, not actually trying to break free. Jenny, still shouting from her place in one of the police vans, shoots an approving glance at me as I go by.

The police throw me into one of the vans but then start to pull me out to place me into a different van. For some reason this makes me feel afraid, panicked, and I grab one of the other activists, who holds onto me as the others hold onto her: “No,” they shout! “Ok, let her stay,” the police say. We breathe a collective sigh of relief. We ARE like one body, one voice working together.

Darrell Enck-Wanzer argues that reducing body rhetoric to an instrumental role limits our understanding by failing “to consider what the rhetoric itself is up to—what cultural or social work it is accomplishing.”⁵²¹ From my experience of participating in this direct action with FEMEN, I felt the individual feeling of empowerment frequently spoken of by FEMEN members. In an interview with a former FEMEN Holland activist, we discussed this:

Julka: Before you take your clothes off you’re, you’re nervous of course and all of these things go through your head and you try to remember, uh, what you must do. But as soon as you take the first step and throw your clothes off, the nerves disappear and you feel brave and strong and aggressive and ready to, uh, fight the enemy that you paint on the person or think that you’re attacking—

Roberta: Mm hmm.

Julka:—you really feel strong when you do it.

Roberta: Yeah. That’s how I felt.

As these acts are repeated over time, FEMEN’s rhetorical actions thus further internalize the ideology/movement for members, inscribing a sense of empowerment on their bodies.

Moreover, protests create a felt solidarity among members as they act together against their

⁵²¹ Darrel Enck-Wanzer, “Trashing the System: Social Movement, Intersectional Rhetoric, and Collective Agency in the Young Lords Organization’s Garbage Offensive,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 2 (2006): 179.

targets: dictatorial states, religions, and the sex industry. But perhaps most affective when it comes to feeling oneself to be part of the FEMEN collective is the police encounter itself. Ahmed argues that “intensity may impress upon the surfaces of bodies through negation: the surface is felt when something is felt ‘against’ it.”⁵²² In this case, as the bodies of activists collide with representatives of the state, FEMEN emerges as a “sociality of bodily surfaces” that surfaces through relationships between bodies, places, and objects, all of which “com[e] to be felt as an intense ‘impression.’”⁵²³ Figure 14, a mural painted in the FEMEN headquarters by one of the activists, highlights the intensity of the police encounter.



Figure 14. FEMEN Mural

⁵²² Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 27.

⁵²³ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 31.

In the next section, I argue that when we understand FEMEN as a trans/national public formed not only through FEMEN's images and their audiences or by the social media networks that link activists together but as also comprised by groups of activists who are, first and fundamentally, embodied individuals who work together as a collective in material space, we can begin to see at least potential lines of flight from the colonialist feminism evidenced and critiqued in the preceding discussion of FEMEN's protests against Islam.

Grounded Networks: The FEMEN Assemblage and Becomings

Examining how FEMEN assembles as individual bodies interact in real time and place as well as through various feminist networks reveals both strengths and weaknesses of the movement in terms of transnational feminist organizing and anti-racist, decolonial solidarity. As discussed above, FEMEN's anti-Islam protests circulate as part of broader racial and colonial discourses. Flattened in these image events and the debates they generate are the links between FEMEN activists that generate FEMEN's rhetorical productions. The Eiffel Tower protest, for example, was organized by two Arab activists, Maryam Namazie, a spokesperson for Iran Solidarity, One Law for All, who describes herself as an Iranian born secularist and human rights activist, and Safia Lebdi, the founder of Free Arab Woman, neither of whom is a FEMEN member, and both of whom participated in the demonstration. As described in the movie, *I Am FEMEN*, in which Lebdi makes a brief appearance, after meeting FEMEN activists in Ukraine she invited them to France to participate in the demonstration. The most widely circulated images from the demonstration, however, focus on Inna Shevchenko and other Ukrainian activists, perpetuating the rhetorics of "white women saving brown women from brown men."⁵²⁴ Recognizing this, of course,

⁵²⁴ Lila Abu-Lughod, "Feminist Longings and Postcolonial Conditions," in Lila Abu-Lughod (ed.), *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,

does not negate the rhetorical impacts of the images, but it does point to complexities not captured by the global public screen. Thinking through FEMEN's actions from the perspective of assemblage suggests that "there is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoming machine."⁵²⁵ It is these subtleties, that which seeps through or exceeds the assemblage, that are the spaces of becoming, the flashpoints from which we might imagine at least the possibility of transnational feminist solidarity within FEMEN.

The "Topless Jihad" march, as well, emerges from a more complex circulation of alignments and identifications between material bodies than that which is captured in the globally-circulated images which quickly became the subject of postcolonial feminist critique. Camilla Reestorff offers further insight into the assemblage of events in which this protest unfolded.

In 2011, Amina [Sbouï, a Tunisian student] participated in the first Femen demonstration in Egypt. The participants were not topless. Later, in February 2013, Amina posted photos of herself on Facebook. She had written 'My body belongs to me and is not the source of anyone's honour' and 'Fuck your morals' on her torso. It is important to keep in mind that Amina did not conduct topless protests in public but used topless photos as an online strategy of circulation. Furthermore, Amina did not use the Femen headquarters' recognizable traits and signs....Her ties to Femen therefore lie in her own identification and in online viewers' interpretation of the

1998), 14. Here, Lughod plays off of a well-known quote from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak re: the "white men saving brown women from brown men" rescue narrative. (See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (London: MacMillan, 1988), 67-109.

⁵²⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 216.

topless photos [and] Amina's images were quickly added to Femen's activist imaginary. This was partly due to the strong responses the images caused. Tunisian Imam Adel Almi called for her death by stones and Amina was, by her own account, kidnapped and beaten by her family. During the time Amina was held by her family, other branches of Femen initiated the so-called 'international topless jihad day' (4 April) in which topless protests were held near mosques and Tunisian embassies across Europe.⁵²⁶

Following Sboui's escape from her family, she demonstrated against the group Ansar al-Sharia by tagging a wall with the word: FEMEN. Though fully dressed while performing this act, Sboui was arrested and accused not only of graffiti but of attacking public morality. News of Sboui's arrest generated additional protests in Europe and a protest in Tunis by three FEMEN France activists who were arrested and jailed for two weeks.⁵²⁷ If, as discussed in the preceding section, the encounter with the police as an arm of the state is seen as further sedimenting attachments between FEMEN members, the feelings that generate activists to act in these and other related protests may have as much to do with affiliative attachments between individual activists as they do with Islamophobic sentiments held by members of the group. Following media accusations of FEMEN's Islamophobia, however, Sboui disaligned herself from the group when she was released from prison in August 2013.

FEMEN also acts on a much broader platform than that represented in media and feminist discussions of the group's Islamophobia; when discussing the direct action targeting

⁵²⁶ Camilla M. Reestorff, "Mediatized Affective Activism: The Activist Imaginary and the Topless Body in the Femen Movement," *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 20, no. 4 (2014): 480.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

Marine Le Pen, they explained to the few activists who were not familiar with Le Pen that she backed a number of racist immigration policies as well as a homophobic agenda. One activist explained,

The theory of the branches and the transnational activities of FEMEN, is you have branches in each country and, uh, they are from that country and know that country very well, and they do actions against topics that are important in that country....Like, for example, we have the Protestant church, the reformist Protestant church but in Spain it's the Catholic church so doing something against the Catholic church, it wouldn't really work here because they're a minority here. So for that reason it's important to focus on issues that are important in that country because every country is different with different institutions, different forms of oppressing women, also culturally.

However, FEMEN's vision of activists working within their own nations to target the problems they face there is in many ways limited by the centralization of the movement, "which also entails an increasing amount of centralized explanations for localized actions."⁵²⁸ This is problematic for a number of reasons. First, because the complexities of FEMEN actions are not captured by media soundbytes that usually feature only one or two sentences from longer statements given by FEMEN activists, statements frequently given in English by non-native English speakers. Second, Headquarters' insistence on adherence to the three pillars of dictatorship, religion, and sex industry, limit the positions FEMEN members take; while they may expand their focus to issues not directly identified in these pillars they may not act against them, so actions that were deemed to be pro-religion, or actions in favor of

⁵²⁸ Reestorff, "Mediatized Affective Activism," 491.

the legalization of prostitution, for example, would not be approved of by Headquarters. (“No one seems to have a problem with our stance on dictators,” Inna jokes at one point. “That’s the one thing we all agree on.”) Third, and most important as it relates to the broader discussion of how FEMEN’s actions participate within larger (settler) colonial memoryscapes, the centralization of the movement is also problematic “because it is embedded within the ‘divided geographies’ that emerge when the Femen headquarters identifies women who they believe to be more marginalized than them.”⁵²⁹

As described on a FEMEN webpage early in the movement’s existence, FEMEN activists strive to achieve “European ideals of freedom, equality, and development of an individual, independently of gender.” Within the larger affective geographies and rhetorical landscapes that have been discussed throughout this broader project, what therefore happens when FEMEN’s anti-Islam protests occur in tandem with their taking up of other issues including, prominently, gay rights, is that they pit the oppressive practices of non-western states against the seemingly more inclusive practices of western states. In so doing, they reproduce notions of democratic multiculturalism and homonationalism that fail to interrupt the (settler) colonialisms on which they rely. As Byrd notes, when rights struggles cathect “liberal democracy as the best possible avenue to redress the historical violences of and exclusions from the state, scholars and activists committed to social justice have been left with impossible choices: to articulate freedom at the expense of another, to seek power and recognition in the hopes that we might avoid the syllogisms of democracy created through colonialism.”⁵³⁰

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, xxiv.

The emphasis on ownership over one's body, tied as it is to neoliberal and post-feminist discourses, further limits FEMEN's decolonial potential. As the gendered bodies of FEMEN are constructed through languages of individualization, choice, and consumption, these representations "mask the ways in which hierarchical structures of power are mapped out on the gendered body, and how the body continues to be a site of struggle for women...This establishes why feminisms that seek to disrupt the gender norms that restrict women's bodily autonomy must locate the body in the webs of power that give meaning to such norms."⁵³¹ While FEMEN does target a variety of oppressions and they often localize their protests through activists working on the ground in different countries, by failing to account for the global systems beyond patriarchy through which bodies acquire gendered meanings, their protests still configure certain bodies and nations as the exceptional subjects of rights, territory, and democracy at the expense of Others that lack intelligibility within racialized imperial cartographies.

Conclusion

Examining FEMEN's protests offers insight into "the often contradictory and unpredictable ways in which gendered whiteness functions in contemporary modernities," and "the power of whiteness and Anglocentrism to continually articulate itself in new ways (often through the figure of the white woman), through new meanings, in new contexts."⁵³² Within FEMEN's rhetorical movements, whiteness, citizenship, and freedom can thus be seen to function "as a chain of equivalences. Whiteness becomes equated with citizenship,

⁵³¹ O'Keefe, "my body is my manifesto!"16.

⁵³² Raka Shome, "Transnational Feminism and Communication Studies," *The Communication Review* 9, no. 4 (2006): 261.

and citizenship with freedom,”⁵³³ against those bodies and nations deemed as unfree. In other words, even as FEMEN members protest against certain gendered, classed, and racialized structures of citizenship (but often in separate actions that fail to make the connections between these systems), in the process of doing so they also rely on and reinscribe those same structures. In this manner, their actions mobilize what Ahmed describes as “the role of the ‘other’ and the ‘other-other,’” which she identifies as,

two sides of neoliberal nation building in western countries. ‘Others’ are the people the nation can ‘save’ or show ‘benevolence’ to by allowing them into the economy and culture of the nation, thus allowing the nation to become multicultural. The ‘other-other’ (on the other hand) is the one who cannot be interpolated into culture. He/she must be expelled, sent away, deported in order for the nation to define and imagine itself, its borders, and its citizenry.⁵³⁴

Within the rhetorical landscapes of FEMEN and its version of women’s liberation, Muslim male bodies, as “savage” terrorists, are placed in the non-place of the “other-other”: those who are “too foreign to be included in the state.” These exclusions are supported by the inclusion of “those who are only ‘other,’ those who can be included and brought into the borders of the nation-state as comprehensible foreigners who we can help.”⁵³⁵ In FEMEN’s rhetoric this includes the oppressed Muslim woman. Through the rhetoric of freeing Muslim women, as one part of the larger FEMEN assemblage that has been discussed, FEMEN members thus envision their own liberation from structures of oppression. As Razack notes,

⁵³³ Carillo Rowe, “Whose ‘America?’,” 124.

⁵³⁴ Wingard, *Branded Bodies*, 5.

⁵³⁵ Sara Ahmed, as quoted in Wingard, *Branded Bodies*, 14-15.

“The nearer you bring the pain [of Others], the more the pain and the subject who is experiencing it disappears, leaving the witness in its place.”⁵³⁶

In this chapter I have further endeavored to make visible connections between imperialist histories, presents, and futures as they relate to ideals such as freedom, equality, and democracy. By examining how (settler) colonial memoryscapes inform and shape FEMEN’s activism, I have demonstrated how rhetorics of “women’s rights” continue to be mobilized in ways that mark particular human, geographic, and political bodies as (non)belonging within the trans/national landscapes of multicultural democracy. Understanding how stories about the democratic US nation-state and its origins map onto other imperialist trajectories enables a further exploration of global assemblages of whiteness within the logics of empire. In the concluding chapter I will address the implications of this analysis for rhetoric, public memory, and intercultural communication studies.

⁵³⁶ Sherene H. Razack, “Stealing the Pain of Others: Reflections on Canadian Humanitarian Responses,” *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (2007): 377.

CHAPTER 6

CASCADING BECOMINGS: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

“To focus on the cascade of becomings is not to deny intentionality or its force but to see intentionality as less definitive of outcomes.”
—Jane Bennett⁵³⁷

This project has brought together three case studies of different publics as they are assembled in different locations with varying degrees of permanence and for markedly different aims. And yet, within each of these publics, I have argued that similar racialized and gendered rhetorics of civilization and its Others circulate. By bringing these sites together as an assemblage, my effort has been to examine the memoryscapes that connect them, articulating “modern” trans/national citizenship and global (non)belongings in racialized ways. In tracing trajectories of signification and affect as they move within and amongst the case studies, I do not seek to claim an equivalency among the case studies, nor do I argue for a direct relationship of cause and effect. Instead, through the lens of assemblage theory, I view the rhetorics that circulate in this constellation as what Jane Bennett refers to as a “cascade of becomings.”⁵³⁸ Rather than focus on a single effect, such a perspective “pays attention to a linked series of [effects/affects], for an unstable cascade spills out from every ‘single’ act.”⁵³⁹

In this chapter, I extend the arguments from the preceding chapters to address whiteness as a rhetorical configuration and global assemblage. As assemblage directs our attention to spatio-temporal logics and material relationships, I identify three topoi: time,

⁵³⁷ Jane Bennett, “The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout,” *Public Culture* 17, no. 3 (2005): 457.

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

⁵³⁹ Ibid.

places, and bodies. I argue that as an assemblage, whiteness mobilizes these topoi as it moves through global landscapes, territorializing lands and bodies as it touches down in different locations. Offering the contributions of *settler colonial memoryscapes* and *monuments of difference*, I conceptualize whiteness as a rhetorical frontier that assembles human, political, and geographic bodies and belongings in contrast to the racialized, gendered bodies of Otherness that are located as external to the state and trans/national democratic public culture. Following this, I address the implications and future directions this dissertation offers for rhetoric, public memory, and intercultural communication, including disrupting identity-based frameworks; shifting the scales of our inquiry; contributing to ongoing discussions regarding rhetoric, materiality, and field methods; and drawing attention to the continued necessity of framing our scholarship within “a global perspective attentive to coloniality.”⁵⁴⁰

Whiteness as a Global Assemblage

France Winddance Twine and Charles Gallagher discern three waves in whiteness studies.⁵⁴¹ Identifying the work of W.E.B. DuBois as the touchstone for the critical study of whiteness, Twine and Gallagher describe the first wave as focused on “how whiteness operates as the normative cultural center that is for many whites an invisible identity.”⁵⁴² While DuBois’ work focused on challenging white supremacy and making institutionalized

⁵⁴⁰ Darrel Allan Wanzer, “Delinking Rhetoric, or Revisiting McGee’s Fragmentation Thesis through Decoloniality,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 15, no. 4 (2012): 648.

⁵⁴¹ France Winddance Twine and Charles Gallagher, “The Future of Whiteness: A Map of the ‘Third Wave,’” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 1 (2008): 4-24.

⁵⁴² Twine and Gallagher, “Future of Whiteness,” 9.

racism visible,⁵⁴³ much of the early work in whiteness studies “concerned itself with the pathology of racist individuals rather than the structural forces that produced racist social systems.”⁵⁴⁴ The second wave of whiteness studies, however, ushered in by critical race scholars and Black feminist theorists working from the location of the United States, returned its focus to the legal and institutional practices through which whiteness is normalized, and their material effects.⁵⁴⁵ The third wave of whiteness studies concerns itself with a multiplicity of whitenesses as they intersect with, and are comprised by, different social and geographic locations.⁵⁴⁶ Amongst the contributions of the most recent wave of whiteness studies is a focus on “the ever expanding boundaries of whiteness.”⁵⁴⁷ Addressing

⁵⁴³ See, for example, W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Harcourt, 1935); W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Signet Classic, 1969); and W.E.B. DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*, 3rd ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 1970).

⁵⁴⁴ Twine and Gallagher, “Future of Whiteness,” 10. For an illustration of the type of race research focusing on racism as pathology see Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944).

⁵⁴⁵ See for example, Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical White Studies: Looking Behind the Mirror* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996); Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Cheryl Harris, “Whiteness as Property,” *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 1709-91; Ian Haney Lopez, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); and Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

⁵⁴⁶ See, for example, Bridget Byrne, *White Lives: The Interplay of ‘Race’, Class and Gender in Everyday Life* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Cynthia Levine-Rasky (ed.), *Working Through Whiteness: International Perspectives* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2002); Monica McDermott, *Working-Class White: The Making and Unmaking of Race Relations* (Berkeley, CA: University of California press, 2006); France Winddance Twine, “Brown Skinned White Girls: Class, Culture and the Construction of White Identity in Suburban Communities,” *Gender, Place, and Culture* 3, no. 2 (1996): 205-24; France Winddance Twine, “Transracial Mothering and Anti-Racism: The Case of White Mothers of ‘Black’ Children in Britain,” *Feminist Studies* 25, no. 3 (1999): 729-46; and Lois Weis, *Class Reunion: The Remaking of the American White Working Class* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

⁵⁴⁷ Jonathan Warren and France Winddance Twine, “White Americans, the New Minority?: Non-Blacks and the Ever-Expanding Boundaries of Whiteness,” *Journal of Black Studies* 28, no. 2 (1997): 200-18.

the incorporative properties of whiteness, third wave scholars attend to how whiteness has expanded to include groups and bodies previously excluded.⁵⁴⁸ This work aligns with my examination of whiteness as an assemblage.

In their use of assemblage to address whiteness as a rhetorical configuration, Thomas Nakayama and Robert Krizek identified six rhetorical strategies, or what they referred to as “strategic rhetorics” comprising the discourse of whiteness: the equation of whiteness with the majority; whiteness as a “non-color” or the absence of a racial identity; whiteness as a scientific definition; whiteness as nationality; whiteness as the refusal of labels; and whiteness as an ethnic identity.⁵⁴⁹ Viewing these strategies as both marking out and constituting the spaces of whiteness, they argue that this assemblage of discourses work together to secure whiteness. They state: “It is this multiplicity that drives the dynamic nature of [whiteness] power relations or forces.”⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁸ See, for example, Charles A. Gallagher, “Racial Redistricting: Expanding the Boundaries of Whiteness,” in Heather M. Dalmage (ed.), *The Politics of Multiracialism: Challenging Racial Thinking* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2004), 59-76; Sarah Gualtieri, “Becoming ‘White’: Race, Religion and the Foundations of Syrian/Lebanese Ethnicity in the United States,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 20, no. 4 (2001): 29-58; Caren Kaplan, “‘Beyond the Pale’: Rearticulating U.S. Jewish Whiteness,” in Ella Shohat (ed.), *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 451-484; Marla Frederick McGlathery and Traci Griffin, “Becoming Conservative, Becoming *White*?”: Black Evangelicals and the Para-Church Movement,” in Robert J. Priest and Alvaro L. Nieves (eds.), *This Side of Heaven: Race, Ethnicity, and Christian Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 145-161; Alisse Waterston, “Are Latinos Becoming ‘White’ Folk?: And What that Still Says about Race in America,” *Transforming Anthropology* 14, no. 2 (2006): 133-50; and Adriana Valdez Young, “Honorary Whiteness,” *Asian Ethnicity* 10, no. 2 (2009): 177-185.

⁵⁴⁹ Thomas K. Nakayama and Robert L. Krizek, “Whiteness: A Strategic Rhetoric,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81, no. 3 (1995): 291-309.

⁵⁵⁰ Nakayama and Krizek, “Whiteness,” 299.

Following Nakayama and Krizek and other communication scholars, I view whiteness as a rhetorical configuration established through a multiplicity of relations,⁵⁵¹ however, my work also differs from this work in important ways. Throughout this project, I have focused on whiteness as a mobile and mutable racial formation rather than as an identity. What I mean by this requires further clarification—clearly, communication scholarship on whiteness does not assume whiteness to be a stable identity; rather, communication scholars interrogate how whiteness is constructed and, in doing so, understand whiteness “as a *process* constituted by an ensemble of social and material practices.”⁵⁵² At the same time, much communication scholarship as with much whiteness scholarship in general takes as its starting point the assumption that whiteness is an identity enacted by white bodies, asking how “whites learn, perform, and participate in whiteness.”⁵⁵³ This work, though important and necessary, differs from my approach, which aligns with transnational feminist interrogations that approach the complexities of whiteness as “best understood through an attention to [whiteness’] various geopolitical locations and their

⁵⁵¹ Ibid. See also, Phil Chidester, “May the Circle Stay Unbroken: *Friends*, the Presence of Absence, and the Rhetorical Reinforcement of Whiteness,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 25, no. 2 (2008): 157-174; Carrie Crenshaw, “Resisting Whiteness’ Rhetorical Silence,” *Western Journal of Communication* 61, no. 3 (1997): 253-78; Carrie Crenshaw, “Colorblind Rhetoric,” *The Southern Communication Journal* 63, no. 3 (1998): 244-56; Michelle A. Holling, “Patrolling National Identity, Masking White Supremacy: The Minuteman Project,” in Michael G. Lacy and Kent A. Ono (eds.), *Critical Rhetorics of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 98-116; and Ronald L. Jackson II, “White Space, White Privilege: Mapping Discursive Inquiry into the Self,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 85, no. 1 (1999): 38-54.

⁵⁵² Raka Shome, “Outing Whiteness,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 17, no. 3 (2000): 368.

⁵⁵³ Shome, “Outing Whiteness,” 367.

intersections with the interlocking axes of gender, class, sexuality, nation/ality, colonialism, and, today, the politics of transnationalism.”⁵⁵⁴

Routing my examination along these lines, I have attended to whiteness as a flexible and shifting assemblage that accumulates and arranges meanings within racialized, gendered, national, and colonial global systems. I have further employed assemblage not simply to mark a rhetorical terrain but to also attend to time, places, and bodies as actants within this assemblage. Approaching whiteness as a global assemblage draws attention to the ways in which whiteness *moves* through global spaces “as a conceptual category of modernity,” referencing but also “exceed[ing] discrete ethnic categories or markers.”⁵⁵⁵ From this perspective, interrogating whiteness requires attending to spatial, temporal, and bodily arrangements of power that emerge from and give rise to “specific social formations and processes that are not necessarily or only tied to what has been historically theorized as ‘race.’”⁵⁵⁶ In the next section, I address how whiteness is rendered through temporal, spatial, and bodily arrangements in the case studies.

Mapping the Topoi: Temporal, Spatial, and Embodied Becomings

In my analysis of the memoryscapes circulated within the trans/national border space and contact zone of the US Southwest, I addressed how rhetorics of time contribute

⁵⁵⁴ Shome, “Outing Whiteness,” 368. For examples of this type of scholarship, see Sara Ahmed, “A Phenomenology of Whiteness,” *Feminist Theory* 8, no. 2 (2007): 149-68; Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); and Jasbir K. Puar, “Transnational Configurations of Desire: The Nation and Its White Closets,” in Birgit Brander Rasmussen, Erick Klinenberg, Irene J. Nexica, and Matt Wray (eds.), *The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 167-183.

⁵⁵⁵ Puar, “Transnational Configurations of Desire,” 168.

⁵⁵⁶ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, xii.

to constructing visitors' "modern" identities against the primitive Native American Other represented in sites of memory while also naturalizing the settler nation-state through the forward movement of progress. Time is engaged both through direct references as well as through embodied experiences within the memory places analyzed. As visitors experience and romanticize a preserved and primitive Native "past," rhetorical enactments of going back in time position Native American histories as the collective past of the settler nation-state and its subjects. This is further reinforced through the themes I explicated in relation to Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's theorization of "settler moves to innocence"⁵⁵⁷:

Disappearance, which reproduces the longstanding tropes of both the "vanishing Indian" and settlers' arrivals in an empty land; Playing Indian, in which Native cultures and material items as well as memory places themselves become objects of desire for settler fantasies; In/Authenticity, which demands and romanticizes authentic representatives of the Native past while also prohibiting the entrance of Native American subjects into the spaces of the present; and We're Here to Learn, in which the act of learning absolves settler guilt and stands in for "the more uncomfortable task[s]" of acknowledging Indigenous sovereignty and "relinquishing stolen land."⁵⁵⁸

Indigenous cultures and knowledges are reconfigured as the property of the settler nation-state and its subjects not only through visitors' engagements within public memory places but in the material existence of memory places themselves. As temporal memoryscapes are circulated and reproduced through visitors' affective and bodily encounters within the places of public memory, they fold Native American histories into the

⁵⁵⁷ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 9.

⁵⁵⁸ Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," 19.

US nation-state's heritage. In doing so, they extend the nation's past into a time preceding its existence and simultaneously deny the futurity of Indigenous sovereignty. As time becomes place and place becomes time, Indigenous bodies, memories, and material cultures all become border objects, residing in the always-already elsewhere, outside the imagined communities of contemporary democratic (white) "civilization." Within this assemblage—if Native Americans are included within the nation-state at all—they are marked as racialized citizen-subjects rather than as sovereign national subjects.

While my discussion of memory places in the US Southwest emphasized how rhetorics of time rearrange bodies and places in the context of the US Southwest, my examination of the memoryscapes that mobilize a geopolitical alliance between the United States and Israel foregrounded how rhetorics of place rearrange times and bodies. Oriented around their support for Israel as a territorial nation-state, the Christians United for Israel utilize place-based arguments as well as place-as-rhetoric as they extol the Jewish people as the rightful owners of the land.⁵⁵⁹ As Israel is constructed as both the ancient homeland of the Jewish people and the site of democratic futurity, Palestinian claims to the land and its material and symbolic sites are erased. Palestinian particularity is also erased through racialized memoryscapes of civilization and progress that construct Arab cultures as backward, primitive, and uncivilized. In this manner, Palestinians are folded into an assemblage in which all of the Muslim bodies that lie beyond the Jewish state are rendered as threatening figures haunting the rhetorical landscapes of democracy. Racialized belongings within the nation-state of Israel and beyond are further sedimented through rhetorics of

⁵⁵⁹ For further discussion of place-based arguments and place-as-rhetoric, see Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, "Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 257–82.

Manifest Destiny and the narratives of chosenness and god-given rights to the land on which they rely. Like the US Wild West, in which gun-toting masculine protectors fought off their “savage” enemies to establish the settler nation-state, Israel is imagined as a place of constant peril where the militarized bodies of the nation-state must fight the terrorist enemies of democracy and progress.

Israel therefore carries on “the white man’s burden” through the “savage wars of peace” that inform settler colonial memoryscapes.⁵⁶⁰ As CUFI’s expressions of love for the nation of Israel circulate as affective intensities aligning the members of the CUFI public, they also construct alignments between nations conceptualized as having shared histories. This configuration importantly points to the ways in which Zionist Jews have been incorporated into global structures of whiteness.⁵⁶¹ While the historical Othering of the Jewish people in European contexts fueled Zionism’s efforts to remake both the nation-state and Jewish bodies in relation to Anglo-European norms of whiteness, in the United States, as Daniel Itzkovitz argues, “the Jews have often seemed a good metaphor for the notion of ‘American’ itself.”⁵⁶² Conflating the persecution of the Jewish people with the persecution of Christians, the United States, and US American values, CUFI’s rhetoric configures Israel as a territory upon which US settler and imperial desires and destinies can be enacted. Rhetorics of the Holocaust further figure into this constellation’s affectivity, constructing a hateful and threatening terrorist body intent on wiping both the nation-state of Israel and the United

⁵⁶⁰ From Rudyard Kipling’s poem, “The White Man’s Burden,” written in 1899. (Rudyard Kipling, “White Man’s Burden,” *Peace Review* 10, no. 3 [1998]: 311).

⁵⁶¹ This point has been more fully elaborated in Chapter 4.

⁵⁶² Daniel Itzkovitz, “Secret Temples,” in Jonathan Boyarin and Daniel Boyarin (eds.), *Jews and Other Differences: The New Jewish Cultural Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 177.

States off the map. As pro-Israel rhetorics sediment Jewish belongings within the nation-state of Israel, they therefore also configure temporal (non)belongings within trans/national communities. Marked as violent and uncontainable, Muslim bodies are positioned as border objects external to both the nation-state and the global order. Lacking intelligibility as global citizen-subjects they thus become targets of death, while Israeli and US exceptionalism is upheld.

In my analysis of FEMEN's rhetorical landscapes, I turned my focus specifically to rhetorics of bodies and bodies as rhetoric as they contribute to temporal and spatial belongings within the nation-state of France as well as globally. Examining FEMEN's use of the body as visual spectacle, I attended to how FEMEN's protests reproduce hegemonic discourses that position white female bodies as objects of patriarchal, national, and global desires even as they seek to interrupt these discourses. Moreover, as bodies interact with place in FEMEN France's anti-Islam protests, the tropes of the veil, Muslim women's oppression, and Muslim men as "savage" and animalistic, render Muslim bodies and cultural practices as temporally Other and as not belonging within the shared time of the "free" democratic nation-state and "modern" civilization. I also analyzed how the rhetorical function of the body in FEMEN extends beyond its function as visual rhetoric. As the site on which various struggles and identifications are enacted, the body aligns individual members with the collective body of FEMEN through the embodied act of protesting. For FEMEN activists, the body thus offers an individual as well as collective means by which members speak against their objectification and reclaim their freedom.

However, even as activists gain a sense of agency through their use of their bodies, FEMEN fails to account for the different mobilities and/or desires of differently racialized bodies within the (post-)colonial nation state. Instead, they mobilize universalizing Anglo-

European imperial and (settler) colonial memoryscapes that link freedom with individuality and ownership. While FEMEN's call to Muslim women to "get naked" ostensibly positions Muslim women as political agents it does so in very limited ways, contrasting (white) secular modernity against religious traditions marked as racially and culturally Other. White women thus become white saviors, spreading the rhetorics and practices of freedom, civilization, and democracy.⁵⁶³ Moreover, as the hyper-sexualized bodies of FEMEN activists construct a "new" feminism they also rely on Anglo-European feminist memoryscapes that reinforce the democratic nation-state as the site for remedying gender inequalities, failing to recognize the imbrication of the nation-state and democracy itself within global systems of inequality.

Drawing the arguments of the different chapters together reveals how whiteness moves through these sites not always or only in direct reference to race and its visibility but through settler colonial memoryscapes that entangle time, places, bodies, and memory in specific ways. I have mobilized the word *topoi* purposefully here, as it relates to the geographic perspective assemblage theory offers. As described by Carolyn Miller, "a *topos* might be thought of as such a point in semantic space that is particularly rich in connectivity to other significant or highly connected points."⁵⁶⁴ As such, "topoi are not only means for cognition but also serve as sources and targets of emotion."⁵⁶⁵ In referencing recurring concepts, "commonplaces," or sources of invention for argument, topoi also connect

⁵⁶³ Given FEMEN's anti-religious stance, it is particularly ironic that the relocation of activists from Ukraine to France to fight for women's freedom bears a certain resemblance to the role played by female missionaries whose overseas work to "civilize" colonial populations was central to the processes of empire.

⁵⁶⁴ Carolyn R. Miller, "The Aristotelian *Topos*," in Alan G. Gross and Arthur E. Walzer (eds.), *Rereading Aristotle's Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 142.

⁵⁶⁵ Ivo A. Strecker, "The Genius Loci of Hamar," *Northeast African Studies* 7, no. 3 (2000): 115.

memories with geographic locations.⁵⁶⁶ It is clear in these brief summaries that the topoi of time, places, and bodies are complexly entangled; these entanglements have been my focus in the preceding chapters. To locate bodies in time is also—or even primarily—an action of assembling bodies, and belongings, in place: clearly, we cannot travel back in time, as public memory places in the US Southwest induce visitors to do—we can only travel in places. Nor, of course, can simultaneously existing bodies be located in different times—instead, the rhetorical positioning of human and national bodies at different points on an imagined linear scale of time evidenced in each of the case studies reinforces the universalism of Anglo-European modernity. As each chapter brings one of the topoi of time, places, and bodies forward as a lens through which to investigate these relationships, it is thus not to disentangle it but rather to utilize it as an entrance point into the larger assemblage.

Settler Colonial Memoryscapes and Monuments of Difference

Within each of the case studies, whiteness as an assemblage touches down through time, place, and bodies as they connect to both real and imagined geographies. This fundamentally involves the processes of memory as they are intertwined with material structures and practices. What I have termed *settler colonial memoryscapes* brings together Indigenous theorizations of settler colonialism⁵⁶⁷ with Kendall Phillips and G. Mitchell

⁵⁶⁶ As described by Philip Ethington, who argues for a spatial understanding of history through the use of *topoi* as a cartographic method, in the Aristotelian usage the term “was most likely borrowed from the widely practiced mnemonic system of using geographic locations (familiar sites along a road, or rooms within one’s own house) to anchor memories.” (Philip J. Ethington, “Placing the Past: ‘Groundwork’ for a Spatial Theory of History,” *Rethinking History* 11, no. 4 [2007]: 483). For further discussion of “commonplaces” see Richard McKeon, “Creativity and the Commonplace,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6, no. 4 (1973): 199-210.

⁵⁶⁷ For further discussion see, for instance, Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, “Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013); Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Scott Lauria Morgensen, *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011);

Reyes's theorization of global memoryscapes.⁵⁶⁸ Settler colonialism complicates postcolonial theory by attending to the enduring structures of colonialism in settler states; it also interrupts the tendency for scholars working in the location of the United States to view the transnational as “elsewhere,” somewhere other than “here.” While the investigation of public memory has long been located at the level of the nation-state, global memoryscapes relate public memory to globalization and to movements across borders, thus requiring a rethinking of the relationships between local, national, and transnational practices, memories, and identities. As memories move across borders, nation-states are both de- and re-centered; in this manner, “rhetorical appeals to local or even national identities do not disappear, but rather, ‘the contemporary assertion of ethnicity and/or nationality is made within the global terms of identity and particularity.’”⁵⁶⁹

Attending to settler colonial memoryscapes as they contribute to whiteness as a global assemblage draws attention to geographies of public memory that shape material and digital places; in this dissertation these have included designated sites of public memory, the cityscapes of Phoenix, Washington DC, Jerusalem, and France, and social media and other online forums. Geographies of memory also shape bodily performances including those of visitors to museums and other memory places in the Southwest, CUFI members as they assemble in Washington DC, or travel to Israel individually and together, and FEMEN

Andrea Smith, “Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy,” in Daniel Martinez HoSang, Oneka LaBennett, and Laura Pulido (eds.), *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 66-90; and Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (New York: Cassell, 1999).

⁵⁶⁸ Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes (eds.) *Global Memoryscapes: Contesting Remembrance in a Transnational Age*. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

⁵⁶⁹ Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitcell Reyes, “Introduction: Surveying Global Memoryscapes: The Shifting Terrain of Public Memory Studies,” in Phillips and Reyes (eds.), *Global Memoryscapes*, 10.

activists as they specifically mobilize their bodies for rhetorical aims. Through rhetorical arrangements of time, places, and bodies, settler colonial memoryscapes support specific kinds of conquest and domination that, though racialized, occur under the guise of universal progress and liberation.

Settler colonial memoryscapes are reinforced through rhetorical enactments of enchantment; the discussions in preceding chapters offer evidence of visitors' enchantment with Native places and cultures in the Southwest, CUFI's enchantment with the Jewish people and the nation-state of Israel, and FEMEN's France's enchantment with the veil and the liberation of Muslim women. To a certain extent, these can all be seen as forms of "going Native," in which the practices of Others are selectively appropriated by colonizing populations as a means of performatively enacting their own identities as free and liberated subjects.⁵⁷⁰ In CUFI, this involves a series of replacements as CUFI's appropriation of Jewish history is not that of the colonized by the colonizer; rather, members' embrace of *talises*, *shofars*, the Star of David and other symbols, Israeli folks songs, and other elements of Israeli culture offer a means by which members stake claim to Israel as a land for Evangelical Christian biblical destinies while also reinforcing US imperialism. But in each of these cases, enchantment upholds imaginative geographies that align with the fantasies and desires of settler colonialism and empire.

Assemblages accumulate meaning as they travel through both time and space. While my focus in this dissertation has been on the contemporary, simultaneous, and relational rhetorical processes through which Others are constructed in each of my sites, the histories

⁵⁷⁰ For further discussion see Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

of settler colonialism in these sites, while irreducible, are not unrelated. Settler colonialism was well established in the United States before the formation of the settler nation-state of Israel, and the United States has long provided Israel with financial as well as rhetorical support. So too did the already “successful” project of settler colonialism in the United States inform France’s settler colonization of Algeria.⁵⁷¹ In highlighting continuities and similarities in the ways trans/national belongings are shaped through settler colonial memoscapes circulated within and beyond these contexts, however, my intention is not to render differences and discontinuities insignificant.

The contemporary (neo)colonial context of France differs from the United States and Israel in important ways in that, unlike the United States and Israel, mainland France is not structured by the necessity of the continued displacement of the land’s original occupants. However, a number of scholars have addressed French colonization of Algeria through a settler colonial framework, drawing parallels between the histories of settler colonialism in Algeria and other settler states.⁵⁷² Given that France’s Muslim population has largely migrated from Algeria, this settler colonial history extends into the contemporary

⁵⁷¹ Ashley Sanders offers a comparative study of the establishment of settler colonies in the United States and French colonial Algeria. Her analysis of historical documents shows that the process of establishing settler colonies followed similar trajectories in both locations and that France, to a certain extent, used the United States as a role model for its colonial project. (See Ashley Sanders, “Between Two Fires: The Origins of Settler Colonialism in the United States and French Algeria,” Dissertation, Claremont University, 2015).

⁵⁷² David Prochaska, for example, argues that colonialism in Algeria can only be understood through a settler colonial framework. (David Prochaska, *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920* [Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1990]; and David Prochaska, “Making Algeria French and Unmaking French Algeria,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 3, no. 4 [1990]: 305-28). For further discussion, see Benjamin Claude Brower, “Rethinking Abolition in Algeria Slavery and the ‘Indigenous Question’ (Repenser l’abolition en Algérie: l’esclavage et ‘la question indigène’),” *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* 49, no. 195 (2009): 805-27; Sung-Eun Choi, *Decolonization and the French of Algeria: Bringing the Settler Colony Home* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); and Sanders, “Between Two Fires.”

socioeconomic and representational landscapes of race relations in France within which FEMEN's protests unfold. While FEMEN France's actions are thus not directly tied to settler colonial memoryscapes in the same ways that memory places in the US Southwest and pro-Zionist rhetorics are, they unfold within a racial context tied to France's settler history.⁵⁷³ Moreover, France's national imagining of itself and its (white) citizen-subjects as emblems of secularity and freedom—a discourse central to FEMEN's articulation of itself—is tied to larger memoryscapes of settler colonialism as a possessive investment in the properties of whiteness.

Identifying the memoryscapes that contribute to the assemblage of whiteness in these sites as “settler colonial” memoryscapes calls attention to the structural permanence of colonial and imperial desire as it arranges human, political, and geographic bodies. Settler colonialism requires disappearing the original occupants from the land; it is thus, at its roots, both a material structure reliant on violence, dispossession, genocide, and enduring control over populations and a rhetorical project of rearranging memory in ways that uphold the settler state's existence. Evidence of this process is seen in the ways that Other bodies are rhetorically removed from the land through their symbolic and material placement outside the nation-state; this is true for the Native American bodies positioned in the past by memory places in the US Southwest and the spatio-temporal Othering of Palestinian and

⁵⁷³ As described by Penny Edwards, “the term ‘settler colony’ or ‘settler colonialism’ is generally now understood to embrace Algeria, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and North America and to exclude British India, French Indochina, and the Dutch East Indies.” Also of relevance as it relates to the project this dissertation undertakes is Edwards interest in “ruptur[ing] the binary of ‘settler colonies’ versus ‘non-settler’ colonies” to instead interrogate rhetorics that straddle various colonial domains. (See Penny Edwards, “On Home Ground: Settling Land and Domesticating Difference in the ‘Non-Settler’ Colonies of Burma and Cambodia,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 4, no. 3 [2003]. *Project Muse*. <https://muse.jhu.edu/>).

Arab bodies in pro-Israel rhetorics circulated within the United States and transnationally. The conflicts over immigration and specifically immigration from Muslim countries that inform the racial assemblages in which FEMEN France's anti-Islam protests unfold are also about the land of the nation, who belongs on this land, and who does not. In each of these contexts then, as the imagined national subject is aligned with rights the imagined nation is aligned with ground; moreover, "this alignment is affected by the representation of both the rights of the subject and the grounds of the nation as already under threat."⁵⁷⁴

Configurations of threat are rhetorically powerful in the ways that they (dis)align bodies through fear and hate. I opened this dissertation with reference to the rhetorics circulated by the Bush administration following 9/11, in which "hate produces an imagined mass of brown/black/bearded/Muslim/Taliban men that seems to be the source of all violence."⁵⁷⁵ This configuration has only gained in its affective power in the years following the World Trade Center attacks; at the time of this writing the most recent iterations of Muslim bodies as terrorist, hateful, and threatening include US presidential candidate Donald Trump's call for a complete ban on the entrance of any Muslims into the United States following a mass shooting in San Bernadino, California;⁵⁷⁶ the UK's vote to leave the European Union—a decision that many, including former Leave supporter Baroness

⁵⁷⁴ Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text* 22, no. 2 (2004): 118.

⁵⁷⁵ Shenila Khoja-Moolji, "Reading Malala: (De)(Re)Territorialization of Muslim Collectivities," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 35, no. 3 (2015): 540.

⁵⁷⁶ Ed Pilkington, "Donald Trump: Ban All Muslims Entering US," *The Guardian*, December 7, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/dec/07/donald-trump-ban-all-muslims-entering-us-san-bernardino-shooting>

Sayeeda Warsi, have argued is connected with hate and fear of Muslim immigrants;⁵⁷⁷ and global reactions to the mass shooting at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida by Omar Mateen, a Muslim man who professed allegiance to the Islamic State.⁵⁷⁸ As rhetorics of terror and fears of Islamic radicalization mobilize Anglo-European states to call for stricter border controls, they are underpinned by the same discourses that have justified the killing of Indigenous populations in settler colonial states: “the idea that modern enlightened, secular peoples must protect themselves from pre-modern, religious peoples whose loyalty to tribe and community reigns over their commitment to the rule of law.”⁵⁷⁹

As also discussed in the opening chapter and further evidenced in the case studies of CUFI and FEMEN, rhetorics of gender, gender oppression, and masculinist protection further fuel narratives of terror and the temporal, spatial, and embodied distinctions they uphold. Rhetorically configured as “irredeemably fanatical, irrational, and thus dangerous, Muslim men are also marked as deeply misogynist patriarchs who have not progressed into the age of gender equality, and who indeed cannot.”⁵⁸⁰ Accounts of Muslim women’s oppression therefore not only sediment the equation of Muslim male bodies with violence

⁵⁷⁷ Jon Stone, “EU Referendum: Baroness Warsi Subjected to Islamophobic Abuse by Brexit Supporters after Defecting,” *Independent*, June 20, 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/eu-referendum-baroness-warsi-defect-islamophobic-abuse-brexit-supporters-remain-leave-a7091076.html>

⁵⁷⁸ Jim Yardley, “Globally, Orlando Attack Strikes Now-Familiar Fault Lines,” *The New York Times*, June 13, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/14/world/europe/globally-orlando-attack-strikes-now-familiar-fault-lines.html>

⁵⁷⁹ Sherene H. Razack, *Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law & Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 9-10.

⁵⁸⁰ Waqas Tufail and Scott Poynting, “Muslim and Dangerous: ‘Grooming’ and the Politics of Racialisation,” in Douglass pratt and Rachel Woodlock (eds.), *Fear of Muslims?: International Perspectives on Islamophobia* (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 90.

but also expel them from the present. Moreover, as discussed at greater length in Chapter 5, these accounts inspire “affects of shock, pain, pity, compassion, and hatred,” through which western audiences are able to see themselves as civilized, developed, and supporting of gender equality.⁵⁸¹ Muslim women—as border objects—therefore become markers of western communities’ modernity.

The similarities between representations of Muslim men in post-9/11 discourses of terror and security and representations of Native American men during the settling of the United States warrant further attention here, as they illustrate both continuities and shifts in how settler colonial memoryscapes are mobilized and adapted into different contexts. As Shari Huhndorf describes, until the mid-nineteenth century, Euro-American accounts of interaction with Natives were typified by “captivity narratives describing the horrifying fates of noble settlers, often [white] women, at the hands of violent savages.”⁵⁸² Through the circulation of these accounts, the military conquest of North America was justified by “fictions of Native peoples’ aggression and inherent malevolence.”⁵⁸³ In post-9/11 discourses even as the “savage” oppression of Muslim women and children circulates as a richly affective sign, the threat to Muslim women’s safety and/or bodily agency is not the primary concern mobilized by this sign as it travels through national and global political landscapes. Instead, the oppression of women and children is utilized to signify the terrorist’s inhumanity. This results in an assemblage of associations in which even as the liberated (white) western female subject is reified through representations of Muslim women as

⁵⁸¹ Khoja-Moolji, “Reading Malala,” 540.

⁵⁸² Shari Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 20.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*

oppressed, she is also threatened by the violent uncontainability of Muslim male bodies. The Muslim terrorist Other—who hates freedom, equality, secularity, and everything the “modern” western subject stands for—threatens to pull all of “civilization” back into a pre-modern “past,” erasing both the present and future of democracy. As settler colonial memoryscapes rely on and reproduce rhetorics of masculinist protection, in which the nation-state shields the world’s women and children from harm, they therefore naturalize contemporary formations of empire through familiar rhetorics of paternalism and progress. In so doing they perform the dual function of justifying military action against the state’s enemies while also reinforcing the state’s power over its citizen-subjects.

As Sara Ahmed describes, “the turning away from the object of fear involves a turning towards home, as a ‘fellow feeling.’”⁵⁸⁴ In post-9/11 landscapes, the terrorist Other, as fearful object, sediments identifications with the nation as well as with an imagined global community of (white) democratic nations standing together against the threatening bodies who would seek to dismantle them. Terrorist Others thus become what Judith Butler refers to as the constitutive outside, that which is relied upon for the “inside” to construct its identity.⁵⁸⁵ In this process, fear expands rather than shrinks bodies, “allow[ing] some bodies to occupy more space through the identification with the collective body, which stands in for the individual body, and moves on its behalf.”⁵⁸⁶ The global power of the US political body is therefore extended through “war on terror” rhetorics that reproduce and rely on three

⁵⁸⁴ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 74.

⁵⁸⁵ Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 2011/1993), xiii.

⁵⁸⁶ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 74.

recognizable figures: dangerous Muslim men, imperiled Muslim women, and civilized Anglo-Europeans. As Sherene Razack notes, the third figure, though infrequently named explicitly in contemporary discourses, “nevertheless anchors the first two figures.”⁵⁸⁷ Together, “these figures animate a story about a family of white nations, a civilization, obliged to use force and terror to defend itself against a menacing cultural Other. The story is not just a story, of course, but is the narrative scaffold for the making of an empire dominated by the United States and the white nations who are its allies.”⁵⁸⁸

Addressing this constellation of figures as a continuation of settler colonial memoryscapes that uphold whiteness as a global assemblage is important. While postcolonial scholars in the US academy have frequently turned their attention to places outside the US nation-state, and while the de-centering of the US nation-state is in many cases necessary and productive, to only focus on colonialism “elsewhere” inadvertently reinforces US exceptionalism. Theorizing settler colonial memoryscapes interrupts this tendency, identifying the interconnectivities that tied—and continue to tie—the US settler colonial state to other historical and contemporary processes of Anglo-European colonialism, neo-colonialism, and empire. Jodi Byrd argues that the “savage” Indigenous Other is “the necessary supplement that continually haunts the edges of any evocation of civilization or Western thought”⁵⁸⁹ and, as such, continues to function “as the constitutive rationale for imperial domination.”⁵⁹⁰ “Savageness” thus becomes a kind of affective register that works

⁵⁸⁷ Razack, *Casting Out*, 5.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁹ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, 9.

⁵⁹⁰ Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*, 27.

by mobilizing memory in racialized ways. As Ahmed notes, the slide between different figures of difference “constructs a relation of resemblance between the figures,” in which “what makes them ‘alike’ may be their ‘unlikeness’ from ‘us.’”⁵⁹¹ What I have suggested throughout this dissertation is that the terrorist Other that appears in FEMEN and CUFT’s rhetorics is inextricably linked to Native American Others conceptualized as the original threat to democracy.

To say that these figures are linked is not to say that they are the same; it is, however, to address the ripples of significations and affects that move between them. The differences between the ways that rhetorics of civilization/whiteness/modernity take shape in memoryscapes of Native Americans in the US Southwest as compared to the ways they emerge in relation to Muslim bodies is illustrative because it relates to both the temporality of colonial conquest and the contemporary demands of US imperialism. While rhetorics of the “savage Indian” are not completely elided within the rhetorical landscapes of the US Southwest, they are secondary to the romanticization of a primitive people imagined to offer a window into the past of Anglo-European civilization. With the conquered “Indian” no longer perceived as a viable threat to the US settler state or western modernity, discourses of “savagery” are shifted elsewhere—particularly onto the bodies of Muslim men in the contemporary political moment—at the same time that Native Americans are folded into the nation and its history as evidence of the tolerance of the liberal multicultural nation-state and its citizen-subjects. The discourses of primitivism that circulate in memory places in the Southwest thus offer a transcendent function. As described by Greg Dickinson, Brian Ott, and Eric Aoki, “the social guilt associated with the violent colonization of the West is

⁵⁹¹ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 44.

assuaged by a discourse of reverence, which erects a new social hierarchy in which respect for and celebration of difference becomes the valued social virtue.”⁵⁹² However, because the “vanishing Indian” supported by discourses of primitivism belongs only in the past, these discourses still allow no place for Native American presence in the present, erasing Indigenous sovereignty while upholding both the settler state and its global imperial aims. As Andrea Smith puts it, “Native peoples can claim a certain kind of nation; however, it is a nation that must disappear...into whiteness.”⁵⁹³

As Native American Others, Muslim Others and other global Others are rhetorically positioned as temporally outside of the places of democracy, they therefore become what I refer to as *monuments of difference*—border objects and objects of memory that stabilize national communities and the global community of (white) nations. As a mode of public memory, monuments affirm dominant power structures. Rhetorically, they are frequently associated with the nation’s remembrance of itself. As such, they serve the function of both celebration and preservation, offering patriotic lessons as they commemorate and glorify the notable accomplishments of ostensibly “great” persons, nations, or events. As they link words, images, and places, monuments attempt to stabilize memory. This is an enduring task given that memory is inherently unstable and shifting, open to a multiplicity of interpretations and change over time. However, monuments acquire authority through their seeming permanence; as Kirk Savage puts it, they “stand apart from everyday experience and

⁵⁹² Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2006): 29.

⁵⁹³ Andrea Smith, “The Colonialism That Is Settled and the Colonialism That Never Happened,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society*, June 20, 2014. <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/20/the-colonialism-that-is-settled-and-the-colonialism-that-never-happened/>

seem to promise something eternal, akin to the sacred.”⁵⁹⁴ As monuments of difference inscribed by dominant power structures, Other bodies reinforce the collective bodies of whiteness, offering lessons in gendered and racialized citizenship and in the greatness of the democratic nation-state and Anglo-European civilization. Monuments of difference thus inspire enchantment and exaltation—states of being that endow national and global citizen-subjects with ontological coherence.⁵⁹⁵

Monuments of difference are not “real”; they are representations that by nature reduce the complexities of the thing they represent. And yet, they are fundamentally material in their existence and the responses they inspire: “the public monument speaks to a need for attachment that can be met only in a real place, where the imagined community actually materializes and the existence of the nation is confirmed in a simple but powerful way.”⁵⁹⁶ As border objects gain meaning in relation to other objects, so too do monuments gather significance through their relation to other monuments, as part of larger commemorative landscapes. Moreover, monuments transmit meaning only through interaction and affect. Through the material experiences they produce, monuments act rhetorically in a manner that “is not exactly in the realm of imagination or reason, but grounded in the felt connection of individual to collective body.”⁵⁹⁷ Finally, monuments offer viewers a means by which to contemplate their humanity; reinforcing not only “fellow feeling” but also *good* feelings—

⁵⁹⁴ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 6-7.

⁵⁹⁵ For further discussion see Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

⁵⁹⁶ Savage, *Monument Wars*, 4.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

even when the feeling is bad. What I mean by this is that as racial Others are positioned as spatial and temporal Others—becoming monuments of difference against which whiteness is stabilized—they enable “modern” western subjects to understand themselves as benevolent, tolerant, free, and full of love for all of humankind. Monuments of difference thus uphold what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri refer to as imperial sovereignty—sovereignty that operates not through force, but by presenting itself as the representative and bestower of universal rights, order, and ethical principles.⁵⁹⁸ In their material endurance, monuments of difference can also be conceptualized as a form of imperial debris, or what Ann Laura Stoler refers to as “ruins of empire.”⁵⁹⁹ As Stoler describes:

“Ruins” are often enchanted, desolate spaces, large-scale monumental structures abandoned and grown over. Ruins provide a quintessential image of what has vanished from the past and has long decayed.... In thinking about “ruins of empire” we explicitly work against [the] melancholic gaze to reposition the present in the wider structures of vulnerability and refusal that imperial formations sustain.⁶⁰⁰

Monuments of difference trace trajectories of power onto the surfaces of human and geographic bodies, persisting in the debris they leave in symbolic and material landscapes.

Through settler colonial memoryscapes and monuments of difference, whiteness as a global assemblage gathers material agency that is not located in a centralized figure or power, but rather is distributed throughout a multiplicity of bodies, signs, and affects. As it mobilizes rhetorics of masculinist protection and the fighting off of “savage” enemies,

⁵⁹⁸ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2000).

⁵⁹⁹ Ann Laura Stoler, “Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruination,” *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (2008): 194.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

Whiteness thus moves through times and places as a kind of rhetorical frontier, spreading “civilization” (e.g., Anglo-European modernity and territorial control) and symbolically and/or materially disappearing the bodies that stand in its way. Conceptualizing whiteness as a frontier draws attention to both movement and difference; the border between “us” and “them” or between “the West” and “the Rest” remains one of its most powerful mobilizing forces. The frontier is also a deeply gendered space in which masculine (white) men and feminine (white) women create a new national identity on the land through hard work, perseverance, and the pioneer spirit. In addition, the frontier is a militarized space characterized by the rhetoric of Indigenous threats to the safety of the nation. That the frontier and its occupants became the symbol of US Americanness despite the longer existence of settler colonies on the Eastern seaboard of the United States speaks to the centrality of the conquest of both the land and its original inhabitants in creating the US national imaginary. As time, spaces, and bodies are demarcated in relation to one another whiteness assembles “modern” national and global citizen-subjects deemed worthy of rights, protection, land, and life.

As shown in the case studies, one means by which settler colonial memoryscapes reconcile the violences of colonization with the construction of democratic states is through discourses of liberal multiculturalism that conceptualize the nation as a space of equality and freedom. As a rhetorical configuration, whiteness thus gains rhetorical traction precisely through its (partial) incorporation of non-white bodies, which further enables and reifies the exclusion of Others. This does not, of course, mean that differently racialized bodies within Anglo-European nation-states have the same access to rights and protection. Rather, as the rhetorical construction of democratic citizenship as incorporating all of the nation-state’s subjects equally masks the material reality of racial inequalities within the nation-state,

racialized trans/national relationships are further reinforced. As a global assemblage, whiteness thus, to a certain extent, rhetorically dislodges itself from race (even as it enacts racial differences) through the “chain of equivalences” addressed in Chapter 5, in which “whiteness becomes equated with citizenship, and citizenship with freedom,” against those bodies and nations deemed as unfree.⁶⁰¹

Assembling Trans/National Citizen-Subjects: The Body Politics of Whiteness

Throughout this dissertation, when addressing citizenship, I have focused on the symbolic processes and modes of public engagement through which the subjects of the nation-state are discursively and relationally constructed rather than on the formal legal and political structures of citizenship. This is not to elide the force of material structures of citizenship that contribute to assembling whiteness in its global iterations. In each of the case studies that have comprised this dissertation these structures have significant impact as they intertwine with the rhetorical processes that shape collective identities in relation to national and global publics. In this section, I turn briefly to entanglements between the rhetorical configurations and material structures of citizenship in the case studies. These entanglements illustrate how the process of incorporating certain Others into the nation-state further reinforces the abjection of those who are seen as incompatible—or incomprehensible—within trans/national democratic public culture.

Interrogating citizenship as a rhetorical process that is impacted by but not limited to an official designation is necessary given that legal recognition does not necessarily correspond with symbolic recognition. This is clearly seen in the subordinate status of France’s largely Muslim immigrant population who, despite formal status as state subjects,

⁶⁰¹ Aimee Carillo Rowe, “Whose ‘America’? The Politics of Rhetoric and Space in the Formation of U.S. Nationalism,” *Radical History Review* 89, no. 1 (2004): 124.

do not fit into the construction of the “ideal citizen” in France. Despite her refugee status, Inna Shevchenko, however, does, and in July of 2013, France released a new Marianne stamp modeled after her.⁶⁰² A symbol of the French Republic, Marianne is an icon of liberty and freedom as well as of French womanhood, which “though posing as a universal ideal of female emancipation, is extremely limited and limiting.”⁶⁰³ As the Marianne-FEMEN stamp sediments Shevchenko’s visibility as an iconic subject (and defender) of the rights of citizenship in France, it also reinforces Shevchenko’s mobility as a global citizen-subject compatible with the ideal of French womanhood as white, beautiful, feminine, strong, secular and so forth. In doing so, it reflects the ways in which FEMEN’s activism and especially the anti-Islam protests discussed in Chapter 5 align with a longer tradition of feminism in France in which “women who are ethnically or culturally Other to a reified notion of French womanhood must re-republicanise by re-feminising.”⁶⁰⁴ Shevchenko’s welcome into France as not only a legal citizen but as a symbol of the Republic can therefore be seen to unfold within a larger assemblage of discourses regarding immigration, integration, and the in/compatibility of French and Islamic values. This example is indicative of how whiteness articulates global identities and spaces by normalizing white western subjects as global citizen-subjects able to move freely across borders. FEMEN’s modes of public engagement including their direct action protests, media visibility, and reliance on social media networks further reflect their mobility and privilege as global citizen-subjects.

⁶⁰² “Femen’s Inna Shevchenko inspired France’s Marianne Stamp,” *BBC News*, July 25, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23320741>

⁶⁰³ Anna Kemp, “‘Marianne D’Aujourd’hui?’: The Figure of the Beurette in Contemporary French Feminist Discourses,” *Modern & Contemporary France* 17, no. 1 (2009): 21.

⁶⁰⁴ Kemp, “Marianne D’Aujourd’hui?” 25.

At the same time, FEMEN also challenges the limitations of structures of citizenship in France, and especially the conservative ideologies of the National Front. FEMEN activists have frequently protested against Marine Le Pen, a strong proponent of anti-immigration and other socially conservative policies. Calling for a moratorium on legal immigration, Le Pen has blamed President Francois Hollande and former President Nicolas Sarkozy for “unpinn[ing] the Islamic fundamentalist grenade,” a statement which clearly equates the bodies of Muslim immigrants with terrorist bodies.⁶⁰⁵ A brief example of one of FEMEN’s attempted interventions is useful here. Following the 2014 “Fascist Epidemic” protest in which I was a participant, FEMEN responded to Le Pen’s racist call to the French population to “make French children” as a response to “considerable immigration.”⁶⁰⁶ The photo FEMEN circulated on their social media networks features a naked, blonde French activist wearing a flower crown with her legs spread wide as she presses a globe against her as if having sex with it. As her brightly-red lipsticked mouth opens, her eyes close, and her head tilts back, the words painted across her chest decry: “Foreigners Fuck Better.” The accompanying message reads: “The fascist epidemic transforms into STD and try to contaminate our vaginas. As a serum, Femen sextremists call all the French women...to fuck as many foreigners as they can before the European elections. We count on you to have many multicolors [*sic*] buns in your ovens!”⁶⁰⁷ In this and other protests, FEMEN attempts

⁶⁰⁵ “‘Quite a Paradox’: Topless FEMEN Activist Attack Marine Le Pen at May Day Rally [VIDEO],” RT, May 1, 2015, <https://www.rt.com/news/254925-france-le-pen-femen/>

⁶⁰⁶ “Femen Calls on French Women to Have Sex with Foreigners and Produce Children,” *The Daily Stormer*, May 26, 2014, <http://www.dailystormer.com/femen-calls-on-french-women-to-have-sex-with-foreigners-and-produce-children/>

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid. Although I do not take it up here, it is clear that this protest also mobilizes women’s role as the biological and cultural reproducers of the nation.

to challenge the racialized construction of citizenship in France. Their protest, however, reveals a paradox underlying (and also, I would suggest, undermining) their strategy—the equation of French citizenship with whiteness, and of non-whiteness with foreignness.

For the Christians United for Israel, rhetorics of citizenship and multiculturalism also intertwine with racialized legal and political structures of citizenship. Most of CUFI's membership and all of its prominent speakers are members of the US conservative Right who are at the forefront of anti-immigration rhetorics and policies in the United States. While the Evangelical Christian Right is arguably not a mainstream movement, it has been a powerful force in US politics for decades, with over 25% of US voters identifying as white Evangelical Protestants.⁶⁰⁸ In fact, according to Carl Davidson and John Harris, the Christian Right in the United States has used the economic stresses and identity reconfigurations wrought by globalization to build a “politics of resentment” that converges around the themes of race, gender, and class.⁶⁰⁹ As CUFI utilizes rhetorics of terror to call not only for US military involvement worldwide but for further border securitization to protect the nation and its citizens at home, they reinforce racial belongings within the nation-state. At the same time, promotional materials that feature Black and Hispanic leaders within CUFI give the organization a kind of multicultural capital that ostensibly masks its participation in the structures of whiteness at both the national and global levels.

⁶⁰⁸ William Martin, “The Christian Right and American Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Policy* 114 (Spring) (1999): 66-80.

⁶⁰⁹ Carl Davidson and John Harris, “Globalisation, Theocracy and the New Fascism: The US Right's Rise to Power,” *Race & Class* 47, no. 3 (2006): 50. For further discussion of how CUFI mobilizes this politics of resentment see Roberta Chevrette and Lisa Braverman, “Brothers, Fathers, Terrorists; Masculine Assemblages in Glenn Beck's Rhetoric of US-Israel Unity Post-9/11,” *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 2 (2013): 81-106.

CUFF's modes of public engagement are also clearly intertwined with political structures. As a lobbying organization, CUFF organizes its members to call and write to their representatives in Congress, to make themselves visible on college campuses and through events like the annual Washington Summit, and to donate to CUFF's campaigns. These strategies rely on members' formal recognition as citizens, sedimenting the CUFF collective through recognizable modes of publicity and public involvement. These strategies of public engagement are built on the democratic notion of ordinary citizens making a difference and getting their voices heard. This further adds affective value to CUFF's rhetorical construction of the Middle East as a place where the rule of the land is established by guns rather than law, and where citizens do not have the right to speak up and participate in the governance of the nation. Against these intolerable structures, the United States and Israel are cast as bright beacons of hope and progress.

Political and rhetorical structures of citizenship are also intertwined within places of memory in the US Southwest. Although public memory places are less obviously political than activities such as rallying one's Congress members or engaging in protest, Teresa Bergman has argued that "the act of visiting a museum, memorial, or historic site constitutes a performance of citizenship."⁶¹⁰ Many places of memory are designated as such by national and/or state governments; moreover, public memory scholars have offered a foundation for understanding museums as "instrument[s] for the democratic education of the 'masses,' or the 'citizen.'"⁶¹¹ Tony Bennett's analysis of the emergence of the museum as a disciplinary

⁶¹⁰ Teresa Bergman, *Exhibiting Patriotism: Creating and Contesting Interpretations of American Historic Sites* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2013), 16.

⁶¹¹ Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, "The Museum in the Disciplinary Society," in Susan M. Pearce (ed.), *Museum Studies in Material Culture* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1989), 71.

site traces a genealogy of “the birth of the museum”⁶¹² as a disciplinary formation through which Anglo-European subjects could be interpellated into a “self-regulating citizenry.”⁶¹³ Specifically envisioned as sites where “civilized” behaviors could be cultivated and instilled, museums shifted the display of colonial “curiosities” from private parlors to public spaces, contributing to the construction of national citizen-subjects against their colonial Others.

As Aaron Hess and I have addressed at greater length elsewhere, within the context of the Southwest, the knowledges that are produced and enacted within memory places are thus “contextualized into broader landscapes of citizenship.”⁶¹⁴ As primarily white visitors participate in the performance of cultural citizenship, or what Aihwa Ong describes as the “dual process of self-making and being-made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil society,”⁶¹⁵ they also become the privileged subjects of the memory places analyzed, and of the narratives of culture, civilization, and progress they uphold.

Differentiated from a Native Other rendered as non-white and non-modern, visitors “engage the Native past as a reflection of what civilization and US citizenship are *not*.”⁶¹⁶ Even when rhetorics of multiculturalism ostensibly incorporate contemporary Native Americans as citizen-subjects within the US nation-state (though typically in limited ways that demand an “authentic” cultural performance), elided in these rhetorical constructions of

⁶¹² Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995).

⁶¹³ Tony Bennett, “The Exhibitionary Complex,” *New Formations* 4 (Spring) (1988): 76.

⁶¹⁴ Roberta Chevrette and Aaron Hess, “Unearthing the Native Past: Citizen Archaeology and Modern (Non)Belonging at the Pueblo Grande Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 12, no. 2 (2015): 153.

⁶¹⁵ Aihwa Ong, “Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States,” *Current Anthropology* 37, no. 5 (1996): 738.

⁶¹⁶ Chevrette and Hess, “Unearthing the Native Past,” 154.

citizenship is the question of Indigenous sovereignty. Instead the distinctiveness of Indigenous nations from the United States as well as from one another is erased as “Native American” becomes a racial identity within the US nation-state rather than an indicator of sovereign national status.

Illustrated in the entanglements between rhetorical constructions and material structures of citizenship in each of my sites is the ways that communities and belongings configured as “national” are always already embedded within transnational and spatial relationships. Moreover, the nation and, more specifically, the sovereign territorial nation envisioned as both democratic and “modern,” is a mode of access enabling certain bodies to become intelligible as global citizen-subjects by marking those Others who lie outside the places and temporality of the nation. In other words, the process of granting rights to certain Others within the nation-state “gives the national body the ‘feeling’ that they are a benevolent, multicultural, and progressive country,” even as other Others are abjected from national landscapes.⁶¹⁷ These processes, while they exceed whiteness understood as a visible racial identity, reflect how whiteness operates as a global assemblage organizing bodies through their different degrees of access to land, rights, mobility, and even life itself.

Bringing the insights of these case studies together to consider how whiteness, as a global assemblage, touches down in different trans/national contexts reveals both shifts and continuities in the maps of whiteness that organize and extend beyond national borders. I have argued that, as a system of power tied to settler colonial memoryscapes, whiteness operates through the (partial) folding in of differently-marked bodies. This is seen in the

⁶¹⁷ Jennifer Wingard, *Branded Bodies, Rhetoric, and the Neoliberal Nation-State* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), 15.

ways that memory places in the Southwest fold Native Americans into US history, subsuming Indigenous claims to sovereignty by locating Native bodies as either objects of the nation's past or as multicultural subjects of the nation's present. This is also seen in CUFI's rhetorical construction of Israel as a multicultural nation where all citizens have equal rights as well as in the organization's depiction of itself as multicultural even as it works in the interest of white Christian belongings in the United States. National discourses in France, similar to those in the United States and in other European nations, also promote the idea of the multicultural nation state where all citizens have equal opportunity.

While the rhetoric of multicultural liberalism clearly fails to deliver on its promise of equality for all, it is important to note that as voluntary migrants from ethnically- or religiously-marked groups in Europe relocated in settler states including the United States, Israel, French Algeria, and other contexts not addressed in this dissertation, they frequently did experience greater equality and opportunity than in their home countries. This equality and opportunity, however, relied on the drastic inequality required to displace Indigenous peoples from their lands as well as the coercive labor of Indigenous peoples and African slaves. Though rendered differently in each of these contexts, the racialized "death of the primitive"⁶¹⁸ can thus be seen to contribute to the symbolic and material mobility of Anglo-European bodies that carry rights as trans/national citizen-subjects: tourists in the US Southwest who come from near and far, reenacting the imperial formation in which the Western subject is both spectator and conqueror in Other exotic lands; CUFI members whose mobility as trans/national citizen-subjects allows them to not only traverse the spaces of Capitol Hill with ease but also to travel to Israel where they visit religious sites while

⁶¹⁸ Huhndorf, *Going Native*, 115.

looking out at the barbed wire fences that prohibit Palestinians from visiting these same sites; and the imperial feminism of FEMEN activists who travel across national borders to protest “primitive” practices in Other nations.

To summarize the preceding discussion, I have argued that whiteness as an assemblage locates bodies within shifting and fluid maps of power that are reliant on the formation of settler states as well as on interactions between states in the “intercolonial” global order.⁶¹⁹ As it “orients bodies in specific directions, affecting how they ‘take up’ space, and what they ‘can do’” in different spaces,⁶²⁰ whiteness can thus be seen to unfold through spatial arrangements that manifest in different ways as they organize bodies across local, national, and global scales. Understanding whiteness as an assemblage importantly draws attention to the ways that whiteness moves not only in reference to race but also through the rhetorics of democracy, equality, and freedom that reinforce physical, temporal, and affective borders between different bodies, communities, and publics.

Identifying the role of settler colonial memoryscapes in assembling whiteness is thus a crucial move in shifting the terrains of emancipatory politics given that settler colonialism sets the very terms through which its attempted contestations occur. As Smith explains, “the way we are supposed to contest settler democracy is to contest the gap between what settler democracy promises and what it performs” and yet, the very act of doing so “is the most effective way of actually ensuring its universality.”⁶²¹ In other words, as settler colonial

⁶¹⁹ Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), xiv.

⁶²⁰ Sara Ahmed, “A Phenomenology of Whiteness,” *Feminist Theory* 8, no. 2 (2007): 149.

⁶²¹ Smith, “The Colonialism That Is Settled,” *Decolonization*, <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/20/the-colonialism-that-is-settled-and-the-colonialism-that-never-happened/>

structures reconfigure colonial and imperial difference as racial difference they articulate frames of resistance “within a domesticated anti-racist framework that cannot challenge the settler state itself.”⁶²²

Assemblage as a Heuristic: Implications and Directions

This dissertation extends current approaches to studying rhetoric, public memory, and intercultural communication in global, trans/national, and (post)colonial contexts in several ways. The preceding discussion has identified the implications of theorizing whiteness as a global assemblage; in this concluding section I identify further implications and directions suggested by this work, focusing on what assemblage offers as a theoretical and methodological heuristic.

To begin with, assemblage theory’s disruption of identity-based frameworks offers productive directions for how we understand and theorize culture, race, and difference. As an analytic, assemblage is concerned with arrangements of bodies rather than with individual identities per se. By drawing attention to “the fragmentary, shifting, and representative nature of identity,”⁶²³ assemblage counters the long-existing tendency in intercultural communication as well as in some rhetorical scholarship in which identity is mobilized as an acontextual framework or category. Instead, assemblage focuses on the materiality and specificity of racialized processes as they are embedded within places and unfold in embodied interactions. This requires “a move from considering difference as an innate trait of a person to reconsidering difference as naming an underlying, comparative relationship

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Wingard, *Branded Bodies*, 20-21.

among people.”⁶²⁴ Put differently, to examine racial formations and/or cultural differences through the framework of assemblage is to attend to a geography of relations rather than a geography of being.

Approaching racial formations as a geography of relations is to examine how different bodies as well as different systems including gender, sexuality, class, nation, citizenship, etc., interact within an assemblage of connections and disarticulations. This is important, given that identities, nations, and even transnational systems only exist in relation to other identities, nations, and systems. What makes assemblage different than popular deployments of intersectionality in this regard is its attention not to the multiplicity of marginalized identities or socially constructed categories but rather to the mediated and material entanglements through which bodies—or to recall Deleuze and Guattari’s term, which was invoked in Chapter 1, *Bodies without Organs*—are produced. Put differently, while intersectional frameworks may at times approach identities as already-given things, assemblages are not things. Assemblages are processes of arrangement that depend on the movement and porosity of both bodies and categories. Denying privilege to the physical body as the primary site of materiality, Deleuze and Guattari therefore view embodiment as emerging from the active interrelation of physical and social worlds.⁶²⁵ Conceptualizing bodies beyond oppositional categories, assemblage offers “an altogether different way of

⁶²⁴ Lester C. Olson, “Liabilities of Language: Audre Lorde Reclaiming Difference,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84, no. 4 (1998): 457.

⁶²⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 149-150.

understanding the body in its connections with other bodies, both human and non-human, animate and inanimate, linking [bodily] processes to material objects and social practices.”⁶²⁶

Thinking race through assemblage thus requires not only, or primarily, attending to race as a visible or categorical identity through which human bodies are produced; thinking race through assemblage requires attending to the ways assemblages of race de- and re-territorialize human as well as geographic bodies through processes not explicitly marked as race. In addition, thinking race through assemblage—at least in the manner I have argued for in this dissertation—requires addressing the entanglements of coloniality with race and gender to interrogate how colonial processes that are fundamentally racialized and gendered are made less visible through rhetorics of anti-racism and anti-sexism. Illustrating the limitations of identitarian frameworks, assemblage theory challenges us to seriously consider how categorical rights claims uphold racist and imperialist agendas.

Assemblages are not states of being but states of becoming. While assemblages can accumulate relatively consistent meanings through sedimentation over time, they are never complete nor stable; they are moving configurations that are territorialized in particular ways as they travel through different con/texts. As a heuristic for rhetorical and critical-cultural communication scholars, assemblage directs attention to con/texts that exceed national boundaries, engaging shifting geographies of power while attending to the mutual embeddedness of national and transnational, local and global. As Zornitsa Keremidchieva notes, by linking the problematics of structure and change within systems, assemblage theory “highlight[s] the perpetual evolution of the state form.”⁶²⁷ As suggested by my analyses of

⁶²⁶ Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1994), 165.

⁶²⁷ Zornitsa Keremidchieva, “The Congressional Debates on the 19th Amendment: Jurisdictional Rhetoric and the Assemblage of the US Body Politic,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99, no. 1 (2013): 53.

the cases, nation-states continue to be important for organizing belongings at the global level; however, while scholars of rhetoric, public memory, and intercultural communication have frequently situated their interrogations of ideology and difference within the nation-state,⁶²⁸ the idea of geographically bounded cultures or nations, each of which has its own interior essence, is clearly inadequate for understanding the movement of messages and the production of belongings in the contemporary era. Against common approaches to globalization that privilege the transnational over the national, at times valorizing movements across borders at the expense of examining the reification of borders amidst these global flows, my deployment of assemblage has instead highlighted the recursive relationship between nations and transnational systems. As Raka Shome argues, “the linkages themselves produce new articulations through which contemporary nations rewrite their boundaries of being and belonging.”⁶²⁹ To address these rhetorical linkages, however, requires disrupting the notion of apriori essences. Assemblage theory thus usefully turns our attention to the material and spatial arrangements through which collectivities are held together in particular places at particular times.

⁶²⁸ For further discussion, see, for example, Alberto González and Tarla R. Peterson, “Enlarging Conceptual Boundaries: A Critique of Research in Intercultural Communication,” in Sheryl P. Bowen and Nancy Wyatt (eds.), *Transforming Visions: Feminist Critiques in Communication Studies* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1993), 249–78; Wendy S. Hesford and Eileen E. Schell, “Introduction: Configurations of Transnationality: Locating Feminist Rhetorics,” *College English*, 70, no. 5 (2008): 463; S. Lily Mendoza, Rona T. Halualani, and Jolanta A. Drzewiecka, “Moving the Discourse on Identities in Intercultural Communication: Structure, Culture, and Resignifications,” *Communication Quarterly* 50, no. 3-4 (2003): 312–27; Dreama G. Moon, “Concepts of ‘Culture’: Implications for Intercultural Communication Research,” *Communication Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (1996): 70-84; Kent A. Ono, “Problematizing ‘Nation’ in Intercultural Communication Research,” in Dolores V. Tanno and Alberto González (eds.), *Communication and Identity across Cultures* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 243–76; and Phillips and Reyes, “Introduction: Surveying Global Memoryscapes.”

⁶²⁹ Raka Shome, “Gender, Nation, and Colonialism: Twenty-First Century Connections,” *Cultural Studies <—> Critical Methodologies*. Published online before print March 22, 2016.

Assemblage theory's emphasis on spatial and temporal arrangements is especially useful for attending to difference as it is constructed within settler and neo-colonial systems of power, which rely on spatio-temporal divisions and distinctions such as inclusion-exclusion, here-there, present-absent, civilized-primitive, and subject-object. These distinctions inform the ways in which racial and cultural differences are constructed; as Sherene Razack notes, the spatiality of power is thus “an important methodological directive for those of us who work on white settler societies.”⁶³⁰ Attending to the spaces and places of power that constitute and reconstitute (non)belongings in settler nations as well as in the imagined geographies produced through colonialism and empire, assemblage theory resists the tendency to view space as merely a setting in which racial formation occurs; instead, it directs attention to spatial relations themselves “as active components in the unequal and heterogeneous production and distribution of identities, politics, and actions.”⁶³¹

Furthermore, just as the notion of the nation as a clearly bounded geopolitical entity is a fiction, so too is this true of empires. As Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan point out, the terrains of empire are more complicated than those which might be captured on “color-coded school maps.”⁶³² Instead, even while “imperial formations may present themselves as fixed cartographies of rule,” their borders are porous and unstable, marked by their lack of fixity. Given the close association between empire and global assemblages of

⁶³⁰ Sherene Razack, “A Hole in the Wall; A Rose at a Checkpoint: The Spatiality of Colonial Encounters in Occupied Palestine,” *Journal of Critical Race Inquiry* 1, no. 1 (2010): 91.

⁶³¹ Raka Shome, “Space Matters: The Power and Practice of Space,” *Communication Theory* 13, no. 1(2003): 43.

⁶³² Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan, “Refiguring Imperial Terrains,” *Ab Imperio* 2 (2006): 24.

whiteness in contemporary as well as historical moments it is perhaps not surprising that, like whiteness, empire maintains power through its invisibility, its normalizing potential and “everything-ness.”⁶³³ Empire is thus embedded in spatial, bodily, and temporal relations in ways that are not always marked.

Assemblage theory’s emphasis on spatio-temporal and embodied relations also resonates with many critical turns in the field of rhetoric. Over the past two decades, rhetorical scholars have increasingly directed attention to rhetoric’s materiality, to the rhetoric of bodies and places, and to rhetoric’s experiential and affective characteristics.⁶³⁴ In keeping with these turns, assemblage theory collapses rigid “divisions between language (as immaterial or abstract forms) and the world (as material realities that language represent).”⁶³⁵ Critical rhetorical scholars have also shifted their attention from viewing rhetorical texts as finished “wholes” to instead engaging with rhetoric as unfinished, fragmented, processual,

⁶³³ Nakayama and Krizek, “Whiteness,” 292.

⁶³⁴ See, for example, Carole Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites”; Carole Blair, “Reflections on Criticism and Bodies: Parables from Public Places,” *Western Journal of Communication* 65, no. 3 (2001): 271–94; Catherine Chaput, “Rhetorical Circulation in Late Capitalism: Neoliberalism and the Overdetermination of Affective Energy,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 43, no. 1 (2010): 1–26; Kevin M. DeLuca, “Unruly Arguments: The Body Rhetoric of Earth First!, Act Up, and Queer Nation,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 36, no. 1 (1999), 9–22; Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott (eds.) *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010); Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2006): 27–47; Darrel Enck-Wanzer, “Trashing the System: Social Movement, Intersectional Rhetoric, and Collective Agency in the Young Lords Organization’s Garbage Offensive,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 2 (2006): 174–201; Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 257–82; Richard Marback, “Unclenching the Fist: Embodying Rhetoric and Giving Objects their Due,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2009); and Jenny Edbauer Rice, “The New ‘New’: Making a Case for Critical Affect Studies,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 94, no. 2 (2008): 200–12.

⁶³⁵ Bryon Hawk, “Vitalism, Animality, and the Material Grounds of Rhetoric,” in Jeremy Packer and Stephen B. Crofts Wiley (eds.), *Communication Matters: Materialist Approaches to Media, Mobility and Networks* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 196.

and emerging in situated acts and practices. This has provoked a reconsideration of rhetorical methods, with scholars in recent years increasingly turning to the use of field methods rather than to the traditionally textual methods of rhetoric.⁶³⁶

To this already vibrant discussion, assemblage offers a few provocations. First, is to attend to the interconnected and dynamic processes through which information is distributed throughout systems. Conceptualizing rhetoric as a topography, web, or network of relations requires examining the ways messages travel, accumulating meaning through their relationships. Rather than viewing rhetoric as located in a specific text, or place, or material object, assemblage as a mode of thinking, or method, suggests that researchers might follow the “rhizomatic or nomadic thought” to forge “linkages or connections between different systems of knowledge-formation.”⁶³⁷ As a heuristic for rhetorical inquiry, assemblage thus directs our attention to “how rhetorics might be picked up, how rhetorics might become networked with new and different arguments, and then how rhetorical meaning might shift and change as a result of these movements.”⁶³⁸ Throughout this

⁶³⁶ See, for example, Michael K. Middleton, Danielle Endres, and Samantha Senda-Cook, “Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods: Challenges and Tensions,” *Western Journal of Communication* 75, no. 4 (2011): 388; Gerard A. Hauser, “Attending the Vernacular: A Plea for an Ethnographical Rhetoric,” in Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.), *The Rhetorical Emergence of Culture* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 157-72; Aaron Hess, “Critical-Rhetorical Ethnography: Rethinking the Place and Process of Rhetoric,” *Communication Studies* 62, no. 2 (2011): 127–152; Sara L. McKinnon, Robert Asen, Karma R. Chávez, and Robert G. Howard (eds.), *Text + Field* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2016); and Michael Middleton, Aaron Hess, Danielle Endres, and Samantha Senda-Cook, *Participatory Critical Rhetoric: Theoretical and Methodological Foundations for Studying Rhetoric In Situ* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015).

⁶³⁷ Eleanor Kaufman, “Introduction,” in Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller (eds.), *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 5.

⁶³⁸ Rebecca Dingo, *Networking Arguments: Rhetoric, Transnational Feminism, and Public Policy Writing* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 2.

dissertation, my aim has been to render visible the rhetorical trajectories that connect and move between different bodies as they interact in material as well as digital places.

Foregrounding these relational connections requires attending to how material and emplaced rhetorical enactments connect with one another and with larger media networks and imaginative geographies.

As a methodological heuristic for critical rhetorical inquiry then, assemblage does not merely suggest that we adapt a spatial vocabulary. Rather, it requires that we engage with rhetorical processes as they unfold across spaces. For rhetorical field methods, we might therefore ask: how do we conceptualize the fields of our rhetorical fieldwork? Where is “the field” located? Where does it stop? Where does it start? Where do we enter? And what do we attend to while we are there? While this dissertation does not seek to offer programmatic recommendations for scholars interested in rhetorical field methods, it does illustrate potential methodological directions. Among these is the suggestion that the equation of “the field” with a singular physical place may limit the ability of our rhetorical analyses to address the complex networks through which messages become meaningful. For public memory scholars especially—whose influential contributions to discussions of rhetoric’s materiality and the role of the rhetorical critic doing field research have already been discussed in earlier chapters—*assemblage* challenges us to think about the locations of public memory beyond physical and official sites of commemoration to also include formations of memory that unfold within the virtual landscapes of digital place as well as through bodily inscriptions.

Even as rhetorical scholars increasingly incorporate field methods into their research, there is nonetheless still a tendency to locate rhetorical agency in a particular place, whether a text, or a place as text, or even an assemblage of bodies as text. Such an approach presupposes the site of rhetorical agency. Rather than view rhetorical agency as situated in a

particular location, ranking texts and contexts, or rhetors and audiences, assemblage instead focuses on the process itself as an actant possessing “degrees of agentic capacity.”⁶³⁹ As topoi are taken up in different contexts, they accumulate meanings and affects; they may also be repurposed in the process of their movement. Emphasizing emergence rather than essence, mutable rather than fixed properties of systems, and mutual rather than linear causality, assemblage theory interrupts longstanding assumptions in the field of rhetoric that continue to carry epistemological force. Returning to the notion with which I opened this chapter, assemblage directs attention to the cascading becomings in which there is no linear cause and effect; instead “one finds circuits where effect and cause alternate position and redound back upon each other.”⁶⁴⁰ Drawing attention to other non-human bodies and circulations of affect as actants within rhetorical assemblages further interrupts notions of linear causality as well as the intentional model in which human actors are presumed to be the authors of messages, showing instead how messages also author us—not only through discursive inscriptions but through material juxtapositions of bodies and affects.

In their study of the discursive maps of whiteness in the United States, Nakayama and Krizek remind scholars of communication and rhetoric of the importance of “understand[ing] the assemblages that produce and reproduce power relations.”⁶⁴¹ In mobilizing assemblage to examine the global terrains and rhetorical frontiers of whiteness, I have sought to take up this charge. Nakayama and Krizek further argue that assemblage can be utilized not only as a theory but as a means of critique, an assertion this dissertation has

⁶³⁹ Bennett, “Agency of Assemblages,” 459.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ Nakayama and Krizek, “Whiteness,” 294.

explored. As a methodological heuristic for analyzing systems of power, assemblage locates rhetorical effects/affects within circuits, circulations, and networks of meaning and messages. From this perspective, the power of rhetorical productions can only be understood as a collectivity of flows and connections.

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