

A MAP OF THIS PLACE: MEMORY AND THE AFTERLIVES OF REMOVAL

BY

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation centers the category of indigeneity to reframe questions of place, space, movement, and belonging articulated in transnational and transcultural memory studies. To that end, I develop a connective study of how memories of dispossession and removal travel across time, generations, and geographies. I do so through a contrapuntal study of contemporary Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations novels and memoirs. Each of the four chapters features three texts, one from each canon. For my primary texts, I take up works by the following authors: Micheline Aharonian Marcom, Nancy Kricorian, Patricia Sarrafian Ward, Michael J. Arlen, Susan Abulhawa, Hala Alyan, Jean Said Makdisi, Tommy Orange, Susan Power, Linda Hogan, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. In terms of structure, in Chapter One, I rearticulate an emerging framework on “settler mnemonics” to identify the novelists and memoirists whose works I study as witnesses to disappearing history. Political scientist Kevin Bruyneel coins “settler mnemonics” to articulate how the US nation-state remembers its founding in Indigenous territorial disposition. For my dissertation, I adapt this concept to the study of narrative form across these literary canons. Having laid the groundwork through my discussion on settler mnemonics, Chapters Two through Four proffer conceptualizations of what I call “nested memory,” a rubric that articulates the structure of the multigenerational transmission of memory in the face of the recursivity of collective trauma. In developing this framework, I draw upon the depiction of the space-time nexus in Nancy Kricorian’s prose poem “Homage to Bourj Hammoud” and Mohawk theorist Audra Simpson’s concept of “nested sovereignty.” As my analyses of novels and memoirs further illustrate, the notion of nesting also accounts for the ways in which memory work unfolds in place and how memories are emplaced. Ultimately, my interpretation of these literary texts brings Indigenous

studies and settler colonial studies to the center of the study of the migration of memory, memory and migration, and the memory of migration.

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INTRODUCTION: A CONVERSION MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS IN THE MAKING

Those of us working in Armenian Studies associate the year 1896 with the Hamidian Massacres and identify it as a formative year in conceptualizing the genocide of Armenians both in terms of an event and a trajectory of structural violence.¹ Across waters that year and on another continent marked by its own legacies of colonization and imperialism, the Armenian Question became a reference point in American Indian nations' assertion of their sovereignty. Published out of Tahlequah, Oklahoma, or as the newspaper's masthead identified it, "Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation: Indian Territory," the *Cherokee Advocate* featured a front-page piece on February 29, 1896 titled "Judge Stuart's View of The Indian Problem." The piece summarizes "various bills pending before Congress in regard to the territory," including arguments set forth by the Dawes Commission.² The purpose of the Commission was to force what were identified as the Five Civilized Tribes of the Southeast to cede tribal title of Indian lands and expand upon the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887, which had legalized Indigenous land theft through individual allotments (Estes, *Our History* 119-121; Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism" 400). The Commission established the system of Final Rolls to undermine tribal governments' jurisdiction over citizenship and tribal enrollment ("Background on the Dawes Commission";

¹ For discussions on the relationship between the 1894-1896 Hamidian Massacres and the Armenian Genocide of 1915, see Stephan Astourian and Raymond Kévorkian, *Collective and State Violence in Turkey: The Construction of a National Identity from Empire to Nation-State* (2020); Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (2004); and Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (2011).

² The *Cherokee Advocate* was the successor of the *Cherokee Phoenix*. For a historical overview of both newspapers, see Meta G. Carstarphen, "To Sway Public Opinion: Early Persuasive Appeals in the *Cherokee Phoenix* and *Cherokee Advocate*."

“1896 Applications”). That newspaper article highlights discussions taking place in Congress, by the House Committees on Territories and in so doing, reveals ideologies and justifications that served as the foundation for the Dawes Act.

Right below that article is another titled “They Protest.” It begins, “To the President and Congress of the United States,” and the opening paragraph reads: “The undersigned, duly accredited delegates of the Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole Nations of Indians, in the Indian Territory, would respectfully, but earnestly, protest against the passage of any bills for the construction of railroads through the lands of said Nations, unless the consent of the tribes thereof are obtained for the purpose.” The statement critiques the United States government, reminding its audience of its obligations dictated by federal Indian policy, or “caring for the interest of a ward” given the “United States stands in the attitude of guardian to the Nations we represent.” Along these lines, delegates of these Native nations, three of five Southeast American Indian nations forcibly transferred from their homelands through the Indian Removal Act of 1830, make the following rhetorical appeal:

We submit that the Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole Tribes hold and possess their lands by virtue of patents thereto from the Government of the United States, under the most solemn guarantees known to Christian civilization. Reflect a moment. Are these to be set at rest because we are Indians and have no means of redress? Should not right and honesty be the guiding star when dealing with the Indian, the same as the Cuban, *Armenian*, or Venezuelan question? (emphasis added)

While the document is framed as an “objection” to the Dawes Act and policies that are a “violation of our treaty rights,” the brief reference to the Armenian Question demonstrates the circulation of knowledge about events unfolding in the Ottoman Empire and the imbrication of

actors and agents implicated in population transfer policies in two seemingly disparate worlds that have heretofore not received comparative critical study.

“A Map of This Place: Memory and the Afterlives of Removal” heeds the call of archives and begins to do that much-needed work by holding together yet apart the migrations of memory pertaining to removal via a sustained study of contemporary Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations literary archives. It does so by contributing a theoretical framework, what I call “nested memory,” to the field of trauma and memory studies. “A Map of This Place” formulates this methodological framework by relating fields of inquiry that have tended not to be bridged and breaks ground for scholars committed to diverse objects of study across the Humanities and Social Sciences.

In *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015), Lisa Lowe offers an astute assessment of the promises of interdisciplinary modes of inquiry in the face of inherited traditions of unearthing and narrating history. She contends, “The modern division of knowledge into academic disciplines, focused on discrete areas and objects of interest to the modern national university, has profoundly shaped inquiry into these connections” (1-2). In Lowe’s case, “the intimacies of four continents” and “these connections” refer to the imbricated histories of “European liberalism, settler colonialism in the Americas, the transatlantic African slave trade, and the East Indies and China trades in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries” (1). My dissertation, “A Map of This Place,” does not seek to provide a historical account of the trans-hemispheric circulation of knowledge pertaining to population management policies. Rather, it takes cues from the archives and recent scholarship to take a closer look at the questions we ask in memory studies and trauma studies. As Lowe asserts about her study, “Even the questions we can ask about these histories are influenced by the unevenly inhabited and inconsistently

understood aftermath of these obscured conditions” (2). In the line “Our present homes are all that now remain of our once extensive tracts of diversified lands” from that *Cherokee Advocate* article about dispossession, legislation, and indigeneity, I see an act of remembrance that betrays the living on of such policies of Indigenous removal. As I will further illustrate, in this archival document and in other objects of study, I see a conversation more than a hundred years in the making for a contrapuntal analysis on the afterlives of removal in the Ottoman world and the Middle East on the one hand and the US and Canada on the other hand. In other words, my emphasis on literary studies and attention to cultures of memory solidifies an inter-imperial and inter-colonial mode of analysis that has started to appear in diverse sites of knowledge production that my dissertation draws upon but that has not yet been formalized.

Roughly a decade later, the Armenian Question as a topic in US print culture would once again be addressed through discourse on federal Indian policy, this time from the perspective of White Americans engaged in questions of humanitarianism and civil and equal rights. In 1904 and in Boston, the *Armenia* magazine saw the publication of the first issue of its first volume. The magazine was published under the honorary editorship of several abolitionist and women’s right advocates, including Julia Ward Howe, Alice Stone Blackwell, Lucia Ames Mead, and William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., son of William Lloyd Garrison who had served as the editor of the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator*.³ In this first issue, Charlotte Perkins Gilman wrote a piece

³ In the inaugural issue, Garrison explains his rationale for the consent to the use of his name as one of the honorary editors as follows: “It is not because your countrymen are Armenians or Christians, or for the reason that the Turks are decadent and Mohammedans that my indignation is stirred. It is because a powerful oppressor tramples upon human rights. Whether such outrage occurs in Asia Minor, in Thibet, in the Philippines, or in Mississippi, my protest is the same” (7). Elsewhere, in a discussion on the “Hague Court of Arbitration” and how “Armenians have their home in Asia minor and are yet without a country,” Garrison asserts, “In the southern United States similar circumstances combine to make what is called a racial problem” (“Justice Essential” 16). I quote these snippets to illustrate that through Garrison’s own writing or other

titled “International Duties.” In it, Gilman asserts that while “America has heard and responded to a certain degree” to the “reports of slaughter and distress” of Armenians, ultimately “no amount of individual sympathy and help prevails on the Turkish government to desist from its criminal conduct” (10). In this context, Gilman goes on to argue: “National crimes demand international law, to restrain, prohibit, punish; best of all, to prevent” (10). As she goes on to discuss how sovereign nation-states should hold each other accountable, she makes the following reflection: “Our Indian policy, for instance, would profit much if we committed ourselves to a high standard of international agreement on the treatment of subject races” (12).⁴ Why is it necessary to read such documents alongside that appeal from the delegates of the Cherokee, Seminole, and Creek nations? In the *Intimacies of Four Continents*, Lowe argues that the “operations that pronounce colonial divisions of humanity—settler seizure and native removal, slavery and racial dispossession, and racialized expropriations of many kinds—are imbricated processes, not sequential events; they are ongoing and continuous in our contemporary moment, not temporally distinct nor as yet concluded” (7). In such arguments that appear in the newspaper and magazine that I referenced, we see a possibility: to understand the relational operations that produce colonial divisions of humanity in different geopolitical sites.

One reason we have not been able to do so is because the comparatively nascent field of settler colonial studies has focused on White settler subjects.⁵ “A Map of This Place” recognizes

mentions of him and his father, the Armenian Question in the magazine was addressed through discussions not just on the so-called Indian problem but also on enslavement, the founding of the US, and White supremacy and racism. See also “Armenian Tribute to Wm. Lloyd Garrison” and his response, “To the Garrison Celebration Committee.”

⁴ For an argument on how Gilman’s work may have been informed by an awareness of federal Indian policy, see Becca Gercken, “The Red Wall-paper: Reservation Policy, The Dawes Act, and Gilman’s Literature of Argument.”

⁵ I am grateful to Antoinette Burton who pointed out to me that invocations of the “settler colonial” as a rubric of study have “taken for granted a particular subjectivity of the settler,” that

that in meaning making processes, comparison is juxtaposition, not equivalency. Indeed, as Lowe asserts, to “pursue particular intimacies and contemporaneities that traverse distinct and separately studied ‘areas’” necessitates “emphasiz[ing] the relationality and differentiation of peoples, cultures, and societies, as well as the convergence and divergence of ideas, concepts, and themes” (6). In articulating the afterlives of native dispossession and removal via a focus on remembrance practices and in offering contrapuntal readings of Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations literatures, “A Map of This Place” identifies the following grounds for comparison. That, as empires expanded, “race consciousness became not only a legitimization of imperial rule but also a mode of governance itself, structuring and limiting indigenous peoples’ access to the colonial state” (Robson 8). Moreover, that the afterlives of Armenia and Palestine must be understood in relation given both were shaped by Ottoman geopolitical and legal administration and that their territorial fates reflect a larger context of “violently forged new nation-states of the Middle East” which emerged out of “decades of colonial decision making” (11).⁶ To understand both the historicity of these communities’ experience of native removal and dispossession and the lived conditions of them means to model new methods for interpreting the past that contributes to ongoing scholarly

of the White settler subject. In naming “White Settler Colonial Studies” in our conversation, Burton asks the needed question, “is the Whiteness in these settler spaces the same?” And, where do the “manifestations and divergences map” in the study of settler colonial contexts?

⁶ Decades of colonial decision making refers to the work of the British mandate, the French mandate, and the League of Nations alongside Ottoman administration of territories. As Robson writes, “By the end of the 1930s, the Middle East had become a space for a massive experiment in demographic engineering. In Iraq, Palestine, and Syria, European colonial modes of establishing land claims and controlling populations via racial, ethnic, and religious categorization converged with a recent Ottoman past featuring desperation and violent efforts at nationalization and a newly empowered racialized settler colonialism in the form of Zionism” (5). It is by engaging the history of Armenian and Palestine in relation and both in relation to settlement and removal in the Americas and Oceania that we open new doors for a global Armenian Studies research prescriptive.

conversations and at the same time, respects differentiation. Finally, while Palestine has figured in critical studies in both Indigenous studies and settler colonial studies, (Western) Armenia has not, despite, once again, archives and critical scholarship pointing us in that direction.

That is, in that same *Armenia* magazine but in volume three, issue five, a one Edgar W. Upton in an article titled “Can Armenia Be Kept Alive as a Nation?” writes, “Notwithstanding all this heritage of trustworthiness, to many people in both Turkey and Russia the Armenian is anathema. To change a Western saying about the Indian—in their sight ‘the only good Armenian is the dead Armenian’” (15). This statement matters because the rhetoric allows us to shift from the historicity centered approach to the Armenian Genocide, which would situate violence as events contained from 1915-1917, or to 1919, or to 1923, the founding year of the Republic of Turkey, to instead discussions on structures that make such violence possible and thus to the logic of elimination, to borrow from Australian historian and settler colonial studies scholar Patrick Wolfe. In the study of settler colonial societies, the rubric of the “logic of elimination” (Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism” 388) centers on “structural genocide” (403), which addresses not only the “summary liquidation of Indigenous people” (388) but also the “concrete empirical relationships between spatial removal, mass killings, and biocultural assimilation” (403). In his oft-cited essay, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” Wolfe argues that “the best known of all genocides was internal to Europe, while genocides that have been perpetuated in, for example, Armenia, Cambodia, Rwanda or (one fears) Darfur do not seem to be assignable to settler colonialism” (387). As will become evident in my analyses of Armenian American novels and memoir, I harness discourses from recent scholarship in Armenian Studies to argue that, together, we in the study of the Armenian case are shifting from the “Armenian Genocide” as a temporally-bound event to the what I conceptualize as the more encompassing rubric of the

“genocide of Armenians,” the latter phrasing emphasizing structural genocide and the empirical relationships Wolfe names.⁷

Wolfe was not a scholar of Armenian Studies, but his interest may have been piqued, I want to suggest, by observations such as the one made by Keith David Watenpaugh in his discussion of the American Near East Relief organization. Taking as a case study the orphanage in Antoura, Lebanon, Watenpaugh asserts: “Indeed, what was happening in the Ottoman state parallels historically contemporaneous programs for enculturation of indigenous children in North America and Australia” (145). Regarding the Near East Relief program’s aims, he further argues that the “assertion of the paternalistic...relationship between the United States and the Armenians manifested along a spectrum of ideas and policies” including “identifying the tens of thousands of Armenian orphans in its care as ‘America’s wards’” (96).⁸ Once again, the specters of federal Indian policy appear. Here I refer to the term “ward.” In the 1831 United States Supreme Court case *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, Chief Justice John Marshall defined American Indian tribes as “domestic dependent nations” and the legal relationship between tribes and the US as that of a “ward to his guardian” (Cherokee Nation). Marshall’s ruling “allowed the United States to assume authority for representing tribal interests in matters of international law as well as to control the terms of the exercise of tribal sovereignty in the realm of domestic policies”

⁷ For a discussion on how the “elimination of the native” can be applied to understand the Armenian case, see Helen Makhdoumian, “Connected Memoryscapes of Silence in Micheline Aharonian Marcom’s *Draining the Sea*.”

⁸ In a personal correspondence about whether materials exist in archives to help us draw links between one, settler colonialism and the dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples in the Americas or Oceania and two, Armenians’ experiences under the Ottoman Empire or Young Turk rule, Uğur Ümit Üngör noted that he “once came across a reference of American boarding schools officials [from Minnesota] visiting Turkey in the 1930s to discuss the forced cultural assimilation of Kurdish children in boarding schools.” The book is titled *Dağ Çiçeklerim* by Sidika Avar.

(Barker, “For Whom” 11). Indeed, that 1896 *Cherokee Advocate* newspaper article references the language of “guardian and wards,” to return to where I began.

Where did these entanglements of empire go in the study of the attempted elimination of Armenians, both in terms of event and structure, as well as memory of collective violence? Or better yet, why have we not studied those entanglements? As I hope has become apparent, the study of memory and the afterlives of Indigenous removal in “A Map of This Place” is born out of an inter-imperial theoretical framework. As Laura Doyle argues, inter-imperial theory “begins from the fact that different empires, of different sizes and means, centered in different yet linked geographical locations, form in dialectical relation: their differences and divergent histories as well as their linkages, alliances, and similarities shape their coformations” (*Inter-imperiality* 6). To put it differently, the “inter-imperial method tracks not only the force of successive imperial formations accruing over at least a millennium of system building, coadaptation, and competitive wars, but also the ways that in any era there is a circle of empires whose battles direct those interconnected imperial and anti-imperial formations, including aesthetic ones” (“Inter-imperiality” 395-6). Developing Doyle’s framework, Manuela Boatcă and Anca Parvulescu analyze the differences and overlaps between the dynamics of coloniality and inter-imperiality that have shaped Transylvania since the sixteenth century and illustrate how a particular geography can be marked by different modes of colonial and imperial rule over time (11). So far, I have disrupted the imperatives of archives to collect and classify and inadvertently cordon off histories by delineating sites of connection and convergence between American imperialism and Ottoman imperialism via attention to discourses that situate the physical and cultural genocide of

Armenians in relation to that of American Indian histories.⁹ But what if we consider inter-imperiality alongside inter-coloniality? As I want to show, questions of settler coloniality and indigeneity in the Armenian case have started to come to the fore via a third connection, that of Palestinian dispossession and removal. For a project on the migrations of memory, it seems apt that those gestures were made in 2015, the year that marks the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

In 2015 and at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, Turkey, scholar, activist, and cultural studies theorist Angela Davis gave a lecture titled “Transnational Solidarities: Resisting Racism, Genocide, and Settler Colonialism” for the Hrant Dink Memorial Lecture on Freedom of Expression and Human Rights. Referencing the “I Am Hrant Dink” social movement, Davis asserts, “Ongoing efforts to create a popular intellectual environment within which to explore the contemporary impact of the Armenian genocide are central, I think, to global resistance to racism, genocide, and settler colonialism.”¹⁰ She goes on to ask of her audience, “Don’t we want to be able to imagine the expansion of freedom and justice in the world, as Hrant Dink urged us to do—in Turkey, in Palestine, in South Africa, in Germany, in Colombia, in Brazil, in the Philippines, in the US?” And answers, “If this is the case, we will have to do something quite extraordinary: We will have to go to great lengths. We cannot go on as usual. We cannot pivot the center. We cannot be moderate. We will have to be willing to stand up and say no with our

⁹ Here, I draw on Lowe’s arguments about the imperatives of archives and how her methodology bridges rather than isolates archives. See especially pp. 5-6.

¹⁰ For discussions on the “We Are Hrant Dink” social movement, see Michael Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (2019); Vicken Cheterian, *Open Wounds: Armenians, Turks, and a Century of Genocide* (2015); and Khatchig Mouradian, “No One is Hrant Dink: 96 Years of Solitude, and 4 Years of the Same.”

combined spirits, our collective intellects, and our many bodies.”¹¹ Those two statements, “We cannot go on as usual” and “We cannot pivot the center,” reflect the guiding principles that drive “A Map of This Place” forward as a trauma and memory studies project. That work begins by reframing where the story ends in *Armenians Studies* in 2015, at least on the topics of dispossession, removal, and remembrance practices, to where the story begins.

That is, a recent comparative gesture by Armenian Studies historians, including Ronald Grigor Suny, Taner Akçam, and Fatma Müge Göçek, informs my methodology of reading transversally across Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations literatures. In *“They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else”: A History of the Armenian Genocide* (2015), Suny ends his book and a reflection on the Turkish nation-state’s denial of that genocide by asserting: “Like many other states, including Australia, Israel, and the US, the emergence of the Republic of Turkey involved the removal and subordination of native peoples who had lived on its territory prior to its founding” (364). What is fascinating here is the way in which Suny’s words indexically point to discussions on indigeneity. That is, the term “indigenous” is “usually applied to members of groups and communities comprising nations within (and predating) larger nation-states, and lands of indigenous nations do not correspond to lands enclosed by international borders” (Anderson and Samudzi 22). Common definitions of indigeneity cited in Indigenous studies include “historical continuity with precolonial societies and ancestral territories, cultural distinctiveness from settler societies, economic and cultural nondominance, and determination to persist as culturally and/or nationally distinct entities”

¹¹ Said references Armenian experiences of genocide, dispersion, and memory across a couple of works. See *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with Edward Said* (2010) and “Reflections on Exile” (1984). See also H. Aram Veenser’s recollection of an exchange with Said concerning Veenser’s identity in *Edward Said: The Charisma of Criticism* (2010).

(TallBear, “Genomic Articulations” 514). Suny further avers: “Coming to terms with that history...can have the salutary effect of questioning continued policies of ethnic homogenization and the refusal to recognize the claims and rights of those peoples, minorities, or diasporas—Aborigines, native Americans, Kurds, Palestinians, Assyrians, or Armenians—who refuse to disappear (365). I interpret this notion of “refusing to disappear” in conversation with Gerald Vizenor’s concept of “survivance” or surviving genocide and resisting narratives and policies that seek to marginalize and assimilate American Indian peoples (vii), Audra Simpson’s scholarship on the Mohawk nation’s “refusal” of American and Canadian citizenship (7), and Mishuana Goeman’s work on how Native North American women’s literature creatively remaps settler geographies as a means of decolonization (1-2).

In other words, we have not named it, but Armenian Studies is engaging conversations in Indigenous and settler colonial studies, even though a review of citations in the works of these and other social science scholars, such as Uğur Ümit Üngör and Ümit Kurt, reveal scant inclusion of scholarship from these latter fields.¹² My dissertation brings scholarship from Indigenous and settler colonial studies explicitly into the fold of Armenian Studies and from there, into contemporary cultural memory studies at large. For example, in her study of identity and language revitalization in the Chickasaw nation, Jenny Davis (Chickasaw) emphasizes that while “the concept of ‘diaspora’ has not frequently been applied to Indigenous communities in North America” it remains “one of the most relevant concepts to understanding Native lived experience(s)” (6). Bringing Suny’s commentary into conversation with Davis’s work and those of other American Indian and First Nations scholars, “A Map of this Place” argues that

¹² “No inclusion” or “hardly any inclusion” seem to me better descriptions. I have chosen not to use this phrasing, however, in deference to the authors who may very well conceive of some of the scholarship they cite as part of Indigenous studies or settler colonial studies.

“indigenous” and “diasporic” (7) are not mutually exclusive terms when describing and understanding Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nation peoples’ experiences. Davis underscores the need to “productively delineate different models of diaspora” when studying North American Indigenous peoples’ experiences of dispersion from their homelands (7). My dissertation identifies Davis’s “Indigenous diaspora” (7) as a cohesive enough rubric to interpret Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations histories and literary traditions together while recognizing the need to particularize this concept through contextualization of each case study.¹³

In turn, “A Map of This Place” also contributes to unfolding conversations in global Indigenous studies. One example is Chadwick Allen’s model of a “*trans*-Indigenous” approach in comparative literary studies, which aims to “invite specific studies into different kinds of conversations, and to acknowledge the mobility and multiple interactions of Indigenous peoples, cultures, histories, and texts” (xiv, emphasis original). Allen carries out such a project by juxtaposing Native literatures from North America, Hawaii, New Zealand, and Australia and drawing out from them discourses on Indigenous self-representation and agency. Another example is Steven Salaita’s theoretical framework of “inter/nationalism,” which describes a “certain type of decolonial thought and practice...in different strata of American Indian and Palestinian communities” (ix). Inter/nationalism “demands commitment to mutual liberation based on the proposition that colonial power must be rendered diffuse across multiple

¹³ Davis also writes, “While the first several hundred years of Chickasaw history after European arrival is marked by processes that attempted to limit tribal sovereignty, aggressively targeted cultural practices for elimination, and dispersed Chickasaw individuals and resources, the past few decades in the Chickasaw Nation have been characterized by the reverse of these processes: de-diasporization, or the returning ‘home’ of people and resources from diaspora and the resolidification of Chickasaw political and economic sovereignty” (13).

hemispheres through reciprocal struggle” (ix). While discourses on self-representation and decolonization certainly matter for my project, “A Map of This Place” prioritizes literary representations of the inter- and transgenerational circulation of collective traumatic memory as the central point from which to expand upon global Indigenous studies and global settler colonial studies frameworks.

Migration and/of Memory: Adding the Rubric of Removal and Its Afterlives

By focusing on depictions of the temporal and spatial mobility of memory in Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations novels and memoirs, “A Map of this Place” revisits research assumptions and methodologies that have come to define the development of the third phase of memory studies, the transcultural turn (Erll, “Travelling” 9). Astrid Erll identifies “transcultural memory” as an umbrella term for different comparative approaches to the study of cultural memory, including two frameworks referenced in the chapters of “A Map of This Place”: Marianne Hirsch’s “postmemory” and Michael Rothberg’s “multidirectional memory.” Broadly, “transcultural memory” calls attention to the “mnemonic processes unfolding *across* and *beyond* cultures” (Erll, “Travelling” 9, emphasis original). Erll also builds on these and other contemporary cultural memory studies scholars’ works and posits “travelling memory” as a metaphorical shorthand to foreground the “unceasing motion” of memory (12). Edited collections such as *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales* (2014), *The Transcultural Turn: Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders* (2014), *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (2017), *Rites of Return: Diaspora Poetics and the Politics of Memory* (2011), *Women Mobilizing Memory* (2019), and *Mass Violence and Memory in the Digital Age: Memorialization Unmoored* (2020) bring together individual essays that address different means and processes of circulation in different

contexts and scales of violence. For applications of transnational and transcultural rubrics, Erll distinguishes among five dimensions of movement: “carriers, media, contents, practices, and form” (11). “A Map of this Place” focuses on literary representations of people as carriers of memory. More specifically, it theorizes the structure of the transmission of memory across generations and in the face of the multiplicity of violent encounters and collective trauma.

To look more closely at the transnational and transcultural connections that arise in the travels of collective traumatic memory, “A Map of This Place” takes cues from Chickasaw theorist Jodi Byrd’s delineation of the US as land activated by positions of native, settler, and arrivant (*Transit* xix). In so doing, “A Map of This Place” heeds scholars’ cautions about universal applications of comparative, be it transcultural or transnational, frameworks for the study of memory. When it comes to a study of the memory’s travels, the transcultural refers to “the hybridization produced by the *layering* of historical legacies that occurs in the traversal of *cultural* borders” while the transnational “refers to the *scales* of remembrance that intersect in the crossing of *geo-political* borders” (Rothberg, “Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings” 130, emphasis original). Whether transnational or transcultural in scope (or sometimes both), “memory as a concept reflects the time and place from which it emerges” and “profound shifts in concepts of memory are often a product of collective traumas born of particular places” (Creet 9). In a similar fashion, Erll asserts that a transcultural framework in memory studies opens an avenue to “question the field’s basic assumptions, which are derived from Western thought on memory: above all from ancient *ars memoriae* and from modern philosophies of identity-through memory” (15). A text like *Survivance, Sovereignty, and Story: Teaching American Indian Rhetorics* (2015) exemplifies how one can begin to question the field’s assumptions. After all, Lisa King, Rose Gubele, and Joyce Rain Anderson write in the

introduction to this collection of essays about pedagogy: “Indigenous rhetorics are the memories, the memoria, so to speak, of this land, its original logos and the means through which relationships among all communities on this land can be restored. Recognizing and engaging indigenous rhetorics is in part how we begin to reason together” (9). Given that the book was published as a contribution to writing studies, it is understandable that King, Gubele, and Anderson’s arguments have not come on the radar of memory studies. There are additional reasons. Memory studies has started to address histories of imperialism and colonialism, but in so doing, it has tended to take for granted the *postcolonial* over the *decolonial* and privileged *migration* as an encompassing rubric that risks flattening factors that engender the movements of peoples tied to collective traumas born of particular places.

This emergent discourse in memory studies stems in part from the recognition that remembrance practices in colonial and imperial contexts do not easily fit into the frameworks rendered by foundational figures such as Maurice Halbwachs, who conceptualized memory as contained and stable (Erl, “Travelling Memory” 10), and Pierra Nora, who identified the nation-state as an arbiter of a mnemonic space for an ethnically homogenous society (7).¹⁴ A similar critique in trauma studies has concomitantly unfolded with this move to engage the residual oppressive effects of the traumas of colonialism. Whereas trauma studies theorists have tended to center an “event-based model of trauma, according to which trauma results from a single, extraordinary, catastrophic event,” (post)colonial contexts necessitate attentiveness to “long-term, cumulative trauma suffered by victims of racism or other forms of structural oppression” (Craps 4) that shape the contours of colonization projects and their legacies. What is fascinating

¹⁴ On the relationship between the fields of postcolonial studies and memory studies, see Michael Rothberg, “Remembering Back: Cultural Memory, Colonial Legacies, and Postcolonial Studies” and his “From the Traumatic Realism to the Multidirectional Memory, and Beyond.”

here is the way in which this rhetoric to think of trauma in terms of “structure” as opposed to an “event” echoes the axiom that, as noted earlier, has so come to define settler colonial studies: Wolfe’s argument that “invasion is a structure and not an event” (“Settler Colonialism” 388). Elimination is a structural, sustained project over time that is carried out through the dispossession, disenfranchisement, and forcible biocultural assimilation of Indigenous peoples beyond concentrated occurrences of mass violence (388). Yet, trauma studies scholars’ confrontation of structural violence in (post)colonial contexts seems to remain on the periphery of memory studies. For instance, critical texts like Dian Million’s *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights* (2014) published in presses under the rubrics of American Indian, Native American, Indigenous, and/or Settler colonial studies have not also been marketed or taught as trauma and memory studies texts.

What we are seeing is that the French colonial context is starting to play a significant point of analysis for bringing postcolonial studies to bear on the third phase of memory studies. Such work has included Michael Rothberg’s *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (2009) and Max Silverman’s *Palimpsestic Memory: The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Fiction and Film* (2015). Silverman returns to three canonical texts of Holocaust literature in French to “show that ‘Holocaust literature’ is always in dialogue with other stories of racialized violence” (7). Specifically writing about Patrick Modiano’s *Dora Bruder*, Silverman asserts that it “transforms Parisian city space into a palimpsest of traces of violence and loss in which the Occupation and the Holocaust are connected not only with colonialism (especially Algeria) but also with dehumanizing modernity in general” (7). Also in the context of France but not specific to global Holocaust memory is the work of Françoise Vergès. Comparing the circulation of memories of slavery in three public

spheres, France, Reunion Island, and Togo, Vergès critiques the implications of the term “knots” in “noeuds de mémoire” or “knots of memory” as a framework for the study of the cross-referencing of memoryscapes in postwar French and Francophone culture. To take “knots” to mean “a series of reified, fixed speeches, representations, objects, and sounds” (137) that make up a common syntax for addressing diverse conflicts, tensions, instances of struggle, and solidarities proves limiting because a knot in this sense suggests the end goal of the study of violent histories is to pin down a singular meaning for a political goal and that this same outcome is desired among different agents and across different case studies (137-138). Rather than prescribing an unknotting of tensions between memoryscapes of those with different positionalities who together remember violent pasts, Vergès offers “contacts de mémoire” or “contacts of memory.” This framework searches for “a zone of encounter and conflict between layers of memory, all making claims for recognition and meaning” (138). In the context of France, “contacts of memory” looks for active contradictions between monolinear national narratives that the state circulates about the colony and embodied remembrance practices of enslaved Africans and their descendants (139-40, 154).

Also writing about race, slavery, and the French colony, Ann Stoler coins “colonial aphasia” to describe how colonial pasts become visible or muffled in contemporary France. Whereas previous scholars of French historiography offer “colonial amnesia,” “historical amnesia,” or “forgetting” to describe the assumed low profile of colonial pasts in modern France (124), Stoler suggests that “colonial aphasia” serves as a more apt term since it emphasizes “both loss of access and active dissociation” (124). Stoler turns to medical dictionaries to define the condition of aphasia, including “a difficulty in comprehending what is spoken,” and extrapolates this experience from the site of the human body to that of the nation-state body or polity that

does not comprehend the surprisingly large number of publications on France's colonial history from 2000 to 2009 (125). Further tracing French public discourse during this decade, including how, when, where, and why political acknowledgement of collective violence in French Algeria and French Indochina manifests in the present, Stoler concludes that "aphasia" aptly attends to the "important features of the relationship among French historical production, the 'immigrant question,' and the absence/presence of colonial relations" (145). In essence, while these connections are rendered visible at various flashpoints, that presence is also marked by absence in that there is a misrecognition of that very presence (145). Like the concept of "contacts of memory," the concept of "colonial aphasia" underscores dispossessed communities' roles in articulating their present circumstances through explanations of the past. Stoler's study of state narratives and dynamic reconfigurations of national memory from below differs from that of Vergès's in that Stoler calls attention to what she calls occlusions of knowledge in contemporary French society, especially in terms of how racialized epistemologies have permeated French political thinking, shaped public discourse on nation-state belonging, and undergirded the rhetoric of threats to "security" (150, 153, 156).

While I do not study memory in the context of French colonialism and its legacies, what matters from Vergès and Stoler for this project is that they astutely call attention to the need to reckon with the real fact that not all nation-states want, seek to, or make an active practice of openly discussing and contending with their roles in past or present violences. In "A Map of This Place," I identify the novelists and memoirists whose works I study as witnesses to disappearing history. As I further illustrate, the intergenerational transmission of memory in Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases respectively function as ways to transmit first-hand knowledge about how states seek to occlude memories of their foundational crimes.

Having laid the groundwork through my discussion on settler mnemonics in Chapter One of “A Map of This Place,” Chapters Two through Four proffer conceptualizations of what I call “nested memory,” a rubric that articulates the structure of the multigenerational transmission of memory in the face of the recursivity of collective trauma. It is on this note that I want to turn to the nexus of migration *and* memory in the transcultural turn of memory studies, a rubric that can overlap with but is also distinct from the study of the migration *of* memory.

Also addressing the mobility of memory, Julia Creet argues that “memory is not a product of stability” but instead “always attended by migrations” (5) and that the “manner in which memory travels is a quality of memory itself” (6). My dissertation advances “transcultural memory” as a comparative memory studies by centering the category of indigeneity to reframe questions of place, space, movement, and belonging in the field. Julia Creet and Andreas Kitzmann’s foundational *Memory and Migration: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Memory Studies* (2010) brings together essays on different categories of displacement—such as emigration, exile, and expulsion—and different physical sites—such as Holocaust survivors who return to the cities, countries, and towns from which they had been deported as well as undocumented aliens held at a detention center in France. Through the curation of essays, Creet and Kitzmann’s book ends up not equating the subjecthood of Kurdish immigrants to France with that of Muslim refugees to Canada, or with that of ethnic Germans expelled from Europe at the end of the Second World War and who arrived in Canada. As is clear, though, the collection as a whole focuses on different kinds of migration from European contexts or into European and Canadian contexts. Edited collections published after Creet and Kitzmann’s also take up the rubric of migration as an encompassing term of different kinds of movements. They tend to also privilege memory of atrocities based in Europe or the movements of peoples from or to sites in

Europe. *Migration, Memory, and Travel* (2018), *The Politics of Public Memories of Forced Migration and Bordering in Europe* (2019), and *Translating Worlds: Migration, Memory, and Culture* (2021) are some critical texts in this category and they, too, skirt around questions of coloniality and imperialism.

Broadly, then, the migration and memory nexus focuses on the ways in which migrant and immigrant societies form a sense of belonging through the memories that they bring and those of the societies which receive them (Glynn and Kleist 17-18). Moreover, this research framework analyzes how experiences and lessons from the past influence state policies on the reception and incorporation of immigrants into a political community (10, 18). With the exception of a few studies of Australia, this subfield of contemporary cultural memory studies has not addressed the entanglements of memories of removal and dispossession of Indigenous peoples or experiences of (im)migration and belonging in a settler colonial state. *History, Memory, and Migration: Perceptions of the Past and the Politics of Incorporation* (2012), for instance, brings together essays on such topics as mass media depictions of British-Asian teenagers in the 1960s, Algerian Europeans and the reception they encountered in France when they fled Algeria in 1962, evangelical leaders in the US and how they encourage followers to remember themselves as immigrants and identify with the plight of present immigrants, and refugee debates in Ireland in the mid-1990s and how the state treats present migrants based upon its own remembrance of its own migration past.¹⁵ One country-specific collection, *Remembering Migration: Oral Histories and Heritage in Australia* (2019), features brief references to “Indigenous peoples” (241), “Indigenous Australians” (77), or the “Indigenous population” (186)

¹⁵ See also Michael Rothberg and Yasemin Yildiz, “Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary Germany.”

but does not feature an essay on Indigenous dispossession nor does it feature an essay that thoroughly discusses the politics of remembrance practices in place, meaning the arrival of memories into places which feature already circulating memories of Indigenous peoples of Australia.¹⁶ Against the rubric of “migration” which does not differentiate between involuntary and voluntary migration, I take up “removal” to articulate the forced migrations of Armenian, Palestinians, and American Indian/First Nations peoples from their respective homelands and to study the circulation of memories pertaining to this kind of displacement within each community as represented in novels and memoirs.

My use of “removal,” as I articulated earlier, emerges from where Suny’s publication concludes. It is also informed by the publication of *Removing Peoples: Forced Removal in the Modern World* (2009), edited by Richard Bessel and Claudia B. Haake. This groundbreaking edited collection seeks to understand “forced removal on a global scale” during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including how factors such as the “development of a global capitalist economy, the emergence of modern race thinking, the conduct of two world wars, and the triumph of popular and national sovereignty” led to such population management policies (Bessel and Haake 3). Moreover, as Bessel and Haake summarize about what some of the essays reveal, “That the pervasiveness of mass forced removal in the modern world...has tended to be overlooked thus far may be due in part to the analytical framework applied. Many recent studies have focused on genocide or ‘ethnic cleansing’, concepts that are related to that of forced removal but are not identical to it” (4). The strength of “forced removal” as an analytical framework, they contend, is that it “can perform descriptive and explanatory work of a kind that

¹⁶ As an exception, see Rosanne Kennedy, “Indigenous Australian Arts of Return: Mediating Perverse Archives.”

frameworks offered by ‘genocide’ or ethnic cleansing’ seldom attempt or cannot undertake” by themselves (5).¹⁷ Certainly in the Armenian case, images such as those from the Armin T. Wegner collection on “Armenian deportees” and “Armenian deportation camps” in the Syrian desert have become iconographic. Indeed, “Crossing the Centennial: The Historiography of the Armenian Genocide Re-Evaluated,” a conference held at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln in March 2015, featured a poster by Ruben Malayan in which he “portray[ed] the experiences of Armenian women and children during the genocide death marches” (Reed). Featuring a woman carrying a child in a sling on her back, the image is “based upon a photograph of an Armenian family taken in 1915, when Armenians living in Turkey *were removed* from their historic homelands through forced deportations and massacres” (Reed, emphasis added). Though deportation or forced migration may be ubiquitous in testimonies of the Armenian Genocide and as a visual referent, the transmission of memories of removal has not been thoroughly theorized. Although I do not have the room in this introduction to explicate this hypothesis, I want to suggest that this dissonance has to do with inherited tools and methodologies in Armenian Studies. Much of the trauma studies and memory studies scholarship I cite stems from the study of the Holocaust, where the concentrationary universe or system comes to the fore in aesthetic representation, conceptual understanding, and collective memory of that genocide (Pollock and Silverman 8, 19-29; Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism* 115-118). We can balance the applicability of theories in trauma studies and memory studies at large to the Armenian Catastrophe while recognizing the limitations or gaps that arise.

¹⁷ For an overview discussion on the rubric of “forced migration” and its relationship to “forced removal,” “deportation,” or “expulsion” as well as the benefits of this analytic for illuminating more adequate perceptions of actors and those who are affected, see Alf Ludtke, “Explaining Forced Migration.” See also Joanne de Groot’s “Comparing Forced Removals.”

In the case of Palestine, Edward Said has invoked “removal” in discussing Zionist settlers’ displacement and dispossession of native Arabs (*The Politics of Dispossession*, 101). In *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race*, Patrick Wolfe asserts that Zionist “arrivals, refugees or otherwise, were nonetheless settlers, since the Natives whom some of them may have been surprised to encounter were nonetheless dispossessed” (204). In further articulating the dispossession of Palestine’s indigenous Arab population and seizure of Palestinian land, Wolfe uses such phrases as “forcibly expelled” (207), “driven into exile” (207), “expropriation” (206), and “ongoing post-Nakba removal” (237). Palestinian political scientist Noura Erakat writing from the perspective of international law has also used “removal,” such as when she asserts that the law “normalized the removal of the native population and enabled the confiscation of Palestinian lands without compensation to their owners” (56).¹⁸ Lack of discussion on removal, Erakat contends, has long term effects on the status of Palestine. In describing the significance of US Security Council Resolution 242, which concerned Israel’s occupation of Arab territories and emerged in the context of the 1967 War, Erakat asserts that that “monumental legal debate took for granted the circumstances surrounding Israel’s establishment, namely the removal and forced exile of the nearly 80 percent of Palestine’s native population from the territory that became Israel during the period surrounding the nation’s establishment in 1948” (73). Moreover, in *The Holocaust and the Nakba: A New Grammar of Trauma and History* (2019), Bashir Bashir and Amos Goldberg clarify that one of the points of differentiation between the Holocaust and the Nakba is that for Palestinians, their Catastrophe is the “ongoing colonization of Palestine that continues through colonial practices and policies such as Jewish settlements, illegal land

¹⁸ Elsewhere Erakat summarizes, “upon its establishment in 1948 and for eighteen years thereafter, [Israel] applied a martial law regime almost exclusively to its native Palestinian population to facilitate their removal and dispossession” (182).

acquisition, imposing siege on Gaza, and the *evacuation* of villages” and “represents the destruction of hundreds of villages and urban neighborhoods” (1, emphasis added). Further drawing on the work of Palestinian scholars, Bashir and Goldberg write that Zionism “was born in the colonial sin of the Balfour Declaration (1917) and has gone on to commit all of the crimes of settler colonialism, which strives, by its very nature and essence, whether openly or secretly, consciously or unconsciously, to seize territory from the native inhabitants while *expelling* or even eliminating them” (4, emphasis added). From the *Journal of Palestine Studies* to the *Settler Colonial Studies* journal, we see the use of terms that echo “removal” to describe the displacement of Palestinians.¹⁹

Understanding removal in American Indian and First Nations contexts involves recognition of removals, plural. First, in the case of both Canada and the US, one could conceptualize removal as occurring from the time of early settlement. Additionally, from the perspective of settler government Indian policy, we can study legalized acts of forced migration. Under the administration of President Andrew Jackson, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 targeted American Indian peoples in what are now Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Louisiana. Moreover, the policy was a “legislative fiat that imagined that, by settling a civilized population throughout those lands and territories that had, up until that point, been Indigenously held and governed, the United States would be able to establish densely populated cities, strengthen its borders from invasion, and most important, increase the wealth of the nation” (Byrd, “Variations” 123). The “Trail of Tears” has often been a point of study for the removal of

¹⁹ I am grateful to Eman Ghanayem who responded to my surprise that Palestinian migration has not been taken up in edited collections on migration and memory by noting that perhaps it’s because “we [Palestinians] don’t necessarily understand our movement as migration” and by suggesting the keywords “exile, expulsion, and removal.”

American Indian tribes to lands west of the Mississippi. Yet, US history curriculum in secondary schools may not explicate Jackson's policies as "enabl[ing] and expedit[ing] a future of further white settlement throughout Indigenous land holdings in what was then the southwestern territories of the United States" (123). Other histories include the collective punishment and removal of Navajo and Apache in 1864 and in the Southwest, remembered by these nations as the Long Walk (Estes, *Our History* 102). 1862 also saw the forced march of Dakota under the guise of the so-called US-Dakota War of 1862 (Wilson, "Manipi" 152). These incidents of removal are situated within a larger trajectory of federal Indian policy in the US, which includes allotment and assimilation, termination and relocation or urbanization. Removal has also been used to characterize the boarding or residential school system for American Indians in the US and First Nations peoples in Canada. As Nick Estes summarizes, "Complete removal from their parents, it was believed, was the only way to prevent relapse to Indigenous ways" (*Our History* 118). Having been taught "docility, compliance, and submission" through a "highly regimented routine," students who survived "prison-like and militarized conditions" and who were returned found themselves alienated from their home communities "because they could [no longer] speak their languages or had no bonds to their kin" (118).²⁰ "A Map of This Place" does not argue the sameness of the situations of removal under consideration; rather, by focusing on literary representations of memory, it aims to enrich understanding on specific removals and their afterlives.

Here is where the second half of the title to this dissertation is key. A handful of critical essay collections on the phenomenon of migration have been published in the last few years,

²⁰ On systems of removal of American Indian tribes, see also Claudia B. Haake, "Breaking the Bonds of People and Land" and Donald L. Fixico, "The Federal Indian Relocation Programme of the 1950s and the Urbanization of Indian Identity."

from *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies* (2014), *Refuge: Rethinking Rethinking Refugee Policy in a Changing World* (2017), *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives* (2018), and to *Forced Migrations: Current Issues and Debates* (2019). Perhaps this comes as no surprise. After all, political scientist Thomas Nail argues that the “twenty-first century will be the figure of the migrant” (1). What is missing in the conversation is a thorough analysis on the afterlives of native removal and dispossession. Furthermore, I choose afterlives over “aftermath” or “aftereffect.” Aftermath implies a consequence or something that follows after an event.²¹ Similarly, aftereffect implies a repercussion that follows after a primary action.²² Applied to the study of cultural trauma, both imply a sense of an end, a closure, rather than an open wound or the continuation of structural conditions which make collective violence possible. By afterlives in “A Map of This Place,” I mean the way that the nation-state narrativizes removal as an event located in its past and not relevant to its present. Moreover, I illuminate how these literary texts allow us ways to theorize the afterlives of communal memory of removal: memories travel spatially, intergenerationally, and across cultures and nation-state borders despite the state’s attempts at occlusion.

Memory studies has employed “afterlives” as a capacious term to mean the reception, remediation, or appropriation of literary texts and cultural phenomena such as feminist activism. The breadth of titles reveals as much. Publications include *The Partitions of Memory: The Afterlife of the Division of India* (2002), *The Afterlives of Walter Scott: Memory on the Move*

²¹ Definitions for “aftermath” in the *Oxford English Dictionary* include “A period or state of affairs following a significant event, esp. when that event is destructive or harmful” (2.a.) and “A (usually undesired) thing remaining or left after the end or exit of something; an unwelcome consequence or effect” (2.b.)

²² The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides the following definition for “after-effect”: “An effect that follows the initial or primary action of something; an effect that follows after an interval; a secondary or later effect; a delayed or lingering effect. Frequently in *plural*.”

(2017), *Feminist Afterlives: Assemblage Memory in Activist Times* (2018), *Memory and Enlightenment: Cultural Afterlives of the Long Eighteenth Century* (2018), and *Online Afterlives: Immortality, Memory, and Grief in Digital Cultures* (2020). As Erll puts it, “In reconstructing the ‘social life’ of a literary text we may ask how it was—across long periods of time—received, discussed, used, canonized, forgotten, censored, and re-used” (“Traumatic Pasts” 3). In this case, one might trace the changes in social reception over time of a text, the transformation of a text from one form of media to another, or how particular properties of texts lend themselves to rereading or remediation (3-4). In this approach, “afterlives” facilitates a “diachronic perspective” focused on “Intertextuality, rewriting, intermediality and remediation” (2). Although it has not been formally applied as such, “afterlives” in memory studies could also be used as an inclusive term to mean the representation of traumatic pasts, reflective of the field’s interest in narrative and aesthetic form. Certainly, “afterlives” could reflect the travels or mobility of memory, as evidenced by the field’s interest in forms of remembering across nations and culture. Yet, memory studies has not fully embraced the concept of “afterlives” as it is employed by Black studies scholars to address the legacies of transatlantic slavery, including Saidiya Hartman in *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (2007).²³ This dissonance reveals that in its attention to Europe-centered sites of atrocities, memory studies has tended to focus on event-based, temporally bound collective violence. That tendency to center aftermath and aftereffect versus afterlives also undergirds the aforementioned edited collections and others which historicize removal or seek to study forced migration in terms of law and policy.

²³ For an example of how Hartman’s work has influenced the field of Black studies, see Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (2016), especially the introduction where she articulates her use of “wake” as opposed to “afterlife.”

Towards a Contrapuntal Approach: Structure of “A Map of This Place”

Ultimately, “A Map of This Place” looks at processes of remembering depicted in Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations novels and memoirs to make legible “theoretical *definitions* of actually existing transcultural and transnational connections” (Moses and Rothberg 31, emphasis original). In this way, each chapter illuminates how Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations novelists and memoirists “make theory” through their artistic endeavors. In turn, I make theory out of the literary texts in a way that speaks to relevant scholarly conversations about the travels or contact points of memory. In each chapter of my dissertation, I read a piece of contemporary prose from each literary tradition. The earliest publication, *Passage to Ararat*, is from 1975, followed by *Beirut Fragments: A War Memoir* originally published in 1990. All other novels and memoirs were published between 1994 and 2017. *Chapters* One through Three focus on novels whereas Chapter Four covers memoirs and personal essays. I choose the term “personal essays” here because one of the authors I study in that chapter, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, argues that the label “creative nonfiction” is “both racialized and gendered” and therefore she rejects the use of that term to describe her work (32). All primary texts were published by US presses and all but two were written by women authors. I see each author as writing to her or his community and a larger US audience.

My contrapuntal approach is informed by Edward Said’s scholarship. In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said offers several definitions of what it means to read “contrapuntally.” In one sense, it means to “look at the cultural archive...with a simultaneous awareness of both metropolitan history that is narrated and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts” (51). In turning to the novel *L’Etranger* (1942) by Albert Camus, for instance, Said argues that a “contrapuntal reading must take account of both

processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it, which can be done by extending our reading of the texts to include what was once forcibly excluded” (66). In addition to reading with an eye towards “what went into [a text] and to what its author excluded” (67), he advocates for seeing each work in “terms both of its own past and of later interpretations” (111). However Said applies the contrapuntal method in *Culture and Imperialism*, the point is that he comes to this comparative methodology from the notion of counterpoint in music. An “acoustic configuration of both interdependence and autonomy,” counterpoint “allows for similarity and yet dissimilarity” (Suna-Koro 136). As Said himself explains it, “In the counterpoint of Western classical music, various themes play off one another, with only a provisional privilege being given to any particular one; yet in the resulting polyphony there is concert and order, an organized interplay that derives from the themes, not from a rigorous melodic or formal principle outside the work” (51). Taken up in the study of literature and culture since Said’s *Culture and Imperialism*, a contrapuntal method of analysis attends to the “interplay of diverse ideas and discrepant experiences” (Telmissany and Schwartz xvii). Said’s contrapuntal approach shares much with Lowe’s mode of reading in *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. As he puts it, “If, for example, French and Algerian or Vietnamese history, Caribbean or African or Indian and British history are studied separately rather than together, then the experiences of domination and being dominated remain artificially, and falsely, separated” (259).

Inspired by the notion of counterpoint that informs Said’s work, my own adaptation of a contrapuntal method juxtaposes Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations texts within each chapter and to illuminate each chapter’s respective guiding question about the inheritance of traumatic memory. This mode of reading also shares much with what Nineteenth-Century Americanist David Kazanjian identifies as a “transversal,” or

interpretation “appositionally.” In *The Brink of Freedom: Improvising Life in the Nineteenth-century Atlantic World* (2016), David Kazanjian derives a methodology of reading for what he calls “transversals.” “Considered alongside each other,” he writes, “nineteenth-century Liberia and Yucatán make visible *transversals* that cut across putatively distinct Atlantic world regions and networks, and unsettle commonplace conceptions of freedom” (7, emphasis original). Rather than “comparativism,” he traces transversals, terminology which he derives “from the Latin *transvertere* (*trans* meaning ‘across’ and *vertere* meaning ‘to turn’).” The “verb *transverse* means to turn across or athwart, to turn into something else, to turn about, or to overturn” (7). The significance of a transverse is that it is “not simply a line that cuts across, but also an unruly action that undoes what is expected” (7). In looking for transversals that connect Liberia and Yucatán, Kazanjian reads Black settler colonization and the Caste War “*appositionally*” (9, emphasis original).²⁴ To read appositionally means to create modes of understanding by putting distinct texts for analysis side by side and creating forms of connection beyond contrast, comparison, juxtaposition (9). In writing about how to “glean these transversals” that connect Liberia and Yucatán, Kazanjian ultimately asserts, “we need to teach ourselves to read seemingly everyday documents not only with a historicist’s eye for their empirical content but also with an eye for their critical, theoretical reflections” (10). In “A Map of This Place,” I take up a contrapuntal approach to develop theoretical nuance and to make legible rather than erase the

²⁴ On the development of the term “appositionally,” Kazanjian clarifies the following: “The word *oppose* derived both as a variant spelling of the word *oppose* in which it originally meant ‘to examine’ or ‘to argue against,’ and as a distinct term from the Latin root *ponere* in which it meant ‘to put one thing to another thing,’ ‘to juxtapose.’” Grammatically, apposition is a form that places two terms alongside each other, without a coordinating conjunction to explain how they are related; or, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* has it, ‘the putting of distinct things side by side in close proximity’” (9).

tensions that get raised when we bring together the afterlives of structural violence in different geopolitical sites.

Finally, words from Mahmoud Darwish's welcome letter for the 2008 Palestinian Festival of Literature (PalFest) inspire the title of my dissertation. Darwish writes: "The search for truth, which is one of a writer's duties, takes on – in this land – the form of a confrontation with the lies and usurpation that besiege Palestine's contemporary history; with the attempts to erase our people from the memory of history and *from the map of this place*" (9, emphasis added). "A Map of This Place" identifies Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations authors' depictions of memory work as a form of resistant cartography and their depictions of place as activated by the contact points of memoryscapes of upheaval, dispersion, and survival. These are the kinds of maps that their novels, memoirs, and personal essays chart. With this final note on the structural organization of my dissertation and the background of my project's title, I turn to a chapter-by-chapter outline.

Overview of Chapters

The nature of this interdisciplinary project on "nested memory" requires contextualizing for readers why there is a proliferation of memories of removal in Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases. To that end, Chapter One, "We Are Here: Witnesses to Disappearing History and Writing against Erasure," illuminates how, in their respective contexts of Indigenous removal, settlement, and sovereignty, these diasporas disrupt "settler mnemonics" through storytelling. In his analyses of political rhetoric, Kevin Bruyneel coins "settler mnemonics" to articulate how the US nation-state remembers its founding in Indigenous territorial disposition. I adapt this concept to the study of narrative form by turning to *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* (2001) by Micheline Aharonian Marcom, *The Blue Between Sky and*

Water (2015) by Susan Abulhawa, and *There There* (2018) by Tommy Orange. I argue that frame narratives allow each author to make legible state-sponsored, hierarchical remembrance practices that seek to occlude knowledge of the genesis of the nation-state. At the same time, Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange develop their respective frame narratives to illustrate the circulation of resistant memories that foreground survival.

Having elucidated the interdependency of nation-state and diasporic cultural narratives through an expansive study of settler mnemonics, Chapters Two through Four attend to multigenerational remembrance practices in the afterlives of removal. Chapter Two is titled “Nested Memory: The Intergenerational Transmission of Memory When the Past Has Not Yet Passed.” In this chapter, I draw upon the depiction of the space-time nexus in Nancy Kricorian’s prose poem “Homage to Bourj Hammoud” and Mohawk theorist Audra Simpson’s concept of “nested sovereignty” to formulate “nested memory.” In so doing, I expand upon Marianne Hirsch’s concept of “postmemory.” Nested memory work refers to the multigenerational contact points of memory when these displaced communities are displaced again. By focusing on the inheritor of memory as an agent and witness to upheaval, I illustrate that while nesting cannot stop the recursivity of trauma, it structures the way memory is carried. To that end, I take up *The Bullet Collection* (2003) by Patricia Sarrafian Ward, *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) by Susan Abulhawa, and *Solar Storms* (1995) by Linda Hogan.

Chapter Three, “The Unspoken as Heritage: Memory of the Everyday in the Shadows of Colonial Archives,” conceptualizes nested memory work when knowledge of the everyday experience during catastrophic extremity is withheld from succeeding generations. I identify practices of withholding as detailed in Harry Harootunian’s memoir *The Unspoken as Heritage: The Armenian Genocide and Its Accounted Lives* (2019). This framework serves as the basis for

my study of *All the Light There Was* (2013) by Nancy Kricorian, *Salt Houses* (2017) by Hala Alyan, and *The Grass Dancer* (1994) by Susan Power. Members of the first generation in each of these novels withhold memories of their lives in their respective homelands prior to forced migration. Withholding also extends to the affective experience of living through dispossession and dispersion, including what survivors thought, felt, or believed would happen to them. This chapter ultimately reframes the notion of forgetting into a question of withholding. It also illuminates how witnessing other events of violence engenders testimony work about the past and in turn, breakthroughs in what was once withheld about the everyday.

Next, Chapter Four, “We Who Become Together”: Networks of Inter- and Trans-Cultural Memory Translation,” brings together memoirs and personal essays. I interpret Michael Arlen’s *Passage to Ararat* (1975), Jean Said Makdisi’s *Beirut Fragments* (1990), and Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg Leanne Betasamosake Simpson’s *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (2017). Where a growing interest in translation in cultural memory studies has addressed how memories travel across cultures, memory work depicted in these memoirs function as what I call acts of translation within displaced communities. These texts demonstrate how for each community, the transmission of collective traumatic memory informs the construction and maintenance of an international kinship, operating within and outside of a nation-state. Members of displaced communities who call different sites home seek to build bridges with one another by discussing their struggles over how the inheritance of traumatic pasts informs their present livelihoods. In reflecting on meaning making processes, these memoirists show that inherited cultural memory can be as divisive as unifying because of the tensions of internal communal relations. Still, they imply positively that such internally comparative conversations might serve as foundations for future kinships.

My conclusion summarizes my arguments. To that end, I juxtapose a passage from Fethiye Çetin's *My Grandmother: An Armenian-Turkish Memoir* (2004) alongside a passage from Orhan Pamuk's *Snow* (2002).²⁵ I also posit further avenues of inquiry. For instance, I gesture to how nested memory can illuminate other contexts of nation-state and diasporic remembrance practices pertaining to native removal, such as South Africa. Furthermore, I ask: What memory work unfolds when native peoples forcibly removed from their homelands as part of nation-state building projects then arrive in North America and identify as home this land marked by removal and dispossession? Or, what possibilities and ethical conundrums arise for the future of memory studies when diasporic migrants' memoryscapes are understood as arriving into Native space and negotiated in the context of Native sovereignty? I raise these questions by reading a scene from Carol Edgarian's *Rise the Euphrates* (1994) alongside the rhetorical work done by the Indigenous resistance hashtag #NoBanOnStolenLand and Standing Rock Sioux. In so doing, I ultimately reiterate the necessity of attending to the nexus of migration *and* memory when studying the migration *of* memory.

A Brief Note on Positionality and Terminology

As will become evident, scholarship from disciplines such as cultural and literary theory, history, sociology, anthropology, and political science inform my project. So, too, do the fields of diaspora, migration, and transnational studies; Indigenous, settler, and postcolonial studies; and genocide, trauma, and memory studies. Still, clarification of the social and physical location from which I author this dissertation allows me to take up protocol in feminist Indigenous studies as well as to analytically distinguish between the migration *of* memory and migration *and*

²⁵ Çetin's memoir was first published in Turkish in 2004 and titled *Anneannem: Anlatt*. The first translation by Maureen Freely appeared in 2008. Pamuk's novel was first published in Turkish in 2002 and titled *Kar*. The translation by Maureen Freely first appeared in 2004.

memory. I am a great-/granddaughter who traces her sense of homeland to the Armenian communities of Furnuz, Adiyaman, and Aintep in eastern Anatolia, the land-based historic Armenia, and the stateless Western Armenia maintained in dispersion; a US-born Armenian daughter of Syrian and Iraqi Armenians; and a scholar researching, thinking, writing, and speaking at a land grant university within the US. Across this land, I have carried inherited and layered memoryscapes and added my own. This land that I view as “home” also bears witness to the removals of American Indian nations and their stories of presence and resurgence. Attention to “locatedness” along these lines also recognizes the need to identify and carry out the responsibilities that come with doing such interdisciplinary and comparative work (Barker 5-6; TallBear, “Standing” 1-3; de Leeuw and Hunt 2-3). One of those responsibilities is to ask “how subjects are produced by social processes” or, specifically, “Who, under what conditions, inherits the power to represent or enact settler colonialism?” (Morgensen 20). With this question, Scott L. Morgensen widens the discourse from “questions of status” as implied in “Who is the settler?” to “respond[ing] to political demands that subjects who inherit the power of settler colonialism challenge their inheritance” (20).²⁶ It is precisely from this exigent question that “A Map of This Place” not only builds transnational and transcultural conceptualizations of memory from depictions of the travels of memory temporally and spatially in Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations literatures but also from discourses on migration and arriving memoryscapes particular to the context of a settler colonial state, the US.

²⁶ Scott L. Morgensen argues that his project responds to those political demands “by investigating and clarifying the genealogies through which such subjects might arise” (20). For an example of how Morgensen’s question has been applied in global Indigenous studies and global settler colonial studies, see Dean Itsuji Saranillio, “Why Asian Settler Colonialism Matters: A Thought Piece on Critiques, Debates, and Indigenous Difference.”

My use of “Indigenous peoples” is informed by the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). I do so while also recognizing the critiques of the document from American Indian and First Nations scholars and activists and non-Native scholars, including that the document remains rhetorically constrained as it does not provide a definition of indigeneity or recognize political self-government from indigenous peoples themselves (Champagne 11). Indeed, the document never uses the word “sovereignty.” It also remains strategically vague on “self-determination,” due in part to the response of settler colonial states at the time of drafting (Engle 144-145). My use of “Indigenous” is also informed by the work of settler colonial and Indigenous studies scholars that I cite in this project. I also choose to capitalize “Indigenous,” though not all the critical scholars I cite do. There are reasons for scholars’ decisions, notably the in-house style of the journal in which an article is published and likewise the press in which a book is published. In the works that I cite for this dissertation, it is rare for publications to feature capitalization of both “Native” and “Indigenous” in comparative projects that deal with a scope beyond the Americas. One notable exception is Patrick Wolfe’s *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race*, where he capitalizes both “Indigenous” and “Natives,” including when he writes about Zionist settlers and the “quest to replace Native society” (260). I opt for “native society” since, as outlined previously, I am aware of the reach of the terminology of “Native American” in the fields with which my dissertation engages and capitalize “Native” only when I refer to Indigenous peoples of North America.

In this vein, I want to also note that, as Byrd highlights, “There are more than 567 federally recognized tribal societies throughout the United States including Alaska, and each in and of themselves is a distinct nation with its own customs, laws, languages, and values that differentiate it from other Indigenous communities as well as the larger colonizing US nation-

state” (“American Indian Transnationalisms” 179). I thus use “American Indian nations” to refer to Indigenous peoples of the continental US, even as I am cognizant of the racially gendered and sexualized imagery in popular culture of the figure of the American Indian (Barker, “Critically Sovereign” 1-3). Moreover, cognizant of what Daniel Heath Justice refers to as “localized indigeneity” (171), I use “First Nations” when referring to Indigenous peoples of Canada. The forward slash allows me to visually illustrate for readers Indigenous transnationalisms across the US-Canada imposed settler border while also recognizing the different government-to-government relations these tribal communities have with the respective settler state, meaning federal Indian policy in the US and the Indian Act in Canada. I do not take up for analysis the literary works of Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Inuit, or Métis people in this dissertation.

Finally, in invoking “Indigenous removal” or “native removal” to refer to the Palestinian and Armenian cases, I do not seek to co-opt, equate, or quickly and violently apply discourses on indigeneity, sovereignty, self-determination, settler colonialism, or decolonization from the context of the Americas to the Ottoman world and the Middle East. Global Indigenous studies allows us to understand “how discrete and localized grounded Indigenous relationalities might speak to and against one another” (Byrd, “American Indian Transnationalisms” 183). Still, I freely admit that I do not hold all the answers precisely because much scholarship in global Indigenous and global settler colonial studies is unfolding as I complete this dissertation. I am, however, ultimately guided by my ethics. By this I mean, I write with an eye towards how my work might travel, including foreseeing positive consequences and unintentional lived repercussions. I cannot think of a better way to complete a project on afterlives than to imagine the afterlives of my own words.

CHAPTER 1: WE ARE HERE: WITNESSES TO DISAPPEARING HISTORY AND WRITING AGAINST ERASURE

Յուշամատեն (Houshamadyan) refers to an open digital archive launched out of Berlin in 2015 and to a genre of writing produced by post-1915 Armenian writers in diaspora. The term translates into “memory book.” Most authors of the historical Houshamadyan literary genre were born in the Ottoman Empire but wrote in diaspora. Prompted by their perspective that their situation of exile was defined as one without a foreseeable return, authors attempted through the means of written word to provide a record of Armenians’ daily life experiences in the homeland (“Why Houshamadyan”). The Houshamadyan website serves as a digital repository for innumerable print culture items (such as maps, drawings, family genealogy trees, and diaries), material objects (such as embroidery, textiles, and ceramics), and other records of domestic life (such as oral folk tales, songs, and recipes). These curated objects allow the website to spatialize Armenian presence in the homeland, similar to the work done by authors of the historical genre who wrote, in part, memoirs of Armenian villages and vilayets in the Ottoman Empire before and up to and through the collective trauma of 1915. The project continues the work of the historical literary genre in that the Houshamadyan team envisions the digital archive will serve as a means by which Ottoman memory may be returned to Armenians. The choice to frame the project as “returning” memory stems from a larger conceptualization that the Catastrophe of 1915, “re-written historiography,” and “re-constructed memory” have severed a memory link between Armenian descendants and the world of their Armenian ancestors (“Why Houshamadyan”). The digital archive does not just concern itself with spatializing Armenian village life effaced from modern maps of the Republic of Turkey. Rather, the project locates the processes of removal, settlement, and state-sponsored remembrance practices that define the Armenian Genocide and its lasting effects both in Turkey and for the Armenian diaspora.

2015 also saw the launch of “Mapping Indigenous LA,” a digital archive and memory work project concerning a connected history from a century before. For, as historian Uğur Ümit Üngör argues, a publication about settlement practices in North America, Australia, and Latin America, including the forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples and attempts to extinguish Indigenous peoples’ spiritual and cultural life, influenced the population policies and techniques of internal colonization carried out during Young Turk rule in Anatolia (*The Making of Modern Turkey* 39).²⁷ Similar to the Houshamadyan project, the Mapping Indigenous LA project emerges from an awareness of how a nation-state rewrites history and reconstructs memory of its foundational crimes. The latter archive, however, concerns the case of the US. Reading these digital archives together proves useful because this chapter turns to three novels to establish how Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations authors studied here conceptualize the conditions under which their peoples’ cultural traumatic memories circulate. In this vein, this chapter serves as a primer for succeeding ones which trace the migration of collective traumatic memory not only in terms of its sites of departure but also in terms of its sites of arrival.

Mapping Indigenous LA launched out of UCLA and responds to the limitations of place-making afforded by contemporaneous settler colonial maps of Los Angeles. The website turns to digital storytelling as an alternative cartography and remaps the city as a place defined by sedimented cultural geographies of Indigenous Los Angeles that includes the Gabrielino/Tongva and Tataviam, American Indian nations who were removed and displaced through settler

²⁷ The book, *The Settlement of Migrants: The International Method of Assimilation*, was penned by Naci İsmail Pelisteran, an Albanian yet “ardent Turkish nationalist.” It was his first publication as an operative of the “Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Immigrants” (İskân-ı Aşair ve Muhacirîn Müdüriyeti, İAMM). See Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, pp. 38-39.

colonial governmental practices. It also features histories of Indigenous diasporas from Latin America and Oceania (“Research Scope”). The project reactivates print, material, and immaterial cultural artifacts to narrate Indigenous nations’ and arriving Indigenous diasporas’ past and present experiences. To produce “story maps” on the website, the Mapping Indigenous LA team turns to these archival materials as well as stories and knowledge from Indigenous youth, community leaders, and elders from Indigenous communities throughout the city.

Houshamadyan produces what can also be called story-maps as part of its mission to revive and preserve memories of Armenians’ presence in the Ottoman Empire (“Why Houshamadyan”).

Beyond the historical intimacy of archives and the similar conceptual aims of the digital story-mapping projects, the emergence of both the Houshamadyan and Mapping Indigenous LA projects coincides with comparative conversations in the social sciences concerning state remembrance practices of foundational acts of collective violence. Sociologist Fatma Müge Göçek asserts that denial in the context of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey persists for more than two centuries “because it involves the interaction of state *and* society, becomes multilayered across time, and keeps on selectively drawing on events for legitimation” (4, emphasis original). The state performs a public display of rewriting history through acts of silence, secrecy, and subversion (8-9). Göçek argues that the analytical framework she develops can be employed to study other states and societies which commit collective violence and struggle with naming such violence, including the US and violence committed against Native Americans and African Americans (3-4). In a discussion on how the Turkish nation-state’s nonrecognition of collective violence in the past informs political violence carried out in the present, historian Taner Akçam, like Göçek, draws comparisons to the US and its denial of the genocide of Indigenous peoples and the legacy of transatlantic slavery (“Upstander Award Speech”). Through his comparative

analysis, Akçam identifies what he calls “temporal compartmentalization,” or the “tendency to place the past and present into different boxes and to ignore their interconnectedness” (“Upstander Award Speech”). Using this framework, Akçam opens up additional points of comparison when he avers that “Israel will have to face its own history regarding the treatment of Palestinians” (“Upstander Award Speech”) and when he suggests that much can be learned by understanding Turkish denialism in relation to the racist apartheid regime of South Africa. Other scholars have also turned to scholarship on Turkish nation-state denial to study Israeli state surveillance of Palestinian remembrance practices pertaining to the Nakba (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 80-82) and South African apartheid to study Israeli occupation and forms of separation and segregation (Makdisi, “The Architecture of Erasure” 531-537).²⁸

This chapter expands upon the model of transversally reading the Houshamadyan and Mapping Indigenous LA digital storytelling projects and takes cues from this emerging scholarly discourse. It does so to examine the relationship between memory work, narrative structure, and mapping in three novels: *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* (2001) by Micheline Aharonian Marcom, *The Blue Between Sky and Water* (2015) by Susan Abulhawa, and *There There* (2018) by Tommy Orange (Cheyenne/Arapaho). Specifically, it argues that frame narratives in these novels function as a means of story-mapping. In story-mapping through narrative structure, Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange conceptualize the circulation of collective traumatic memory as a dialectic between state-sponsored, hierarchical, and oppressive memory and resistant

²⁸ For a discussion on how the 1923 resettlement of Muslims in Greece to Turkey and Greek Orthodox Christians in Turkey to Greece set the precedent for other segregation policies, including apartheid, partitions, and the creation of walls, see Asli İğsiz, *Humanitarianism in the Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* (2018). A fruitful avenue for further inquiry is to study how the Ottoman millet system set a legal precedent for population management based on religious or ethnic difference, including and beyond the Greek-Turkish population exchange.

remembrance practices within dispossessed Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian communities that foreground survival.²⁹ Each vignette in *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* is told from the perspective of a different character who watches the Catastrophe of 1915 and its aftermath unfold. These storytellers include those who are sent on death marches to Der Zor, Syria, those who either stay behind or are rescued but forced to assimilate either way, and those who end up in diaspora, such as in Beirut. Abulhawa's *The Blue Between Sky and Water* follows a Palestinian family and their neighbors who are forced to leave their village of Beit Daras in 1948 and walk to Gaza as well as their descendants, both in the US and in Gaza. *There There* depicts an urban American Indian community in contemporary Oakland and the community members' struggle "to be recognized as present-tense people" (Orange 141) in the face of a "five-hundred-year-old campaign" of "assimilation, absorption, [and] erasure" (8). This campaign, the novel emphasizes, stretches East to West, from violence committed in the 1600s against Wampanoag and Pequot nations in what is now Massachusetts, to the 1864 Sand Creek massacre of Cheyenne in what is now Colorado, to the Indian Relocation Act of 1956 and the larger Indian Termination Policy era from the 1940s through the 1960s. Mapping Indigenous LA's attentiveness to the layered memoryscapes of removed and arriving Indigenous peoples matters especially for *There There* because relocated Cheyenne and Arapaho characters negotiate tribal national and US national memory on traditional lands of the Ohlone people in northern California.

Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange, I argue, each occupy the position of a descendant who witnesses disappearing history. In the case of the novels this chapter engages and as

²⁹ In drawing this juxtaposition, I draw upon Michael Rothberg's arguments about the overlaps and divergences in the analytical rubrics of "transcultural" and "transnational" memory. See "Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings: The Case of Post Holocaust Germany," p. 127.

demonstrated in my reading of the Houshamadyan and Mapping Indigenous LA projects, the notion of “disappearing” here refers to an active, structural erasure of a particular kind of history: the founding of nation-states through the dispossession and subordination of native peoples. This rubric stands in contrast to Cathy Caruth’s use of “disappearing history” (10), which she develops in her analysis of Sigmund Freud’s work and by extension, the writing of psychoanalytic theory. Caruth asserts that psychoanalytic thought developed in the face of “the threat of a world that [was] disappearing in the destruction of the two world wars” (x). She extends her analysis to the works of Honoré de Balzac and Ariel Dorfman, whose literary works “recount the traumatic struggles of characters attempting to reappear in the legal and political realms from which they have been banished” (x). From there, Caruth turns to Hannah Arendt’s political essays which sought to “describe the unfolding of a twentieth-century political history that seems no longer to establish, but rather to eliminate, the very possibility of its own remembrance” (x). Arendt’s writing on the “modern lie,” she concludes, “may be understood as a rigorous attempt to articulate a new and perplexing phenomenon: the advent of a history that is constituted by the way it disappears from consciousness, that eludes or erases memory in the very act of creating new events” (x). While each of these authors grapples with a contemporaneous example of the phenomenon of the disappearance of history, Caruth’s point is that across these case studies, there emerges the “persistence of a language,” the language of what Freud calls the “life drive” or a “mode of speaking and of writing that bear witness to the past by turning toward the future” (xi). But what persistent language arises in works that take on the willful disappearance of history through projects of empire, settler coloniality, and nation-state building?

Where Caruth elucidates the “language” of trauma theory (15-17) that arises through image-making and formal elements such as repetition in the works of Freud, Balzac, Dorfman, Arendt, and Derrida, this chapter concerns itself with the language of “being witness to the process of witnessing itself” (Laub, “An Event” 75) in the face of settler mnemonics.³⁰ That is, I argue that each author develops a frame narrative to conceptualize intersecting practices of settler subjectivity, governmentality, and memory. The frame narratives allow each author to demonstrate that in the intergenerational transmission of memory in Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases, what is passed on is not just communal knowledge of events of collective trauma having happened. Rather, what is also passed on is knowledge of having witnessed how states seek to suppress memories of their foundational crimes.

Others have followed Caruth’s path in studying the emergence of the trauma paradigm as a critical theory through analyses of the formal qualities of literary writings. Turning to postmodern and postcolonial literatures, critics have developed such rubrics as “trauma fiction” (Whitehead 3), “trauma narratives” (Vickroy 1), “trauma literature” (2), or the “trauma genre” (Gibbs 2) to study how novelists have mimetically represented “forms and symptoms” of trauma such that “temporality and chronology collapse” and “narratives are characterized by repetition and indirection” (Whitehead 3). Frame narratives have by and large escaped exploration in these studies which address the literary techniques contemporary novelists employ to represent trauma and its effects. Exceptions include W.G. Sebald’s *The Emigrants* (1996) and *Austerlitz* (2001), which have been the focus of articles and edited collection chapters on narrative form in literary

³⁰ Dori Laub identifies three positions that a listener of testimony can hold: “being a witness to oneself within the experience,” “being witness to the testimonies of others,” and “being witness to the process of witnessing itself” (“An Event” 75). In chapter three of this dissertation, I further revisit Laub’s arguments on witnessing and testimony.

representations of the Holocaust, modernism, or German literature.³¹ Identifying Sebald's "maze-like structures as labyrinths," Judith R. Ryan asserts that Sebald positions the reader to undertake "detective work" while at the same time preventing the reader from "finding a key that brings the works into coherent focus" (127). Elsewhere, critics have traced how Sebald reimagines narrative frame techniques from late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German authors to undermine the very believability that his novels' fragmentary narrative structures attempt to establish (DeMair 30). Relatedly, Anne Whitehead argues that Sebald's lengthy anecdotes and digressions replicate Freudian notions of trauma and structurally render a "diabolical movement which (like trauma) is interminably caught between advance and regress, progression and return" (121).³² At stake in this chapter of "A Map of This Place" is a shift from the nexus of narrative structure and trauma theory to the nexus of framing devices and memory work.

Collective trauma and collective memory are of course imbricated. Departing from these other studies, however, this chapter illuminates how Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange develop frame narratives which offer a way to theorize how "being actively erased from history," to borrow Susan Abulhawa's words (email interview), is a function of settler mnemonics, and how resistant memories circulate intergenerationally and spatially. In theorizing settler memory, state practices of (re)writing history, or nation-state forms of forgetting through the narrative frames of their respective novels, Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange exemplify a message from one more

³¹ Sebald's *The Emigrants* was published in German as *Die Ausgewanderten* in 1992.

³² See, for instance, Scott Denham and Mark McCulloh, editors, *W.G. Sebald: History, Memory, Trauma* (2006); Jakob Lothe, "Narrative, Memory, and Visual Image: W.G. Sebald's *Luftkrieg und Literatur* and *Austerlitz*"; and Lynn L. Wolff, *W.G. Sebald's Hybrid Poetics: Literature as Historiography* (2014).

event that occurred in 2015.³³ In April 2015, Armenians from the diaspora, the Republic of Armenia, and the Republic of Turkey came together in Istanbul and held signs at various public historical sites. One such site was Haydarpaşa railway station, where Armenian intellectuals, cultural and community leaders, artists, writers, political activists, and teachers in April 1915 had been imprisoned on their deportation route. These signs read «Մենք Հն՛ւ Ենք» or “Menk *Hos* Enk,” which means “We Are *Here*.”³⁴ Kanaka Maoli feminist anthropologist J. Kēhaulani Kauanui’s concept of “enduring indigeneity” proves useful in understanding the significance of these three novels in bringing to the fore two levels of the migration of memory. First, she argues, “indigeneity itself is enduring—that the operative logic of settler colonialism may be to ‘eliminate the native’” but “indigenous peoples exist, resist, and persist.” She further avers, “settler colonialism is a structure that endures indigeneity, as it holds out against it” (Kauanui). These novels depict a long *durée* of memory work as settlers stake claim to citizenship and belonging to the lands unto which they arrive. At the same time, the frame narratives demonstrate that communal memories of forced migration and dispossession remain in motion because removed peoples exist, resist, and persist.

In this vein, Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange have much in common with the authors of the Houshamadyan genre who, in their own time, witnessed the practices of settler memory in the context of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey and responded with their own resistant

³³ Marcom writes, “many Armenians feel a tremendous pressure to write into history that which has been erased and revised by the Turkish government, with all of the power and influence governments possess to tell their version of history” (“Truth is Buried”). She makes this comment after discussing Peter Balakian’s research on denialist scholarship in the US academia.

³⁴ In modern standard Armenian, the *shesht* (or the ´ punctuation mark) is used for emphasis. For a discussion on the significance of the commemoration, see Nancy Kricorian, “Choosing ‘Co-Resistance’ Rather Than ‘Turkish-Armenian’ Dialogue.” For an analysis of this event as part of themes apparent in global commemorative efforts in 2015, see Sossie Kasbarian, “The Politics of Memory and Commemoration: Armenian Diasporic Reflections on 2015.”

cartography. Rather than “forgetting” or “amnesia” to describe how US statist power enforces Indigenous territorial dispossession, political scientist Kevin Bruyneel offers the concept of “settler memory.” On a local scale, settler memory circumscribes the “functions, practices, and products of memory – of colonialist dispossession and settlement that shape settler subjectivity and governmentality in liberal colonial contexts such as the USA” (“Codename Geronimo” 351). On a global scale, settler memory refers to the way in which a settler society “articulates collective knowledge of the past and present of settler colonial violence and dispossession” and simultaneously “disavows the political relevance of this memory by refusing and absenting the presence of Indigenous people as contemporary agents” (351). By situating Indigenous peoples and indigeneity as part of the nation’s past rather than its present, the nation-state perpetuates and legitimates violence and dispossession (Bruyneel, “*Happy Days*” 52).

American Indian and First Nations theorists Mishuana Goeman (Seneca), Jean M. O’Brien (White Earth Ojibwe), and Audra Simpson (Mohawk) have elucidated how, despite ongoing dispossession, American Indian/First Nations epistemologies regarding “place-making” and “*place-world[s]*” (Basso quoted in Brooks xxiii, emphasis original) disrupt the work of settler memory as part of the “logic of elimination” (Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism” 308). In the study of settler colonial societies, the rubric of the “logic of elimination” decenters questions of degree and hierarchy among victims while still holding in its purview settler colonialism’s enduring power and ongoing effects. In contrast to the study of genocide as a temporally-bounded event, the logic of elimination foregrounds “structural genocide” (403), which encompasses not only summary liquidation of Indigenous peoples (388) but also empirical relationships between spatial removal, mass killings, and biocultural assimilation (403). O’Brien’s study of nineteenth-century European and Anglo-American settlement in Southern

New England illuminates the imbrication of collective memory and settler colonialism. Local histories penned by settlers, or “firsting” narratives which perpetuated the “vanishing Indian” trope, alongside ceremonial cycles of pageants, commemorations, monument building, and lecture hall performances created a narrative of Indian extinction that has persisted in American consciousness (xiii).

Three Apples Fell from Heaven, The Blue Between Sky and Water, and There There exemplify how displaced peoples turn to the creative power in literary production to remap space and place and counter the construct of “lasting,” or narratives which do not recognize the bodily presence and resurgence of Indigenous peoples removed in processes of nation-state building. As Goeman asserts, literature “tenders an avenue for the ‘imaginative’ creation of new possibilities, which must happen through imaginative modes precisely because the ‘real’ of settler colonial society is built on the violent erasures of alternative modes of mapping and geographic understandings” (*Mark My Words* 2). To build upon Indigenous studies scholars’ arguments about the work of institutional memory in the case of the settler states of the US, Canada, and Australia, this chapter brings into the conversation scholarship about what in Armenian Studies and Palestine Studies has been referred to as “political” or “state” memory. In so doing, this chapter counters discursive practices in settler colonial studies, the overarching scholarly field of research in which Bruyneel participates. That is, in its attention to death and destruction, including Patrick Wolfe’s oft-cited “Settler Colonial Studies and the Elimination of the Native,” settler colonial studies has tended not to bear witness to Indigenous life, social reproduction, and futurity (Estes, “Indigenous Studies”). In contrast, *Three Apples Fell from Heaven, The Blue Between Sky and Water, and There There* depict how revitalization of storytelling techniques and folk song traditions function as empowering, self-defining, and subversive acts of cultural

survival for displaced Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian peoples who identify their history and presence on land back home as erased by local, national, and global forces.

Rumored Memory in *Three Apples Fell from Heaven*

Three Apples Fell from Heaven consists of fifty-four individually titled, interconnected vignettes. The main narrative arc follows the character Anaguil in the months leading up to and during the deportation of Armenians in 1915, her life afterwards as a hidden-Armenian, when she is taken in by a Turkish couple who conducted business with her father before he and other Armenian men in town were rounded up by gendarmes and deported, her attempts at speaking the “forbidden language” of Armenian (Marcom, *Three Apples* 134) with her siblings, and her decision to emigrate to Beirut.³⁵ Anaguil’s narrative, told both in first- and third-person perspective, makes up seventeen vignettes while twenty-three vignettes are told from the perspective of other characters who are victims, bystanders, and perpetrators.³⁶ A fictionalized account of Consul Leslie Davis makes up seven vignettes.³⁷ In the remaining seven vignettes

³⁵ The novel concludes at an undisclosed time in the future. In exile, Anaguil looks at a photo and thinks, “I look young in 1922 despite the dark circles. In my thirties I begin to age quickly. No one knows how old I am. History and ledgers are in the time Before. I say I don’t know my own age, and there are no papers to contradict me. I am thirty-five; I am thirty-two; forty; forty-odd. When I die my daughter says, Maman was born in the old place” (257).

³⁶ One story told from the perspective of a victim is Dickran whose mother abandons him under an oak tree during the death marches to Der Zor. One example of a bystander is Maritsa. She is married at the age of thirteen to a thirty-five-year-old man named Mustafa, is berated by her mother-in-law, is abused by the Commander after he sends Mustafa and other Turkish farmers to Russia, and has a non-verbal exchange with an Armenian woman she identifies as a “gâvur” (79) meaning “infidel” (78). For the perspective of the perpetrator, Marcom provides a vignette titled “Official Proclamation,” a ten-point list modeled after the historical memorandum of the Committee of Union and Progress, a document which was discovered and translated in 1919 by British officials in Turkey who dubbed it “The Ten Commandments.”

³⁷ In the Acknowledgements, Marcom indicates that *The Slaughterhouse Province*, which contains Davis’s report to the Consular Agency on the years 1914-1917, served as an invaluable book for her research. In the novel, Marcom quotes from official dispatches Davis wrote.

interspersed throughout Anaguil's narrative arc, Marcom develops three framing devices which use the opening and closing conventions of Armenian folklore storytelling traditions.

The first framing device pertains to the personified character of Rumor in the opening vignette, titled "This is the Story Rumor Writes," and the penultimate vignette, titled "Arsinee." In these vignettes, Marcom invokes the opening storytelling convention of "There was, there was not." Rumor narrates the history of the "clans who lived on the Anatolian plateau for more than two thousand years" and describes how the "clans say, We call ourselves *Hai*" (260, emphasis original). In the Armenian language, Armenians do not refer to themselves as "Armenian." Rather, "*Hai*," the word for Armenian people, stems from the name of the founder of the nation, Haik, as told in the Armenian myth of origin, which makes up Movses Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians* penned in the mid-fourth century.³⁸ An unnamed voice in these vignettes interrupts Rumor's narration and asserts, "Don't believe it, she's a liar of the first order. The second framing device encompasses two other vignettes, "A Very Sad Ending" and "A Sad Ending Again." These vignettes do not concern the figure of Rumor, but Marcom adapts the "there was, there was not" convention in describing the destruction of two towns, Kharphert and Mezre, and the violence carried out against Armenian inhabitants.

The third framing device encompasses three vignettes which close "And three apples fell from heaven, one for the storyteller, one for the listener, and one for the eavesdropper." This last line is a variation of the traditional terminal convention which always begins "Three apples fell from Heaven" and almost always features one apple given to the storyteller and one given to the

³⁸ For a discussion of how Khorenatsi's work is "instrumental in giving Armenians' a sense of belonging that stretched back over two millenia or more" (49) and an analysis of the symbolic resonance of the Haik and Bel story in terms of Armenian identity formation, see Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (2006), pp. 48-52.

listener. The recipient of the third apple may vary; some examples refer to the “the world” (Tashjian ix) or the reader receiving two apples (Avakian 96). Predominantly, however, the formula concludes “one for the teller, one for the listener, and one for the one who gives heed/ear” (Avakian 95).³⁹ Marcom uses this convention for the vignettes titled “Mardiros,” “The History of Bozmashen as Iterated by the Local Dogs,” and “As to Where Are the Bootmakers and the Town of Kharphert.” I will use the category “folklore vignettes” to refer to the vignettes in which Marcom employs the second and third framing devices and “Rumor vignettes” to refer to the opening and penultimate vignettes in the novel.

Across these folklore and Rumor vignettes, Marcom presents the relationship between the destruction of stories, here meaning communal memory of collective trauma, and the persistent interruption of the preconceived story, here meaning the narrative that the state tells of its founding. In this vein, these five folklore vignettes conceptualize the processes that inform what Üngör has identified as “political memory” in the case of the Turkish nation-state. Political memory refers to the mnemonic practices through which the government attempts to maintain a unitary narrative about the past (“Lost in Commemoration” 149-150). As Üngör argues, official textbooks, nationalist canons, and city histories have predominantly remained “silent on critical historical issues” and “banished all ethnic minorities from history” (156). Political memory as Üngör articulates it is akin to settler memory because Üngör points to the underlying process of the state narrating history to legitimate itself, much like Bruyneel describes “settler memory” as an “active practice” and “not a reference to a dislocated past” (“Codename Geronimo” 352).

³⁹ For a discussion on the use of this concluding phrase in Turkish, see Avakian, “Three Apples Fell from Heaven,” p. 95.

Through the imagery of stories destroyed and converged and the circulation of a preconceived story, Marcom implies that political memory of the past remains an active practice.

On the surface level, the content in these framing devices appear not to concern the experience of the genocide. Through each of these vignettes, however, Marcom invites the listener-reader, or eavesdropper, to look at the narrative nested in the larger narrative. The term listener-reader proves useful here because of the way that Marcom presents Rumor as both writing and speaking stories of upheaval and survival and because of the way Marcom uses the second-person pronoun “you.” Both vignettes about Rumor begin:

She writes it late at night, while you are dozing.

Rumor says things like, And So, and so

There was and

There was not. (Marcom, *Three Apples* 1)

The pronoun “this” in “Rumor tells stories, this is the story she writes” (1), the line immediately following the first few sentences above, and the pronoun “it” in “She writes it late at night” refer to the thick narrative of the Armenian Genocide in between the two Rumor vignettes. In the first vignette to the novel, Rumor previews that “There is a lake that overflows its bounds, transshapen by flesh,” that “There are new name places and streets, the heft of empty churches,” that the “printing press is dismantled,” and that the “bakers and bootmakers [are] uninvented” (2). In this way, the opening vignette, “This is the Story Rumor Writes,” foregrounds the work of firsting and lasting in the process of settlement and the creation of the Republic of Turkey, practices described in the folklore vignettes. The first vignette continues, “Their birth was in the time of fire, when God’s wrath was immutable and adamantine, in the summer months of that year when all of the stories were destroyed and converged and the new story was

preconceived—they were not themselves until them” (3). At first, the pronoun “they” renders Rumor’s claim unclear. However, the folklore vignettes offer a framework for the listener-reader to interpret the final line about “their birth.”

The vignette “Mardiros” follows an Armenian man tortured by the police then dumped in a “naked heap next to the other recently liberated inmates in the ditch four miles from town” (94). The character of the Turkish Commander and the torturers call him Mardiros, the Armenian name meaning “martyr.”⁴⁰ In the open grave, “Mardiros became dead like the rest of his cohort and he waited for the Newresurrection” (94). Among the pile of bodies, he witnesses how “bits and pieces of the congregation were departing in the mouths of birds of prey, rats, wolves, and heyenas” (94). Mardiros the martyr does not die as the perpetrators intended. Rather, Marcom presents a character who performs the role of one of what memory studies theorist Aleida Assmann has identified as the four basic types of witnessing: the witness as martyr.⁴¹ The witness as martyr falls victim to the state’s unrestricted power. This witness lacks the possibility of finding justice before a legal court but can appeal to his or her god. When a martyr elevates “his death to an act of witnessing,” Assmann continues, “he does not die off but dies for” (n.p.). Resurrected, Mardiros asks, “What made you forget me, Effendi Bey?” Reflecting on the “lesson he knew the Newgod was teaching him,” he concludes, “I must return to town” (Marcom, *Three Apples* 94). Through his apostrophe to the effendi bey, terms in the Turkish language used for titles of rank and respect in the Ottoman government, Marcom clarifies the lesson Mardiros

⁴⁰ Readers never learn this character’s real name. In Armenian: Մարտիրոս. See Mesrob Kouyoumjian and Levon Torossian, *New Pocket Dictionary: Armenian-English*, p. 183.

⁴¹ Assmann clarifies that she views these as “basic forms or ideal types or generalizations in the sense of Max Weber.” Assmann identifies these types in a talk in which she traces the emergence of truth and reconciliation committees.

learns.⁴² The phrasing “made to forget” suggests an active practice of supplanting collective memory of political violence. This knowledge prompts Mardiros, the resurrected martyr, to disrupt settler mnemonics and speak that which is never meant to be told.

This final scene in the vignette “Mardiros” also emphasizes the importance of transmitting traumatic memory. In this way, the “Newresurrection” that Mardiros the character awaits concerns the circulation of his testimony. In the context of the narrative arc, Mardiros, to adapt Assmann’s words here, does not “die off but dies for” in that he returns to Kharphert to ensure that his testimony, part of collective memory of the Armenian Genocide, undermines the Turkish Commander’s attempts to erase all physical archives of the destruction. On his return route to Kharphert, he encounters two Armenian women who tell him that all men above the age of eight have been taken. Mardiros tells them, “I am proof that the men have not been murdered. They are four miles from here in a big heap, not too far from the lake” (95). Mardiros lies; after all, he describes the death of the men when he refers to them as the congregation departing in the mouths of animals. To the women, he indicates that “they are being hawks, vultures, field mice, rats, flies, queen ants, millipedes, and hyena” (95) and claims that in this way, “They are rising into the living” (95). However, Mardiros’s conversation with the women clarifies what he means when he says he awaits the Newresurrection: that their bodily remains will be devoured by animals, the “living.” The women go to wash and kiss Mardiros’s feet and notice the “swollen and decrepit and missing pieces of his lower extremities. The nails missing from his toes” (95). They then create a “newritual” by “patt[ing] the ground around the halo of his present and missing toes” (96). The women carry on, having witnessed the physical scars that remain of the bodily violence carried out against Mardiros and by extension, the other men in the pile on the

⁴² For definitions, see “Effendi” and “Bey.”

edge of town. Mardiros's conversation with the women functions as testimony. As recipients of the martyr's testimony, the women occupy the position of what Assmann identifies as "secondary witnesses of the martyr" (n.p.). A secondary witness "establishes a factual truth" given that a martyr dies and depends on others to remember his or her testimony. Mardiros asks the women to "Stay here in this town" (Marcom, *Three Apples* 96), and the scene concludes that they "continued on their way" (96). As carriers of Mardiros's testimony, the women have the potential to speak truth through remembrance practices.

The description of the erasure of the bodily archive in this vignette prepares eavesdroppers to understand the perpetrators' attempts to suppress collective memory of the genocide. Mardiros continues to the army headquarters, which a parenthetical aside indicates had previously "been the Armenian School for Boys, established 1886" (96). When Mardiros arrives, he notices that the "room was immaculate except for a few hairs left in corners and in the cracks of hinges of things" and that the "floor had been mopped" (96). The perpetrators have swept away the tangible evidence of Mardiros's torture and that of other Armenian men. Mardiros asks the Turkish Commander a seemingly simple question, "What happens after this Story?" (97). Their conversation continues:

Agh. Don't worry, my son. This story will never have happened after it's finished.

And the Rumors, where will they go?

The Commander adjusted himself again. With the marchers—the Mesopotamian has space for everything.

You've thought of everything, sir.

Yes, we thought of you also. (97)

Both Mardiros and the Commander speak of “this story,” but Marcom capitalizes “Story” when Mardiros speaks the term in contrast to the Commander’s response. Through this visual and linguistic distinction between “Story” and “story,” Marcom conceptualizes how the testimony of a martyr “survives and undermines the victory of the powerful,” to borrow Assmann’s words (n.p.). It survives and circulates, the vignette demonstrates, when the two women characters bear witness. By “this Story,” Mardiros refers to his persecution and by extension the attempted elimination of his people. The word “genocide” was not coined until 1948, and Armenian communities up to that point used several Armenian language phrases to describe the deportations and massacres from 1915-1923. Hagop Oshagan (1883-1948), considered one of the major authors who wrote in Western Armenian and in exile, used the term “*aghed*” translated as “disaster” or “catastrophe” and in the decades immediately after the events of 1915, Armenian communities in diaspora used “*aghed*” in addition to massacre (*chart*), atrocity (*eghern*), crime (*ojir*), deportation (*deghahanut‘iwn*) (Chahinian 13).⁴³ To recall, Rumor in the opening vignette indicates “Their birth was in the time of fire.” Given this context of Armenian language terminology, “fire” alludes both to the genocide and to the “birth” of the post-1915 Armenian diaspora and the ensuing transnational formation of an Armenian peoplehood. The “story that Rumor writes,” then, encompasses the creation of the Turkish nation-state and the dispossession of Armenians from their homeland, the logic of elimination and the resurgence of Armenians, and the migration of hegemonic settler memory from above and the migration of resistant traumatic cultural memory from below.

The Commander understands rumors to mean eyewitness testimonies of the deportations and believes that the accounts will not circulate because the perpetrators intend for the marchers

⁴³ Here I use Chahinian’s transliteration.

to perish in the desert. When Mardiros speaks of Rumors, however, he refers to the people themselves. The listener-reader who stops here, since the “three apples” phrase ends the vignette “Mardiros,” understands only part of the “Story” Mardiros references: the destruction but not the survival of the people. Succeeding vignettes, however, show that the Mesopotamian region had space for everything—space for some survivors to carry rumors, meaning memories of the atrocities, with them. One of these survivors is the storyteller Rumor. Two of the other folklore vignettes, “A Very Sad Ending” and its companion piece “A Sad Ending Again,” focus on the role of map-making and renaming of places in the Turkish nation-state’s narrative of its dark past. Once again, Marcom employs the dual terms of “Rumor” and “rumor.” She does so this time to portray both how the character of Rumor survives and how the rumors also circulate despite the Commander’s attempts to rewrite history.

In “A Very Sad Ending,” Marcom employs the opening line of “there was, there was not” to frame “a terrible story” (203) that concerns twin wolves, “brothers in Anatolia [who] had no idea what was transpiring in Constantinople” (206).⁴⁴ The wolves are metaphors for the “twin towns” of Kharphert and Mezre (203). Through this metaphor, Marcom illustrates how beyond these immediate years, the state attempts to carry out the Commander’s vision when he tells Mardiros that the “story will never have happened after it’s finished” (97). In “A Very Sad Ending,” the “there was not” negation recalls the description of how the “brothers no longer figured into local stories” because “they were lost or abandoned or burned” (206). The “sad ending was complete” for these brothers given that without anyone remembering and telling their

⁴⁴ The characterization alludes to the Roman myth of Romulus and Remus. That myth tells the events that led to the founding of the city of Rome and the Roman Kingdom, including how Romulus killed Remus over a dispute about the hill upon which to build a city of their own. For an overview of the narrative, see Augusto Frascchetti, *The Foundation of Rome* (2005), pp. 1-28.

story, they seemed to have “never existed” (206). Explicitly, Marcom writes that “all that remained of the towns were large white stones like prehistoric beasts” (206). Here she points to the physical destruction of the landscapes in which collective violence unfolded. As in the case of the vignette “Mardiros,” in which Marcom juxtaposes the destruction of the bodily archive alongside the destruction of memory, here too does she juxtapose the destruction of physical sites alongside the erasure of local histories. The notion that the brothers are no longer present in local stories because they were abandoned or burned also suggests that the two towns no longer appear in local stories because of active forgetting.

Indeed, the companion vignette, “A Sad Ending Again,” Marcom emphasizes that the logic of elimination is not confined to physical destruction and bodily death. Rather, it also entails attempts to contain memory of native peoples’ lived experiences on land prior to settlers’ arrival. This companion vignette commences with a town crier who announces, “No town here, notownhere. Move down the hill. There is no town there” (245). The vignette continues, “It was not long afterward that a great flood came, a fire, or plague. An earthquake shook the foundations of Kharphert” (245). Flood, fire, and earthquake connote natural disasters and as noted earlier with the term “fire,” Marcom plays on these words which refer to catastrophes to describe the Catastrophe as Armenians conceptualized the genocidal experience before Lemkin’s term. After the deportation of Armenians, the town crier walks through the streets of Mezre, renaming it Elazig. He asks:

Who believes the fables and rumors of the djinn against history stories? Soon we’ll have tomes of books to elucidate the What Has Always Been True today and yesterday, for two thousand years or more. Elazig, my son. Elazig, today and yesterday. You are the

hope and pride of the newnation. What do you say? There has never been another.

Türkiye. (247)

The town crier reports his “progress to his boss” (246), the Turkish Commander. Upon hearing the news, the Commander envisions that “there will be some confusion,” that the “post may be delayed,” and that the “cartographers will require overtime and extra pay” (246-7). He reasons, however, that “Soon the villages will have always existed this way” and concludes, “It’s better than dead, it’s history” (247). The Commander assigns truth value to the “history” produced in the tomes of books. As the passage suggests, local histories penned by settlers remain central to the construction of the “newnation” after the removal of Armenians. The Commander’s claim about history also explains Mardiros’s statement to the two women about the men left to die in a pile at the edge of Kharphert. When Mardiros indicates that he is “proof that the men have not been murdered,” he refers to work of communal memory, informed by his testimony, which disrupts national memory, meaning the history or the “What Has Always Been True today and yesterday, for two thousand years or more” (247) that the Commander and the town crier circulate.

Marcom also depicts the porousness of the boundary between state and society in the maintenance of the national memory. In “The History of Bozmashen as Iterated by the Local Dogs,” an Armenian shepherd boy named Kurken visits his aunt and his cousin. Kurken takes his relatives’ flock to a high plateau to graze for the summer. In the middle of his trip, he decides to return back home to his aunt’s home to pick up some soukhari, dry toast or croutons. Upon his return, he finds “only a few large white stones in the place where the village should have been” (144). He proceeds to walk around, wondering if he has taken a wrong turn, but “as a son of the village he could not image a wrong turn from the first spring” (144). Eventually, Kurken comes

across a “policeman dressed as a poor farmer in the middle of a fallow wheat field” (145). Kurken tells the man, “Effendi. I’m lost. Can you tell me how to get to Bozmashen?” (145). The “Turkish or Kurdish farmer who was or was not a policeman” replies, “Bozma-heh! Bozma-heh!” and proceeds to take up his sickle and cut “Kurken’s head cleanly off” (145). The story concludes with dogs lapping blood on the ground. To recall, policemen torture Mardiros and other men. In this scene, it is not just state officials but civil society members who participate in violence through maintaining a new cartography of the place, beyond the physical violence carried out as part of the logic of elimination.

Still, in a 2014 article developed from his oral history interviews with elderly Turks and Kurds in Eastern Turkey who recall memories passed onto them from family members or villagers who witnessed or participated in the genocide, Üngör asserts a seemingly paradoxical claim about the Turkish nation-state’s official policy towards the Armenian Genocide. These interviews suggest that “to some extent, the Turkish government is denying a genocide that its own population remembers” (“Lost in Commemoration” 157). Official state memory and popular social memory remain in tension, Üngör continues, because while “Turkish official historiography consists of a ‘veritable denial,’ which has powerful mechanisms of prejudice against ethnic Others” (150), memories from the perpetrator, bystander, and victim communities still circulate and disrupt the government’s attempts to maintain a unitary narrative about the past (149-150). Üngör argues that the state regards the local population of Anatolian towns and villages as a threat to the maintenance of political memory because communities which have attained knowledge through inherited memories and oral stories, including Kurds, might “confess” details about the past that the state works to silence (156-7). Indeed, in the last few decades, Kurdish activists have played a significant role in commemorative efforts of the

Armenian Genocide as resistance and justice projects. This movement has stemmed in part from recognition of how Ottoman violence against Armenians in the past informs state policy and collective violence towards Kurds, including forced disappearances from the late 1970s onwards.⁴⁵

Read in conversation with Üngör's analysis, Marcom's adaptation of "there was, there was not" to characterize the Kurdish policeman or villager Kurken encounters makes possible a reading of "Rumor" and "rumor" in terms of the spatialization of memory work about survival. In the penultimate vignette, listener-readers learn that Rumor's "name is Arsinee," that "her brother Dickran died beneath an oak on the plains of Anatolia that stretched for miles," and that her "mother cast herself into the Euphrates River without word or tug of hand" (Marcom, *Three Apples* 259). At one point, the vignette indicates that Rumor "lives in Aleppo now" while at another point the vignette indicates that "she's old and lives with two Kurdish fellows now" (259) in the village of Tadim (262). Similarly, the vignette indicates that "Rumor was five or six when she began" and then indicates, "Rumor says, I've lived with them [the Kurdish fellows] since I was eight or nine or ten" (259). Marcom repeats these lines in the penultimate paragraph in the vignette, this time switching from third-person to first-person narration. Rumor as Arsinee interrupts the narrative voice which reiterates "Don't believe it, she's a liar of the first order. A mendacious tatterdemalion" (262). Rumor challenges this voice: "A Mendacious tatterdemalion? Evanescent? I'm a girl, Arsinee. This is the story that I write, rumor writes this story" (262). Rumor "doesn't speak Armenian anymore" (259, 262) and in conversation with the line that Rumor lives with Kurdish men, Marcom on the one hand here alludes to the history of Armenian

⁴⁵ See Bilgin Ayata, "The Kurds in the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Process" and Maria Koinova, "Diaspora Coalition-Building for Genocide Recognition: Armenians, Assyrians, Kurds."

women's experiences of forced assimilation into Kurdish society.⁴⁶ The reference to Aleppo, Syria, also points to one of the largest Armenian diasporic centers and spaces of survivance post-1915. On the other hand, when Rumor as Arsinee speaks about "this story," she uses the lower case "rumor." Marcom also calls attention to "rumor" in "This is the story rumor writes" (258, 260) in this vignette. Through juxtaposition of "Rumor" as a person, the girl Arsinee, and "rumor" as memory, Marcom also suggests that communal memory of what Armenians witnessed "lives" in the sense of continuing despite the Turkish Commander's hope that those sent on the death marchers will carry memories of the atrocities to their graves. Communal memory migrates into Aleppo, when survivors carry those memories into diaspora. At the same time, the vignette suggests, communal memory circulates among Armenians who remain behind, as Rumor/rumor "lives" in Anatolia. Finally, the story suggests that memory "lives" within Kurdish society, implied when Marcom indicates that Rumor/rumor has lived in Tadim with Kurdish men since she was eight or nine or ten.

Through the figure of Rumor, Marcom also demonstrates how storytelling and memory work can function as modes of resistance. In a discussion on gendered remembrance practices of Armenian women in modern Turkey, Melissa Bilal writes that "History" in Turkey is "constituted by silencing the historical presence of Armenians in the land territorialized by the Turkish nation-state and by criminalizing the articulation of the fact that this presence was brought to an end by state-sponsored mass violence" ("Lullabies" 186). In her anthropological

⁴⁶ For a historical overview of the silence about Islamized Armenians in most histories of the genocide and how the testimonies of orphaned Armenian women adopted and Islamized by Muslims affects their descendants identity construction, see Ayşe Gül Altınay and Fethiye Çetin, editors, *The Grandchildren: The Hidden Legacy of "Lost" Armenians in Turkey* (2014) and Fethiye Çetin, *My Grandmother: An Armenian-Turkish Memoir* (2008). For a discussion on Armenian women's experiences, see Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, "A Climate for Abduction, A Climate for Redemption: The Politics of Inclusion During and After the Armenian Genocide."

study, Bilal finds that lullabies sung by Armenian women survivors and passed on generationally, often by women too, and accompanying memories index microhistories of Armenian life post-1915. Memories voiced through song and contextual narration, she contends, function as “protests” and “affect created and transmitted during storytelling, singing, or silence...constitute[s] a mode of knowing” which has the “capacity to interrupt the epistemology of denial, to decolonize history, and to guide us towards justice” (204).⁴⁷ Indeed, Rumor participates in this disruption by providing testimony in the face of institutional forms of silencing embodied by the voice which reiterates “Don’t believe her, she’s a liar of the first order” (Marcom, *Three Apples* 258). First order, of course, recalls the Turkish Commander’s idea to “Get rid of them” (205) as well as the “committee for the carrying out of the ideas” (205) dreamt up by the “young man” in Constantinople (204). Specifically, Rumor provides microhistories of Armenian life pre- and post-1915.

After asserting, “We call ourselves *Hai*; call me by my nighest name” (260), Rumor writes a story in which she describes how two thousand years was long enough for the “clans who lived on the Anatolian plateau” to

honor the sun and moon, slay the dragon, and build a parapet, castle, and monastery in Ani. Long enough to riddle the land with khatchk’ars—asserting in stone crosses the multitude. Long enough to fertilize the earth with bones. To raise a few dogs and sheep, slap the mule’s hindquarters. To make buttery pilaf and pound the meat until it is tender. Weave the kilim and embroider the rosette. (260)

⁴⁷ By “silence,” Bilal refers to the moments when interviewees chose not to share painful details. Bilal writes that as a member of the community and as someone who was addressed often as “my daughter” and “my child,” she unconsciously preferred to share the silence (“Lullabies” 198).

The story does not end in past tense. Instead, Rumor speaks in the present tense and narrates quotidian experiences up to and beyond the tenth century in the Armenian highlands, to the six Armenian vilayets of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, and the most populous cities and major cultural centers of what would become the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Armenia in the twentieth century. She indicates, “These people like to tell jokes, stories, fables, and sing quite a bit. Fond of lamentations. They construct edifices from Constantinople to Yerevan. They plow and sew. Delicate lace pillowcases and a marriage veil. There is language, they point at things and say: this and this and this” (261). The story also covers the violence of the Armenian genocide in the early twentieth century: “We shaved our beards and buried gold coins, treatises, books of poetry. We buried mounds of gold coins, rumor has it; rumor says they hunted for years in our villages and quarters, they dug up the foundations and orchards in search of the treasure” (261). During the deportations, rumors had spread that Armenians had buried their gold in their houses or gardens. Perpetrators searched houses emptied of Armenians and overturned gardens (Üngör and Polatel, 71).⁴⁸ Rumor also indicates “We have built villages, We purchased a new bell from Massachusetts for our church. We played the organ. We pounded the spices for basturma and made the sujuk for winter months” (Marcom, *Three Apples* 261). The story that Rumor writes unfolds beyond 1915 and exceeds the boundaries of modern nation-states formed in the region of what was then Anatolia. Through the narrative frames, Marcom ultimately illuminates how in the homeland or in dispersion, the intergenerational and spatial

⁴⁸ For accounts of the phenomenon of treasure hunting for buried Armenian gold in contemporary eastern Turkey and how this search among Armenian architectural ruins illustrates the complicated ways in which the violent history of the Armenian genocide animates the lives of Kurds and Turks in the region today, see Anoush Tamar Suni, *Palimpsests of Violence: Ruination and the Politics of Memory in Anatolia* (2019) and Alice von Bieberstein, “Treasure/Fetish/Gift: Hunting for ‘Armenian Gold’ in Post-Genocide Turkish Kurdistan.”

circulation of Armenian cultural memory keeps in motion a notion of “there was,” meaning Armenian presence, in the face of settler mnemonics which circulate a notion of “there was not.”

At the end of the novel, Anaguil decides in a story set in 1917 that she must gather her siblings and “leave this place,” that they “cannot remain” (250). Like the other inhabitants of Kharphert, Anaguil observes that the “caravans had long since departed” and initially reasons, “Now they will leave us alone” (250). However, she hears about the death of another character, Sargis, and how the perpetrators leave his head on a pike for public display. In exile, Anaguil imagines herself returning home to Kharphert, “stopping at the places that have views of the Anatolian plains which stretch beyond the town and on a clear morning in spring allow her to see Mezre and sometimes even the neighboring Armenian village, Hoolakeuy” (264). As she approaches this latter village, she finds that it “lies empty and only wind occupies the eaves” (264). She continues to other Armenian villages, where she “finds again only cats and missing wooden doors and windows” (264). In this way, Anaguil “continues for weeks” in the “places where they had been one year and nine months before” (264). Observing the empty plains, Anaguil thinks, “They have changed geography” (264). Marcom, however, ultimately juxtaposes images of loss and destruction in these places with an image of hope that unfolds in diaspora. The final paragraph of the novel reads:

When she arrives at the edges of Beirut she smells the sea air which she has always dreamed of so that her shod feet take her down to the boardwalk and she walks along the waterfront breathing deeply and she stops and buys a pastry from a corner vendor and she takes off the çarşaf and she gathers her brothers and blue-eyed Nevart close to her and she says, My darlings, new spring has arrived, and she began to sing this song.

What Anaguil tells her siblings recalls the lyrics of an Armenian folk song that serves as the epigraph to the novel: “Նորից գարուն եկաւ, գարուն աննըման” (Norits‘ karun yegav, karun annëman).⁴⁹ In her third novel, *Draining the Sea*, Marcom translates the lyrics as “New spring arrives, beautiful spring” (325). I want to offer a slightly different translation. Նորից means “again” and աննըման can mean “unlike” or “unmatched.” I will return to this translation in the conclusion to this dissertation, where I elucidate how my analyses respond to the question: what might “spring arrived again, a spring unlike any other” mean for contemporary cultural memory studies and the field’s interest in the migrations of memory? For now, I want to call attention to where Anaguil sings this song, the waterfront of the Mediterranean, because in *The Blue Between Sky and Water*, Abulhawa also turns to an image of the Mediterranean sea’s edge alongside Gaza to coalesce the themes of dispossession, survival, and resistant memory work.

Memory of Remnants, Remnants of Memory in *The Blue Between Sky and Water*

The Blue Between Sky and Water consists of seventy-one individually numbered chapters. The opening pages of the novel first feature a genealogy tree for the four generations of the Barakas family, the characters at the center of the novel. Next is an untitled, one-page essay Abulhawa uses to historicize the “rise of an Islamicist movement in Palestine...known as Hamas” as a “counterweight to Yasser Arafat’s Fateh party, a secular revolutionary resistance movement”; the Oslo Accords of 1993, the launch of an “endless ‘Peace Process,’” and “two decades of failed negotiations”; and the discovery of documents which “revealed the chilling precision with which Israel calculated the calorie intake of 1.8 million Palestinians in Gaza to make them go hungry, but not starve” (vii). This piece which functions as a foreword has a

⁴⁹ For the transliteration of Armenian, I use the Library of Congress 2011 Armenian ALA-LC Romanization Table, which includes the variant phonetic values of Western Armenian.

corresponding piece, another one-page essay titled “Epilogue.” There, Abulhawa describes the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2014, which she notes occurred shortly after she submitted a manuscript of the novel for publication. The family tree and Abulhawa’s one-page essays form two of five framing devices in the novel. In the order of appearance after the foreword, the other three devices are: the character Khaled’s narration; a seven-stanza poem which features an unnamed speaker and organizes the chapters into seven sections; and a song about the “blue / between sky and water” that characters recall in times of personal and collective crises. This section of “A Map of This Place” focuses on the latter three components.

A story titled “Khaled” appears after the foreword and likewise before the Epilogue. These “Khaled” stories do not have chapter numbers but are narrated from the first-person perspective of Khaled, a fourth-generation member of the Barakas family. In individual italicized stories and in italicized paragraphs which begin each chapter, Khaled narrates intimate details of the lives of family members who preceded his generation in Palestine as well as his cousin Nur’s upbringing in the US. Khaled’s perspective covers events before his birth and after his death, from 1945, three years before the 1948 Nakba, through the 1967 Naksa, then the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2008, when Khaled turns ten. Through Khaled, Marcom vocalizes the history of Beit Daras and Palestinian presence silenced by the Israeli state. Given the spatial and temporal scope of his narration, Abulhawa presents Khaled as the voice of several scales of collective memory: familial memory, communal memory, and national or cultural Palestinian memory.

After the first “Khaled” titled story but before the first chapter, is the first stanza of the frame poem in *The Blue Between Sky and Water*. Similar to her deployment of Khaled’s point of view in the main narrative arc, Abulhawa presents the speaker of the frame poem as a bearer of familial, communal, and national Palestinian memory in the face of settler mnemonics. This

poem exemplifies the notion of a new nation-state history supplanting native peoples' history evident in the town crier's claim in *Three Apples Fell from Heaven*: that "there has never been another." The poem also foregrounds a thematic concern of the novel, made apparent also in Khaled's narration: the intergenerational and spatial circulation of Palestinian collective memory that emphasizes a message of "there was" in the face of silencing political memory work.

Of particular relevance to an understanding of how Abulhawa in the frame poem conceptualizes what scholars have studied as state or political mnemonics in the case of Israeli settlement are the arguments literary critic Saree Makdisi makes in his commentary on the establishment of the Museum of Tolerance in Jerusalem on a site that includes "the largest and most important Muslim cemetery in all of Palestine" ("The Architecture of Erasure" 520) as well as his analysis of Israeli novelist Amos Oz's memoir *A Tale of Love and Darkness*. Makdisi situates his analysis of the museum's proposed architectural design alongside other structures in Israel. Analyzing the design plans of the museum specifically, Makdisi asserts that "Not only are Palestinian bodies rendered invisible, but (again, perfecting the logic only partially enacted by the wall in the West Bank as seen from the Israeli side) the process by which they are erased, removed, or transferred is itself rendered invisible" (544). He further asserts that the construction of the museum embodies "not merely ignorance...not merely the denial of Palestinian history, Palestinian dispossession, and Palestinian Rights" but the "denial that they have been denied in the first place" (558-559). Just as *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* allows for an expansion of scholarship on denial in the Turkish-Armenian case to a discourse on settler mnemonics, so too does *The Sky Between Blue and Water* in the Israeli-Palestinian case. Indeed, in analyzing the ways in which the state of Israel narrates the history of its foundation in political, legal, and social spheres, Makdisi engages scholarship in settler colonial studies, notably the work of

Patrick Wolfe and his arguments about the logic of elimination of the native. Makdisi does not explicitly engage cultural memory studies scholarship, but his arguments about the construction of the museum and Oz's memoir are similar to Bruyneel's conclusions about settler memory.

To illustrate, Makdisi acknowledges that "Oz does actually admit that unpleasant things happened in 1948, that massacres took place, that people were forced from their homes; he even expresses a certain degree of compassion for the displaced, at least the ones he knew personally" ("Zionism Then and Now" 241). He clarifies, however, that "certain facts are *mentioned* without actually being *narrated*" (244, emphasis original). In other words, "the point is not that Oz is attempting to rewrite the history of what happened in 1948: it is that the kind of history that he has in mind is flatly incapable of acknowledging what actually happened in 1948" (252). Moreover, Makdisi suggests that Oz's memoir exemplifies a "skipping over of history, a resetting of historical chronologies such that 1947 marks the beginning and nothing that came before counts" (252). This "myopia," he avers, ultimately fosters "historical, and hence, *political* blindness" (252, emphasis original). Makdisi's conclusions relate to Akçam's concept of the logic of compartmentalization. That is, by "political blindness," Makdisi means, in part, how the Israeli state does not recognize the interconnectedness of past and present events.⁵⁰ The history-writing that engenders "political blindness" as Makdisi puts it has a parallel in what Bruyneel argues about the "politics of memory" of the US nation-state ("*Happy Days*" 50).

⁵⁰ One such example might be Makdisi's following argument: "In an unbroken line running from Vladimir Jabotinsky in the 1920s to Arnon Sofer and Benny Morris today, this recapitulates the brutal honesty of earlier episodes of settler colonialism and is absolutely unrestrained in advocating further violence – murder, demolition, expulsion – in order to safeguard the Zionist project in Palestine" ("Zionism Then and Now" 238). By "this," Makdisi refers to a "softened version of Zionism (that in all seriousness regards itself as a movement for liberation and 'tolerance') [which] coexists with another, much harder, version of Zionism" (238).

To explicate this concept, Bruyneel turns to the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM). BLM, he continues, participates in resistant memory work in that it calls attention to America's foundational crimes and how these crimes have perpetuated their legacy in contemporary state practices (50). That is, BLM engages its own "politics of collective memory" in that as a social movement, it foregrounds how the "contemporary abjection and treatment of Black Americans as people whose lives have not mattered to the police, the state, and many citizens of the nation is traceable from the time of chattel slavery on up to our day" (50). Turning his attention to the place of indigeneity in American political discourse, Bruyneel concludes that settler memory encompasses the "practices of memory that allow those in the United States to both see and not see Indigenous people and settler colonialism, to remember and forget them at the same time" (52). It is here that we most prominently see the relation between Makdisi's claim that facts are mentioned without being narrated and Bruyneel's observations about indigeneity and state memory work. Bruyneel concludes:

Indigeneity is not absent in the collective memory of the American nation, but rather constructed as a people and positionality deeply sewn into the existence of the nation as part of the nation's past, not its present, and thus not politically pertinent today. As such settler memory allows Americans not to see settler identity itself, and its persistent and correlated practices. (52)

Makdisi comes to related conclusions about seeing and not seeing when he observes that Oz "consciously signals and elides the terrible reality of what it means for a country to be dismembered and ultimately destroyed; this is the reality of one people being driven from their homes so that another, largely immigrant people, could take their places" ("Zionism Then and Now" 241). The implications of seeing and not seeing that Bruyneel and Makdisi identify

resonate with the refrain “there was and there was not” in *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* and the lines “When our history lounged on the hills” (6) and “before history was born” (63) in the frame poem of *The Blue Between Sky and Water*. Through these phrases, both novels call attention to mnemonic practices employed by settlers in the process of firsting or staking claim to belonging to a place and the process of lasting in which active negation through state memory work still traces the very thing it seeks to suppress: native peoples’ history on land prior to settlement.

Specifically, Abulhawa’s poem frames the main narrative arc of the novel by foregrounding Palestinian presence on the land “before history was born” (*The Blue Between* 63). The first stanza of the frame poem reads: “When our history lounged on the hills, / lolling in sylvan days, the River Suqreir flowed through Beit Daras” (6).⁵¹ The second stanza, however, foregrounds the arrival of a different history:

But the violence of an alien story burned those
meandering native days, and the Mediterranean Sea
lapped at our history’s wounds along the shores
of Gaza. (41)

What is also key here in these first two stanzas is the way that Abulhawa emphasizes the power of the “story” that arrives. That is, rather than emphasizing physical violence carried out against people and the destruction of architecture, she describes how this new story “burn[s]” and “wounds” native Palestinian history: “But the violence of an alien story burned those meandering

⁵¹ Since Abulhawa identifies this frame narrative as a poem, I identify the sections as stanzas and mark the line breaks as they appear in the novel. The lines are center-aligned on the pages of the novel. For parenthetical citations, I provide page numbers rather than line numbers.

native days” (40, emphasis added).⁵² Through the imagery of the river, stanza two juxtaposes erosion of what remains of Indigenous Palestinian history and collective memory of the Israeli nation-state which spreads throughout the land. The implications of the frame poem echo the commentary of the Commander in *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* who tells Mardiros that the state has plans to suppress the rumors, or testimonies of the relocations. Moreover, a scar registers a trace of the wound from an event located in the past. In contrast, the term “lapped” in the line “the Mediterranean Sea lapped at our history’s wounds along the shores of Gaza” (40) visualizes a covering of a wound that remains open and has not yet become part of the past.

Having depicted collective trauma of the Nakba as not temporally-bounded, the center of the poem describes the ongoing presence of displaced Palestinians, communal rebuilding, and the persistence of memory work. The third stanza refers to the “pieces” which “got lost on the other side of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans” (65). After his family is forced to migrate to Gaza from Beit Daras, Nur’s grandfather, Mamdouh, grows up and learns beekeeping. Mamdouh’s trade skills take him from Egypt, to Kuwait, and to the US, where his son and granddaughter are born. Regarding this labor migration, Khaled comments: “Palestinians were ripe for both pity and exploitation throughout the Arab world, where the brightest Palestinian minds bore fruit for other nations, and once proud farmers chased the call of bread, becoming desperate workers far from their lands” (51).⁵³ Khaled continues that his great-uncle Mamdouh “was swept up in that stream of cheap labor that kept carrying him farther and farther away” (51). Read in conversation

⁵² I draw upon the conversations that emerge in the documentary *The Destruction of Memory* (2016). The documentary juxtaposes cultural destruction—or the annihilation of irreplaceable artwork, artifacts, and historical sites—in the 20th and 21st centuries alongside bodily violence. Interviewees call for an expansion of definition of the term “genocide” to include a key component Lemkin originally proposed: vandalism, or attacks on cultural property.

⁵³ For ease of reading, I have removed the italicization Abulhawa uses for Khaled’s perspective.

with the intergenerational experiences of the Barakas family inside and outside of Palestine, the use of “our” in the opening stanza positions the speaker as referring to familial history where “pieces” connotes family members. At the same time, the use of “our” suggests the speaker’s familiarity with communal memory of Beit Daras, and the phrase “lolling in sylvan days” positions the speaker as witnessing a transitory moment. The implication here is that the speaker once regarded the history of Beit Daras, meaning rural or pastoral life, in terms of a future-looking orientation and open space. Abulhawa’s use of continuous tense suggests that the speaker later comes to recognize how rather than a moment marked by stability, he witnessed a period marked by the precarity of the livelihood of Beit Daras’s inhabitants. The frame poem thus locates the speaker as a witness to the disappearance of history about to unfold.

In succeeding stanzas, the speaker witnesses what remains after the Catastrophe of 1948, both in terms of Palestinians who survive and the memories they carry. The fourth and middle stanza begins, “We made do with the remains of the day” (105). In relation to the “pieces” which “got lost” across waters, “remains” points at once to people who survive, internally displaced but not absent, and at once to the memories of the “day.” The latter term can mean both a single day, a period of time in the past, or the present time. Writing in the aftermath of the 1948 Nakba, the speaker of the frame poem continues:

We made do with the remains of the day, built
homes from debris, bathed where the fish swam,
created love out of thin air, loaded our slingshots
and scavenged for power in Molotov cocktails. (105)

Abulhawa’s use of the term “remains” to emphasize a message of survivance resonates with Armenian American author Nancy Kricorian’s use of “remnants” in her prose poems. In her

poem “Homage to Bourj Hammoud,” the speaker calls readers attention to how “remnants of Marash create a new Marash. And so also Nor Sis, Nor Adana, Nor Giligia, and Nor Hadjin.” Bourj Hammoud, near Beirut, Lebanon, has served as home for one of the largest Armenian communities in diaspora. Armenian refugees named neighborhoods of Bourj Hammoud with the term “nor” meaning “new” in Armenian and the villages from where they were exiled. Kricorian, who identifies her grandmother, a genocide survivor, as her muse, explains that the title of Hagop Oshagan’s 1934 novel *Remnants (Mnatsortats)* inspires her use of the word “remnants.” She also recalls how her grandmother kept a sewing machine with scraps of fabric on hand and indicates that in the Palestinian and Armenian cases, she is fascinated by the ways in which individuals as remnants, torn from the fabric of community, come together again as patchwork (personal interview). Kricorian threads together Armenian and Palestinian experiences of survivance in her reflections. She likewise does so when discussing the inspiration for her poem “Letter to Palestine (With Armenian Proverbs).” The poem is an “homage” to a Palestinian student she knew while studying in Paris and the “extraordinary grace” with which he met her “terrible ignorance” back then (Kricorian, “Note” 322). Paired together for an oral presentation, this student remarked to Kricorian: “I’m glad we’re doing this together. We will talk about our people, the Palestinians and the Armenians, and their histories of dispossession and struggle” (quoted in Kricorian, “Note” 322). At that point, she “knew little about [her] own people’s tragic experience in 1915, and far less about the travails of the Palestinian people” (322). As a writer several years later, Kricorian maps transcultural connections between Armenian and Palestinian survivance after removal and the role of memory work in resurgence. To bring Kricorian’s comparative conceptualization of “remnants” to bear on Abulhawa’s use of “remains,” the frame

narrative shows how the intergenerational transmission of stories and the creative remediation of inherited songs informs the coming together of Palestinians.

Building on interlinked temporal and spatial references such as the River Suqreir having once traversed through Beit Daras and the winding path of by Beit Daras's villagers as they leave home behind and live "native days" in dispersion, the fifth stanza of the frame poem provides an image of the day transforming into night as the "sun [sinks] into the sky" (Abulhawa, *The Blue Between* 161). More than a reference to the course of a single day, the fifth stanza presents an ending to a period of time. Still, the sixth stanza counters the vision of "darkness" (161) that marks the end of the day:

Words and stories washed ashore on that ancient
way of the sea, and we made of them new songs.

The sun came again, casting shadows that we peeled
off the street to make new clothes. (201)

The sun rises, ushering in another period of time, and "shadow" can refer to the traces of history, the "there was" to the nation-state's collective memory of "there was not." To apply Bruyneel's arguments about settler memory here, shadows in the sense of traces or specters refer to the "meandering native days" at once present and absent in the "alien story" that arrives. Clothes are a form of covering and thus recall the image in the second stanza of the Mediterranean Sea enwrapping the remains of native Palestinian history. The blue between sky and water, then, is the place of possibility, of "new clothes" or the fabric of belonging made out of the shadows or marginalized history cast by state memory work. Blue can connote sorrow or melancholy. In Abulhawa's frame poem, however, blue implies the message of survivance encoded in the "new songs" made of the old. After all, the frame poem concludes, "from that terrible dignity, we

heard the susurrus of a / long-ago old woman's words: *This land will rise again*" (274, emphasis original). This last line in the frame poem suggests that Palestinians who experienced the 1948 Nakba and their descendants identify this phrase as a call for decolonization. The last line also alludes to the migration of memory evinced in the narrative of the Barakas family.

In the main narrative arc, Um Mamdouh, Khaled's great-grandmother, speaks the words "this land will rise again" in 1948, in the months leading up to the attempted "conquest" of Beit Daras by the "highly trained Haganah, with their mechanized weaponry and fighter planes" (27). Beit Daras is "consumed by the fog of death and defeat," surviving villagers flee toward Gaza, and several individuals are "taken prisoner, never to be seen again" (31). In the months leading up to the Israeli Defense Forces' invasion of Beit Daras, Palestinian villagers hear "daily news of atrocities committed by Zionist gangs against both the British and the Palestinians" (26), Um Mamdouh tells "Village elders and chosen *mukhtars* from each of the main families of Beit Daras" (22) that "Only Allah can know the unknown, but if Beit Daras does not surrender, this land will rise again, even if the war is lost" (24). Um Mamdouh speaks these words in response to the gathered male leaders' fear that "Native blood will pour from these hills into the river and that the war will be lost" (24). The men do not comprehend the meaning of Um Mamdouh's counsel, but "It was enough [for them] to hear *this land will rise again*" (24, emphasis original). The elders and leaders "grabbed those final words of hope and inhabited them until their final days, which came to some in battle shortly thereafter, and to others in the wreckage of nostalgia that paved refugee camps" (24). Decades later, Nazmiyeh, Khaled's grandmother, recalls these words when three generations of her family gather in Gaza for a celebration in anticipation of her son Mazen's release as one of "one thousand Palestinian political prisoners" in exchange for the release of "Gilhad Shalit, the captured Israeli soldier" (282). Here, Abulhawa fictionalizes the

historical prisoner exchange, which took place in 2011. The gathering, attended also by other Palestinians in Gaza, serves as a celebration of several kinds of returns.

At another celebration years earlier, Mazen is taken prisoner by IDF forces. Khaled recounts how Nazmiyah at that time “thought Palestine was scattering farther away at the same time that Israel was moving closer” (59). He continues, “They confiscated the hills and assembled Jewish-only settler colonies on the most fertile soil. They uprooted indigenous songs and planted lies in the ground to grow a new story” (59). Khaled also identifies this moment as a time when “Rather than returning and regrouping, family were leaving and dispersing” (59). In this way, Abulhawa demonstrates how forced migration from Beit Daras to Gaza as well as the labor migration breaks down the kinship structure of the Barakas family as well as other multiply-displaced generations of Palestinian clans. As Khaled indicates about Nur: “her life reflected the most basic truth of what it means to be Palestinian, dispossessed, disinherited, and exiled. That to be alone in this world without a family or a clan or land means that one must live at the mercy of others” (89). When Nur’s grandfather, her legal guardian, passes away, her mother takes custody of her so that she may access the trust fund Nur’s grandfather sets up for Nur.⁵⁴ In addition to her mother’s emotional abuse, Nur’s stepfather sexually abuses her. After Nur’s stepfather Santiago discerns how Nur’s parents abuse her and alerts authorities, Nur goes on to live in several foster homes. As Khaled observes about Nur’s traumatic childhood, “Nur had everything we wanted” but “Nur was the most devastated person we knew” (99). While she returns to help a Palestinian child who she does not know is her cousin at first, Khaled observes

⁵⁴ When she is a child, Nur’s father dies in a car accident. Nur’s mother, a Castilian woman from Madrid, does not like that Nur has an Arabic name. Nur’s parents compromise and give her the first name Nur and her mother’s last name of Valdez. Nur’s mother calls her Nubia. She claims, “We need to do something about your name, though. Nuria is the closest, but that’s Catalan, which isn’t much better than Arab. Let’s call you Nubia” (80).

that Nur ultimately comes to Gaza to “bathe in the cramped bustle of family and neighbors,” to “watch life up close, to rub her soul raw with the rhythms of our families,” and “for the dew of family caught on her skin” (179). When Nazmiyeh speaks about the land rising, then, she does so as she watches the regrouping of her family members decades after the start of the Nakba.

Through Khaled’s perspective, Abulhawa conceptualizes the Nakba not as a traumatic event firmly set in the past but an ongoing lived experience. In one of the introductory paragraphs that frames the chapters, Khaled describes the atrocities of the 1948 Nakba as the time when “history arrived and Beit Daras was carried off by the wind” (22). In the main narrative, Abulhawa writes that the “Naqba, the Catastrophe, that inaugurated the erasure of Palestine, started slowly in 1947, one atrocity at a time throughout the country. For Beit Daras, the decisive battle occurred in May 1948, soon after European Jewish immigrants declared a new state called Israel in place of ancient Palestine” (30). In this way, Khaled’s comments echo observations made by Lebanese author and literary critic Elias Khoury in his discussion on the multilayered intersections of the Holocaust and the Nakba. He asserts that “addressing the Nakba as a memory is a trap that many fall into” (xiii). By “memory” here Khoury means attaching an event-based frame of analysis towards a study of how the events of 1947-48 inform the lived conditions of Palestinians in the present. He clarifies, “The everyday reality of life in Palestine clearly indicates that the 1948 war was merely the beginning of the catastrophic event. It did not end when the cease-fire agreements of 1949 were signed. In fact, 1948 was the beginning of a phenomenon that continues today” (xiii). Chapter Two of this dissertation turns to Abulhawa’s novel *Mornings in Jenin* to study the intergenerational transmission of collective traumatic memory when “the past has not yet passed” for Palestinians (Abu-Lughod 79). *The Blue Between Sky and Water* was published after *Mornings in Jenin*. As will become apparent, though,

Abulhawa's confrontation with state memory work through Khaled's perspective adds a needed layer for an interpretation of her first novel. At one point in *The Blue Between Sky and Water*, Khaled addresses readers who question his knowledge of events which preceded his birth and after his death. He indicates, "But maybe you can believe, as I do, that there are truths that defy other truths, where time folds on itself" (*The Blue Between* 27). The "truth" Abulhawa ultimately presents in *The Blue Between Sky and Water* is the persistence of history of Beit Daras despite the uprooting of indigenous songs and the arrival of an alien story in Palestine.

This history of Beit Daras and its Palestinian people reappears in the form of a memory and in the form of a song. Khaled claims at the end of the novel: "I was there with the women of my life. I was in the colors. In the mulberries, magentas, and corals of a tired sun. In the blue between sky and water" (287). In terms of the narrative arc, the individual "Khaled" stories appear after the bombing of Gaza in 2008, when Khaled cognitively enters the place between sky and water, the "place where time does not exist" and as Khaled clarifies, when "Everything is now" (157). Having passed away by the time of the celebration at the end of the novel, Khaled is not bodily present. But, if we understand the character Khaled as the manifestation of familial, communal, and national Palestinian memory, then it seems that Gaza as a place and specific aspects of that environment serve as mnemonic devices for histories of dislocation and communal upbuilding. That is, he remains with the women in the form of memories, and they tell their familial, communal, and national history through the experience of Khaled, the child whom Nur diagnoses as having "Locked-In Syndrome" (167). In the final story attributed to him, Khaled's words recall the lyrics of a song that he says that he "remembered" or "inherited...somehow" (177). The community also sings this song to remember how, as Khaled indicates, "all of this happened in Gaza. It happened in Palestine" (287). That is, Khaled

observes how “Their conversations and laughter anchored the ground in place, tucked the shore under the water, hung the sky and decorated it with stars and moon and sun” (287). As the bearer of several scales of memory, Khaled details instances of mass violence, an extensive period of upheaval, and different but related experiences of exile across generations. To recall, the frame poem indicates “the Mediterranean Sea lapped at our history’s wounds along the shores of Gaza” (41) and “Words and stories washed ashore on that ancient way of the sea” (201). Abulhawa concludes the novel, then, by showing how the Barakas family and Palestinian villagers invest meaning into an old song.

The novel ends: “It grew late, and as they packed up to retire home, a familiar song danced in the marrow of their bones, then hummed in their throats. Hajje Nazmiyeh sang it first, and the others joined in” (286). The lyrics of the song are:

O find me
I’ll be in that blue
Between sky and water
Where all time is now
And we are the forever
Flowing like a river. (286)

Earlier in the novel, Nur, pregnant with a child conceived in Gaza, sits by the water and a “song washe[s] and dance[s] out of her” (256), one she did not know she knew. The remains of the day, Khaled and Nur, descendants of the Barakas family forcibly removed from Beit Daras, both inherit this song. However, Abulhawa provides for the first and only time the second half of the lyrics in this scene where Nur contemplates her future. Nur decides to stay in Gaza and raise her unborn child among the women in her family and the Palestinian community. In this way, the

lyrics come to mean hope and a decolonial future, especially for the next generation of Palestinian children. After “Flowing like a river,” the song continues:

O find me
Where it’s always day
And always night
There are no hours here
In the blue
Between sky and water
There are no countries here
No soldiers
No anguish or joy
Just blue between sky and water. (257)

Gathered in celebration, the Palestinian community in Gaza gaze up at the moon, which “look[s] down on the world beyond their seaside cage” and in that moment, they “feel free” (286). As the bonfire comes to an end and community members pack up to “retire home,” they also think that “Everything seemed possible in those moments” (286). In part, what seems possible is the future for Rhet Shel, Khaled’s sister, whose “potential—bounded by an ocean and warships to the west, electrified fences and snipers to the east, and formidable armies at the northern and southern tips—could be redeemed” (286).⁵⁵ In addition to the meaning of melancholy, blue also recalls the sea or the sky on a clear day. Abulhawa characterizes Rhet Shel as locked-in geographically. As

⁵⁵ Rhet Shel’s parents name her after Rachel Corrie, a twenty-three-year-old American from Olympia, Washington and “an international activist who had been run over by an Israeli bulldozer as she tried to prevent the demolition of a Palestinian home” (138). In the novel, Abulhawa writes that “Gaza poured into the streets to honor her as a martyr” (138).

the song lyrics imply, though, to look for the blue means not just to recognize violence, trauma, and limited mobility experienced by these Gazan Palestinian characters, but to look for the blue of a clear day, the blue of their resurgence, past, present, and anticipated future.

While the representation of possibility and the migration of memory at the edge of the Mediterranean Sea connects *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* and *The Blue Between Sky and Water*, it is the image of life flowing like a river that connects *The Blue Between Sky and Water* and *There There*. To explicate, I first turn to the context in which *There There* emerged: a history about a river, Indigenous resistance movements in the US, and the conversations about memory that arose, even if they were not identified as such.

Surviving the Bullets of Memory in *There There*

Between April 2016 and February 2017, Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota peoples gathered at Osceti Sakowin Camp, the largest of several camps located at the confluence of the Cannonball and Missouri rivers and near the Standing Rock Indian Reservation. As allies and as guests to Dakota territory, other Indigenous nations within and beyond the Americas and non-Native allies supported Water Protectors who challenged the US Army Corps of Engineers' attempts to violate treaty rights and build the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). In his discussion of the #NoDAPL Indigenous social resistance movement, Indigenous historian Nick Estes (Kul Wicasa) frames a reflection on his fourth and final trip to Osceti Sakowin Camp within a larger reflection on state mnemonics as it pertains to the Thanksgiving US national holiday. He writes: "Thanksgiving is the quintessential origin story a settler nation tells itself: 'peace' was achieved between Natives and settlers at Plymouth, Massachusetts, where *Mayflower* pilgrims established a colony in 1620, over roast turkey and yams" (*Our History* 1). Reframing the commonly circulated narrative, Estes continues: "To consummate the wanton slaughter of some 700

Pequots, in 1637 the governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, William Bradford, proclaimed that Thanksgiving Day be celebrated ‘in honor of the bloody victory, thanking God that the battle had been won.’ Peace on stolen land is borne of genocide” (1). Estes does not identify himself as working in the field of memory studies, but he engages questions about remembrance practices when he posits that the Oceti Sakowin prophecy of Zuzeca Sapa, the Black Snake, functions as “revolutionary theory” because it can inform conceptualizations of humans’ relationship to land, to other human and non-humans, and to history and time (14).

Estes clarifies that “Settler narratives use a linear conception of time to distance themselves from the horrific crimes committed against Indigenous peoples and the land,” including origins stories like Thanksgiving (14). In contrast, “Indigenous notions of time consider the present to be structured entirely by our past and by our ancestors” (14). In this way, Estes ultimately avers, “Our history is the future” (14). Anthropologists, historians, archaeologists, lobbyists, and grave robbers have “distorted [and] misinterpreted Indigenous histories” which are “irrelevant and unfamiliar to actually existing Indigenous peoples” (16). To connect Estes’s claims with those of Bruyneel’s, rhetorical and (il)legal practices like these engender “collective knowledge of the past and present of settler colonial violence (“Codename Geronimo” 351). This collective memory maintained in service of the state disavows “Indigenous people as contemporary agents” (351). Or, to bring Estes in conversation with O’Brien’s studies, narratives penned by nineteenth-century New England settlers and replicated across the nation resulted in a “collective story” which “insisted that non-Indians held exclusive sway over modernity” and “denied modernity to Indians” (xiii). To counteract these “disempowering” discursive practices (Estes, *Our Future* 16) and make a “crack in history” (18) means to “imagine a decolonial future by reconnecting to Indigenous places and histories” (18).

This “alternative future” (14) is also determined by an understanding that “Indigenous resistance draws from a long history, projecting itself backward and forward in time” (18).⁵⁶ As will become apparent in succeeding chapters of “A Map of this Place,” Linda Hogan’s *Solar Storms* and Susan Power’s *The Grass Dancer* exemplify Estes’s arguments about the transindigenous and multigenerational recollection of resistance movements. That is, these novels exemplify how succeeding Indigenous resistance movements draw upon knowledge of previous struggles. In turn, contemporary resistance movements keep in motion conversations on sovereignty, self-determination, and survivance that inspired previous movements. The implication in Estes’s claim, then, is that memory work undergirds this process of understanding the aims of one movement in relation to another.⁵⁷

In examining traditions of Indigenous resistance and their far-reaching implications, Estes theorizes statist practices of history-writing, especially concerning the nation’s founding crimes. In this way, he grapples with similar questions as Marcom does through the character of the Commander and his claim that “It’s better than dead, it’s history” (*Three Apples* 247). Moreover, Estes’s point about making a crack in history resonates with Marcom’s portrayal of Rumor who disrupts the “What Has Always Been True today and yesterday, for two thousand years or more” (247) narrative generated by the Commander and the town crier. Estes models

⁵⁶ Estes traces the defense of Lakota and Dakota lands as part of a tradition of resistance that goes back to the Oceti Sakowin’s emergence as a nation and its nineteenth-century encounters with the “US as a predator nation” (22). He also addresses the Oceti Sakowin’s defense against the mid-twentieth century Pick-Sloan act, which authorized the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation to dam the main stem of the Missouri River; the urban-centered American Indian Movement of the 1970s; and the global Red Power movement which resulted in the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

⁵⁷ For critical and creative work on the movement’s significance and how Indigenous history and politics informed Water Protectors’ efforts, see Nick Estes and Jaskiran Dhillon, editors, *Standing with Standing Rock: Voices from the NoDAPL Movement* (2019).

how to make such interruptions as a “radical Indigenous historian” (*Our History* 18) when he weaves in his familial and tribal national memories of the past to study the relationships between the “Oceti Sakowin, Mni Sose [Missouri River], and the United States as an occupying power” (21). Indigenous theory, history, and memory work come together in Estes’s book, allowing him to underscore that “Indigenous peoples are central subjects of modern world history” (21). In this vein of thinking comparatively about Indigenous peoples’ experiences of removal and their accompanying remembrance practices as central to a study of modern world history, this dissertation chapter concludes by analyzing Tommy Orange’s *There There*. The publication of the novel coincides with the timing of the #NoDAPL protests. Orange began writing the novel in 2012, submitted the manuscript in 2016, then edited it through 2017 (Laubernds).

Moreover, in the two-part frame narrative, Orange presents a narrator who addresses history, memory work, and the “Vanishing Indian” trope in ways that are not just similar to Estes’s commentary. In the Interlude, Orange describes the effects of settler mnemonics in a way that resonates with Abulhawa’s phrasing of “the violence of an alien story burned those meandering native days” (*The Blue Between* 6). The narrator indicates:

The wound that was made when white people came and took all that they took has never healed. An unattended wound gets infected. Becomes a new kind of wound like the history of what actually happened became a new kind of history. All these stories that we haven’t been telling all this time, that we haven’t been listening to, are just part of what we need to heal. (Orange, *There There* 137)

Through the line “the history of what actually happened became a new kind of history” and how this new story leaves an open wound Orange, like Marcom and Abulhawa, produces a story-map which spatializes the transmission of memory when the past has not yet passed. To describe the

movement of American Indians from reservations to places like Oakland, the narrator of the Prologue tells readers, “This was part of the Indian Relocation Act, which was part of the Indian Termination Policy, which is exactly what it sounds like. Make them look and act like us. Become us. And so disappear. But it wasn’t just like that” (9). Orange thus spatializes memory in the context of federal Indian policy which, as the narrator suggests, operationalizes the logic of elimination through termination policy repackaged under a different title. Developed by the US government as another response to what it identified as “the Indian problem,” the Indian Relocation Act of 1956, also known as Public Law 959 or the Adult Vocational Training Program, encouraged American Indians to leave reservations, acquire vocation skills, secure jobs and permanent employment, and “assimilate into the ‘melting pot’ called the United States” (Martinez, Sage, and Ono 87). Many relocated American Indians during this time were also as children once placed into Indian boarding schools, where they were taken from their families and tribal nations and prevented from speaking their own Native languages (87). In spatializing practices of relocation, top-down and bottom-up memory work, and the refusal of American Indian peoples to disappear, the narrative frame of *There There* foregrounds the multiply-connected memoryscapes of displaced American Indians and arriving American Indian nations who are themselves also displaced. “There” refers to Indigenous homelands from which memory departs, but “there” can also refer to homelands of other Indigenous nations unto which memory arrives. Together, the phrase “there there” refers to this third space in the making, a multi-tribal national urban Indian space developed as a consequence of and in response to settler mnemonics that keep in motion claims of “there was not.”

The main narrative arc of Orange’s *There There* concludes with a familial and communal gathering. American Indians from “reservations and cities, from rancherias, forts, pueblos,

lagoons, and off-reservation lands” (Orange, *There There* 134) meet at the annual Big Oakland Powwow. Powwows, the unnamed narrator of the Prologue and Interlude observes, function as a space “where we get to all be together, where we get to see and hear each other” (135). Across the “Prologue” and “Interlude,” the unnamed narrator predominantly uses the plural pronouns “we” and “us.” One exception occurs when the narrator addresses non-Indigenous readers and prompts them to trace their own familial histories.⁵⁸ Given the narrator’s claims such as “We came to know the downtown Oakland skyline better than we did any sacred mountain range” (11), it appears that the narrator identifies as an urban Indian. Orange invests new meaning into the term “urbanity” and writes that “Urban Indians were the generation born in the city” (11). The main narrative arc follows twelve characters, many of whom identify as urban Indians born and raised in Oakland. These characters’ lives all intersect with one another. Sometimes that connection comes in the form of generational experiences: elders watch teens carve out their own definitions of Native identity, community, and belonging. Sometimes that connection comes in the form of siblinghood while at other times it comes in the form of friendship. Characters also relate to each other by sharing stories of personal trauma and survival. Finally, their lives intersect when a group of youth steal the Powwow prize money, cause an upheaval during the Powwow Grand Entry, and fracture communal ties when they shoot their 3-D printed guns. The frame narrative provides historical context, including a framing of the Thanksgiving national holiday not in terms of a series of “meal[s] meant to symbolize eternal friendship” (4) but in

⁵⁸ Orange writes, “If you were fortunate enough to be born into a family whose ancestors benefited from genocide and/or slavery, maybe you think the more you don’t know, the more innocent you can stay, which is a good incentive to not find out, to not look too deep, to walk carefully around the sleeping tiger. Look no further than your last name. Follow it back and you might find your line paved with gold, or beset with traps” (138-139). This passage resonates with Michael Rothberg’s work on the “implicated subject.” See *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (2019).

terms of the massacres which took place. Yet, the narrator's commentary on the relationship between tribal national memory and US nation-state memory escaped attention in early reception of the novel.

Around the debut of *There There*, Orange also published essays on the history of Thanksgiving as well as a critique of US federal law which equates tribal national identity with a quantifiable amount of blood.⁵⁹ Given the similarity in content between those essays and the Prologue and Interlude in the novel, the desire of reviewers to read the point of view in the frame narrative as that of Orange is understandable.⁶⁰ While the narrator provides metacommentary on colonists' history-writing processes and the legacies of those narratives, Orange also implies that the narrator attends the Powwow at the end of the novel and watches the violence which unfolds there. The narrator observes that in the parking lot for the location where the Powwow will take place, "there is one thing that makes many of our cars the same. Our bumpers and rear windows are covered with Indian stickers like *We're Still Here*" (135-136). The Interlude previews the bloodshed that will take place at the Powwow, but what is key here is the way that the narrator speaks in the future anterior: "We won't have come expecting gunfire" (140). Together, the Prologue and Interlude function as more than just an essay, and the speaker in these two parts cannot hastily be identified as Orange himself. Rather, the narrator in these two parts functions as the thirteenth character in the novel: an urban American Indian who attends the Powwow and

⁵⁹ See Orange, "Why Thanksgiving Isn't Necessarily a Celebration: A Native American Writer's Take," "Thanksgiving is a Tradition. It's Also a Lie," and "How Native American is Native American Enough?"

⁶⁰ See, for example, Chelsea Lau, "'There There' by Tommy Orange" and Ron Charles, "What Does it Mean to Be Native American? A New Novel Offers a Bracing Answer."

whose gender and tribal national identification Orange never presents.⁶¹ A witness, the narrator does not merely foreshadow the bullets that will leave characters hanging onto their lives. The narrator also bears witness to a “five-hundred-year-old genocidal campaign” (10) and how urban Indian communities continue to create Native space in the face of erasure.

In this frame narrative, Orange turns to the image of flying bullets to articulate the ways in which American Indian/First Nations’ peoples relate to the land through memory work and how those remembrance practices counter colonizers’ practices of nation-state building. The narrator begins, “When they first came for us with their bullets, we didn’t stop moving even though the bullets moved twice as fast as the sound of our screams” (10). Orange reiterates this point about Native transmotion (Vizenor 15-16) when the narrator continues, “we kept on, even when we saw the bullets send our bodies flailing through the air like flags, like the many flags and buildings that went in place of everything we knew this land to be before” (Orange, *There There* 10).⁶² By asserting knowledge of relationalities both on and to the land before the arrival of settlers, the narrator counters settlers’ discourses of discovery, possession, and development. At the same time, these practices of nation-building perpetuate the “legal fiction of *terra nullius*—land belonging to no one” (Moreton-Robinson 4, emphasis original), meaning such discourses transform “indigenous peoples into the *homo nullius* inhabitants of lands emptied and awaiting arrival” (Byrd, *Transit* xxi). In this way, the narrator also suggests that the bullets fired by colonizers cause wounds beyond those that appear outwardly on the body. The narrator identifies those “bullets” used to massacre American Indians as “premonitions, ghosts from

⁶¹ Orange writes about an “old Cheyenne story about a rolling head” (6) and about the Sand Creek massacre of Cheyenne (8). Because the narrator uses “we” in discussing experiences of Indigenous peoples of the Americas broadly, I am hesitant to identify the narrator as Cheyenne.

⁶² Anishinaabe writer and theorist Gerald Vizenor defines “transmotion” as “that sense of native motion and an active presence, is *sui generis* sovereignty” (15-16).

dreams of a hard, fast future” (Orange, *There There* 10). Those “premonitions” and “ghosts” concern the politics of memory which inform the settler vision of the American past.

Absent in that vision is recognition of the dispossession and genocide of indigenous peoples and the settler colonial state built on stolen land. After massacres, bullets continue to come in the form of “fast lines of borders and buildings” (10). Through this metaphor of bullets, Orange makes legible how the “possessive logic of white patriarchal sovereignty” aims to render Indigenous territorial sovereignty as nonexistent (Moreton-Robinson 212). After colonizers take and grind everything “down to dust as fine as gunpowder” (Orange, *There There* 10), their bullets take yet another form and continue to inflict trauma. Once settlers “fired their guns into the air in victory,” the “strays flew out into the nothingness of histories written wrong and meant to be forgotten” (10). These bullets do not just shatter Indigenous histories during westward expansion. In Oakland and sometime in the post-2000s, the narrator reflects, “Stray bullets and consequences are landing on our unsuspecting bodies even now” (10). By “bullets” in this last sense, the narrator points to the imbrication of settler mnemonics and the racially gendered and sexualized appropriations of Indigenous identities and cultures in the US and Canada. That is, “consequences” refers to ways in which texts from governmental policies to cinematic Westerns have produced an image of Indians as “tragic, noble even, but no longer around” (Stromberg 8). Imperial and colonial formations of “heteronormative archetypes of an Indigeneity” deemed “authentic” render “real indigeneity” irrelevant (Barker, “Critically Sovereign” 3). In other words, a practice of the state is to remember Indigenous peoples in the US and Canada in terms of racialized and sexualized tropes, such as the figure of the chief. When Indigenous peoples assert their own self-definition and defy these archetypes, the state makes irrelevant actually existing Indigenous peoples and their legal rights to governance, territories, and culture (3).

There There underscores that indigeneity exists and persists because “Being Indian has never been about returning to the land” (11). Rather, the “land is everywhere or nowhere” (11). The land is everywhere or nowhere depending on one’s recognition of Native space. Historian Lisa Brooks writes that in the twenty-first century, “Native America continues to be located on the periphery of America in the minds of most Americans, despite the fact that this country continues to be home to over five hundred indigenous nations” (xxxvii). To follow Brooks’s logic, the land is everywhere because Indigenous peoples did not disappear. As Brooks further explains, Americans identify Indigenous peoples as “problems” who stand in the way of the US nation-state’s claims for territorial sovereignty. The historical response has been to place American Indians in the “territory of the past.” The logic goes that “if there are no ‘real’ Indians left, there are no ‘real’ Indian land claims” (xxxvii). Orange makes the link between stereotypes and racist imagery of American Indians and claims for US territorial sovereignty when the narrator states, “from the top of Canada, the top of Alaska, down to the bottom of South America, Indians were removed, then reduced to a feathered image” (*There There* 7). Specifically concerning urban Indians, the narrator asserts that non-Natives “used to call us sidewalk Indians. Called us citified, superficial, inauthentic, cultureless refugees, apples. An apple is red on the outside and white on the inside” (10). In contrast, the narrator recalls how in urban centers like Oakland, “We found one another, started up Indian Centers, brought out our families and powwows, our dances, our songs and beadwork” (9). The Prologue and Interlude, then, function as a kind of map which centers Native space as lived by actually existing Indigenous diasporas.

What happens, Brooks asks, when one views Native space as the center of America and Europe and its colonies on the periphery? Brooks calls for imagining the kind of map that can be

drawn when texts of Anglo-American history and literature are participants in Native space (xxxv). Brooks has in mind the construction of the canon of American literature and disciplines like American Studies. Orange takes up similar questions through his use of the phrase “there there” from Gertrude Stein’s memoir *Everybody’s Autobiography*. One of the twelve characters in the main narrative arc, Dene Oxendene, secures a grant to document urban Indian stories in Oakland. As he waits to pitch his documentary project to the committee, Dene meets Rob, a “white hipster” (Orange, *There There* 37) also applying for a grant. When Dene asks Rob where he is from, Rob responds: “no one’s really from here, right?” (38). Rob proceeds to quote “There is no there there” from Gertrude Stein. Stein uses this line to describe “how the place where she’d grown up in Oakland had changed so much, that so much development happened there, that the there of her childhood, the there there, was gone” (38). Dene holds back his thoughts in response to Rob, but Orange’s point is clear. Through Dene’s internal dialogue, Orange welcomes non-Indigenous readers to locate this conceptualization of “there is no there there” in Native Space. Dene “wants to tell [Rob] it’s what happened to Native people” and to explain how he and Rob are “not the same” because Dene is “Native, born and raised in Oakland, *from* Oakland” (39). Indigeneity is often incorrectly “taken as rooted and static, located in a discrete place” (Byrd, *Transit* xvi). Dene establishes his relationality to the land within and beyond imposed borders of the nation-state: he is “an enrolled member of Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma” and “*from* Oakland,” California (Orange, *There There* 39). Orange frames indigeneity in a mode of transit, a point he reiterates when the narrator in the Prologue notes, “We’ve been moving for a long time, but the land moves with you like memory” (11). *There There* shows that American Indian peoples unsettle US settler space through collective memory

of geographic understandings of their homelands prior to Europeans' arrival, colonization, and nation-building.

It is not just memory of spatial construction that is passed down from one generation to the next. Orange writes in the frame narrative: "what we are is what our ancestors did. How they survived" (10). Storytelling plays a central role in that communal survival. During a scene which alludes to the occupation of Alcatraz by American Indians as a social and political protest movement from 1969-1971, the character Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield learns "how the monster that was the machine that was the government had no intention of slowing itself down for long enough to truly look back to see what happened" (58).⁶³ To "make it right," her mother tells her, Opal must "understand where [they] came from, what happened to [her] people" and to "honor them by living right, by telling our stories" (58). Opal's mother, Victoria, explains that Native peoples occupy Alcatraz in response to a "lie" told by colonizers in the past and the "lying" of governments since (58). While the aim of relocation through federal Indian policy was to dismantle Native communities, the experience of forced movement and assimilation had the opposite effect: the formation of pan-Indigenous movements (Estes, *Our Future* 170). What emerged from Indigenous peoples' critical reflections on their rural and urban experiences was a "radical, explicitly anti-colonial political consciousness" that undergirded the Red Power

⁶³ Orange complicates historical accounts of the American Indian Movement in that he calls attention to violence carried out against Indigenous women. As a teenager, Opal's sister Jacquie is raped by a young Indigenous man named Harvey. Jacquie gives birth to their child, the character Blue in the novel; Blue is adopted and raised by a white couple. Harvey is the father of another character, Edwin Black. These characters do not know how they are related to one another until the Powwow. The line "The men looked more tired and more drunk more often, and there were fewer and fewer women and children around" (57) also calls attention to the gendered dynamics of the occupation at Alcatraz, but Orange does not elaborate. For a discussion on gender, sexuality, and the American Indian Movement, see Lee Maracle, *I Am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism* (1996), pp. 98-107.

movement (170). Victoria's comments evince how Red Power was ideological at its core, focused on Indigenous liberation at home while also concerned with contemporaneous global decolonization movements (172-3). Images of confrontational tactics such as sit-ins, occupations, and direct action come to the fore in historical accounts of this period of Indigenous activism. However, *There There* renders visible the power of storytelling, understood as testimony of past and ongoing violence committed against Indigenous peoples, as a mode of activism.

Beyond the historical allusion to the Occupation of Alcatraz, another Indigenous social and resistance movement unfolds in *There There*: Dene's storytelling project. In making a case for his grant application to the committee, Dene claims that he wants interviewees to talk or write or "tell their stories with no direction or manipulation or agenda" because the "Urban Indian story" has "been ignored, has remained invisible" (Orange, *There There* 40). Dene's vision for the storytelling project grows nuanced over time. While he aims to counter stereotypical portrayals of Natives on the screen and address a non-Indigenous audience, he later recognizes the value of sharing stories of resurgence within and across Native nations. As an adult, Opal raises her sister's three children. One of them, Orvil Red Feather, seeks to understand his Native culture and identity better. To that end, Orvil searches "What does it mean to be a real Indian" online, turns to Wikipedia and *Indian Country*, stumbles upon "some pretty fucked-up, judgmental forums" and the Urbandictionary.com entry for "pretendian," and looks up YouTube videos to learn how to dance at the Powwow (121).⁶⁴ Orvil participates in Dene's documentary project and during the interview, Dene tells Orvil, "I'm here to collect stories in order to have

⁶⁴ For a discussion on tribal affiliation, kinship, and self-determination, see Rebecca Nagle, "Elizabeth Warren Has Spent Her Adult Life Repeating a Lie. I Want Her to Tell the Truth."

them available online for people from our community and communities like ours to hear and see” (123). He further explains the purpose of his project by saying, “When you hear stories from people like you, you feel less alone. When you feel less alone, and like you have a community of people behind you, alongside you, I believe you can live a better life” (123). Dene’s project has the potential to disrupt the way in which the state recalls imperialist and colonialist constructions of “real” Indians and in the same swift move culturally and legally vacates indigeneity in the present. In the face of these institutional remembrance practices and their material ramifications, transindigenous digital storytelling functions as a form of resistance. It serves as a platform through which to build kinship-networks and develop political consciousness, much like Victoria instructs Opal to do so.

For this generation of urban Indians in *There There*, practicing relationality as a basis for political and cultural life also necessitates recognition of the affective power of knowing made possible by the silences in the intergenerational transmission of memory. The narrator observes:

We are the memories we don’t remember, which live in us, which we feel, which make us sing and dance and pray the way we do, feelings from memories that flare and bloom unexpectedly in our lives like blood through a blanket from a wound made by a bullet fired by a man shooting us in the back for our hair, for our heads, for a bounty, or just to get rid of us. (10)

In part, the narrator’s comments allude to Orvil’s experiences. When Orvil practices a powwow dance in preparation for the gathering, he thinks that moment feels like it “was all his ancestors who made it so he could be there dancing and listening to that sound, singing right there in his ears through *all those hard years they made it through*” (126, emphasis original). At the same time, the line “We are the memories we don’t remember, which live in us, which we feel” echoes

arguments Chickasaw literary theorist Chadwick Allen makes in revisiting Kiowa author N. Scott Momaday's concept of "blood memory." Allen expands Momaday's controversial trope into what he calls the "blood/land/memory complex," a rubric which "makes explicit the central role that land plays both in the specific project of defining indigenous minority personal, familial, and communal identities (blood) and in the larger project of reclaiming and reimagining indigenous minority histories (memory)" (*Blood Narrative* 16).⁶⁵ In the section "Massacre as Prologue," the narrator indicates that "*Some* of us grew up with stories about massacres" (Orange, *There There* 8, emphasis added). One of those stories pertains to Sand Creek in what is now Colorado. The narrator observes, "we heard it said that they moved us down with their howitzers" (8). The rest of the section articulates the acts of violence from November 1863, when US colonel Chivington and his soldiers massacred more than 200 Cheyennes at Sand Creek in Colorado Territory, and several of the perpetrators took scalps as souvenirs (Estes, *Our Future* 105).⁶⁶

The "we," then, holds several meanings. The first "we" may refer to this community of urban Indians while the second "we" may refer to the collectivity of the American nation engaged or implicated in settler mnemonics. As Orange suggests, the state's project of

⁶⁵ Allen writes that the blood/land/memory complex names both the process and product of Indigenous writings which "seek to liberate indigenous minority identities from definitions of authenticity imposed by dominant settler cultures" (16). In a couple of scenes, Orange attends to Indigenous self-definition and self-determination negotiated inside and outside of imposed settler territorial borders and federal law. The character Edwin Black asks his father "*What tribe are you/we?*" His father writes back, "*Cheyenne. Southern. Out of Oklahoma. Enrolled with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma. We're not Arapahos*" (71, emphasis original). To recall, Dene identifies as an "enrolled member of Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma" and "*from Oakland*," California (39, emphasis original).

⁶⁶ Around this time, the federal government also reimbursed state bounties paid for Indian scalps and severed heads; these bounties also covered costs for ammunition, guns, and horses (Barker, *Native Acts* 149).

disappearing history is never fully successful because of the nested memories that these characters carry inside themselves and that are mobilized in acts of asserting resurgence. The “we” in “we don’t remember” can also refer to American Indian nations and their memoryscapes. In this latter context, to not remember does not mean to forget collective trauma and its repercussions. Rather, it means to have inherited traumatic cultural knowledge and to hold images of loss alongside survival, to speak the language of trauma the colonizer seeks to suppress but to also speak of life and living through that same language. The language of reclaiming and reimagining can attend to both settler colonialism as an ongoing project and indigeneity as an enduring lived condition.

The Locations of Settler Mnemonics and the Routes of Diasporic Mnemonics

By way of a conclusion about the spatialization of memory and the witnessing of disappearing history, I want to turn to the vignette “As to Where Are the Bootmakers and the Town of Kharphert,” the last of three in Marcom’s novel which close with the terminal “three apples fell from heaven” convention. In this vignette, newly arrived bootmakers set up an “out-of-the-way stall” at the edge of the “commercial district” and soon put out of business other bootmakers (*Three Apples* 180). Buyers flock to purchase the boots, drawn to the “quality and workmanship of the boots [which] were unprecedented” and “Heretofore unknown in these parts” (180). Soon, the bootmakers expand their business to meet demands, given that the “townspeople beg[i]n purchasing boots for their descendants” and that the townspeople reach “their sixth generation of antecedents” (181). For example, someone requests, “Two blues for my great-great-great-greatgrandchildren and one yellow for their auntie” (181). Another asks someone else, “Have I told you that I put in an order of blacks for my youngest son’s niece five generations removed?” (182). Signs appear “detailing the exchange values” across the “south

and east ends of the bazaar which became the bootmakers' Waiting Room and Reservations Area" (181). These payments include "plucked out nails," "pulled-out hairs," body parts, internal organs, and "all water sources" (183). The vignette articulates the genocidal process carried out against Armenians and conceptualizes settler becoming. Armenians were removed from their homes predominantly in the east and south of Anatolia. The "Waiting Room and Reservations Area," I want to suggest, alludes to the network of death march routes and railroad lines used to forcibly relocate Armenians as well as the system of what historians have identified as concentration camps.⁶⁷ What is more, through the portrayal of boots purchased for descendants and antecedents, Marcom alludes to the erasure of native Armenian cartography as part of the emergence of the Republic of Turkey.

Where is the town of Kharpert? It remains there as part of Elazig province in Turkey, but what of the history of its Armenian inhabitants? After all, as part of establishing a modern nation-state, founding father of the Republic of Turkey Kemal Atatürk reformed the Turkish language. In changing from Ottoman Turkish with its Persio-Arabic alphabet to modern Turkish with its Latin-based alphabet, he deprived most of its citizens (and their descendants) access to the very language with which to comprehend the history of the land prior to the genesis of the nation-state. The Houshamadyan project was established in part as a response to this systemic disappearance of history. Thus, Kharpert is also there, in the maps, population records, photographs, and accompanying story-maps available through the Houshamadyan project. The town of Kharpert is there, in the workings of settler mnemonics, as an antecedent, or to

⁶⁷ See Ronald Grigor Suny, *"They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide* (2015) and Khatchig Mouradian, "Internment and Destruction: Concentration Camps During the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1916."

summarize Bruyneel's words, it is there whenever the nation speaks of its native peoples as part of the nation's past and not its present.

What is more, the title of this short story can be read as both as a definitive and an open-ended statement. Indeed, when the "townspeople's methods of payment beg[i]n to dry up," the bootmakers conclude, "This always happens" and decide to move elsewhere (184). The final paragraph of the vignette, right before the "three apples fell from heaven" closing, reads: "A few weeks later, they moved their business to an abandoned cookie factory in Munich and began refurbishing. They took in an ambitious street artist who quickly rose to the position of General Manager" (184). This vignette, then, alludes to the Holocaust and the ascension to power of Adolf Hitler. The triumvirate of Turkish pashas who devised and implemented plans to eliminate Armenians were not the Nazi perpetrators who carried out the genocide of European Jewry.⁶⁸ When read alongside earlier lines from the story—the "quality and workmanship of the boots [which] were unprecedented" and "Heretofore unknown in these parts" (180)—it becomes clear that Marcom alludes to the historical record which reveals how acts of perpetration in the latter case of human catastrophe were informed by knowledge of collective violence carried out in the Ottoman Empire. To read the title of the story as open-ended also means to recognize the mnemonic practices which inform and are informed by settlement and dispersion, an ongoing story in the wake of Indigenous removal and dispossession.

⁶⁸ For overviews of the historical connections between acts of perpetration in these two cases, see Stefan Ihrig, *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler* (2016) and his *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination* (2014); Robert Melson, *Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust* (1992); and Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (2004).

In summarizing her arguments, Caruth writes that a “mode of speaking and of writing that bears witness to the past by turning toward the future,” or what she calls the “language of life,” “must be reread, and understood anew, through the losses, and disappearances, of an era in which the very possibility of the future is fundamentally in doubt” (xii). Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange ultimately show that to speak the language of life in the context of empire, settler coloniality, indigeneity, and dispersion first necessitates a recognition of the legacy of disappearing history. In their respective novels, Marcom, Abulhawa, and Orange conceptualized those dynamics through frame narratives. That is, frame narratives demonstrate that in response to each respective state’s assertion of “there was not,” each community remembers “there was” and speaks the language of “there is.” As they also illustrated, memories of removal still circulate despite the state’s attempts at occlusion precisely because survivors and their descendants carry traumatic memories in the new homes and communities they build and of which they become members. Succeeding chapters of “A Map of This Place” attend to questions of diasporic mnemonic practices, and more specifically, what I call “nested memory work.” That rubric attends to both the spatial and temporal markers of memory in the face of the recursivity of trauma. *Three Apples Fell from Heaven*, *The Sky Between Blue and Water*, and *There There* provide the foundation from which to best understand the workings of nested memory, meaning the structure of the intergenerational transmission of memory and the ways in which stories are emplaced in locations as part of the process of home-making in diaspora.

CHAPTER 2: NESTED MEMORY: THE INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF MEMORY WHEN THE PAST HAS NOT YET PASSED

April 2015 saw worldwide centennial commemorations of the Armenian Genocide. To recall, on April 24, 1915 several hundred Armenian intellectuals, cultural and community leaders, artists, writers, political activists, and teachers in Istanbul were arrested and exiled to the interior of Anatolia (Suny 272-280). That same month, Nancy Kricorian published a prose poem titled “Homage to Bourj Hammoud.” Published in this milieu of global memory work, Kricorian’s poem thematically concerns the historical rebuilding of Armenian communities by refugees and their descendants in Bourj Hammoud, near Beirut, Lebanon. What does the enjambment of lived remembrance practices of the Armenian diaspora pertaining to the events of collective violence between 1915-1923 in Anatolia and a literary representation of remembrance practices pertaining to the memory of succeeding upheavals experienced by the Armenian diaspora, particularly the events of the Lebanese Civil War of 1975-1990, matter for this chapter of “A Map of This Place”? The poem exemplifies what I define in this chapter as “nested memory work” for succeeding generations in the aftermath of removal. More specifically, this chapter argues that the rubric of nested memory work serves as a useful model to articulate the migration of memory in the context of the afterlife of removal. Here, I borrow the term “afterlife” from Saidiya Hartman who invokes it to address the effects of slavery for African and African-American communities across the transatlantic (*Lose Your Mother* 6). Moreover, where aftermath emphasizes the temporal-boundedness of an event of collective violence, afterlife attends to the structures which endure.⁶⁹ One aspect of the afterlife of Indigenous territorial

⁶⁹ Here, I am indebted to Antoinette Burton who in calling my attention to *Bullet Proof: Afterlives of Anticolonial South Africa* suggested that the term “afterlives is trying to attend to both structures and events, even if we haven’t named it as such” and that afterlives serves as a

dispossession is settler memory, the active remembering and circulation of narratives pertaining to the founding and genesis of the nation-state in settler colonial contexts. In this chapter of “A Map of This Place,” I bring these points on the afterlife of removal and the simultaneous production of nation-state and diasporic memory in Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases to bear on Marianne Hirsch’s conceptualization of postmemory.

To build this framework for the study of the three novels I engage in this chapter, I want to first highlight how the rubric of postmemory has traditionally been applied in the study of Armenian collective memory, including most recently in the context of the centenary of the Armenian Genocide. As anthropologist Sossie Kasbarian argues about remembrance projects and initiatives during the centenary, “In the Armenian case, memory of the genocide has been an essential component of diasporic identity. Generations have grown up with their parents’, grandparents’, and great-grandparents’ personal accounts of loss, displacement, and of starting over - the memory of the genocide transmitted intergenerationally” (126). We see in Kasbarian’s observation echoes of Hirsch’s words, even if Kasbarian does not cite Hirsch. At its core, the rubric of postmemory “describes the relationship that the ‘generation after’ bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before—to experiences they ‘remember’ only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up” (5).⁷⁰ Hirsch clarifies that the term postmemory names a phenomenon she observes from both her personal experiences of the Holocaust and which appears in creative remediations about this particular collective violence that she analyzes. As she notes about the origins of the theoretical rubric:

useful term for articulating how an event becomes “embedded in structures but doesn’t leave structures untouched” (personal correspondence).

⁷⁰ In developing the framework of postmemory, Hirsch turns to different material archives—from family albums, literature, iconic images of the Holocaust, Nazi photographs in post-WWII art, and testimonial objects such as books produced in Nazi concentration camps.

Postmemory is the term I came to on the basis of my own “autobiographical readings” of works by second-generation writers and visual artists. Like some of the writers named above, I felt the need for a term that would describe the *quality* of my own relationship to my parents’ daily life stories of danger and survival during the Second World War in Romanian Cernauti and the ways in which their accounts dominated my postwar childhood in Bucharest. As I was reading and viewing the work of second-generation writers and artists, and I was talking to fellow children of survivors, I came to see that all of us share certain qualities and symptoms that make us a *postgeneration*. (4, emphasis original)

What does the structure of the intergenerational transmission of memory look like? That question seems to have driven Hirsch to develop the framework of postmemory. It is also the central question that guides my study of the migration of memory in this chapter of “A Map of This Place.” This chapter, however, takes inspiration from the space-time nexus depicted in Kricorian’s poem “Homage to Bourj Hammoud” and in so doing, offers nested memory as a model to open alternative perspectives on the structure of the intergenerational transmission of traumatic memory. “Nesting” defines the structure of the transmission of memory in the face of the recursivity of trauma, where nesting refers to how an inherited memoryscape of cultural trauma is folded into the memoryscape of a descendant who becomes a witness to an event of collective violence his or herself. Nesting also encompasses the emplacement of memory, meaning memory work is always geographically located somewhere given that diasporas establish nests or communities in the wake of removal.

Attention to the space-time nexus depicted in Kricorian's poem serves as a useful entry point to prioritize the descendant as witness in the study of the transmission of memory in diaspora. The last stanza of the prose poem ends:

Remember Nor Adana, Nor Marash, Nor Sis. Men still play backgammon and grill meat on braziers on the sidewalk. Remember the narrow alleys and wooden houses of Sanjak Camp, razed for a shopping plaza. Oh people of long memory, listen, look, speak, remember: your stories are a homeland. (29-33)⁷¹

In terms of space, Kricorian's use of the grammatical article "a" in this seventh and last stanza opens polysemy for a taken for granted term in the case of the post-1915 Armenian diaspora. Given the narrative arc of the prose poem, "homeland" at first glance points to the land from which Armenians were removed in the 1915 Catastrophe or genocidal process. However, given Kricorian's depiction of the upbuilding of Armenian communities in dispersion, "a homeland" in this last line comes instead to imply "a home" on "land" away from "the homeland." The first meaning (the homeland) emphasizes the site of dispossession and forced migration; the latter (a homeland) emphasizes sites of arrival.

In this vein, the speaker's prompts call attention to how inherited traumatic memories from the site of violence in the homeland can be folded into descendants' own memory work, prompted by collective violence they experience in a homeland, a diasporic community. At the beginning of all but one of the seven stanzas, the speaker orients the "people of long memory" (31) to "listen" to (1), "look at" (12), "speak of" (16, 20), and to ultimately "remember" (24, 29)

⁷¹ On March 21, 2016, Kricorian posted the poem on her personal website. The prose poem also appears in Ara Madzounian's *Birds Nest: A Photographic Essay of Bourj Hammoud* (2016). The enjambment differs slightly across these publication venues. Based on personal correspondence, I cite line numbers from the version on Kricorian's website.

experiences of survival in dispersion.⁷² The middle part focuses on the “flowering” (23) of the refugees and their children who name the neighborhoods of Bourj Hammoud, their home in diaspora, with the word “Nor” (meaning “new” in Armenian) and the places from where they were displaced. The speaker continues: the “remnants of Marash create a new Marash. And so also Nor Sis, Nor Adana, Nor Giligia, and Nor Hadjin” (7-8).⁷³ Removed from our Anatolian homeland by the Ottoman Empire, we “remnants” were refugees settled and resettled under policies of population transfer overseen by the League of Nations, the French mandate, and the British mandate and developed in the service of “constructing internationally sanctioned forms of imperial control of the Levant” (Robson 5). Caught in the throes of entangled empires, Armenians in the 1930s began creating distinct neighborhoods in Bourj Hammoud, such as Nor Marash.⁷⁴

In this context of population transfer and the intimacies of empires, I turn to the poem to underscore the need to conceptualize the intergenerational transmission of memory in space but also in terms of spaces in relation to one another. As Kricorian’s poem exemplifies, in the Armenian case that means understanding memory that continues to be generated in our

⁷² For discussions on Armenian orphanages in Lebanon and the Ottoman Empire, see Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (2016); Hilmar Kaiser, *At the Crossroads of Der Zor Death, Survival, and Humanitarian Resistance in Aleppo, 1915-1917* (2002); Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire* (2014) and *Ottoman Children and Youth During World War I* (2019); and Keith David Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (2015). For a memoir about the orphanage experience in Lebanon, see Karnig Panian, *Goodbye Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* (2015).

⁷³ As Brett Kaplan pointed out to me, non-Armenian speakers may read “Nor” as the adverb and the line “Remember Nor Adana, Nor Marash, Nor Sis” as a “neither/nor” sentence construction.

⁷⁴ In 1919, French administrators repatriated Armenian refugees then in Syria back to Cilicia. The Cilicia region in southwestern Turkey includes such villages as Adana and Hadjin, places from where Armenians had been deported. In 1921, French administrators withdrew from Cilicia and evacuated Armenian refugees they had previously moved there. Refugees again, many Armenians arrived on the shores of Beirut then came to reside in Bourj Hammoud (Nucho 15).

homeland and in the nests we establish. My choice of terminology—nests, nested, nesting—is no mere coincidence. In a 2015 photography book on the contemporary Armenian community of Bourj Hammoud, Ara Madzounian identifies the space as the *Birds Nest*. The title recalls the “Bird’s Nest” orphanage in Byblos (Jbeil), Lebanon, which was once home to Armenian youth who survived the death marches to the Syrian desert.⁷⁵ What is more, Kricorian’s poem features an epigraph from the Lebanese author Khalil Gibran: “Have you heard a thrush sing while its nest burns in the wind?” The metaphor of nesting proves doubly useful here for an analysis of Kricorian’s poem. That is, the poem depicts not just the spatial nesting of memory as refugees call Bourj Hammoud home, but the temporal nesting of memory when remnants and their descendants are exiled once again.

From references to removal and to orphanages, the poem further unwinds through the Lebanese Civil War of 1975-1990 and ultimately up to the present in 2008, or the moment when “the narrow alleys and wooden houses of Sanjak Camp” (30-31) are on the cusp of being “razed for a shopping plaza” (31). As the poem depicts how this Armenian community creates its nest, its structure exemplifies how one memory gets nested into the narration of another memory. The fourth stanza begins: “Speak of those times, or don’t, when the parties take up arms against each other” (16-17).⁷⁶ This line alludes to the way in which present-day inhabitants of Bourj

⁷⁵ The orphanage was first administered by the Near East Relief American humanitarian program starting in 1921 and later a Danish Christian missionary named Maria Jacobsen as part of the Women’s Missionary Workers (KMA), a Danish relief organization. This location housed some of the youngest in the Near East Relief orphanage system and today it remains the only Near East Relief orphanage still in operation (“One Hundred Years of Service”). 2015 saw the opening of the *Armenian Genocide Orphans’ Aram Bezikian Museum* on that site.

⁷⁶ In diaspora post-1915, many Armenians maintained (and continue to maintain) three political party affiliations: Dashnak, Hnchak, and Ramkavar. For histories of these parties see Razmig Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (2006). The Lebanese Parliament follows the principle of “confessional distribution,” meaning each religious

Hammoud recall “what happened among and between the Armenians of Beirut in 1958, as though understanding that earlier conflict [is] necessary to understanding the later one” (“Bourj Hammoud”).⁷⁷ In the prose poem, however, Kricorian situates memories of loss and rebuilding associated with exile in the context of the Armenian Genocide as necessary to understanding what the prose poem locates as collective traumas that will later occur: the upheaval of the 1958 Lebanon Crisis and later the 1975-1990 Lebanese Civil War. After all, the poem situates this narrative of possibility, the flowering of remnants, as a necessary memory to recall in the face of future upheaval, destruction, and the envisioned impossibility of rebuilding from the ashes once again. In reference to the upheaval of the Lebanese Civil War, the penultimate stanza of the prose poem concludes: “Carrying leather suitcases to the airports, so many are exiled again” (27-28).⁷⁸ Passive voice obscures the agent, allowing Kricorian to emphasize the recursive experience of exile.

The space-time nexus in Kricorian’s poem thus calls attention to the ways in which descendants who bear witness to traumatic pasts that preceded their births can themselves also be witnesses to mass violence. To recognize this duality of bearing witness and witnessing means to recognize the agency of the descendant. In this vein, a study of the nested memory work that can arise is exigent because it nuances an observation Hirsch makes about postmemory: “To grow up

community has an allotted number of deputies in the Parliament. Armenians have regularly held positions in the Lebanese Parliament, currently 6 out of 128 seats (“Five Ethnic”).

⁷⁷ On August 4, 2020, an explosion occurred at Beirut’s port. Reactions from the Lebanese Armenian community and Lebanese diaspora(s) reveal the cross-referencing of inherited memory and the feeling of “another upheaval for Beirut, yet again.” See Shahen Araboghlian, “The Explosion: Lebanon Isn’t What Lebanon Was.”

⁷⁸ In that stanza, Kricorian alludes to the aforementioned Armenian political and religious groups’ collective decision not to take sides with any of the warring Lebanese factions or take an active role in the military, a stance that has come to be known as “positive neutrality” (Geukjian 68-9). For more nuanced discussions on what motivated the stance of “positive neutrality” and what that looked like in practice, see Ohannes Geukjian, Nicola Migliorino, and Joanne Nucho.

with overwhelming inherited memories, to be dominated by narratives that preceded one's birth or one's consciousness, is to risk having one's own life stories displaced, even evacuated by our ancestors" (5). As the novels studied in this chapter illustrate, characters mobilize inherited traumatic memories to make meaning of their own experiences of displacement.

In developing nested memory work as a rubric for the study of the multigenerational contact points of memory when an already displaced people is displaced again, the work of Mohawk theorist and anthropologist Audra Simpson also proves useful because her concept of "nested sovereignty" (*Mohawk Interruptus* 11) can be used as a kind of call to account for where such remembrance practices unfold. Simpson proffers "refusal" as a political science framework when she argues that the Mohawks of Kahnawà;ke, like other Iroquois people, "refuse the 'gifts' of American and Canadian citizenship" and "insist upon the integrity of Haudenosaunee [Iroquois Confederacy] governance" (7). As Indigenous peoples, the Haudenosaunee "have survived a great, transformative process of settler occupation, and they continue to live under the conditions of this occupation, its disavowal, and its ongoing life, which has required and still requires that they give up their lands and give up themselves" (2). However, in tracing the implications of refusal, Simpson argues that one sovereign political order can exist nested within a sovereign state. In other words, Mohawks of Kahnawà;ke "live and move within a territorial space that is overlaid with settler regimes" while refusing to "stop *politically* being Iroquois" and instead practicing communal belonging and citizenship as Indigenous nationals (7, emphasis). Nested sovereignty ultimately proves useful in expanding upon Hirsch's postmemory insofar as spatializing where the intergenerational transmission of memory takes place can hold a mirror to the ways in which diaspora is a taken for granted term in memory studies. While addressing homeland, home-making, and nationhood, diaspora as a rubric employed in memory studies has

tended not to also encompass indigeneity, address questions of occupation and settler coloniality, or conceptualize resistant memories as set against the disappearance of history in the aftermath of removal.

Taking cues from Kricorian's prose poem and Simpson's arguments, this chapter turns to Patricia Sarrafian Ward's *The Bullet Collection* (2003), Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin* (2010), and Chickasaw Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* (1995). In Ward's novel, Marianna turns to inherited memories of her grandfather's and great uncle's experiences of displacement during the Armenian Genocide as well as her cousin's claim that "Armenians have no home" (151) to work through her own experience during the Lebanese Civil War. She experiences the war as a child, emigrates to the US as a young adult while the war continues to unfold, and narrates from the viewpoint that she and her family live in exile. *Mornings in Jenin* focuses on Amal, a third-generation descendant of the Abulheja family displaced from Ein-Hod in 1948. Amal returns in 2002 to her birthplace of the Jenin refugee camp, where she previously lived through the 1967 Naksa. Amal is joined by her daughter Sara, who herself is deported by the Israeli government for writing about her mother's death at the hands of snipers during the 2002 Israeli invasion of Jenin. *Solar Storms* follows the journey of Angel Jensen, a fifth-generation member of a fictionalized First Nation in what is now Canada. Angel returns to her ancestral homeland in search of an explanation as to why social workers removed her from her family and placed her in foster homes in Oklahoma. Angel witnesses the dispossession and displacement of her Indigenous community yet again as the Canadian government installs a hydroelectric dam.

Certainly, *The Bullet Collection*, *Mornings in Jenin*, and *Solar Storms* demonstrate how "imaginative investment, projection, and creation" define the transmission of traumatic knowledge along "familial" and "affiliative" lines (5). In other words, the core notion of

traumatic knowledge as having the potential to be passed on vertically between child and parent within a family and horizontally across other contemporary members of the second generation appears in these three novels (36).⁷⁹ Still, Ward, Abulhawa, and Hogan depict these axes of connective memory work and imaginative investment beyond a first- and second-generation binary. At the same time, the nesting of memory pertaining to removal does not appear the same across each novel. In Ward's novel, the marginalized narrative of the Armenian Genocide reveals the difficulty in trying to make meaning of two different forms of mass violence, each marked by its own respective event-structure relationality. While the experience of exile comes to the fore as a point of comparison, knowledge of dispossession becomes a lost archive. In Abulhawa's novel, nested memory work reveals how succeeding acts of violence engender a narrativization of the Nakba both as an event and a structure given memory work unfolds in the space of ongoing occupation and as such, the Nakba is experienced as a continuing present. Finally, in Hogan's novel, nested memory work reveals that there is no naming of settlers' dispossession of Indigenous peoples as an event. While the proper names 1915 Catastrophe and the 1948 Catastrophe are invoked in the Armenian and Palestinian cases, respectively, we can ask whether any Native languages use a word translated as "catastrophe" into English, such as the 1492 Catastrophe. Through the portrayal of nested memory work that allows Angel to fill in the omissions in her knowledge pertaining to her removal, Hogan conceptualizes intergenerational remembrance practices which seek to name the logic of elimination.

⁷⁹ For a critique of how postmemory takes for granted heteronormative constructions of family and of generation or intergenerational, see Dilara Çalışkan's work on "queer postmemory," including "'Nobody is Going to Let You Attend Your Own Funeral': A Funeral for Trans Woman and Naming the Unnamed."

***The Bullet Collection* and Memories from a Time That Had [Everything] to Do with the Present**

The Bullet Collection begins with a two-page prelude in which the first-person narrator, Marianna, remembers her youth in Lebanon before its ethnic and sectarian civil war. Marianna recalls the past from her position as an eighteen-year-old in an unidentified US New England town, eight months after her family is exiled there from Beirut. Marianna has an older sister, Alaine, who collects war debris, such as bullets and shrapnel. The novel's title refers to Alaine's accumulation of the material ravages of war. The title also aptly encapsulates Marianna's archival memory of her time in Beirut during war and the intergenerational memory work present in the narrative. A bullet, of course, refers to a projectile fired from a gun; it can also mean a bullet point, or a typographical symbol used to introduce and organize items in a list. Bullet points may be single words, short phrases, sentences, or paragraphs. Other than for complete sentences, bullet points tend not to end with a period or full stop. The novel's structure exemplifies Marianna's attempts to order and make meaning of her memories pertaining to the events of the Lebanese Civil War. The structure also exemplifies the resulting temporal disorientation in the attempt to narrate a period of collective violence that has not yet passed. That is, the war continues back home while Marianna's family attempts to establish a sense of home in the US. Through this narrative structure, we see the nesting of memory and postmemory: Marianna recalls events from the Lebanese Civil War, but her narration also indexes the transmission of memory pertaining to the Armenian Genocide.

Nested memory work in *The Bullet Collection* demonstrates the continuum between what Aleida Assmann calls the "canon," or the "actively circulated memory that keeps the past present," and what she calls the "archive," or the "passively stored memory that preserves the past as past" ("Canon and Archive" 98). In the novel certain aspects of collective memory of the

Armenian Genocide come to the fore, such as the experience of establishing a home in dispersion, while others remain in the archive, “de-contextualized and disconnected from their former frames which had authorized them or determined their meaning” (99). By the latter, I mean the broader history of removal and dispossession, including the identification of the genocidal process in Armenian as the *Medz Yeghern*, translated into English as the “great crime,” and the structural violence reflected by the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic’s Abandoned Property Laws. After delineating the structure of nested memory work in the novel, I situate Ward’s creative treatment of the Lebanese Civil War in relation to emergent scholarly discourses in Armenian Studies thereby highlighting how questions of internal versus external displacement as well as indigeneity and settler coloniality differently inform the representation of the migrations of memory in each of the novels that I address in this chapter.

Kricorian’s depiction of a space-time nexus in “Homage to Bourj Hammoud” proves useful as Ward also depicts spaces of diasporic memory work in relation to each other. That is, scenes from Beirut during the war disrupt the main narrative arc, which itself consists of the out-of-order memories Marianna strings together concerning her family’s initial arrival in the US, her resistance to her family’s desire to leave the past behind, and her conclusion that her initial belief that “[j]ust a little while and then we’ll go home” (7, emphasis original) no longer holds true. Indeed, the novel is organized around three sections, in the following order: “Autumn,” “Summer,” and “Winter.” One strain of the novel takes place in Rome, where Marianna’s cousin Vartan is himself exiled. In Hirsch’s conceptualization of postmemory, Vartan functions as a member of the “postgeneration.” He exemplifies what Hirsch, drawing upon Eva Hoffman’s arguments about the “hinge generation” and the “guardianship of the Holocaust,” calls a “‘guardianship’ of a traumatic personal and generational past with which some of us have a

‘living connection,’ and that past’s passing into history or myth” (1). In the novel, Marianna’s grandfather and great-uncle, Jiddo and Uncle Ara, respectively, are genocide survivors. They, alongside Marianna’s grandmother, Teta, and her Auntie Lupsi, are the living connection to the Armenian Genocide. I will return to Ward’s depiction of the intergenerational transmission pertaining to the removal and dispossession of Armenians. For now, I want to delineate the structure of the novel and how it allows Ward to position Marianne as a guardian of a traumatic personal and generational past, meaning the Lebanese Civil War.

To that end, Ward provides two prefaces in which Marianna’s narration appears in italics. The first italicized preface appears at the start of “Autumn,” and features the refrain “*Before the war was real.*” The first preface demonstrates how “Postmemory’s connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation” (5). In this instance, however, the postmemorial work does not pertain to traumatic memories. Here, Marianna describes childhood games at picnics, family trips to Mount Lebanon, the harvesting of lavender in the Summer, and listening to her grandfather sing in Armenian during Christmas and Winter. On the one hand, the refrain “*Before the war was real*” points to a moment in the narrative when Marianna remembers a night during a cease-fire. Marianna observes: “grown-ups discussed this cease-fire with new excitement, rehashing memories from a time that had nothing to do with me” (93). A neighbor, Mrs. Awad, asks Marianna, “Do you know your parents took you all over Lebanon before the war” (93). Although the novel does not provide an explicit date for the family’s exile, literary critic Syrine Hout argues that Marianna was “born in the late 1960s” and “started witnessing civil strife at the age of six” (274). In this way, Ward develops a character who embodies a member of what is known in Lebanon as the “war generation” or “*jeel*

al-harb” (Elias 4).⁸⁰ This generation, or individuals born between the mid-1960s and early 1970s, “has a particularly close and complicated relationship to the war, having experienced much of it unfolding as adolescents” (4). The preface, then, exemplifies this generation’s search for origins and attempts to imagine, project, or create a past not marked by war. In this vein, the preface seems to draw out the positive memories of life before the war, memories which are transmitted to Marianna and nested into her own memoryscape.

On the other hand, the refrain “*Before the war was real*” captures the several stages of what would later come to be known in totality as the Lebanese Civil War. It also underscores how one can remember events within larger structural violence. Ward does not capitalize the word “war” in any invocation of this phrase nor at any point in the novel. Similarly, in the rest of the novel, she never provides the proper name of the Lebanese Civil War. Critics of Lebanese art and literature have argued that “Lebanese Civil War,” “postwar,” and “post-civil war” are misnomers (Elias 7). The period of war between 1975 and 1990 covers more than one singular event; those events of violence spanned from the course of a few moments, individual days, or

⁸⁰ A fruitful comparison would be discussion of the “war generation” or “*jeel al-harb*” with what others in memory studies have identified as the “1.5 generation.” By “1.5 generation” Susan Suleiman refers to the “child survivors of the Holocaust, too young to have had an adult understanding of what was happening to them, and sometimes too young to have any memory of it at all, but old enough to have *been there* during the Nazi persecution of Jews. Suleiman observes, the “specific experience of Jewish children was that they were persecuted because of an identity they could not even fully claim, since disaster hit them before the formation of stable identity that we associate with adulthood, and in some cases before any conscious sense of self” (181). Hirsch, citing Suleiman, employs the term “1.5 generation” when arguing that W. G. Sebald “belongs to the second generation, but through his character Austerlitz, born in 1944 and a member of the ‘1.5 generation’...blurs generational boundaries and highlights the current preoccupation with the persona of the child survivor” (41). She also identifies Leo Spitzer, one of her co-authors, as a member of the 1.5 generation. I do not take up the “1.5 generation” as a rubric in part because I recognize Armenians were not in the context of the Lebanese Civil War persecuted in the same way Jews were in the Holocaust. See also Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, *War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory Work* (2012).

longer periods such as weeks, months, or years (Hermez 12-13, 22-23).⁸¹ In this light, “civil wars” might best describe the fifteen-year period of violence overseen by sectarian alliances and actors (Elias 5). To return to the cease-fire, Ward employs the pronoun “this” in Marianna’s version of that night. She also uses it when Marianna’s father observes, “This cease-fire won’t last long” (80). Read in conversation with Ward’s repeated invocation of “this,” the refrain “*Before the war was real*” reflects the way in which the war becomes real over and over again because the fighting stops and picks up again.

Moreover, to bring the refrain “*Before the war was real*” in conversation with the title, *The Bullet Collection*, one also sees how in Marianna’s narration, Ward nests memories of one phase of the war into another. In observing that “This is how we left home,” Marianna betrays how she witnesses the “militias [which] went to war for West Beirut; Amal, Hizbullah, PSP” (279) and that marked the third phase of this multinational and sectarian violence. She also refers to the fourth phase of the collective violence. That is, she watches from an apartment balcony the arrival of Syrian soldiers who empty her neighborhood of Palestinians, just as they “had been taken away like this years ago” (285). The qualification “like this” demonstrates how to conceptualize the totality of the Lebanese Civil War means to understand one event in relation to another or one phase in relation to another. Finally, she describes the start of the war as April 13, 1975, the night her family celebrates her grandmother’s birthday; it is the night when partygoers head to Beirut and “find themselves ensnared in traffic” because of the “busload of Palestinians that have been attacked by the Kataeb” (305), the militia of the Lebanese Phalange party.

⁸¹ Or, in the words of Hrayr Anmahouni Eulmessekkian, a Lebanese-born, Armenian artist who experienced the Lebanese Civil War and revisits memories of it through his artwork: “the Lebanese wars, yes there were several flavors of them” (personal correspondence). See also Hrayr Eulmessekkian, “Art After Remnants” and “Retouched and Rendered.”

The second italicized preface appears at the start of “Winter,” but this time Ward shifts to present tense, “*Before the war is real*” (267). Marianna now narrates her experience of having lived through the events of collective violence back home in Lebanon by reframing a memory she has of visiting a butcher’s shop with her mother and the childhood crush that she has on the shop owner’s son. The shift from past tense “was real” to the present tense “is real,” as Syrine Hout notes, “indicates the war’s continuous effect, made visible in [Marianna’s] reactions to its many memories while in exile” (277). Whereas “Before the war was real” marks Marianna’s repeated attempts to narrate life in Beirut before the events of the Lebanese Civil War, the singular iteration of “Before the war is real” now marks Marianna’s attempts to narrate memories of the collective violence, in its totality, that she experienced before being exiled to the US. The preposition, “before,” however, captures how the past is not yet passed in Ward’s literary representation of the effects of the Lebanese Civil War on the war generation. That creative remediation is reflective of lived conditions in Lebanon. Anthropologist Sami Hermez argues that there has been a tendency in Lebanon to perceive the war as “something in the past, without ongoing structural effects” (6). That understanding of the period of 1975-1990 raises a problem, however, because the war has “not past: not physically as its presence is felt continually, nor in the structural outcomes as they manifest persistently in the present” (6). The second preface in *The Bullet Collection* exemplifies this tension between situating the events of the Lebanese Civil War in the past tense while recognizing its ongoing effects. That is, the preface to “Winter” is the only time Ward uses third-person narration while the content of the section is in the first-tense and covers Marianna’s confrontation with nostalgia for the home her family left behind, a home not marked by war when indeed the war continues.

In becoming the holder of memories of the Lebanese Civil War within her family, Marianna becomes both a witness to and participant in postmemorial work. More specifically, through Marianna's bullet collection, meaning traumatic memories pertaining to the Lebanese Civil War, Ward illustrates the witnessing of a "rememory" and the mediation process which transforms a rememory into postmemorial work. In her discussion on visual representations of the ways in which the mark of trauma "can, however partially and imperfectly, be transferred across subjects and generations," Hirsch turns to Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* (80). In particular, Hirsch turns to the scene in which Sethe tells her daughter Denver the following about forgetting: "If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place—the picture of it—stays, and not just in my rememory but out there in the world" (43). When Denver asks in turn, "Can other people see it," Sethe continues: "Some day you will be walking down the road and you hear something or something going on. So clear. And you think it's you thinking it up. A thought picture. But no. It's when you bump into a rememory that belongs to somebody else" (43). In the *Bullet Collection*, Marianna becomes the window through which Ward portrays the transformation of rememory into postmemory.

More specifically, Ward establishes Marianna as a character who witnesses postmemorial work but does not recognize what takes place, meaning how the adults call up the past and integrate it into historically different present. In one scene set during the Lebanese Civil War, Marianna's great uncle and his wife, whom she refers to as Uncle Ara and Auntie Lupsi, lose their store in Beirut because of a bomb explosion. In response to the destruction, the adults remark "how terrible to suffer so much at the beginning of their lives, and now this!" (Ward 22). In her reading of *Beloved*, Hirsch distinguishes rememory as a "memory that, communicated through bodily symptoms, becomes a form of repetition and reenactment" from postmemory, a

memory that “works through indirection and multiple mediation” (83). By having “suffer[ed] so much at the beginning of their lives” the adults refer to the events of the Armenian Genocide and use this past history to articulate the consequences of this contemporary displacement. Marianna, looking back on this exchange, remarks, “What I knew about being Armenian was that Jiddo had to travel in a suitcase when he was a child fleeing the Turks” (22). The scene demonstrates a nesting of memory in that Marianna, looking back on the events of Lebanese Civil War, recalls having witnessed the adults in her family discussing a traumatic past, the genocidal process, which preceded her birth. In recalling the car bombing from a temporal remove, Marianna’s memory betrays how descendants of those who experienced collective trauma participate in the “imaginative investment, projection, and creation” that define the transmission of traumatic knowledge along “familial” and “affiliative” lines (5). However, as Marianna puts it, the narrative of “Jiddo and Uncle Ara fleeing the Turks” had for her in her youth “always seemed an adventurous way to grow up” (152). The scene, then, marks the indirection in the transmission of memory. That is, without commentary from the adults, Marianna does not have the interpretative framework as a child to understand the severity of her grandfather’s journey and by extension the second upheaval of which the car bombing is part.

To return to Assman’s arguments about the canon and archive, Ward demonstrates how in the intergenerational inheritance of memory, what we might call the storehouse of memory, different parts of the story can be called up and resonate with different individuals for different reasons. That is, Ward demonstrates how inherited memories are “open to new contexts and lend themselves to new interpretation” (Assman, “Canon and Archive” 99). This meaning making process is evident in the travels of the “rememory” Marianna “bumps into” as a child. In that same scene of the car bombing, Auntie Lupsi, rocking back and forth in her chair, claws at

Marianna's arm and commands her to "Watch for them, watch. They're everywhere," which Marianna thinks refers to potential thieves in the store (Ward 22). As Auntie Lupsi rocks back and forth in a trance-like state, memories of this past collective violence haunt her in the present. By "them," Auntie Lupsi refers to perpetrators of the genocide. Later, Astrig, frustrated by her mother's persistent inquiry about the presence of shoppers, exclaims "Uf, Mama, next you'll be looking for Turks" (22). The mention of "Turks" silences Auntie Lupsi and her face turns "pale and rigid" (22). Marianna does not understand "what was so terrible in Astrig's words" (22). In turn, Auntie Lupsi's embodied response to the mention of "Turks" instills in Marianna a fear of the "Turkish thieves" (23). I will shortly return to the word "thief" and situate it as a reflection of the historicity of the novel's publication and Armenian Studies scholarship on the "Abandoned Property Laws" that were part of the genocidal process and inform the afterlife of the events of the 1915 Catastrophe. For now, I want to emphasize that in this scene, no one informs Marianna that by "Turks" Astrig refers to perpetrators. "What forms of identification and attachment," Hirsch asks, "can enable the transfer of body memory, and what artistic idioms can represent them? And what is the role of 'historical withholding' in the transmission of trauma?" (82). In the *Bullet Collection*, historical withholding vis-a-vis family members results in the child witness observing the shift in affective response in the individual carrier of traumatic memory but not comprehending the trauma that leaves its mark. To witness how someone "can see the ghosts living inside her husband" (23) does not necessarily result in understanding what in the present prompts that rememory or the originary violence that gave rise to it.

Still, in depicting the decontextualization of collective memory of the Armenian Genocide in its temporal and spatial migration, Ward holds the character Vartan as a mirror to Marianna's nested memory work. In Ward's juxtaposition of characters' narrative arcs, a

descendant, someone beyond the postgeneration in Hirsch's articulation, later participates in the very meaning-making process she witnessed as a child but did not recognize as occurring. To protect their daughters during the war, Ani and her husband Stephen send Alaine and Marianna to stay with Ani's first-cousin, Vartan, in Rome. In Rome, Vartan instructs the girls with "We, as Armenians...do not belong anywhere. So you should make your home wherever you go and be pleased you are somewhere at all" (152). Vartan's claims that "Armenians have no home" and that "We are exiles" coupled with inquiries such as "Do you know nothing of Armenian history?" bother Marianna since she cannot relate, at this point in her life, to this history of exile (151). Marianna dismisses Vartan's knowledge of Armenian history for three reasons.

First, she "never thought of [herself] as Armenian" but Lebanese instead (251).

Marianna's reflection suggests that she sees her identity developing in a specific place and that in her youth she does not understand how her personal history in Lebanon is situated within her family's collective history that transcends borders. Second, the "notion of being homeless, of carrying this in [her] blood, appeals to [her]," but it does not ultimately mean anything since her family "had a home" (152). Vartan reiterates that Marianna's grandparents "were among the first refugees to arrive in Lebanon" and that "Jiddo spent part of the trip in a suitcase" (151).

Marianna "had known the suitcase story [her] whole life," and given this familiarity, Vartan's version of the story does not "astonish" her "as it was meant to" (151). Marianna justifies her dismissal of the repeated story as insignificant since the girls see "refugees all the time" (151).

While Marianna sees refugees back home, she does not as an adolescent comprehend the situation, struggles, or concerns of refugees. Third, Vartan's version of the past brings to

Marianna's mind Auntie Lupsi's memories of "*The church floors [that] ran red with blood*"

(152, emphasis original).⁸² Marianna, however, stops short of critically engaging the memories. Instead, she dismisses Auntie Lupsi's stories because "she hadn't been there so somehow it didn't count" and likewise Marianna "hadn't been there, and neither had Vartan" (152). Across these reasons, Ward elucidates how a child may (or may not) come to identify herself in diaspora and how that positioning influences the individual's relationship to testimony and witnessing.

Indeed, in narrating her interaction with Vartan from the vantage point of being an eighteen-year-old exile in the US, Marianna reflects that she "could not yet understand that Vartan looked at [her family] through the eyes of an exile, and that he had divined [their] own from a history of ocean crossings and marriages made with foreigners" (152). After realizing that Vartan's exilic experience informs his "obsession" with the past, his guardianship of that traumatic history, Marianna reckons with Vartan's coded message that "the past will never be undone" (152). In looking back on that moment, she notes: "something terrible lay in his words as if they were prophecy whose meaning I had failed to read" (152). Vartan makes this claim in the context of a key period during the Lebanese Civil War. The girls and Vartan hear news about "the killing of Bashir Gemayel and the Israeli invasion of Beirut, the massacres of the Palestinians who had been left behind, the return of multinational peacekeepers," and this information prompts him to ask, "What will become of Lebanon?" (160). The scene, then, recalls the one from the start of the war, the car bombing, in which the adults remark "how terrible to suffer so much at the beginning of their lives, and now this!" (22). The open-ended question as to what will happen to their nest in Beirut, in diaspora, and the exclamation which indexes the recursivity of trauma are sentiments that have emerged in the real-life context of the recent

⁸² The phrase "the church floors ran red with blood" recalls another memory often cited by genocide survivors and witnesses: that the Euphrates River ran red with Armenians' blood (Hovannisian 120).

explosion at the port of Beirut on August 4, 2020.⁸³ Although the ashes are still falling in this lived case, early news reports about how the explosion has affected survivors and their kin abroad similarly demonstrate the nesting of memory, the feeling of having lived through the Lebanese Civil War and now this disaster.

How does one come to name this phenomenon of upheaval yet again that one has just witnessed? Just as Marianna passes a gate inside the airport, she suddenly turns to find Vartan and when she cannot locate him in the crowd, she turns back around. Marianna claims that her movement back around to go on the plane “repeats itself under [her] skin” as she remembers her life in Beirut and their trip to Rome from a vantage point of her life in exile in the US (161). In the airport, the movement sparks an affective response from Marianna, which she observes foreshadows “what [Vartan’s] dying would mold inside me permanently, the sense of never having paid attention, of *too late*” (161, emphasis original). Towards the end of the novel, she recalls leaving Beirut on a boat and remarks, “What did I know of what was coming, of the yearning, of the dreams?” (205-6). The novel ends with Marianna venturing outside their New England home and observing as snow falls, “There is the future coming” (307). She heeds Vartan’s claims and begins to make this new place her home. But what is the significance of snow in New England? From Emily Dickinson to Henry David Thoreau to Robert Frost, winters in New England have regularly been features as a motif in American literature, including in works that engage questions of nostalgia.⁸⁴ Lebanese author Thérèse Soukar Chehade also turns

⁸³ As Shahen Araboghlian writes about the experience, “It was an explosion, and mom knew, because the Civil War still lingers in the daily memory of my parents’ generation. They can differentiate between airstrikes, missiles, mortars and bombs” (“The Explosion”).

⁸⁴ I am grateful to Nancy Castro who pointed out to me that snow and winters in New England are a recurrent motif in American literature. For critical analyses on this topic, see Adam W. Sweeting, “Conjecturing Future Winters: Poetry, Nostalgia, and Climate Change in New England.”

to the motif of a blizzard to explore themes of dispersion, nostalgia, and home-making in her novel *Loom* (2010) which features a Lebanese diasporic family in Vermont and their cousin who gets stuck in New York due to the storm. In the conclusion to “A Map of This Place,” I turn to a brief passage from *Snow* (2004) by Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk to suggest that the imagery of snow captures well the afterlives of Indigenous removal and dispossession when it comes to remembrance practices of the Turkish nation-state. To read together the imagery of snow in Ward’s novel and that of Pamuk’s means to study the afterlives at home and away from home.

In some ways, a study of *The Bullet Collection* seems out of place in this dissertation’s focus on resurgence and remembering removal. The novel takes place in Beirut, and as I have illustrated, the experience of exile resonates with descendants while dispossession does not precisely because they do not live through their own experience of dispossession but rather ethnic and sectarian civil war. Those seeming omissions in the history of the Armenian Genocide as it is narrativized and transmitted through memory work make a study of the novel relevant. By means of a conclusion, I want to return to a moment in the indirection of memory depicted in the novel, the moment when Marianna mistakes Auntie Lupsi’s embodied recall of the perpetrators to mean a fear for thieves in the store.

In the settler colonial context of the US and Canada, Indigenous scholars have invoked such terms as “stolen land” and “land theft” to articulate what Patrick Wolfe would come to argue in his work on the logic of elimination of Indigenous peoples: “Territoriality is settler colonialism’s specific, irreducible element” (“Settler Colonialism” 388) and that “settler colonizers come to stay” in that settler colonialism “erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base” (388). While recognizing there is much work to be done on questions of settler coloniality and Indigenous removal in the case of the Republic of Turkey, I want to note

that in addition to the term Aghed, meaning Catastrophe, Armenians use the phrase Medz Yeghern, meaning the Great Crime, to refer to the events of collective violence that constitute what in English is called the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923. Moreover, what has not been sufficiently addressed but that which is implied is that the term Great Crime encompasses not just massacre and bodily violence but the deportation of Ottoman Armenians from their homelands, the destruction and theft of their property, the destruction of cultural sites and material heritage such as artworks, and the confiscation of territory. In opening up a study of the Armenian Genocide this way, I want to also suggest that Ward's depiction of transference of memory devoid of this context is symptomatic of the milieu of discourses on Armenian collective memory in which the novel was published.

Only in recent years have historians studied the Abandoned Properties Laws, referring to the laws and decrees issued by the Ottoman Turkish government to deal with "what was going to happen to the properties Armenians left behind" as part of the genocidal process as well as later Turkish Republican administration of those properties (Kurt and Akcam 1-2). As Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt have argued, the "Republic [of Turkey] adopted genocide as its structural foundation" (4) and that the "Republic of Turkey and its legal system were built, in a sense, on the seizure of Armenian cultural, social, and economic wealth, and on the removal of Armenian presence" (2). The Abandoned Property Laws, they contend, "were a structural element of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 as well as of today's Turkish legal system" (2). In arguing that the "primary goal of the laws and decrees, by seizing all the movable and immovable property of the Armenians, was to eliminate the physical foundations of Armenian existence in Anatolia" (13), Kurt and Akçam illuminate the specific policies regarding property in terms of money, homes, land, and livestock. This recent work by Kurt and Akçam, published in 2012, has informed

recent scholarship on the history of the Armenian Genocide. Moreover, in her discussion of the destruction and confiscation of Armenian cultural heritage, one aspect of the afterlife of the concentrated events of mass violence that gave rise to the Republic of Turkey, art historian Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh situates the story of the “survivor object” (40) of the Zeytun Gospels, a manuscript illuminated by the medieval Armenian artist Toros Roslin, within the context of the Abandoned Property Laws. As she illuminates, a bishop who visited Aleppo and documented the plight of Armenian refugees “saw the illuminated manuscripts [he came across] as survivors, just like the thousands of orphans he met” (42). Another individual, a survivor, went so far as to identify the Zeytun Gospels as an “eyewitness to the terrifying massacre” (42). As Watenpaugh concludes, the “Zeytun Gospels witnessed the genocide and survived it, bearing its marks. The manuscript speaks of survival, and it also speaks of those who are dead” (44). But what about people as witnesses and their memories? Bringing *The Bullet Collection* in conversation with such recent scholarship reveals the needed work of understanding nested memory in diaspora when the homeland is marked by the structures that remain after removal, including as Akçam and Kurt put it, the “relationship between the Republic [of Turkey] as a legal system and the Genocide” (4).

Such work in the study of the migrations of Armenian traumatic cultural memory is possible given emergent scholarship in Armenian Studies that makes visible the taken for granted historicity-driven approach to understanding the Armenian Genocide, an approach that situates that formative violence as contained from 1915-1923. From her ethnographic research on the Armenian diaspora in the modern nation-state of Turkey, Melissa Bilal asserts that “while the great majority of the Armenian population lives in Istanbul, far away from their Anatolian hometowns, they still think they have never left this homeland” (“Longing for Home” 55).

Bilal's argument that "narratives of 'belonging' and narratives of 'displacement' can define the same space" for Armenians in Turkey (62-3) matters for a comparison of the afterlives of removal in the Armenian case. That is, we can juxtapose living through the Lebanese Civil War and feeling that past has not yet passed because of a fear of future wars in that context and living in Turkey when the past has not yet passed due to settler mnemonics and what Bilal calls the "structural continuations" of the genocide after the founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 ("Lullabies" 185). These structural continuations are reflected by a "generation who could not study Armenian history at school since it was considered suspect and not included in the curriculum" ("The Lost Lullaby" 80), the "overall ignorance towards the presence of Armenians in a classroom and in Turkey and towards Armenian culture and religion in general [which] leads one to think that they do not even exist" (82), the way in which the "idea of multiculturalism in Turkey is directly related to the remembrance of the violent annihilation of difference in Anatolia in the wake of the establishment of the nation-state" (74), and how that nexus of Turkish nation-state identity politics and remembrance practices informs an "imagining of the past, present, and future of Anatolia" in which "Armenians are displaced" (89). To bring this scholarship to bear on the novel means to revisit Vartan's claim that "Armenians have no home." It means to see the novel's concern with memory work in Lebanon, a home in diaspora, in relation to the homeland and Republic of Turkey's denial of Armenian presence there, both of these in relation to the Republic of Armenia, and all of these in relation to other nests we establish in dispersion. Intergenerational memory work happens in all of these sites, sites marked by other histories of collective violence.

This heretofore understudied archive of the Abandoned Property Laws and the recent engagement with questions of indigeneity and settler coloniality in the Turkish-Armenian case

can also serve as the foundation for a nuanced interpretation of diasporic Armenian memory work. In portraying Marianna's process of making meaning of her experience of collective trauma in relation to others' memories of the war, Ward engages a trope in American literature of snow and isolation in the Northeast. Chapter one of "A Map of This Place" identified authors in this dissertation as witnesses to disappearing history. But what does it mean to carry memory into New England, a space that, as Jean M. O'Brien demonstrates, is reflective of how arriving European Americans asserted their own modernity while denying it to Indian peoples (xiv). To bring scholarship from Indigenous studies and settler colonial studies to bear on the emplacement of memory could prompt us to understand our community's memory work in relational terms. More specifically, these latter fields illuminate that an ethical contrapuntal method of analysis necessitates that we Armenians recognize our "transits with and against empire" to adapt the words of Jodi Byrd (*Transit of Empire* xxxix). That is, while we carry memories against Ottoman Empire and against the Turkish nation-state's rewriting of history, we may in doing so, transit with US empire and migrate into settler mnemonics in the course of our home-making and nest building in the US.

On this note of holding together yet apart the space-time nexus maintained by the US nation-state and the one maintained by the Republic of Turkey when it comes to a study of the migration of collective Armenian traumatic memory, I turn to Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*. In that novel, much of the nested memory work unfolds in Palestine and in the context of internal displacement. In contrast, *The Bullet Collection* takes place in Lebanon and the intergenerational transmission of memory is depicted in the context of external displacement. Memory is nested in Ward's novel because characters experience collective violence that occurs in another geo-political space, is overseen by a different government, and is not engendered by

the structural continuations that remain after the Young Turks' project of population movement. In contrast, memory is nested in the *Mornings in Jenin* because characters experience events of collective violence that are seen as extensions of the originary dispossession and removal that constitute the 1948 Nakba.

***Mornings in Jenin* and Memories from an Infinite Mist of One Moment in History**

Mornings in Jenin begins with a one-page Prelude that foreshadows the novel's climax. Amal Abulheja returns in 2002 to her birthplace of Jenin, where an Israeli sniper shoots her during the invasion of the refugee camp.⁸⁵ As Amal stares down the barrel of a soldier's gun, moments before the sniper's shot from a different angle, the Prelude ends with the sentence, "The petitions of memory pulled her back, and still back, to a home she had never known" (*Mornings* xiii). The main text delineates the contents of these memories and unfolds in eight sections that arc from the first-generation's (Amal's grandparents) life in the village of Ein Hod, near Haifa, in 1941, to the next three generations' experiences of collective violence and displacement during the Nakba in 1948, the Naksa in 1967, the Sabra and Shatila massacres that occurred during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and the 2002 assault on Jenin.

The Prelude and several chapters are narrated in third-person. However, starting in the section "El Naksa," part two of the novel, the narration switches to first-person in chapters where Amal recounts her memories.⁸⁶ These include memories of her father, Hasan, and how she would "ris[e] before the sun" and how alongside him, she "witnessed the sun pour itself over the land,

⁸⁵ In the Author's Note at the end of the novel, Abulhawa indicates that she wrote *Mornings in Jenin* in response to "the horrors [she] witnessed" as an international observer arriving after the Israeli assault on the Jenin refugee camp in April 2002, and to the "steadfastness, courage, and humanity of the people of Jenin" who inspired her (324). For testimonies, see *Searching Jenin: Eyewitness Accounts of the Israeli Invasion 2002* (2003), edited by Ramzy Baroud.

⁸⁶ A handful of chapters are told from the perspective of Amal's older brother Yousef.

drenching everything it touched with life” (59). During those mornings, Hasan would read aloud the “dazzling words of Abu-Hayyan, Khalil Gibran, al-Maarri, [and] Rumi” (61). The title of the novel refers to these mornings which Amal recalls throughout her life. The title also serves as an apt metaphor for the generational witnessing of violence. On a morning in 2002, Amal’s daughter Sara watches her mother die in an attempt to save her. In 1967, Amal lives through a “time that ran as a continuous stream, unmarked by day or night” (67) until the attack ends and she confronts death and destruction in the refugee camp. Through these juxtaposed scenes that begin in the morning, then, Abulhawa in the novel conceptualizes for readers what social scientists Lila Abu-Lughod and Ahmad H. Sa’di have theorized as “Palestinian time,” or how the “Nakba is the point of reference for other events, past and future” (5).⁸⁷ The petitions of memory that pull Amal back refer to the events of the Nakba and her family’s forced migration from their home in Ein Hod. In the portion of the narrative arc that encompasses the Nakba, Palestinian villages of Ein Hod “prepare a feast as a gesture of friendship and [their] intention to live side by side” with “Jewish refugees who had been pouring in [and] proclaimed themselves a Jewish state, changing the name of the land from Palestine to Israel” (Abulhawa, *Mornings* 27). Here again, Abulhawa sets the plot in the morning: “The next morning, July 24, Israel launched a massive artillery and aerial bombardment of the villages,” including Ein Hod (28). The repetition of violence occurring in the morning ultimately allows Abulhawa to depict characters who, like the characters in Ward’s novel, are descendants who bear witness but also witness collective violence.

⁸⁷ As Abu-Lughod and Sa’di note, the “Balfour Declaration of 1917 gains significance from being followed by the Nakba” while landmark events in Palestinian history, from Black September in Jordan in 1970 through the Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon in 1982 and through the first and second intifadas (1987-1993, 2000-present), “would not have occurred if they had not been preceded by the Nakba, to which they refer back” (5).

Still, the nested work that I delineated in my analysis of *The Bullet Collection* does not graft perfectly onto the Palestinian characters in *Mornings in Jenin* insofar as the traumatic event of the past in this latter novel continues to generate more traumatic events for each succeeding generation. In her study of Ottoman imperial and Turkish nation-state denial of collective violence against Armenians, sociologist Fatma Müge Göçek reflects:

[E]ven though the denial of the 1915-1917 Armenian Genocide was my starting point, the analysis of collective violence against the Armenians, I realized, neither started nor ended there. As a consequence, I expanded my research to cover a 220-year period from 1789 to 2009. I then divided these years in accordance with the major acts of collective violence committed against the Armenians, namely, the imperial period (1789-1907), Young Turk period (1908-18), early republican period (1919-1973), and late republican period (1974-2009). (60)

To recall, *The Bullet Collection* is set in Lebanon and during the Lebanese Civil War. Simply put, to conceptualize the Lebanese Civil War as events within a longer period of structural violence does not equate to the model of events within a longer period of structural violence Göçek articulates.

To apply this distinction to a study of *Mornings in Jenin*, Abulhawa presents a different space-time configuration than Ward does in *The Bullet Collection*. As Amal in *Mornings in Jenin* observes, “We were refugees, all of us. Those who had fled had become refugees once again, in another human junkyard dotting Israel’s brief history. And those of us who had remained became prisoners in Jenin” (82). The phrase “Those who had fled” alludes to Amal’s inherited memoryscape of the Nakba. Israeli soldiers displace Amal’s grandparents, parents, her uncle, and her brother Yousef from Ein Hod in 1948. Survivors bequeath to their heirs “keys to

their ancestral homes,” “land registers,” “deeds,” “memories and love of the land,” and “the dauntless will not to leave the spirit of forty generations trapped beneath the subversion of thieves” (35). Through the narratives that Haj Salem, one of Ein Hod’s elders, tells in the refugee camp, “Palestine and all her villages, many long since razed by Israel, would come alive,” and through his telling, “past events unfold as if that very moment” (79). On top of this history, Amal returns to the 1948 memories she inherited when, in 1967, she has her own direct experience of collective violence and when she witnesses the already displaced Ein Hod Palestinian villagers “become refugees once again” (82). This connected recollection manifests the ongoing condition of violence and dispersal that the Abulhejas and Ein Hod descendants live. Here, Abulhawa’s words describing Haj Salem’s rememory are telling: “past events unfold as if that very moment.” The narrative does not just present the Nakba as the point of reference for other events, past and future. Rather, through such lines, Abulhawa illustrates how, to adapt the words of Bashir Bashir and Amos Goldberg, the “Nakba is an explicitly continuing present. Its consequences as well as the eliminatory colonial ideals and practices that informed it are still unfolding, being deployed, and affecting contemporary Palestinian life” (7).

Abulhawa reinforces this conceptualization of the Nakba from the opening of the first chapter of *Mornings in Jenin*, which echoes the first stanzas of the frame poem in *The Blue Between Sky and Water*. *Mornings in Jenin* begins: “In a distant time, before history marched over the hills and shattered present and future, before wind grabbed the land at one corner and shook it if its name and character, before Amal was born, a small village east of Haifa lived quietly on figs and olives, open frontiers and sunshine” (3). To bring both of Abulhawa’s novels in conversation, *Mornings in Jenin* previews the connotations of “remains” as both a verb and a noun in the line “We made do with the remains of the day” from the frame poem of *The Blue*

Between Sky and Water. While my reading of the term “remains” in the previous chapter focused on its connotation of people as remnants and carriers of memory, here I will focus on how Abulhawa depicts 1948 as remaining and resisting the temporal orientation constructed and maintained through settler mnemonics.

In the novel, Abulhawa conceptualizes Palestinian time as unfolding along a separate temporal plane than the one maintained in the service of Israeli nation-state sovereignty and jurisdictional dominion over territory. Building on Simpson’s framework of “nested sovereignty,” Abulhawa’s novel allows us to conceptualize what we could call “nested temporality.” Before the novel turns to Amal’s first-person perspective, the narrator in *Mornings in Jenin* observes: “In the sorrow of a history buried alive, the year 1948 in Palestine fell from the calendar into exile, ceasing to reckon the marching count of days, months, and years, instead becoming an infinite mist of one moment in history” (35). The qualification of 1948 as “an infinite mist of one moment in history” simultaneously lays claim both to the ability to locate the Nakba as a point on a progressive historical timeline and the inability to relegate it to the past because of its perpetual dispersion into further, ongoing violence. As well, Abulhawa’s description of the temporality of 1948 exemplifies that for Palestinians, the “Nakba is not merely about their defeat, their ethnic cleansing from Palestine, and the loss of their homeland, nor even about having become a people living predominantly as refugees outside their land and as a fragmented minority under occupation in their own land” (Bashir and Goldberg 1-2). Rather, “It is the ongoing colonization of Palestine that continues to the present through colonial practices and policies such as Jewish settlements, illegal land acquisition, imposing siege on Gaza, and the evacuation of villages” (2).

Bringing Bashir and Goldberg's claims about the socio-cultural significance of the Nakba for Palestinians in conversation with Edward Said's commentary about the life of an exile offers a way to interpret the transmission of memory when "Palestine [has fallen] from the calendar into exile" (Abulhawa, *Mornings* 35).⁸⁸ Said concludes his oft-cited essay "Reflections on Exile" by arguing that a "life of exile moves according to a different calendar, and is less seasonal and settled than life at home" (149). He further avers, "Exile is life led outside habitual order. It is nomadic, decentered, contrapuntal: but no sooner does one get accustomed to it than its unsettling force erupts anew" (149). Said comes to these conclusions as part of his call for the need to distinguish between "see[ing] a poet in exile" and "reading the poetry of exile" (138). Abulhawa's move to situate the year 1948, and not just people, as occupying the spatial and temporal situatedness of exile performs a similar distinction for readers. That is, each generation of the Abulheja family in the novel experiences an event of mass violence, an (un)settling force which erupts anew, to adapt Said's words. One effect of each of these upheavals is that each succeeding generation identifies that year as moving according to a different calendar, to adapt Said's words again, similar to what the first generation feels about the year 1948 falling from the calendar into exile.

Throughout the novel, Abulhawa identifies the events of 1947-1948 as that "eternal 1948" (43), the "futureless 1948" (295), that "year without end" (44). After arriving in the Jenin refugee camp and waiting in a "time and place where the hope of returning home could be renewed," news of assassination of a Swedish UN mediator leads the villagers of Ein Hod to

⁸⁸ This is no mere coincidence. In the Acknowledgements, Abulhawa writes: "Although I met him only once in person, and briefly so, the late Dr. Edward Said influenced the making of this book in no small way. He lamented once that the Palestinian narrative was lacking in literature, and I incorporated his disappointment into my resolve." She also indicates, "The sad loss of him, felt by many thousands of us, is echoed in the pages of this story" (325).

conclude that “Israel would not allow the return” (41). The Abulheja family then “wait[s] captive in that interminable year, with its surreal twist of fate and tentative conclusion, stretching on and on, renewed each morning in the news” (41). Moreover, when Dalia hides Amal, Huda, and Amal’s infant cousin in a kitchen hole for their safety in 1967, Amal observes, “Time after that ran as a continuous stream, unmarked by day or night” (67). Soon “after the 1967 war,” when she looks upon that “new landscape of hastily built Israeli watchtowers,” Amal thinks, “I felt years crammed into weeks, a terrible dream with no end” (82). She continues to describe the “earthen taste of demise [which] pervaded” throughout Jenin and “those days [which] entrenched themselves in [her] memory,” by noting, “We moved but went nowhere. We looked, but reality blurred our vision. We inhaled and exhaled the dust of carnage, but we were not breathing” (82). Sara’s narrative parallels Amal’s narrative beyond their similar experiences of navigating personal and collective trauma in the face of a lack of international recognition of state and political violence carried out against Palestinians.⁸⁹ Sara “can never forget those last minutes of her mother’s life,” what feels like an “eternity” (312). In the temporal orientation of the “eternal 1948” (43) and its accompanying spatial orientation given how “Palestine fell from the calendar into exile” (35), Amal and Sara each experience an event of upheaval that leaves them questioning the possibility of futurity and healing, both for themselves and their community.

⁸⁹ The narrator observes, “The official report of the United Nations, prepared by men who never visited Jenin and spoke to neither victim nor victimizer, concluded that no massacre had taken place. The conclusion was echoed in U.S. headlines: ‘NO MASSACRE IN JENIN.’ ‘ONLY MILITANTS KILLED IN JENIN, SAYS ISRAEL’ (317). Earlier in the novel, Abulhawa depicts Amal’s reactions to newspaper headlines concerning the Sabra and Shatila massacres, including a *Newsweek* cover story titled “Israel in Torment” (230-231).

In this vein, rememory of dispossession and removal in the Palestinian case becomes the source for postmemorial work as descendants live through its aftermath and its afterlives.⁹⁰ Amal's traumatic memories as a survivor of the Naksa are added to her mother's traumatic memories as a survivor of the Nakba. Amal carries these sets of "gnawing memories of years past" (195) through the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres in Beirut and her return to Jenin in 2002. Those inherited memories reappear when Amal hears the warning that the "The Jews are coming! The Jews are coming" (297) before the 2002 Israeli attack on Jenin. Amal's mother, Dalia, exclaims the same thing in 1947 when an "explosion rock[s] the air" and the Palestinian villagers of Ein Hod watch "plumes of smoke [rise] from the adjacent village, al-Tira" (25). Years later, when Israeli fighter jets drop bombs on Jenin in 1967, Dalia hides twelve-year-old Amal and Amal's best friend Huda in a kitchen hole. An explosion exposes their shelter, allowing Amal to witness the destruction of the refugee camp and the dead body of Abu Sameeh, one of the Abulhejas' neighbors in the camp. While Abu Sameeh "had started life over after 1948," Amal remarks that "in the end, the original injustice came to him again and took his entire family once more" (70), before he himself is killed. That is, he loses his father and four brothers in the "Israeli campaign" (70) of 1948 and goes on to marry in the refugee camp, raise children, and support his two widowed sisters, only to see his new family "buried alive" in 1967 under the "rubble where his refugee's shack had stood" (70). Under attack in Jenin in 2002, Amal and Huda, huddled together again, this time with their children, Sara and Mansour, respectively, listen to the "sounds of death and destruction" that "r[i]se and f[a]ll," which remind

⁹⁰ As Lila Abu-Lughod and Ahmad H. Sa'di argue concerning the events of 1948 and postmemory, "for Palestinians, still living their dispossession, still struggling or hoping for return, many under military occupation, many still immersed in matters of survival, the past is neither distant nor over" (10).

them of the 1967 Naksa (299). The two women view the tiny room where they spend nine days in 2002 as a “bigger kitchen hole,” and their situation prompts Huda to face Amal and ask, “Remember?” (299). This question evokes not only their shared Naksa experience, but also collective trauma, storytelling, and remembering sessions from when they were children in Jenin. This nesting of memory and postmemory, the novel further implies, applies to the next generation. Although Sara was born and raised in Philadelphia and Mansour was born and raised in Jenin, they share an experience: the assault in Jenin results in them having their own memories of collective violence while simultaneously inheriting several generations’ memories.

Still, Abulhawa’s descriptions of the year 1948 in *Mornings in Jenin* nuance the notion of Palestinian time that Abu-Lughod and Sa’adi delineate. It is from Abulhawa’s conceptualization of Palestinian time that we can return to Hirsch’s particular arguments about postmemory work exemplified in Ghassan Khanafani’s novella *Return to Haifa* (1969), the novella which inspired Abulhawa in writing *Mornings in Jenin*.⁹¹ Hirsch analyzes Khanafani’s novella alongside Lily Brett’s novel *Too Many Men* (1999) and the Eurydice series of Bracha Lichtenberg-Ettinger, an Israeli visual artist and daughter of Holocaust survivors. Hirsch turns to these texts to ask: “How does the act of returning to place and how do the objects found there inflect the process of affective transmission that so profoundly shapes the postmemory of children of exiles and refugees?” (211). But, as Patrick Wolfe argues in his discussion of Zionism and the logic of settler colonialism, “there is no necessary tension between being a refugee and being a settler”

⁹¹ In the Acknowledgments of *Mornings in Jenin*, Abulhawa indicates: “The seed for this book came from Ghassan Kanafani’s short story,” meaning *Return to Haifa*. Abulhawa also writes, “In 2001, Dr. Hanan Ashrawi sent an e-mail to me after reading an essay that I had written about my childhood memories in Jerusalem” and that “to Dr. Ashrawi, I owe the initial confidence to write” (324). Abulhawa does not name the essay. For relevant essays see her “Memories of an Un-Palestinian Story, in a Can of Tuna” and “Once Upon a Time in Jerusalem.”

(*Traces* 203). Wolfe clarifies that he makes this claim when speaking about “collective outcomes rather than individual representations” (304). He also makes this claim as part of his larger following observation: “Even if it could be shown that a people had been dispossessed absent-mindedly, or through some mistaken exercise of good intent, this would alter neither the fact of that people’s dispossession nor the fact that the settlers who replaced them thereby became colonisers” (304). To bring Wolfe’s arguments to bear on Hirsch’s question, one can ask, how is the postmemory of children of exiles and refugees shaped when those exiles and refugees create nests, homes, in settler colonial contexts?

Abulhawa attends to that question when she juxtaposes the transmission of memory along familial, affiliative, and disrupted familial lines in *Mornings in Jenin*. That portrayal allows Abulhawa to foreground how the workings of postmemory can serve as the foundation for a framework through which the Nakba and the Holocaust can be studied together in a “historically, politically, and ethically instructive and productive” manner (Bashir and Goldberg 5).⁹² Abulhawa makes such discourse possible through the two temporal frames alongside which Amal and her siblings, Yousef and David, grow up after 1948 and through the character Ari, who witnesses the trajectory of these temporal frames.

⁹² Such project entails recognition of how both catastrophes can be understood within a “wider contextualization of modern political violence created by the convergence of nationalism, imperialism, orientalism, and colonialism” (Bashir and Goldberg 14). To come to this conclusion, Bashir and Goldberg return to the work of Edward Said, who they summarize understood the affinity between “European colonialism in general and settler colonialism in particular” and the “Holocaust and European anti-Semitism” (14). While delineating how historical and structural conditions gave rise to these projects of mass violence, Bashir and Goldberg clarify: “There are immense differences between the destruction of the Jews and the population transfers and ethnic cleansings by means of which modern national movements and nation-states have satisfied their basic desire for ethnic homogeneity” (19). A discussion of perpetration in the case of the Holocaust and Nakba is beyond the scope of this dissertation and would require other tools.

Across this backdrop of the “eternal 1948,” Abulhawa confronts the entanglements of Holocaust postmemory and Nakba postmemory. Amal has two brothers: Yousef, the eldest sibling, and David, the middle child. David is born Ismael Abulheja, a Muslim Palestinian, but kidnapped by Moshe, a Jewish soldier and settler, for his wife Jolanta, a Holocaust survivor and Nazi rape victim who cannot conceive a child.⁹³ This is a part of the novel clearly inspired by Kanafani. As an adult, David discovers his parents’ secret and reaches out to Amal, who by then, has completed graduate study in the US after initially receiving a scholarship to move to the US and pursue a Bachelor’s degree. When David and Amal meet in her home in Philadelphia and note the absence of their brother Yousef, Abulhawa writes: “Three siblings emerged from the cradle of boundless tragedy. Each separated from the others but forever pursued by whispers torn from the consciousness of the others” (*Mornings* 265). Abulhawa alludes to the scars that bind and separate the siblings, including the scar on David’s face. The scar results from a wound suffered when Yousef, David’s then four-year-old brother, lifts up baby Ismael and accidentally drops him over a crib that has a protruding nail. The narrator observes, “The physical remnant of the day was a distinctive scar that would mark Ismael’s face forever, and eventually lead him to his truth” (22). Indeed, the scar later helps identify him to his Palestinian family. In the chapter titled “The Brothers Meet Again,” which takes place in 1967, David, a soldier in the IDF, brutally attacks Yousef at a checkpoint. David attacks the “The one who had his face without a scar” (105) in response to Jewish soldiers who goad David for the resemblance.

If Amal’s narrative concerns the intergenerational transmission in the context of nested temporal (1948) and spatial (Palestine) orientations invoked within and beyond the Israeli nation-

⁹³ The novel’s original title, *The Scar of David* (2006), refers to a scar on the face of Ismael/David. It also clearly replaces the word “star” in “the star of David” with “scar.”

state, then David's narrative concerns the transmission of memory when the generation of settlers in 1948 who perpetrated the Nakba fosters the "story of 'from Holocaust to rebirth,'" a "closed, exclusive, and redemptive narrative" that "leads to violence" and "decades of colonial denial, negation, erasure, and misrecognition" (Bashir and Goldberg 25). When Amal and David meet, he shares the knowledge he has inherited about Jolanta's victimization during the Holocaust. Specifically, he tells Amal, "She had been a young girl of seventeen, frightened and weak, when Allied soldiers had liberated her camp. Her entire family had been murdered during the holocaust of World War Two" (273). At first, Abulhawa seems to tread in competitive memory work concerning the Holocaust and the Nakba. But what comes out of the scene is Abulhawa's return to Said's writings in which he aimed to delineate a conceptual framework for dealing with the inexorable links between the two catastrophes. Amal observes, "The irony, which sank its bitter fangs into my mind, was that Mama, the mother who gave birth to David, also survived a slaughter that claimed nearly her entire family" (Abulhawa, *Mornings* 273). She continues, "Only the latter occurred because of the former, underscoring for me the inescapable truth that Palestinians paid the price for the Jewish holocaust. Jews killed my mother's family because Germans had killed Jolanta's" (273). Amal draws a quick cause-and-effect relationship between the perpetration of the Holocaust and the Nakba. Problematic as Abulhawa's rendering may be, Amal's words here recall Said's oft-cited argument that Palestinians are the "victims of the victims, the refugees of the refugees" ("One-State").

Recent scholarship has returned to Said's arguments as part of developing a new "syntax and grammar" which "honors the uniqueness of each event, its circumstances and consequences, as well as their differences" but also recognizes the important conceptual repercussions of studying the connections between these events and their aftermaths (Bashir and Goldberg 5).

Published before *The Holocaust and the Nakba: A New Grammar of Trauma and History* (2019), Abulhawa presents “*mirror images of human suffering*” (Khoury xvi, emphasis original) through Amal's response to David's narration of Jolanta's experience.⁹⁴ She thinks to herself that David's adopted and birth mother each “survived a slaughter” (Abulhawa, *Mornings* 273). David also recalls the trip he and Jolanta made to her hometown in Poland. He concludes to Amal, “Other than the day she died, seeing the death camp where she lost everything was the saddest day of my life” (276). David, child of Palestinian victims but raised by Jewish settlers who themselves were victimized in the Holocaust, asks Amal for empathy. That is, he also tells Amal, “I know the things my father did make him a terrorist to you and others” and “He did some evil things, but he was not evil. He was good to me. He was my father” (278). The scene concludes by Amal thinking “*I understand*” (278, emphasis original) to herself and David saying, “Here's to new beginnings” out loud (278). The conclusion to this chapter of *Mornings in Jenin* leaves open-ended a question taken up in the next section: whether the two siblings who have had different life trajectories post-1948, who have lived through different temporal orientations, can empathize about human suffering and loss beyond the scale of the immediate family. It is Ari, “son of a German professor who had fled Nazism early and settled in Jerusalem, where his family rented a small home from a prominent Palestinian” (8), who shows David and Amal that possibility.

David carries postmemory of the Holocaust and grows up under Israeli nation-state time. Amal and Sara experience the nesting of memory as they live in the aftermath and the afterlives of the Nakba. In contrast, Ari holds together memoryscapes of the Holocaust and the Nakba and

⁹⁴ I borrow the phrase from Elias Khoury, who, in thinking about these traumatic histories and narratives together, observes: “The Holocaust and the Nakba are not mirror images, but the Jew and the Palestinian are able to become *mirror images of human suffering* if they disabuse themselves of the delusion of exclusionist, nationalist ideologies” (xvi, emphasis original).

recognizes the national temporal orientations that emerge in the wake of that year. In 1948, Amal's father Hasan and Ari discuss the atrocities of the Holocaust in relation to the violence unfolding before them in Ein Hod, the village from where Amal's grandparents, parents, and siblings as well as their neighbors "were marched into dispossession" (39). Upon her return to Jenin in 2002, Amal, Sara, David, and one of David's sons, Jacob, visit Ari, who has become a university professor. The reunited Amal and David and their children learn from Ari that Hasan provided safe transport for the Perlsteins in 1948 to the "Israeli side," the "other side of Jerusalem's divide, when East Jerusalem was yet unconquered" (287).⁹⁵ Ari recounts the "stinging memory," or the moment when upon hearing a Jordanian soldier's voice, he believed that "Hasan had set a trap to betray us at the last moment" (288). He continues, "For the rest of the journey I trembled in my mistake, my private betrayal of the friend risking his life to save mine" (288). In the office with Hasan's children and grandchildren years later, Ari also recalls that upon securing the Perlsteins' safety, Hasan gives them the "flag that he had painstakingly painted himself with the Jewish star, the same blue star that fluttered over the demise of his country" (288). Ari contextualizes for Amal what she did not comprehend as a child about the silence that overcame her father's face when he thought about his childhood friend: "After having lost his home, his land, his son, his identity to the Jewish state, your father risked his life to save mine and my family's" (289). Through Ari's narration, Abulhawa foregrounds that serious engagement with the entanglements of Holocaust memory and Nakba memory can make "empathetic unsettlement" (Bashir and Goldberg 25) possible. In her analysis of how Hasan's

⁹⁵ The truth behind the scar leads to divorce, as David's "wife could not bear his secret. That her husband had not been born a real Jew did not suit her upbringing nor her family's sense of propriety" (256). The family separates, "splitting down the middle with ideological cleavers: their eldest son, Uri, a zealous Zionist, wanted nothing more to do with his father, standing squarely with his mother, while Jacob asked to live with his father" (256).

understanding of Ari's pain as the child of Jewish refugees exemplifies Bashir and Goldberg's notion of "disruptive empathy," Nina Fischer asserts that Abulhawa highlights a solidarity between victims that goes beyond national narratives, loyalties and fears" (6).⁹⁶ Fischer focuses on scenes from Ari and Hasan's youth, and not the inheritance of memory. In this scene of the intergenerational transmission of memory, Ari unearths the history of the Nakba, of Indigenous Palestinian dispossession and removal, contained by the Israeli nation-state. In so doing, he provides for Amal, David, and their children a memory about empathy that they can nest into their own memory work.

Indeed, Amal puts that into practice. Ari asks about their sibling Yousef, and Amal tells him that "They say he was the man who drove the truck bomb into the US embassy in 1983" (Abulhawa, *Mornings* 286). That information turns out not to be true. During the exchange in Ari's office, however, Amal cannot hold back the "long-overdue acknowledgement with remembrance and pain" (287) of the loss of her brother and her husband, Majid, a doctor killed during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Ari meets her gaze with "quiet comprehension" of loss (287). She notes that he "understood" and "pulled a blanket of compassion over my words" (287). At the same time, Amal demonstrates empathy towards Ari. She describes him as:

Ari, the boy whose childhood and even whose right leg had been damaged beyond repair by Nazi bigotry. The limping boy with only one friend, taken to an Arab village to breathe fresh air, unpolluted by the awful memories of his parents, forever damaged by concentration camps no matter how much they tried to pick up the pieces of their lives.

⁹⁶ Fischer notes, "Hasan stands behind welcoming Jews as neighbours, especially those escaping persecution in Europe, but not the Zionist project of creating a state" (6). She continues, Hasan is "afraid of the effects of the Holocaust's aftermath on his people" but understands Ari's pain because he has read about the horrors of the Holocaust and witnessed the effects of trauma on the living, including Ari's mother (6).

Ari, the hunted boy, suffocating and cramping in a taboo while Arabs sought Jews, any Jews, to exact revenge after 1948. Ari, the young man who watched his parents fade like ghosts into the mortal anguish of their memories, leaving him with relics of their lives, an eighteen-pearled brooch and shelves of books. (287)

Such recognition of the violence Ari and his family faced nuances Amal's earlier understanding of remembrance practices pertaining to collective violence towards Palestinians. In 1982, Amal describes her ordeal of personal remembering amid global forgetting, observing that "the memory and horrors of Sabra and Shatila [are] vanquished" (231) when the perpetrators are not held accountable. In 2002, however, Amal recognizes how a child of refugees who comes to call home in a settler colonial context offers a counter-narrative to the state's understanding of its founding. In turn, she understands Ari's own loss. The novel ultimately ends with a positive image of the potential of nested memory work. After the 2002 attack on Jenin and her mother's death, Sara writes in her blog, "*They murdered you and buried you in their headlines, Mother. How do I forgive, Mother? How does Jenin forget? How does one carry this burden? How does one live in a world that turns away from such injustice for so long? Is this what it means to be Palestinian, Mother?*" (317, emphasis original). Sara's writings land her "on an Israeli list of 'security threats'" (314), and she is deported to the U.S. But in the section titled "Nihaya o Bidaya" (*an end and a beginning*), David, who also signs his name Ismael, writes in Sara's blog: "*Osama remarked how our children live like siblings together in your Pennsylvania home. One American, one Israeli, and one Palestinian*" (320-321). Fischer identifies this as a "narrative move that could be read as a metaphor for a future coexistence of the 'cousin nations'" and notes "significantly this can (for now) only be imagined abroad, displaced from the site of conflict itself" (5). In terms of memory work, the novel ends not only with an image of Sara's

remembering in the face of institutional forgetting, as Sara, like Amal, comes to believe that the world does not justly address the plight of Palestinians. Through the blog's title, "April Blossoms," Abulhawa ends on the possibility that this next generation can model the memory work they witnessed unfold in Ari's office and that they witnessed their parents participate in.

By way of a conclusion, I want to return to Abu-Lughod and Sa'adi's arguments. They write, "in the Palestinian case, too many of these children and grandchildren [of the Nakba]...have their own direct experiences of violence to make this concept [postmemory] useful across the board. Ongoing displacements and personal experiences of racism...fire this generation to identify the 'imagined community' of Palestinians through a doubling of memory and postmemory" (21). Through an analysis of *Mornings in Jenin*, I hope to have shown how "nested" is a more encompassing term than "doubling" for the study of the intergenerational transmission of Palestinian traumatic memory. As in my analysis of *The Bullet Collection*, nested calls attention to the oscillation between the canon and the archive in the transmission of memory. Where the archive of removal and land theft seems to have gotten lost in Ward's rendering of the intergenerational transmission of memory in the Armenian case, that respective archive in the Palestinian case is quite present in Abulhawa's novel. What is more, both novels end in the US and, like *The Bullet Collection*, *Mornings in Jenin* does not ultimately call attention to the emplacement of diasporic memory work in the US. What does it mean for the American, Palestinian, and Israeli, to borrow David/Ismael's terms, to carry memory of collective violence in Jenin into Philadelphia, a city also marked by settlement and collective violence? And finally, what does it mean for each of these characters to nest in this location, the site of Independence Hall, the memories they receive from Ari, son of refugees who holds the memoryscapes of the Nakba and the Holocaust together via having witnessed the founding of the

Israeli nation-state? Those questions will have to remain unanswered for this chapter. In what follows, though, I look at the “where” of memory’s arrivals by turning to Linda Hogan’s *Solar Storms* and its depiction of nested memory work that unfolds in Native North America.

***Solar Storms* and Memories from Where Time and History and Genocide Gather**

Solar Storms is set during the 1960s-1970s era of Red Power Indigenous protests and the American Indian Movement. Hogan draws upon the history of the James Bay hydroelectric project overseen by the Crown-owned utility corporation Hydro-Québec and in particular, the “Great Whale River Project” of the 1980s-1990s. This latter phase of the project called for the damming and diversions of rivers and resulted in the flooding of Cree and Inuit land in northern Quebec (Goeman, “Ongoing Storms” 105; Sze 478). The damming project depicted in *Solar Storms* occurs during Spring 1973, or the time that the narrator, Angel, identifies as the period when she was “traveling toward [herself], coming to a place where [she’d] lived as an infant, returning to people [she’d] never met” (29).⁹⁷ In revisiting the history of Canadian authorities’ water management policies, Hogan depicts a “*trans-Indigenous*” (Allen, *Trans-Indigenous* xiv) resistance movement that arises when the same “possessive logics of patriarchal white sovereignty” (Moreton-Robinson 212) which made possible the founding of settler colonial states like Canada and the US through conquest, physical and cultural genocide, and abrogation of treaties are in the twentieth century deployed and affirmed through federal government-sponsored damming and pipeline projects.

Hogan’s depiction of the long *durée* of settler colonial violence is one reason I juxtapose the novel with *The Bullet Collection* and *Mornings in Jenin* for the study of nested memory

⁹⁷ The narrative arc pertaining to the swamp roots activism and Angel’s return home unfolds over the course of a year. She arrives at the beginning of Autumn 1972. See p. 29. Angel is short for Angela Jensen. At one point, Angel uses her mother’s last name, becoming Angel Wing.

work. Another reason is Hogan's depiction of space, as the novel is set on the boundary waters of the US and Canada, which allows us to see the limitations of applying the comparative diasporic memory rubric that I drew out from Kricorian's poem. At Adam's Rib, the "multilayered Native community" is like many other actually existing Native communities, "composed of Native people who originated in the area and those who found themselves sharing land and indigenous principles as various Native diasporas occurred during settler occupation and environmental destruction" (Goeman, "Ongoing Storms" 102). In the novel, the first community of Indigenous women at Adam's Rib, who "had called themselves the Abandoned Ones," were "Born of the fur trade" and "Some had Cree ancestors, some were Anishinaabe, a few came from Fat-Eaters farther north" (Hogan 28). Finally, the character, Bush is a displaced Chickasaw. The Chickasaw nation was among the five Southeastern American Indian nations removed as part of US federal Indian policy in the 1830s. Broadly, the conceptualization of internal and external diasporas in *The Bullet Collection* and *Mornings in Jenin*, as well as Armenian and Palestinian diasporas by extension, does not look the same in *Solar Storms* or equate to the lived experiences of American Indian/First Nations communities. More specifically, as Jodi Byrd argues, "In taking Indigenous political sovereignty as foundational to understanding Indigenous communities as distinct in and of themselves to other communities, the emphasis on Indigenous necessitates the transnational as the precondition for any comparative work in the field" of American Studies ("American Indian Transnationalisms" 179). The boundary waters become the meeting place of two larger colonizing nation-states, the US and Canada, with independent yet intimately linked political systems that have overseen removal as an event and oversee removal as an ongoing condition.

The boundary waters also become a space to see that “there are more than 567 federally recognized tribal societies throughout the United States including Alaska, and each in and of themselves is a distinct nation with its own customs, laws, languages, and values that differentiate it from other Indigenous communities,” such as First Nations peoples, “as well as the larger colonizing US nation-state” (Byrd, *American Indian Transnationalisms* 179). Fictional as some of the tribes may be in the novel, meaning the Abandoned Ones and the Fat-Eaters, the point is to conceptualize the intergenerational transmission of memory when “what [Daniel Heath Justice] refers to as a ‘localized indigeneity’ exists in relation to other localized indigeneities” (180) and in the context of what Glen Coulthard theorizes as “grounded normativity,” meaning “Indigenous land-connected practices and long-standing experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and nonhuman others over time” (13). To bring Simpson’s notion of “nested sovereignty” to bear on Hogan’s novel and these scholars’ arguments, we see that in removing Angel from her family, the state also removes her from the nested temporality lived by her Indigenous home community and that upon her return, she carries her own memories from a nested temporality into her homeland.

Just as the titles *The Bullet Collection* and *Mornings in Jenin* reflect the space-time nexus depicted in the respective narrative arcs, the title *Solar Storms* aptly encapsulates the space-time nexus Hogan depicts. A “solar storm happens when major eruptions called solar flares or coronal mass ejections (CME) happen in the solar atmosphere. If these events take place on the part of the sun facing Earth, they can send electromagnetic radiation and charged particle radiation hurtling our way” (Shupak). Or, simply, a solar storm is a disturbance on the sun’s surface which can affect the entire solar system, including the earth. Hogan depicts the early arrival of French,

British, Norwegian, and Swedish settlers as a kind of solar storm. Angel, the first-person narrator, learns from her ancestors to see the “earth as a seed, with some great life stored inside it” and this “world as that which gave birth to fish, the great natal waters parting to make way as birds left the sea and opened their wings in air” (Hogan 81). She describes how she “remembered and loved” that world which she knew only through her ancestors’ stories and how she “suffered for the felling of this world, for those things and people that would never return” (81). To Adam’s Rib and then the land of the Fat-Eaters, Angel carries memories from her experiences in Oklahoma. Looking back on her journey, Angel concludes that “in the nooks of America, the crannies of marble buildings, my story unfolded” (96). Through Angel’s narrative, Hogan situates imposed laws and legislation in a larger trajectory of settler occupation. That is, the source of originary violence which informs Angel’s experience as a young, displaced Indigenous woman stretches “even farther back than [the offices of social workers], to houses of law with their unkept treaties, to the broken connection of people to the world and its many gods” (96).

What proves useful to understanding Hogan’s treatment of a space-time nexus and how that differs than Ward’s and Abulhawa’s in their respective novels is Kevin Bruyneel’s argument about the “temporal and spatial impositions of colonialism” (*The Third Space* xv), which he makes in reference to US-Indigenous political relations. To adapt Bruyneel’s words here, Hogan demonstrates that the solar storm of early settler colonialism leaves in its wake imposed “spatial boundaries around territory and legal and political institutions and the temporal boundaries around the narratives of economic and political development, cultural progress, and modernity” (xiii) which seek to “contain tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, indigenous identity, and indigenous political expression” (xiv). Angel inherits her ancestors’ memories of practicing grounded normativity before the arrival of settlers. Moreover, the repetition of “to” in Angel’s narration of

a past that has not yet passed exemplifies how the intergenerational transmission of memory becomes for this Indigenous community a process through which to name those spatial and territorial boundaries maintained over hundreds of years of colonial occupation.⁹⁸

Storms, plural, in the title also gestures to how the project of settler colonialism in Canada and the US endures through imbricated acts of violence. Hogan establishes the relationship between event and structure through the eyes of Angel. At one point, Angel observes the following about the healing powers of water: “I hope the water would cleanse all the pasts, remove griefs” (Hogan 229). Not just a “past,” but “pasts”; not just “grief,” but “griefs.” To cross time means to confront “how governments treated their earthbound people” (212), which necessitates understanding how, as Angel reflects, “Our beginnings were intricately bound up in the history of the land” (96). Here, Angel clarifies, “My beginning was Hannah’s beginning, one of broken lives, gone animals, trees felled and kindled” (96). Hannah is Angel’s mother. To bring these points to bear on Hirsch’s postmemory, the aftermath of Indigenous North American removal and dispossession is its afterlife. That is, Angel does not indicate that her beginning is “like” her mother’s; rather her beginning “is” her mother’s. For each generation, the solar storm is not over. As Mishuana Goeman argues, Angel’s story, which is part of her grandmother Loretta’s story and Hannah’s story, “interconnects generations of witnessing violence that occurs at the level of interpersonal violence, of violence directed at specific communities, and of state violence that transpires against all humans and nonhumans” (“Ongoing Storms” 100). What can clarify Goeman’s arguments about the levels of violence is an argument that Nick Estes makes

⁹⁸ Elsewhere writing about settler statecraft, Audra Simpson asserts that “Canada requires the death and so called ‘disappearance’ of Indigenous women in order to secure its sovereignty” and that this “sovereign death drive then requires that we think about the ways in which we imagine not only nations and states but what counts as governance itself” (“The State is a Man”).

about the 1944 Pick-Sloan plan in the US and the damming of waterways in Dakota Territory. The Pick-Sloan plan, a collaborative effort between the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and states along the Missouri River, “called for the construction of large multipurpose earthen-rolled dams for flood control, reclamation, and irrigation that, at its promoters claimed, promised to make otherwise-arid grasslands bloom” (*Our History* 133). As he explains, “You have three federal agencies working in tandem to eliminate Native people.... They weren’t going out there like they had in the nineteenth century and mowing people down with gatling guns, but they were mowing people down with paper bills, and laws and dams.... It was a different kind of elimination” (“Red Power”). To bring this to bear on the novel, the past is not past precisely because each event of violence, violation of treaty rights, and act of dispossession is reflective of the ongoing structural conditions of settler colonialism.

At the same time, nested memory in the novel unfolds in the “third space of sovereignty,” to adapt Bruyneel’s words. By this, Bruyneel means Indigenous sovereignty which is “inassimilable to the institutions and discourse of the modern liberal democratic settler-state and nation” and which resides “neither simply inside nor outside the American political system but rather exists on these very boundaries, exposing both the practices and the contingencies of American colonial rule” (xvii). Resistance to colonial rule, he further argues, engenders this third space of sovereignty (xvii). From her position at Adam’s Rib, near the boundary waters between Canada and the US, Angel recalls her journey home to her immediate relatives and tribal nation and her participation in “swamp roots activism” (Hogan 308) in the lands of her ancestors further north, the Fat-Eaters.⁹⁹ In describing her journey alongside relatives to that land, she observes,

⁹⁹ The blurb on the back of the book identifies the place as the ‘Boundary Waters between Canada and Minnesota.’ However, Hogan never refers to Minnesota in the novel. I follow Mishuana Goeman in identifying the place as the border between the US and Canada.

“We’d crossed time and space to be there” (212). Here, “space” alludes to the imposed borders of US and Canada, the “topographies, the territories and tricks and lies of history” (123). In contrast, Angel, Dora-Rouge, and Bush cross land that “refused to be shaped by the makers of maps” (123). Canadian governance, writes Simpson, “seeks an ongoing ‘settling’ of this land” (“The State is a Man”). In Hogan’s novel, land resists settler domination just as the characters refuse settler encroachment through activism and remembrance practices.

The US foster care system removes Angel from her family home and sends her to Oklahoma in her youth. That narrative strain marks the imbrication of settler Indian policy in Canada and the US, past and present. That is, through these details in Angel’s narrative, Hogan alludes to the forced removal of Southeast American Indian nations from their ancestral homelands in the 1830s to Indian Territory, land from which Oklahoma was created as a state. Of her initial arrival at Adam’s Rib, Angel also observes: “I was at the end of my life in one America, and a secret part of me knew this end was also a beginning” (Hogan 26). Throughout the novel, she also describes her journey in terms of entering “an old world” and how she “began to bloom” (48). “Part of the structure of settler colonialism,” writes Mishuana Goeman, “is to create amnesia around geographies” and “colonialism in the context of the United States, Canada, and their provinces and states demands a temporal process of remembering a nostalgic past” (“Ongoing Storms” 114).¹⁰⁰ On the one hand, “one America” refers to Angel’s life in the foster homes in Oklahoma, before her return home to relatives. Still, “one America” encapsulates

¹⁰⁰ Goeman points to settler mnemonics, though she does not name it as such, when she argues “Settler colonial structures must imagine a homogenous stable present space developed for the good of the majority, even while they rely on forgetting the violence it took to produce the nation-state and the violence and fear it takes to sustain the current sociopolitical order, which necessitates a lack of acknowledging the ongoing structures of the colonial moment” (“Ongoing Storms” 114).

the way in which Angel encounters a cartography that does not align with the maps rendered by settlers and a temporal orientation that defies the one of the nation-state.

At this site of water and in the context of this enactment of sovereignty through resistance efforts, Hogan presents three intersecting memoryscapes. The first is settler mnemonics, as Goeman alludes to. The second concerns the gaps in knowledge Angel has of her childhood. Those gaps map onto her body: Angel observes, “My scars had no memory, were from unknown origins” (Hogan 34). The third concerns Angel’s gaps in knowledge about settler colonial violence. Angel has moments where she remembers her mother’s “heartbeat from when [she] was inside [Hannah’s] body” and “At those times, a distant memory tugged at [her] in a yearning way, and I felt something deeper than sorrow” (34). Angel’s body registers these scales of remembering and forgetting. Her narration of the swamp roots activism demonstrates the process of nesting memory she observes and that she herself later participates in.

The novel is framed through Angel’s memory of the consequences of the desire of “lawless men” and “people who were, as they explained, and believed, only doing their jobs” to “control water, the rise and fall of it, the direction of its ancient life” and to have its “power” (339). Those consequences include flooding and displacement. As Angel recalls the resistance movement from a temporal distance, she also references memories passed onto her by her female relatives, Dora-Rouge (her great-great-grandmother) and Agnes Iron (her great-grandmother), as well as by Bush (the first wife of Angel’s grandfather, Harold). More specifically, *Solar Storms* begins with a Prologue, which itself commences with Angel’s following words: “Sometimes now I hear the voice of my great-grandmother, Agnes. It floats towards me like a breeze through an open window” (11). In italicized text, Hogan then turns to Agnes’s narration of the night Bush prepares a feast in honor of Angel and as part of mourning her loss of Angel when she is

removed from the community. Similar italicized passages appear throughout the main narrative arc and each is narrated from the perspective of Dora-Rouge, Agnes, or Bush. The structure of the novel exemplifies the nesting of memory in that these characters' recollections are folded into Angel's recollection.

“The ‘post’ in ‘postmemory’,” writes Hirsch, “signals more than a temporal delay and more than a location in an aftermath. It is not a concession simply to linear temporality or sequential logic” (5). As she further avers, the “structure of postmemory and the process of its generation” reflects how traumatic “events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present” (5). But how does one remember and narrate the logic of elimination? That question matters because, as Byrd argues about the applicability of postcolonial theory in American Indian studies, the “‘post-,’ even though its contradictory temporal meanings are often debated, represents a condition of futurity that has not yet been achieved as the United States continues to colonize and occupy indigenous homelands” (xxxii). Hogan grapples with that question in depicting the transmission of memory.

Each time Dora-Rouge, Agnes, and Bush attempt to narrate Angel's origins, her “story” and “where it began” (Hogan 37), they go further back in time and anchor the narrative around the extermination of an animal population or the decimation of trees. At first, Agnes tells Angel: “What happened to you started long ago. It began around the time of the killing of the wolves. When people were starving” (37). However, she augments her reflection by telling Angel, “No. It was long before then” (37). She continues: “There wasn't a single beaver that year. They'd killed them all, And they'd just logged the last of the pine forests” (37). In an attempt to “know where the beginning was, your story, ours” (40), Agnes also recalls the words of another community member, Old Man from the Hundred-Year-Old Road. He claims it had to do with the

“train tracks that went through the land and came out of the iron mines” (40). Still elsewhere, Agnes references the cultural genocide that continues long after early settlers’ massacres of Indigenous peoples. She tells Angel, “I’ve thought of this for years. It might have started when the crying children were taken away from their mothers or when the logging camps started and cities were built from our woods” (40). Agnes’s narration betrays her own inheritance of memory in that Dora-Rouge recalls when she was twelve, or the “time when Indian agents came to take her away to school” (167). When Angel, Bush, Agnes, and Dora-Rouge travel to the land of the Fat Eaters to stop the construction of the dam, Dora-Rouge recalls how boarding school agents hit her and her sister to separate them. Dora-Rouge’s little sister, “taken to another school, walked into the snow, lay down in it, and froze to death” (167). Upon hearing the news, Dora-Rouge ran away from the boarding school and made a thirty-mile trek back home, on foot and in the winter. Recalling her experience, Dora-Rouge tells Angel, Bush, and Agnes, “By the time I got home, my fingers were frostbitten. But it was a small pain next to that memory of having seen my sister cry and call out my name, begging the righteous men to let me go” (168). Through the memory work that unfolds when the women narrate the beginning of Angel’s story and by extension their story, Angel learns that Hannah’s violence towards her is “history-deep” (40). In other words, that violence is part of a system in which “heteropatriarchal and white settler sovereignty” was achieved through “slow processes of forced geographic removals, assimilation projects, and citizenship itself” as well as through the “imposition of Federal and state law” (Simpson, “The State is a Man”).

Bush, Dora-Rouge, and Agnes tell Angel memories of the past which allow Angel to see “into another kind of time, one that floated down through history” (Hogan 64). In unraveling multigenerational nestings of memory and postmemory, Angel learns that Hannah’s own story

fits into a larger history: Hannah's mother, Loretta Wing (Angel's grandmother), was a member of the Elk Islanders, who, after being starved, "ate the poisoned carcasses of deer that settlers left out for the wolves" (38). As a result, a "sweet...almond odor" comes off Loretta's body, the smell of cyanide (38). To the people at Adam's Rib, Loretta seems to carry "something terrible" inside herself (39). Agnes claims the "curse on that poor girl's life came from watching the desperate people of her tribe die" (39). Loretta herself experiences violence. After the decimation of her people, Loretta, a child at the time, is "taken and used by men who fed her and beat her and forced her" (39). Agnes explains "That was how one day she became the one who hurt others. It was passed down" (39). Harold and Loretta leave Adam's Rib and several years later, Hannah, around the age of ten, appears out of the water, smelling like the "same bitter almonds" (40). Moreover, Bush indicates that on the night of Angel's birth, "explosions of heartwood sounded like gunshots" (109). "Remembering history," she continues, "the people dropped themselves on cold floors. Except your mother, who was not threatened by anything as simple as gunfire" (109). The other "kind of time" that "floated down through history" (64) refers to the memoryscape of her Indigenous homeland that Angel migrates back into after she has been deprived access to it as a result of her removal by the US foster care system.

The community at Adam's Rib accounts for Hannah's violence towards Angel as a product, in part, of traumatic memories. Bush, who is there on the day Hannah shows up on the shore of Adam's Rib, tells Angel, "Everyone had a name for what was wrong. Dora-Rouge said it was *memory* and I think she was the closest. After a time, I thought, yes, it was *what could not be forgotten*, the shadows of men who'd hurt Loretta, the shadows of the killers of children" (Hogan 100, emphasis added). As Goeman observes, "The story and the trauma do not end in the individual body of Loretta but become intergenerational violence: Loretta and her daughter

Hannah Wing are open wounds that embody the mental and physical destruction of colonization, they are a ‘meeting place’” (“Ongoing Storms” 108). Goeman quotes a phrase spoken by the Old Man at the Hundred-Year-Old-Road. Bush takes Hannah to him to see if she can be healed, and he observes, “I can see them. All of them. She is the house, the meeting place” (Hogan 101). Bush later understands the implications of the Old Man’s words when she witnesses Hannah’s “life going backward to where time and history and genocide gather and move like a cloud above the spilled oceans of blood. That little girl’s body was the place where all this met” (101). That is, Hannah “was the sum total of ledger books and laws. Some of her ancestors walked out of death, out of a massacre. Some of them came from the long trail of dying, people sent from their world, and she was also the child of those starving and poisoned people on Elk Island” (101). Yet, “shadows” refers to the memories of sexual violence Loretta experienced and in this way, shadows come to mean personal memories. Relatedly, by “shadows of the killers of children,” Dora-Rouge, who witnessed and lived through the boarding school period of settler Indian policy, also refers to memory of cultural trauma beyond the scale of the individual. Hannah’s body becomes the “meeting place” in that what gets passed onto her from Loretta are two memoryscapes of trauma, the individual and the tribal national.

By way of a conclusion for my analysis of *Settler Storms*, I want to turn to Hogan’s depiction of the migration of memory pertaining to Wounded Knee and the Ghost Dance across what is now the Canada-US border. In *Solar Storms*, the Hundred-Year-Old-Road people, other Indigenous community members at Adam’s Rib, and Angel all listen to youth who arrive from the land of the Fat Eaters and who tell them about the damming project. Angel concludes that if the “dam project continues, the lives of the people who lived there would cease to be, a way of life would end in *yet another* act of displacement and betrayal” (Hogan 58, emphasis original).

Before the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the #NoDAPL resistance movement would serve as sites through which LaDonna Brave Bull Allard (tribal historian), Nick Estes (historian), and Kevin Bruyneel (political scientist) would conceptualize the relationship between US nation-state and tribal national memory work, Hogan in *Solar Storms* depicts nested work by turning to nineteenth-century US policy and military invasion in Dakota territory.¹⁰¹

In response to the local press who portray the swamp roots activists as the “enemy” and claim that they occupy, steal, and take over by force a local trading post, Angel, remarks, “memory is long about these things” (302-303). She clarifies, “It happens that in a crisis, all of the time between one history and another falls away. It disappears and the two times come together, gathered as one. Remembered” (303). Moreover, “memory is long about other things” (303), and by this, Angel refers to men who begin to sing the “oldest hunting songs” which make the “wind rise” (303). Hogan emphasizes that memory work for this American Indian/First Nations community addresses the recursivity of trauma. To adapt Simpson’s words, memory work also takes place in the context of “living in the face of an expectant and a *foretold* cultural and political death” (*Mohawk Interruptus* 3). Angel recalls that near Adam’s Rib, the Hundred-Year-Old Road people “had been alive at the time of the massacre of Indians at Wounded Knee” and because they “remembered,” they “wanted nothing to do with the new world” (Hogan 29). They live in the wake of early settlement, live in the wake of Wounded Knee, and take action

¹⁰¹ See LaDonna Brave Bull Allard “‘They Took Our Footprint Out of the Ground’: An Interview with LaDonna Bravebull Allard” and “‘Why the Founder of Standing Rock Sioux Camp Can’t Forget the Whitestone Massacre’”; Bruyneel, “‘Wake Work versus Work of Settler Memory: Modes of Solidarity in #NoDAPL, Black Lives Matter, and Anti-Trumpism’”; and Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (2019).

when they envision living in the wake of the contemporaneous damming project, which itself comes in the wake of earlier government policies that enabled displacement.

The memory of Wounded Knee and this larger history of Indigenous resistance movements comes back into context in the novel when Angel observes that she and Bush take action to stop the construction of the dam because “It was that time in our history when the past became the present” (120). Hogan further temporally locates the swamp roots activism when Angel observes, “There was the formation of the American Indian Movement. Red women and men all coming to new life” (120). Set in 1973, the swamproots activism coincides with a significant moment in the AIM’s “stand for the life and liberation of all Indigenous peoples” (Estes, *Our History* 193). That is, the seventy-one-day takeover of Wounded Knee, the site of the 1890 massacre.¹⁰² The resistance movement against the damming project, Angel concludes, is about standing for life and liberation of Indigenous peoples. While recognizing that both striking back and not striking back against settler colonial invasion have “meant loss and death,” Angel claims that the fight in the present “meant that we can respect ourselves, we Beautiful People” (325). Here, Angel invokes the original name the Fat-Eaters had for themselves, on the “lands they’d lived on since before European time was invented” (225). The resistance movement gives her people hope, the people come to believe in themselves again, and they remember old songs.

At the end of the novel, Angel observes, “Sometimes I think the ghost dancers were right, that we would return, that we are still returning. Even now” (325). Estes identifies the “Ghost Dance prophecy” of the late 1880s as a “political movement [that] spread like prairie fire across

¹⁰² Estes notes that the takeover of Wounded Knee was the continuation of AIM’s struggle to link the “everyday policing, surveillance, and criminalization of Indigenous peoples in border towns to the global anti-colonial struggle and treaty rights. For those seventy-one-days, he continues, Wounded Knee was an independent Indigenous territory, attracting worldwide attention and the support of revolutionary movements” (194).

the West, promising Indigenous rebirth” (*Our History* 122). The prophecy “envisioned the end of the present world through settlers’ erasure from the earth, and the return of human and nonhuman relations that had been vanquished by colonialism” (122). The vision, Estes further contends, was “part of a growing anticolonial theory and movement” and that it was a “utopian dream that briefly suspended the nightmare of the ‘wretched present’ by folding the remembered experience of a precolonial freedom into an anti-colonial future” (124).¹⁰³ Nineteenth- and twentieth-century anthropologists and historians “downplayed or (misconstrued) the revolutionary premises of the Ghost Dance” (124). Angel echoes the beliefs of the Hundred-Year-Old Road people and their vision of futurity. She reiterates that message at the end of the novel, when she thinks “Something beautiful lives inside us. You will see. Just believe it. You will see” (Hogan 351). These lines make up the only instance Angel’s narration switches to second person. Agnes, Dora-Rouge, and Bush use the second person pronoun when they tell Angel about her origins. In invoking the second person pronoun here, Angel continues the work of these women in passing on memories herself, both personal and inherited. She also follows the Hundred-Year-Old Road people: Angel’s memoryscape of the swamp roots activism also includes a belief in the potential for a decolonial future as envisioned in the Ghost Dance prophecy.

When the Post-It Falls Off

In developing her rubric of postmemory, Hirsch clarifies that like other “posts” such as “postmodernism,” “poststructuralism, and “postcolonial” (5) the rubric of postmemory reflects an “uneasy oscillation between continuity and rupture” (6). By “continuity and rupture” Hirsch

¹⁰³ Estes notes “Letters conveying Ghost Dance songs and doctrines poured into Oceti Sakowin reservations from Indigenous nations in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Oklahoma (127).

means that she understands her rubric as a “Post-it that adheres to the surface of texts and concepts, adding to them and thereby also transforming them in the form of a Derridean supplement” (5). As Hirsch also observes about Post-it notes, “If a Post-it falls off, the post-concept must persist on its own, and in that precarious position it can also acquire its own independent qualities” (5). This chapter revisited the structure of the intergenerational transmission of memory as it fell into different contexts such as settler colonialism, Indigenous removal and dispossession, and diasporic livelihood.

First, to recall, Hirsch develops the rubric of postmemory in relation to works by postgeneration or second-generation writers and visual artists of the Holocaust. This chapter opened up perspectives on postmemory by tracing the migrations of memory across more than two generations in each respective novel: *The Bullet Collection*, *Mornings in Jenin*, and *Solar Storms*. Where previous applications of postmemory in the field of memory studies have tended to focus on second generation members as inheriting memories and thus bearing witness to traumatic pasts that preceded their births, the very definition of postmemory, this chapter called attention to the descendant as witness to violence in his or her own lifetime.

Second, this chapter of “A Map of This Place” demonstrated the importance of nation-state constructions of space in the study of the circulation of memory. Those nation-state constructions of space also inform conceptualizations of diaspora. One of the main claims of this dissertation is that “indigeneity” and “diaspora” are not mutually exclusive terms when describing and understanding Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nation peoples’ experiences. *The Bullet Collection*, however, did not lend itself to discussions of Armenian indigeneity because the narrative took place in Lebanon, memory work pertaining to the Armenian Genocide focused on the experience of exile rather than removal and territorial

dispossession, and the fictional Armenian community ultimately was an external diaspora. *Mornings in Jenin* indexed a discussion of Palestinian indigeneity as Abulhawa presented both internally and externally displaced characters who live in the wake of “an infinite mist of one moment in history” (35). *Solar Storms* lends itself to further complicating conceptualizations of diaspora as it focuses on the territoriality of North America and thus simultaneously calls attention to the imposed settler US-Canada border and presents located indigeneities that defy the border. In other words, it features a community of American Indian/First Nations characters who would, if we were to follow settler cartographies, be identified as internally displaced but also simultaneously internally and externally displaced, as would be the case for Angel and Bush. Finally, with *The Bullet Collection* and *Mornings in Jenin*, my analyses reinforced the need to study both migration and memory as well as the migration of memory by highlighting the ways in which Ward and Abulhawa, respectively, situate arriving memory in critical US national sites but are not self-reflexive about the work of placing memories of removal in places marked by histories of removal.

Third, attention to spatial constructs engendered a discussion on temporal constructs, in particular the narrativization of memories of events of violence in relation to structural violence. This chapter ultimately offered “nested memory work” as a rubric to conceptualize the intergenerational transmission of memory. Here, nesting called attention to the ways in which certain aspects of rememory, the archive of inherited memory, become part of the canon, or personal remembrances of succeeding generations. Nested also called attention to the agency of descendants, emphasizing the duality of both bearing witness to traumatic pasts that preceded one’s birth while also witnessing collective trauma in the present.

In delineating her concept of “nested sovereignty” from her ethnographic research with the Mohawks of Kahnawà;ke, Simpson writes, “[n]ationhood, one might think, hangs on the brink. But this story starts with a grounded refusal, not a precipice” (*Mohawk Interruptus 10*).¹⁰⁴ The intergenerational transmission of memory in Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases can be seen as acts of refusal against settler mnemonics, the elimination of the native, and the state’s attempts at disappearing history. To assert that refusal and maintain nationhood in diaspora necessitates a recognition of how those memories of removal are carried and emplaced in sites marked by nested sovereignty. The story of the post-it note falling off, then, is also a story of attending to where the post-it note ultimately lands.

¹⁰⁴ Simpson also asserts that Mohawks “deploy [refusal] as a political and ethical stance that stands in stark contrast to the desire to have one’s distinctiveness as a culture, as a people, recognized. Refusal comes with the requirement of having one’s *political* sovereignty acknowledged and upheld, and raises the question of legitimacy for those who are usually in the position of recognizing” (11).

CHAPTER 3: THE UNSPOKEN AS HERITAGE: MEMORY OF THE EVERYDAY IN THE SHADOWS OF COLONIAL ARCHIVES

In his memoir *The Unspoken as Heritage: The Armenian Genocide and Its Unaccounted Lives* (2019), Harry Harootunian, historian of East Asia and descendant of Armenian Genocide survivors, does not cite Marianne Hirsch's rubric of postmemory but certainly conceptualizes the intergenerational transmission of memory when he avers that the "long and multigenerational afterlife of the genocidal moment" has "become a form of heritage that obliges each [successive generation], in its own way, to find adequate form to express this continuing testimony as a necessary condition of preventing the defining memory of the experiences from falling into permanent indifference and forgetfulness" (5). In part, I begin this chapter of "A Map of This Place" by citing *The Unspoken as Heritage* because Harootunian situates his observations about the transmission of memory in a larger discourse reflective of the changing state of Armenian Studies. That is, Harootunian's memoir was published at a time when social scientists have started to move away from the study of the Armenian Genocide as an event. As a historian, Harootunian asserts that his aim for the memoir is not to produce another "world historical narrative of eventfulness" (12) about the Ottoman Empire, the violence it oversaw, and its dissolution. Rather, what motivated him to write the memoir was the "wish to show that the event did not necessarily end one hundred years ago and has continued to persist as an afterlife in every present since the inaugural moment" (11). In arguing that the 1915 Catastrophe "did not end one hundred years ago," Harootunian gestures to the need to conceptualize the relationship between structure and event in the study of collective violence against Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic in Turkey.

Harootunian further demonstrates this need as he invokes phrases such as "large-scale theft" (87) and Marx's "so-called primitive accumulation" or "original accumulation" (87) to

historicize the emergence of the modern Turkish Republic in the wake of foundational nation-state violence. In so doing, he historicizes the Ottoman Empire in relation to other “imperializing spaces,” specifically “continents like Africa...where white European imperial powers decimated populations” and oversaw “unlimited expropriation and theft and unaccountable violence in the act of accumulation” (96). In making such observations and bringing them to bear on the study of the Armenian Genocide, Harootunian’s words echo those of First Nations political scientist Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene). In theorizing “colonialism as a form of structured dispossession” (7) as part of his project to illuminate the historical and ongoing political relationship between First Nations peoples and the Canadian state, Coulthard revisits Marx’s theory of primitive accumulation.¹⁰⁵ The potential for a connective study on structured dispossession in these two geo-political contexts is ripe. As Harootunian summarizes, though, “It is almost another mystery of the genocide [as to] why so many of the historical accounts have simply bypassed the magnitude and significance of expropriated wealth connected to the mass murder” (101). Through its contrapuntal approach of studying literary representations of memory

¹⁰⁵ While arguing for the critical purchase of Marx’s primitive accumulation thesis, Coulthard critiques three of its features. First, in contrast to “Marx’s rigidly *temporal* framing of the phenomenon,” global Indigenous studies scholars have “demonstrated the *persistent* role that unconcealed, violent dispossession continues to play in the reproduction of colonial and capitalist social relations” (9, emphasis original). Second, regarding the “*normative developmentalism* that problematically underscored Marx’s *original* formulation” of the thesis, Coulthard asserts “any analysis or critical critique of contemporary settler-colonialism must be stripped of [the] Eurocentric feature of Marx’s original historical metanarrative” (10, emphasis original). Finally, in Marx’s thesis, the “driving force behind dispossession and accumulation is initially that of *violence*: it is a relationship of brute ‘force,’ of ‘servitude,’ whose methods, Marx claims, are ‘anything but idyllic’” (15, emphasis original). In the Canadian context to which Coulthard attends, “colonial relations of power are no longer reproduced primarily through overtly coercive means, but rather through the asymmetrical exchange of mediated forms of state recognition and accommodation” (15).

work in the afterlives of removal, “A Map of This Place” upholds that the time has come for that mystery to remain no more.

For now, the title of the memoir prompts my study of nested memory work in this chapter: the “unspeakable as heritage.” Here, the unspeakable refers not to the extremity of collective violence but the everyday. Harootunian identifies the stakes of expanding the scope of study on the Armenian Genocide as shifting the discourse from the “historical status” conferred upon it (24) as well as what he argues has been a clear division “between history (an event that happened, presumably based on facts capable of verification and measurement, that is, dating or chronology, and grounded in the ‘authority’ of documents)” and the “everyday (as the domain of subjective experience and memory, neither reliably datable nor empirically certifiable, located in history’s shadows)” (25). Along these lines, he articulates the need to discuss the “repository of affect and emotion...absent in historical narratives” of the genocidal process (25). What is key here is that in making such interventions, Harootunian does not just discuss Turkish *nation-state* denial of the Armenian Genocide, a larger discussion in the field that I reframed in chapter one into a discourse on settler mnemonics. Building upon the first chapters of “A Map of This Place” and my discussion of the migration of memory in the context of not just the aftermath of an event of violence but its afterlife, we see how Harootunian underscores the power of testimony to counter practices of occlusion by the nation-state. Memory work of the everyday disrupts a “nation’s (empire’s) own repetitious attempt to reorder the present according to the narrative templates of the national or imperial past’s history or what it has been conceived to be” (27). As chapter two of “A Map of this Place” illustrated, the question of what I call nested memory is never far from the question of “nested sovereignty” (Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus* 11) in settler colonial contexts. Harootunian also refers to memory and the *nation* such as when he employs

the phrases “national experience,” “nation-form,” and “national history” (25) when discussing Armenians’ experiences in the face of the “logic of elimination” (Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism” 387).¹⁰⁶ Chapter two identified “nesting” as the structure for the inheritance of memories thereby offering its own theorization of remembrance practices in terms of both the nation-state and the nation (and more specifically, the removed Indigenous nation as a diaspora). The space-time nexus matters for this chapter, especially the way in which nesting cannot stop history or the recursivity of trauma. Building on the discussion of how traumatic cultural memoryscapes are nested into others, this chapter of “A Map of This Place” argues that withholding about the everyday of traumatic pasts marks the intergenerational transmission of memory and thus identifies this phenomenon as one aspect of the afterlife of dispossession and removal.

There are a couple of practices of withholding in the transmission of traumatic cultural knowledge that Harootunian articulates and that serve as the basis of my theoretical framework for the study of *All the Light There Was* (2013) by Nancy Kricorian, *Salt Houses* (2017) by Hala Alyan, and *The Grass Dancer* (1994) by Susan Power (Standing Rock Sioux). The first is the formulation of silence as an act of withholding rather than forgetting. “Above all else,” Harootunian writes, “the memoir is about the lasting effects of destruction in the lives of my parents that inadvertently became an inheritance passed on to us (my sisters and me) through their practiced silence: ‘the unspeakable as heritage’” (7). Harootunian clarifies what he means by the unspeakable when he asserts:

¹⁰⁶ Harootunian does not cite Patrick Wolfe. I suggest, however, that Harootunian’s work can open up avenues for understanding what the Armenian case can illuminate about Wolfe’s work on settler colonialism and vice versa. For example, Harootunian writes: “What distinguishes the implementation of a genocidal impulse serving the interests of large-scale expropriation of wealth from others and theft facilitated by mass murder is the process that aims to eradicate the everyday lived by *those targeted for elimination*” (16, emphasis added).

The heritage I wanted to unveil is the image of ordinary everyday life lived by Armenians until they were uprooted through mass acts of murder and destruction. It was this experience, not of the eventful history as such, that the diaspora has tried to recuperate in countless places the survivors have found refuge. This prior Anatolian everyday life has remained somewhat invisible down to the present, apart from its anecdotal existence recounted in Armenian households of the diaspora. (11)

The second act of silence refers to gaps in archivization, a gap that the *Houshamadyan* digital archive and story-mapping project attempts to fill, as evidenced by its mission statement that it is a “project to reconstruct Ottoman Armenian town and village life” (“Why Houshamadyan?”). Bringing the Palestinian and Dakota novel to bear on Harootunian’s arguments, I would like to suggest that the second node of silence pertains to History-writing processes which produce an aporia. On the one hand, we have a discussion of the event of removal in terms of extremity—mass death and destruction. On the other hand, we have an absence of discourse on the everyday life prior to state-sanctioned population transfer, a gap which remains in the wake of these policies precisely because of the need to reconcile an event of mass violence and its place in structural dispossession, erasure, and settler mnemonics that ascribe indigeneity as part of the nation’s past.

Beyond the experience of everyday lives in Anatolia, Harootunian refers to the way in which he and his sisters “never knew or heard [their parents] articulate the actual experience of living through and escaping genocide, what they thought, felt, or believed would happen to them” (6). The third node of silence, then, refers to the affective elements of the experience. Or, rather, not just what happened but what was felt. Beyond the Armenian case, what are the implications of Harootunian’s third sense of silence in the transmission of memory? Here, I

would like to suggest that this node of silence attends to the multiple purposes of testimony. Survivor testimony functions as documentation and truth-telling in adjudication of crimes against humanity. Still, in the study of trauma, one has learned and will continue to learn much from what survivors in that experience of extremity thought, felt, or believed would happen to them. Relatedly, in discussing how his father, Ohannes, “confronted the most unanswerable question of his life, which was how and where his family vanished, murdered” (43) and how his mother, Vehanush, had her own unanswered questions about her childhood experience as an orphan, including “why her mother never came back for her” (43), Harootunian concludes that “Unanswerability turned them into witnesses of silence, which they bequeathed to three of us” (43). Harootunian’s identification of survivors as “witnesses of silence” both to the everyday in Anatolia and to the horrors of the attempted elimination of Armenians as well as Harootunian’s description of his memoir as an “act of coaxing memory from its concealment” (9) prove useful for this chapter’s study of *All the Light There Was*, *Salt Houses*, and *The Grass Dancer*.

Kricorian, Alyan, and Power all depict young adult characters who inherit memories of collective violence, memories that are shrouded in silence. As this chapter will illustrate, those portrayals of withholding in the intergenerational transmission of memory are deceptive. Rather, they are markers of the attempt to locate testimony, defined both by the events of the everyday and of mass violence, in geographies foreign to succeeding generations. Kricorian’s novel takes place during the 1940-1944 Nazi Occupation of Paris and the larger history of the Holocaust. It becomes apparent in the novel that the generation of Armenian survivors of the “Deportations” have bequeathed to their children a handful of words in reference to the Old Country, the death marches, and their lives afterwards, including their survival in orphanages and refugee camps. Alyan’s novel follows a Palestinian family who does not identify with the refugee experience of

others in the community given their self-understanding of having experienced the Nakba from a different socioeconomic position. Members of the first generation in *Salt Houses*, dispossessed of their home in Jaffa, come to call Nablus home and go on to endow their children with scant knowledge of that original home. In turn, each generation experiences its own displacement to Kuwait, Jordan, Lebanon, and the US, where they learn of violent events unfolding in Lebanon while also living through such events as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and 9/11. Finally, Power's novel follows two narrative strains. The contemporary narrative arc, set between 1981-1982, begins with the preparation of the grounds for the Dakota Days Contest Powwow on an unnamed reservation in North Dakota.¹⁰⁷ Succeeding chapters move temporally backwards to 1864 and to Dakota Territory. Although Power never names the events, the nineteenth-century narrative strain is set in the wake of the Dakota War of 1862 and the removal of Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota peoples from Minnesota to Nebraska and South Dakota.¹⁰⁸ In addition to making visible US national events in the twentieth and nineteenth centuries—such as Japanese internment and the largely unknown history in public memory of concentration camps for Great Plains Indigenous nations at Fort Snelling—Power alludes to international events when she depicts

¹⁰⁷ Per the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, the Great Sioux Reservation spanned territory in what is now Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wyoming. The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty changed the boundaries to what is the western half of South Dakota and Boyd County, Nebraska. The northern part of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation is in North Dakota while most of it makes up South Dakota. The Fort Berthold Reservation is also located in North Dakota. For a map, see the front matter of Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (2019).

¹⁰⁸ For a discussion of the removal of the Ho-Chunk nation in 1863 through the Winnebago Removal Act, public memory of this removal in relation to the removal of Dakota peoples, and what some have called the “removals” (plural) of the Ho-Chunk, see Amy Lonetree, “A Heritage of Resilience: Ho-Chunk Family Photographs in the Visual Archive” and “Transforming Lives by Reclaiming Memory: The Dakota Commemorative March of 2004.”

Dakota characters who bring back to the tribal reservation traumatic memories from their participation in wars abroad.

As these summaries illustrate, each author depicts different histories of extreme violence that confront each other. Withheld knowledge about the everyday becomes legible through each novel's formulation of "multidirectional" memory work, to borrow the words of Michael Rothberg. Against the rubric of competitive memory which understands collective memory "as a zero-sum struggle over scarce resources," the framework of multidirectional memory attends to the intercultural dynamics of remembrance practices and thus identifies memory work "as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative" (*Multidirectional Memory* 3). To elucidate the workings of multidirectional memory, Rothberg takes as his primary case study the emergence of Holocaust memory on a global scale, which, he argues, "has contributed to the articulation of other histories—some of them predating the Nazi genocide, such as slavery, and others taking place later, such as the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) or the genocide in Bosnia during the 1990s" (6). Certainly, *All the Light There Was* utilizes the history of the Holocaust to stage nested memory work concerning the Armenian Catastrophe while *The Grass Dancer* makes a brief but significant reference to the liberation of concentration camps in Germany in its portrayal of the nesting of Dakota tribal national memory. In employing multidirectional memory as a framework for the study of these three novels, I depart from Rothberg's focus on how the Holocaust specifically has "enabled the articulation of other histories of victimization at the same time that it has been declared 'unique' among human-perpetrated horrors" (7). One aim of *Multidirectional Memory* is to illuminate how the "cross-referencing" of the Holocaust and global histories of racism, slavery, and colonialism once "characterized the period of decolonization" and how that cross-referencing

“continues to this day and constitutes a precondition of contemporary discourse” (7). Departing from this archival recovery and historicization approach, my aim through the study of *All the Light There Was*, *Salt Houses*, and *The Grass Dancer* is to theorize the aesthetic representations of the elisions of memory pertaining to the everyday in the cross-referencing of histories of victimization. Additionally, this chapter does not attend, as Rothberg does, to the evocation of multidirectional memory in the public sphere. Nevertheless, I turn to these novels to participate in a “form of comparative thinking that, like memory itself, is not afraid to traverse sacrosanct borders of ethnicity and era” (17). In *All the Light There Was*, *Salt Houses*, and *The Grass Dancer*, the multidirectionality of memory not only gives rise to a discussion of the unspoken as heritage for the community of characters each author respectively portrays. That multidirectionality allows each author to explore the multiplicity of relations between individuals who experience occupation together yet apart. This relationality occurs both within the construct of the family and within the community at large. It is on these notes that I turn to Kricorian’s *All the Light There Was*.¹⁰⁹

From Orphans of the Nation to Witnesses Again in *All the Light There Was*

All the Light There Was unfolds before, during, and immediately after the Nazi Occupation of Paris from 1940-1944. Maral Pegorian, the first-person narrator, witnesses the start of the Occupation as a fourteen-year-old. However, in the first chapter, she remembers the

¹⁰⁹ On scholarship pertaining to narrative form and aesthetic representation of the extremity of collective violence, see Sarah De Mul, *Colonial Memory: Contemporary Women’s Travel Writing in Britain and the Netherlands* (2011). De Mul offers “acoustic bricolage” to describe the aesthetic device that Doris Lessing uses to represent the Zimbabwean everyday in *African Laughter* (1992). See also Michael Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (2000). Rothberg turns to Ruth Kluger’s memoir *weiter Leben: Eine Jugend* as an example of the articulation of the extreme and the everyday in the concentrationary universe of the Nazi camps. Kluger’s text leads Rothberg to “formulate a new mode of representation and historical cognition under the name of traumatic realism” (*Traumatic Realism*, 109).

past from an unmarked time in the future (though the central narrative arc concludes when she is twenty). Kricorian frames the novel as Maral's testimony of the events of the everyday during the Occupation, from attending school, to securing food through the rations system, to falling in love with an Armenian youth who does not return from the work camps of Buchenwald, later marrying his brother who wrestles with the traumatic memories he brings back home and who himself passes away, and to marrying the man she identifies as her husband, an "Armenian prisoner of war who had a choice between dying and putting on a German uniform" (*All the Light* 274). Given that United Nations General Assembly formally adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on December 9th, 1948, Kricorian relies on terms Armenians historically used to refer to the events of 1915-1923: the "Massacres" and the "Deportations."¹¹⁰ Kricorian portrays characters who have lived through extremity of collective violence and who remember the past as events given their positions in diaspora. By depicting these characters as then living through the everyday of the Nazi Occupation of Paris, what Maral identifies as a war, Kricorian complicates received testimony of the Armenian Genocide. As with her previous two novels, Kricorian conducted extensive research for *All the Light There Was*, including interviewing Armenian Genocide survivors in France.¹¹¹ In the novel, she revisits collective memory of the extreme event, typically rendered visible through

¹¹⁰ On the development of the term "genocide," see "Genocide Timeline." For a discussion of how the original definition included acts of "barbarism" and "vandalism" and how the settler states objected to the inclusion of a cultural element, see Helen Makhdounian and Claire Baytas, "'The Voice of Lemkin Could Be Heard Distantly Returning': Implications of Tim Slade's Documentary *The Destruction of Memory*." For a discussion of terms used by Armenians, see Marc Nichanian, *Writers of Disaster: Armenian Literature in the Twentieth Century* (2002), pp. 10-12 and his "Catastrophic Mourning" as well as David Kazanjian and Marc Nichanian, "Between Genocide and Catastrophe."

¹¹¹ See Nancy Kricorian's "Nazareth Peshdikian: Cobbler, Actor, Humanist," "Extended Family: When Fictional Characters Show Up in Your Living Room," and "Shoemakers of Belleville."

narratives about bodily violence, and instead attends to memories such as those that focus on the affective experience of orphanhood, as exemplified by the narrative strain about Maral's parents.¹¹²

As this overview of the novel reflects, Kricorian puts several memoryscapes in contact, which, in many ways, precedes a recent development in the accumulation of testimonies in the Armenian case. I will return to this point in transitioning to my analysis of *Salt Houses*. For now, I want to emphasize that the novel's attention to the transmission of positivity as part of the lived experience of the everyday during a period of occupation and unrest serves as a means for Kricorian to bring to light the historical multidirectionality of diasporic Armenian memory work that has appeared in the footnotes of history: the experience of Armenian Genocide survivors witnessing, and in some cases, taking action against the persecution of Jews.¹¹³ Beyond demonstrating a need to revisit this understudied archive, Kricorian's depiction of the

¹¹² In identifying the concentration camp system in Ottoman Syria as an integral part of the genocidal process in the Armenian case, Khatchig Mouradian aptly summarizes the state of Armenian Studies: "Many survivors wrote about their camp experience in newspaper articles and memoirs published in the years following the genocide, yet it took almost a century for the first scholarly examinations of their interment to appear. The massacres-and sporadic instances of armed resistance-overwhelmed the discourse, while scholarship focused on dispossession, deportation, death and denial. As a result, the grueling, brutal 'respite' for Armenian deportees in concentration camps between massacres was relegated to footnotes, often literally" ("Internment and Destruction" 155-156).

¹¹³ The website for the Yad Veshem Memorial to the Holocaust features a quote from an Armenian Genocide survivor, Pran Taschiyan, who made it to Crimea: "Having witnessed the Armenian Genocide, we decided to save them" ("Armenian Righteous"). The website also features additional stories of Armenian survivors, under the following description: "Among the rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust were Armenians - some of them motivated by the memory of the atrocities committed against them at the beginning of the 20th century. These acts of rescue took place where the Armenians fled subsequent to the genocide - Ukraine, Crimea, France, Hungary, and Austria" ("Armenian Righteous"). The website also features an image of the memorial, one of stones in which names of those Armenians are engraved.

transmission of positivity allows us to expand the scope of Harootunian's claims about remembrances of the everyday. He observes:

The genocide's fragmented afterlife conveyed by the testimonies of witnesses has consistently shown how this involuntary encounter of history and memory, and the violent collision of history and the everyday produced unanswerable questions in the lives of surviving victims but also prompted their search for new ways of testimony to assert the truth of what they were able to recall and what they refused to remember. It is in such circumstances that we are forced to rely on the scraps of memory in our search to verify the unanswerable. (26)

Proverbs become the means through which the previous generation gives testimony in *All the Light There Was*. That practice of giving testimony reveals an active refusal to remember the extremity of the genocide but the will to remember resurgence.

In one scene, Maral's father, Garabed, presents a positive recollection with a statement Maral assumes is one of the many Armenian proverbs her father quotes. He tells her, "This world is made of dark and light, my girl, and in the darkest times you have to believe the sun will come again, even if you yourself don't live to see it" (103). He clarifies, "I made that one up myself" (103). The title of the novel, then, stems from Garabed's made-up proverb. What prompts him to make that statement is his remembrance of losing his brother to tuberculosis in Camp Oddo, a refugee camp in Marseille. He remembers that experience when Maral asks him during the Occupation of Paris whether her mother, Azniv, would "come back to [them]," meaning from her grief after having lost her sister, Maral's Aunt Shakeh, to tuberculosis (102). Garabed tells Maral that after losing his brother, "Food tasted like ash in [his] mouth and everything was dim" but that "Little by little, the sun came back" when he married, when the orphans who "had no

real family—no parents, no grandparents, no aunts, no uncles” but called the refugee camp home after the Deportations “celebrated with [them] like they were our cousins,” and when he thus had a “new family” with Azniv and Shakeh (103). The content of their exchange concerns kinship-making and survival in diaspora. Texts like Maud S. Mandel’s *In the Aftermath of Genocide: Armenians and Jews in Twentieth-Century France* (2003) have addressed the role refugee camps like Camp Oddo and Camp Mirabeau in Marseille played in facilitating the inclusion of Stateless Armenians into the French polity.¹¹⁴ Critical studies of the Armenian diaspora in France, however, have tended not to ask how these “orphans of the nation” (Mandel 31) in France asserted their truth of the “Deportations” as an experience of ongoing dispossession.¹¹⁵

Kricorian’s rendering of testimony about the everyday raises an important question: In what ways did the extreme of the 1915 Catastrophe become legible through the witnessing of the Holocaust and the trials of the Nazi perpetrators? And, how did that multidirectionality, informed by the French state’s stance towards its own history of imperialism and coloniality, give rise to or deflect from questions of indigeneity, settler coloniality, and primitive accumulation in the Armenian case? Without deep archival work, this chapter of “A Map of This Place” cannot answer those questions.

It can, however, emphasize that Kricorian’s depiction of hope troubles the “habitual and unquestioned focus on violence and victimhood in the exploration of collective memory”

¹¹⁴ In the novel, Maral notes that her parents hold Nansen passports. These were identity certificates used as travel documents and issued by the Nansen International Office for Refugees (Mandel 32). For a discussion of how those documents informed Armenians’ legibility in the public sphere and participation in civic life, see Maud S. Mandel pp. 31-33, 37-39, 43-45.

¹¹⁵ See for example Maud S. Mandel, *In the Aftermath of Genocide: Armenians and Jews in Twentieth-Century France* (2003) and Mary Dewhurst Lewis, *The Boundaries of the Republic: Migrant Rights and the Limits of Universalism in France, 1918-1940* (2007).

(Katriel and Reading qtd in Rigney, “Remembering Hope” 369).¹¹⁶ Garabed’s act of remembering the death marches occurs in the context of unfolding violence but it does not focus on the extremity of either. In her study of the commemoration of the Paris Commune, Ann Rigney intervenes in transnational and transcultural memory studies which “has been dominated by a traumatic paradigm that both responds to, and feeds into, the predominance of mourning and memorialisation in contemporary cultures of memory” (“Remembering Hope” 369).¹¹⁷ One risk of this taken for granted link between trauma and memory is that the field “has itself become implicated in perpetuating the idea commonly held in public debates that violence is the primary subject of collective memory and grievance the core of identity” (369). Against this analytical repertoire of thinking memory in terms of grievance, Rigney calls for critical attention to hope, which she identifies as a “structure of feeling” that is “life-affirming and future-oriented in a minimalist way” and that informs “civic action and motivates the struggle for a better life, if only in the form of small acts of resistance rather than of revolutionary transformations”¹¹⁸ (370-371). To recall, *All the Light There Was* is framed as Maral’s testimony of how her family and community “lived the war” and how she found her husband (6). The following question prompts

¹¹⁶ In describing her research for *All the Light There Was*, Kricorian demonstrates her interest in depicting small acts of resistance in dark times. She indicates that she came to understand Paris of the 1940s as a “somber city, a city of shadows and privation, but also a place where people of conscience worked hard to keep a small light of dignity burning in an inhumane time” (“Paris: City of Shadows”). In reflecting upon how her novels present a “collage portrait of the diaspora,” Kricorian also writes, “What interests me here is how the Armenians, like birds whose nests are destroyed repeatedly by storm, continue to rebuild their homes and their communities again and again. It’s a sad story, but ultimately, it is about resilience and hope” (“A Candle”).

¹¹⁷ At stake in Rigney’s project is a contribution to a nascent research area, the memory-activism nexus, which she further breaks down into three research agendas: memory activism; the memory of activism; and memory in activism (“Remembering Hope” 372).

¹¹⁸ In her analysis of positive memories and civic space, Rigney centers the “concept of hope, seen by Hage (2003) as the alternative to ‘paranoid nationalism’” and “adopt[s] Alan Mittleman’s (2009) definition of hope as a ‘civic virtue’ and as a minimum condition for democracy” (370).

Rigney's project: "through what cultural forms and practices has the exercise of hope been made memorable?" ("Remembering Hope" 371). To bring that question to bear on the novel, we see that what gets nested in Maral's inheritance of memory is not large-scale loss but a positive memory of her family's survival. The trope of the orphaned Armenian family gives rise to the question of how testimonies of the orphaned nation are remembered. The scene decenters the focus on victimhood in the exploration of collective memory of the Deportations. It demonstrates that messages of hope and positivity may come to the fore when traumatic histories converge.

Rigney also asks in her study of commemorative efforts of the Paris Commune, "how has that memorability [of exercises of hope] related to the dramatic reality of – often violent – defeat?" (371). In the novel, that memorability of hope in the wake of dispossession is one of the ways in which Maral gains access to traumatic knowledge that has otherwise been withheld by the survivor generation. Maral identifies herself and her brother Zaven as "the children of two orphans" (Kricorian, *All the Light* 36) but that she "knew so little about what they had gone through" even though "it seemed to loom like a vast, amorphous shadow over our lives" (62). She further reflects, "My mother and my aunt referred vaguely and ominously to what they called the Massacres or the Deportations. If I asked about that period in the Old Country, my mother would say darkly, 'It's better not to talk about those times'" (63). Maral then confesses, "after a while, I stopped asking, and it was all I could do to keep from rolling my eyes when they made their dire, cryptic references" (64). Through the qualifiers "ominously," "darkly," and "dire" as well as the imagery of the looming, structureless shadow, Kricorian conceptualizes testimony that is both there and not there. This scene coupled with the one featuring the proverb about believing that the sun will rise again allow Kricorian to stage what I will call "proximate testimonies." In giving her own testimony of the Nazi Occupation of Paris, Maral recalls how

time and time again, she witnessed the affective response brought on by the memories of the Deportations and Massacres but little indication of what those dark times entailed. Kricorian's choice of "loom" seems apt, given that the term can mean an apparatus for making fabric by weaving thread as well as the appearance of something indistinct. The novel itself functions as a loom: Maral's testimony of the everyday lived experience of the Nazi Occupation of Paris also documents how and why her parents break their silences about their own pasts.

Acknowledging that multidirectional work is often an intergenerational project, Rothberg turns to three texts that concern the entanglements of the period of Vichy and Nazi Occupation and the Algerian War: a novel by the French detective fiction writer Didier Daeninckx, the Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke's 2005 feature film *Cache*, and a novel for young adults by French-Algerian writer Leila Sebbar.¹¹⁹ In so doing, Rothberg problematizes previous understandings of the French state's collective memory of these events. In this context, he asserts, "Not only does the mediation and belatedness of postmemory recall the mediation and belatedness of all memory—its construction out of networks of spatially and temporally differentiated 'moments'—but those characteristics of postmemory are precisely the points of entry for the multidirectional confluence of disparate historical imaginaries" (*Multidirectional Memory* 271). He concludes that these texts demonstrate how the "work of memory proceeds from the present when an individual is contingently 'caught' on the contradictions of his or her situation and propelled into a search for the past, thus becoming a subject of fidelity and an agent of memory" (272). In *All The Light There Was*, characters are not propelled into a search for the past; rather, their parents' pasts greet them as they witness the start of the war, the persecution of

¹¹⁹ Rothberg also reads the latter two works in relation to the 1997-1998 trial of Papon for crimes against humanity during the Holocaust.

Jews and Communists, and the return of some survivors. The young characters may do so in the same physical location as their parents but not from the same positionality. It is this witnessing together yet apart that complicates not just the nexus of postmemory and multidirectional memory but also taken for granted understandings of testimony in memory studies.

That work begins by revisiting the work of psychoanalyst Dori Laub and that of literary critic Shoshana Felman, co-editors of *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1992).¹²⁰ Specifically, I want to suggest that trauma and memory studies tend to take for granted the three positions of witnessing that Dori Laub articulates in his study of Holocaust testimony. Laub comes to this conceptualization of the process of testimony from his work as the cofounder of the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale; as an interviewer of Holocaust survivors who give testimony for such archival projects; as a psychoanalyst who treats Holocaust survivors and their children; and as a child survivor of the Holocaust (“An Event” 75). The first level of witnessing centers the survivor as witness and testimony-giver, a witness who remembers her individual experience of the trauma. The second level of witnessing centers the recipient of the testimony, the individual as an interviewer who negotiates her position as the witness relives and reexperiences the traumatic encounter in the process of giving an account of the past. Regarding the third level, Laub avers: “I observe how the narrator, and myself as listener, alternate between moving closer and then retreating from the

¹²⁰ Arguments by Laub and Felman inform the development of Hirsch’s postmemory. See Hirsch, *Postmemory*, 168-173. See also Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, pp. 213-214, 219-220. Rothberg argues that “Paying attention to the particular *public* form testimony takes in [Charlotte] Delbo’s work can lead to a rethinking of the contemporary theory of testimony” (*Multidirectional Memory* 213, emphasis original), and there he means the work of Laub and Felman. Rothberg revisits Laub and Felman’s work in his discussions of Holocaust testimony and in particular, as he seeks to “decenter the Eichmann trial’s canonical position and provide an alternative account of the emergence of testimony in which Holocaust memory does not serve to consolidate an exclusivist national identity premised on a unique suffering” (178).

experience—with the sense that there is a truth that we are both trying to reach” (76). The testimony-giver and recipient “halt and reflect on these memories as they are spoken, so as to reassert the veracity of the past and to build anew its linkage to, and assimilation into, present-day life” (76). For Maral’s father Garabed, her mother Azniv, and her Aunt Shakeh, acts of witnessing during the occupation of Paris, including the persecution of Jews in their Belleville neighborhood, serve as catalysts for them to rupture the silence that they have up to that point maintained about the violence that they experienced. Maral becomes the recipient of their testimony, but the past is voiced not for the purposes of archival accumulation nor is it voiced in a formal setting between an interviewer and a survivor as interviewee.

Kricorian never employs the term testimony in the novel. In the moments Maral learns about her parents’ experiences, though, she is alongside them trying to reach a truth, an understanding of what her parents mean by “*orphan, desert, and shame*” (Kricorian *All the Light* 77, emphasis original). Indeed, in the opening chapter, Kricorian depicts what can be best be described as proximate testimony. The chapter begins with Maral and her brother, Zaven, helping their mother by taking home the groceries she has purchased from the local market. Upon seeing all the amount of food wrapped and tied in packages, Zaven inquires of his mother, “Are we starting a restaurant,” to which his mother replies, “Don’t be smart” (1). In reflecting back on that day, Maral remarks, “This was how our war began” (2). In other words, “It didn’t start with blaring newspaper headlines announcing a pending invasion, nor was it signaled by the drone of warplanes overhead” (2). Although Maral’s testimony concerns a period of collective violence, what comes to the fore are not images associated of extremity but the everyday lived experience of occupation. As she clarifies, “Our war commenced that afternoon when my mother stockpiled groceries so that, no matter what this new war might bring, her family would have

something to eat” (2). What is key here is the phrasing “this new war.” Kricorian foreshadows the meaning making process that the second generation undergoes: the phrasing betrays a recognition of the everyday lived conditions their parents encountered in a place far away from home, how they lived through another upheaval, and how the everyday of the past prepared them for the present.

The opening chapter further stages proximate testimony in that the previous generation alludes to without naming their experience. The conversation about stockpiling food continues, and in regard to the large amount of bulgur, or cracked wheat, Maral remarks that it is “Enough to last until we won’t be able to stand the sight of it on our plates” (4). Her mother responds, “Don’t talk like that, Maral. We will be grateful for every bite” (4). The scene continues with Maral’s mother taking stock of additional items she has purchased: “machine needles, hand needles, and three dozen spools of thread” (4). When she thinks out loud, “I know there’s something I’ve forgotten,” Zaven cracks a joke about the “pairs of animals two by two” (4). Similar to her retort to Maral, Azniv tells Zaven, “Talk to me in two months, Mr. Wise Guy” and “dismisses[es] him with a toss of her hand” (4). In these scenes of premonition, one generation tries to reach a truth about past collective violence and perceived future collective trauma but the other may not recognize that this process is happening. There are additional moments where the adults make cryptic references. People flee Paris, schools close, and storeowners shutter their shops. Maral summarizes her father’s decision for the family not to leave Paris as a wager that “remaining where [they] had a roof over our heads and where he could keep an eye on his cobbler’s shop was safer than wandering across the countryside to God knows where” (3). She then recalls his specific words: “We’re staying put. The last exodus we saw led straight to hell” (3). However, those words get lost on Maral because she has grown up in an environment in

which her mother dismissed her questions about the past, claiming “It’s better not to talk about those times” (63). Kricorian demonstrates that while the previous generation continues to live with traces of the past, they may also refuse to remember, putting descendants of survivors in the position of relying on scraps of testimony in their search for answers about the Occupation.

Ten days after the discussion about the past that is not an open discussion about the past, German troops march down the streets of Belleville. Maral and her brother watch the scene from a neighbor’s window. At dinner that evening, when Shakeh asks, “And it’s done?” (6), Garabed reveals that he too witnessed the arrival of German soldiers and the beginning of the occupation: “Not a shot fired....Paris is an open city. I couldn’t see the Germans from the shop, but I heard the boots. That’s a sound you will never forget” (6). Once again, testimony in this scene in *All the Light There Was* is not given for archival purposes; rather, it is prompted by the older generation’s premonition of catastrophic human suffering. Both generations may hear the same sounds of the boots but do not necessarily make meaning of them the same way. One has the reference point of having already experienced a crisis of inhumanity while the other does not. Yet, the novel is framed as Maral’s autobiographical writing about the Occupation. In that mode, the opening chapter ends, “And the sound of those boots reverberated in my head for months and then for years, and sometimes even still. This is the story of how we lived the war, and how I found my husband” (6). In the study of multidirectional memory work, one can take a cue from the scene and as a listener to traumatic memory recall, listen for the listening that takes place in the narrative. To reach truth together means to hear how sounds index other sounds and other memories of cultural trauma. After all, while the novel outwardly concerns the protagonist Maral during the war, it becomes an account of how she remembers her parents remember (or withhold) their past.

To further frame Maral's narration as a testimony to the unearthing of a hidden past, Kricorian relies on the "hidden child" trope.¹²¹ During the Holocaust, some parents gave their children to Christian families or schools in an attempt to protect their children from deportation (Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* 288). The testimonies of hidden children played a significant role in the trial of perpetrators, including the 1997-1998 trial of Maurice Papon for his role in the deportation of Jews to Nazi camps during World War II. In the novel, the discourse of hidden children allows Kricorian to position Maral as a character who witnesses but does not have full cognizance of how her parents and aunt narrativize the past and thus participate in a process of "knowing" or "creation of knowledge" in the afterlives of removal (Laub, "Bearing Witness" 57). The Pregorians hide a young Jewish child when German troops take her parents away during the Vel' d'Hiv' Roundup and later reunite the child with her relatives in Nice. When Aunt Shakeh sees the child, Claire, she rocks back and forth in her armchair and Maral catches "the words *orphan*, *desert*, and *shame*, this last repeated again and again" (Kricorian *All the Light* 77, emphasis original). Maral's parents do not share information about the past because they do not want to "frighten" their children (77). That silencing, however, prevents Maral from recognizing how Shakeh relives the collective trauma she experienced and how the return of those memories affects her health. Earlier, when Garabed tells the family news that notices are plastered along the rue de Belleville which "listed the names of the latest supposed criminals executed by the Germans" (53), Aunt Shakeh grows pale and puts down her fork. Azniv admonishes her husband for "talk[ing] like that at the dinner table" and Garabed retorts, "Shakeh, stop dwelling on the past. The Turks didn't manage to kill us, and the Germans won't

¹²¹ For a historical example, see Yair Auron, "Aznavour Family Risked Their Lives Saving Jews and Armenians Under Nazi Occupation."

either” (53). Maral sees Aunt Shakeh look at Missak and express that she is not worried for herself, implying that she is concerned for her niece and nephew. Moreover, Maral describes how her aunt would return home “trembling and distraught after her trips to the market” because “terrible stories and rumors circulated up and down the long queues outside the shops” (53).

To recall from my analysis of *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* in chapter one of this dissertation, Marcom used the term “rumors” to refer to the eyewitness testimonies of the deportations as well as the legacy of that removal as the Turkish nation-state continuously quells what it deems as false allegations of crimes against humanity. The state does so through such means as a governmental website, language reform as part of the birth of the Republic which resulted in the state’s relegation of Ottoman Turkish and its Persian script to the past and the state’s adoption of Latin script, and now a call for an independent institution to counter claims that a genocide took place.¹²² In giving “testimony to the trauma,” writes Laub, the “hearer” is the “blank screen on which the event comes to be inscribed for the first time” (“Bearing Witness” 57). Through the characterization of Aunt Shakeh in the novel, Kricorian raises an exigent point. Laub further contends that the “listener to trauma comes to be a participant and a co-owner of the traumatic event” (57). That argument is premised on the hearer being cognizant that the speaker is giving testimony. Maral hears rumors at the kitchen table. She sees her aunt’s affective reaction to the rumors. But Maral does not recognize these instances of rumored memory as testimonies. While the everyday of war in the present prompts the previous generation to recall the past they have sought to keep hidden, the next generation only has

¹²² The website is titled *The Events of 1915* and is maintained by the Republic of Turkey’s Directorate of Communications. For the planned civic institution, see Taner Akçam, “Dr. Taner Akçam on the Recent Decision of the Turkish Government.”

proximate knowledge of the past and does not become co-owners of that knowledge until it is explained to them.

Indeed, Shakeh's experiences prompt her to tell her sister that the "child [Claire] is an orphan" and, "The same as we were. Except we saw it all. Our parents dead before our eyes" (Kricorian, *All the Light* 86). She continues, "It is the same thing again, Azniv, the way they sent us to die in the desert. They are driving them out of their homes with nothing but a suitcase, sending them to who knows where, to do God knows what. Shame, it's a terrible, terrible shame" (86). The notion of rumors and the experience of orphanhood serve as sites through which histories of extremity converge in *All the Light There Was*. The image of the suitcase is ripe for multidirectional memory work beyond the novel. In *The Bullet Collection*, Marianna grapples with the inheritance of the story of her grandfather who escaped to Beirut hidden in a suitcase. What is more, in some Japanese internment photographs, families appear with suitcases, satchels, and other kinds of bags.¹²³ With deference to these specificities of these histories, one still sees how an everyday material item like a suitcase can serve as a trope for a multidirectional memory aesthetic in literature. Here, I mean the way in which Kricorian depicts a character who having lived through the "Deportations" becomes a survivor who is also a bystander and thus witnesses the deportation of another persecuted group.

In addition, Kricorian stages multidirectional memory of the experience of survival. Garabed later tells his daughter, "I can't tell you, I won't tell you what I saw—I don't want my words to live in your head the way these images are burned into mine" (251). By "images" Garabed refers to what he witnessed when the "Turks burned Moush to the ground" his family's

¹²³ See, for instance, Dorothea Lange's photos in Maurice Berger, "Rarely Seen Photos of Japanese Internment."

village, the killing of his family members, and the deportation of Armenians from Moush to the Syrian desert (251). Garabed confides to Maral that when he saw the newspaper photos of the “black-and-white faces of the gaunt, haggard survivors” of Buchenwald (196), he thought to himself, “*If those boys come back, those memories come with them*” (252, emphasis original). He implies parallels between what he “witnessed” (252) in 1915 and the memories of the deportation that he carries with him and the process of healing and traumatic recall that will happen for the survivors of “this war that made so much suffering” (252). Drawing on his own experience of finding all the light there was, he tells Maral: “Right now, you are lost” but “you will go on” for loved ones and “if we are anything, my girl, we are tough and we are *jarbig*” (252, emphasis original).¹²⁴ Those words of hope and a future-looking orientation make the past accessible to Maral in ways that are not otherwise. After Shakeh passes away, Maral remarks to her mother, “It feels like a part of you went with her when she died” (146). Azniv, “hardly talk[s],” “never laugh[s],” and appears “lonely” (146). In the room “laden with silence,” Azniv finally tells her daughter about the deportation experience to the desert. After detailing physical acts of violence carried out by the perpetrators, Azniv recalls, “What was harder was staying alive,” and asks, “How should you stay alive when you had lost your humanness?” (147). What is key here is that in Azniv’s testimony, Kricorian uses the ambiguous phrase “in that place” (147). In her narration of the exchange, Maral observes, “She was looking beyond me to something that was more real to her than the room we were in” (147). Maral asks her mother, “I need you to come back” (148), and Azniv heeds her request. These acts of violence occurred in a

¹²⁴ The word “jarbig” (ճարպիկ) can be translated as “able,” “clever,” “skillful,” “sharp,” or “adroit” (Kouyoumjian and Torossian 171).

geography unfamiliar and inaccessible to the younger generation. As both scenes exemplify, the message that may resonate is one of reemerging from the ashes and of healing and hope.

Chapter one of “A Map of This Place” began by reading the Mapping Indigenous LA Project in conversation with the *Houshamadyan* project. To recall, the latter digital archive features storymaps and identifies its purpose as a “Project to reconstruct Ottoman Armenian town and village life” (“Why Houshamadyan”). In effect, the project does reparative work in that it documents Anatolian Armenian everyday life pre- 1915 Catastrophe. The unspoken as heritage, to return to Harootunian’s words, is made accessible via the *Houshamadyan* project even while the everyday remains withheld or silenced in the site of the family. Still, as my interpretation of Kricorian’s novel illustrates, Armenian diasporic memory work in its multidirectional configurations serves as a ripe site through which to revisit assumptions about the omissions of everyday Anatolian Armenian life in nested memory work.

Indeed, Kricorian’s representation of resurgence in the wake of removal can prompt avenues of inquiry concerning recent collections of testimonies of diasporic Armenian experiences. In 2018, the USC Institute of Armenian Studies, announced that it had begun expanding its archive by gathering documents and testimonies of the “Armenian Displaced Persons (DP) community formed during and after World War II” (“Displaced Persons”). The Institute sought to create an archive that revealed how “World War II was an episode of immense human migration, which included the Armenian communities of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, among them prisoners of war, those relocated as slave labor under German occupation, and those who moved with the retreating German Army to escape from Stalin’s rule” (“Displaced Persons”). In 2020, Salpi Ghazarian, the Director of the Institute, sent an email to the Institute’s listserv with the subject line “Write History, Right History.” It began “You want to

hear a question that hurts? ‘Five generations after the genocide, why don’t Armenians have stories?’ I didn’t know what to say. Because we don’t ask? Because we think a story that’s not extraordinary is not valuable? Or maybe, with each generation moving from one place to another, there has been continuous loss - loss of memory, of objects and even names” (“Write History”). The email came as a follow up to the Institute’s announcement about its #MyArmenianStory initiative, a “do-it-yourself oral history project” launched during the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing. The Institute promoted the initiative by indicating: “This is when we capture the stories of those who lived through the Soviet collapse and Armenia’s early independence, the Lebanese Civil War, life before or after the Shah, life before and after the Perons, the generations of factory workers in Michigan or farmworkers in Fresno” (The Team at the USC Institute of Armenian Studies). In *All the Light There Was*, Kricorian depicted one of those stories of survival.¹²⁵

How will the axis of nested and multidirectional memory work appear in these newly accumulated testimonies through the #MyArmenianStory initiative? Will the convergence of histories in these testimonies perpetuate the unspoken as heritage or will it lead to the legibility of once hidden narratives of the everyday? And, what comparative memory work will these testimonies give rise to? After all, the Institute for Visual History and Education, part of the USC Shoah Foundation, houses testimonies of Armenian Genocide survivors. This repository also features testimonies from survivors and witnesses of eight other “genocidal events” (Kuznia): The Holocaust, Genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, the Nanjing Massacre in China, the Guatemalan Genocide, the Cambodian Genocide, the ongoing conflicts in South Sudan and the

¹²⁵ An audience member once told Kricorian after a presentation she gave on the novel, “It meant so much to us that you have written this book. Everything was so familiar, and I have never read before our story” (“We Have so Many Stories”).

Central Africa Republic, Kurdish displacement in Northern Syria, and anti-Rohingya mass violence (“Collections”). There is, then, a need for a two-pronged theoretical praxis. A need to hear the testimonies within testimonies, as *All the Light There Was* depicts. And, a need to hear by studying testimonies across national and cultural contexts. On these notes of studying testimonies contrapuntally, I turn to from the Armenian case to the Palestinian case and *Salt Houses*.

Parallel Lives and the Displaced as Distant Witnesses in *Salt Houses*

Similar to Susan Abulhawa’s *Mornings in Jenin* and *The Blue Between Sky and Water*, Alyan’s novel follows several generations of a displaced Palestinian family. *Salt Houses* differs in that the narrative arc commences in 1963 in Nablus, four years before the 1967 Naksa. More specifically, the narrative unfolds with the Yacoub family at the center of the novel having gathered for a pre-wedding celebration. Salma, the matriarch of the Yacoub family and a member of the first of five generations, looks into her daughter Alia’s coffee cup and “knows instantly that she must lie” (2) about the future she interprets from the coffee dregs. As the community celebrates Alia, the third-person narrator observes, “To keep something to yourself when reading cups was treachery. What was seen had to be shared” (7). Salma does not heed this caution she learned from her own mother. Rather, she tells Alia, “It will come true. Your wish” and the narrator observes, “She has given the truth. But amputated” (10). In the cup, with its porcelain surface “white as salt” and the “landscape of dregs, violent” (9), Salma sees “Houses that will be lost,” a zebra that represents an “exterior life, an unsettled life” (9), and “Flight” (10). Those words come true as each generation experiences multiple displacements.

Having been forced to migrate from Jaffa to Nablus in 1948, Salma later moves to Amman, Jordan. From the second generation, Alia and her husband go on to live in Kuwait City,

after her husband is tortured during the Naksa, and from Kuwait they flee to Amman during the Gulf War. From the third generation, Alia's eldest daughter Riham marries and moves to Jordan, where her husband, a doctor, provides medical aid to refugees in the 1990s. During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Alia's son Widad receives asylum in the US and the opportunity to finish his degree in Boston. There, he later marries an Iraqi Kurdish woman. Alia's youngest daughter, Souad, has the opportunity to study art in Paris, where she meets and marries a Lebanese exile, later moving to Beirut where she and her children experience the 2006 Lebanon War. From the fourth generation, Souad's daughter Manar undertakes a return to roots trip to Jaffa in 2014. The novel ends with an undated Epilogue set in Beirut. The family, now in its fifth generation as Manar has a baby, celebrates Alia's 100th birthday. What is more, the family comes together as Alia experiences Alzheimer's. Different members reflect upon what they learned or did not about Palestine and their grandmother's and great-grandparents' lives in Jaffa.

In functioning like a prologue, the first vignette provides more than just background narratives for these multiply displaced Palestinian characters.¹²⁶ Through the first vignette and in particular the portrayal of Salma sharing parts of the fortune she has read in the cup, not the whole of it, Alyan previews the ways in which the generation of the survivors of the Nakba and of the Naksa pass on limited knowledge about life in Palestine before these events of collective violence. While this opening vignette is titled "Salma" and thus appears to focus on her characterization based on the plotline of the wedding celebration, the narrative has folded into it a memory of the past. Indeed, Alyan does this for each vignette: the narrative arc in each unfolds

¹²⁶ I identify these stories as vignettes because Alyan does not provide chapter numbers, though the novel progresses in a linear timeline. For a discussion of the novel as part of a larger discussion on narrative form in Anglophone Arab novels, see Majed Aladylah, "Polyphonic Narrative Spaces in Hala Alyan's *Salt Houses*."

in the present but features a flashback.¹²⁷ Through those memories of the past nested into the structure of the narratives, readers see what has been withheld and why from one generation to the next. The flashback in this opening “Salma” vignette concerns Alia’s childhood. Through Salma’s recollection of Alia’s own remembrance practices, Alyan sets up a series of omissions in the transmission of knowledge regarding the everyday of the Yacoub’s lives in Jaffa—before the Israeli army declares that there will be the “birth of a new nation” (5)—and in Nablus—before the narrative shifts from a focus on internal displacement to external displacement.

Where material objects of the lost home, predominantly keys, facilitate remembrance practices for Palestinians in exile (Saad 60-61), Alyan turns to the trope of orange groves.¹²⁸ Before the “Israeli army rolled through Jaffa’s streets, the tanks smashing the marketplace, the soldiers dragging half-sleeping men from their homes” (5) and before the “three nights of terror before they decided to go” (3), Salma and Hassam’s “villa sat atop a small hill that overlooked the sea, with orange groves banded beneath it in strips” (5). After initially refusing to leave their home and village behind, the Yacoub’s decide to leave for Nablus when “burning rags [are] hurled into their groves” and they watch “fire streak across their land” (6). As the fire burns, the

¹²⁷ To “decolonize and thus extend the analysis of trauma theory,” Wael J. Salam and Safi M. Mahfouz identify “repetitiveness, flashbacks, narrative incoherence, and writing out memories” in *Salt Houses* as “aesthetic tropes that depict the Palestinians’ predicament” (297). Where trauma theory, they argue, “centres on the passivity of the traumatized subject,” these narrative elements in *Salt Houses* “serve as resisting tactics pitted against the occupier’s ‘official’ narrative and as a record of the tragic experience of this diasporic family” (297).

¹²⁸ For a discussion on the imagery of orange trees and groves in displaced Palestinians’ narratives and what they reveal about the materiality of remembering lost homes, see Dima Saad, “Materializing Palestinian Memory: Objects of Home and the Everyday Eternities of Exile,” pp. 60-62. In a discussion about Israeli national memory and the occlusion of native Palestinian history and geography, Edward Said refers to the “landscape of orange and olive groves” he remembered from his “earliest glimmerings of consciousness” (“Invention, Memory, and Place,” 188). This article seems to me a place where Said’s arguments could be used to expand upon Kevin Bruyneel’s work on “settler mnemonics” and vice versa. For another literary example that invokes the symbol of orange groves, see Ghassan Kanafani’s “The Land of Sad Oranges.”

narrator continues, the “smell of burned oranges r[i]se[s] to them, scorched and sweet” (6). Alia, a child of war, witnesses how “Within days the groves [are] mangled, soil impaled with wooden stakes, oranges scattered, pulp leaking from battered flesh” and “crie[s] not at the sound of gunfire but at the smell of the mashed oranges” (6). In Nablus, Salma yearns for their home though she recognizes that their “villa was gone, razed to the soil” and that the “groves had been replanted and new workers picked the browned leaves, new owners baked bread with the orange rinds’ (7). It is Alia, with the “tactlessness” (6) of a “six, even seven years old” (7) child, who recalls “licorice sticks the grocer used to give her, for the dolls in her old bedroom” (6) and the “enormous Jaffa pomegranates, the seeds that could be spooned out and sprinkled with either salt or sugar, depending on their ripeness” (7). On the eve of Alia’s own experience of being the matriarch of the Yacoub family as they are about to leave behind the nest that they have established in Kuwait, “Alia remembers her mother telling her, back in Nablus, that she used to cry for something when they left Jaffa. Though she cannot remember what” (156).¹²⁹ Alia’s partial remembrances of life in Jaffa prior to removal allows Alyan to juxtapose passive forgetting and active withholding in the intergenerational transmission of traumatic knowledge.

Although it has not been identified as such, recent scholarship on diasporic memory in the Palestinian case gestures to this relationship between forgetting and withholding and how those omissions inform identity formation for succeeding generations. In a personal essay about

¹²⁹ An encounter with a Kurdish woman refugee from Iraq who describes state violence against Iraqi Kurds prompts Alia’s partial remembrance of the past. Telar asks Alia if she has “ever been hungry” (155). While Alia feels she can relate to the woman because of her pregnancy with Souad, when “every inch of [her was] begging for food” but her “body [was] refusing” to “keep down” the food (155), Alia recognizes her experience is not equatable with Telar’s. Similarly, she recognizes how, though her family has been displaced, her children, “children of a professor,” are “well fed, spoiled, [and] ingrateful” (155). In the course of their discussion, Telar recalls how her sister cried for rice pudding when they arrived as refugees in Kuwait.

returning to Palestine to bury her father, Lila Abu-Lughod recalls her father, political scientist Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, telling her stories about his childhood in the 1920s and early 1930s, stories that were “nostalgic, both comic and bitter” as well as “political” (125) insofar as her father also taught his children “what it had meant to be Palestinian under the British Mandate” (125-6). She continues, however, “I don’t recall hearing his stories of 1948, the last months before the fall of his hometown, Jaffa. Were we too young to be told? Did it not mean anything to children who had never seen Jaffa?” (126). The period immediately before 1948 and the events of that year constitute that infinite mist of one moment in history, to borrow Abulhawa’s words. In this case, Abu-Lughod, as a member of the second generation, wonders whether her lack of knowledge is due to her own forgetting or her father’s active withholding about that traumatic experience.

What is more, Abu-Lughod describes how her father nests his memories back into a geography that has occluded traces of its native Palestinian people. Upon his return, those stories of pre-1948 Palestine “became the guide to a living history and a real place,” stories he would tell his daughter and to “anyone who would listen” (126). About her own returns to visit her father while he was alive, Abu-Lughod observes that she could not “easily embrace” her father’s memories because she was a “stranger” to the place and “caught up in defeat and hostility” (128). He points out “orange groves where he might have stolen a fruit or two when young” and the “Arab houses that had somehow escaped destruction” (127), but she struggles to understand what these places meant for him, especially as she sees the current infrastructure as a reflection of a larger history of colonialism in the Middle East and feels as if they, as Palestinians, are “vulnerable intruders” given Israeli state surveillance and occupation (129).¹³⁰ It is also hard for

¹³⁰ On occupation, see Saree Makdisi, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation* (2010) and Noura Erakat, *Justice for Some: Law and the Question of Palestine* (2019).

her to imagine what her father and his family had lived through because her own grandmother “had never talked about it...her only stories from the past being about her wedding night and other fragments of magic and everyday life in Palestine” (128). Abu-Lughod also asserts that she could not “transpose [his] old black and white photographs” (129) or visualize as she stands physically in Palestine the “half-ruins he built in his imagination” (127) because his “trauma in Palestine had lived on in [her] only as a wounded identification in a hostile U.S. where sympathy for Palestinians were scarce and aggressive lies about what happened prevailed” (129). In *Salt Houses*, Alia becomes the matriarch who has partial remembrances of the past—she knows she once remembered something but not what. At the same time, in vignettes about succeeding generations of the Yacoub family, Alyan repeatedly depicts how Alia’s generation does not extensively speak about the past. Specifically, Alyan portrays children and young adult characters who constitute the fourth generation as eavesdroppers who utilize Atef’s letters to access sealed memories and who eventually rely on Atef to remember on Alia’s behalf. The flashback in the first “Salma” vignette ultimately presents Alia as a carrier of memory: she is the nest of memories in the novel.

Just as the opening vignette is set in-between the Nakba and Naksa, the exchange between Alia and Selma unfolds in another in-between moment, this time in 1988 which occurs after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon but before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Alia and Souad have an argument over spilled sugar. As that plotline unfolds, Alia recalls the death of her mother. In her last few days, Salma implores Alia, “When it happens, *you must find a way to remember*” (141, emphasis added). To Alia’s inquisitive “When what happens?” Salma continues, “I was wrong. I thought I could make myself see something that wasn’t there. But it was a lie. I saw the houses, I saw how they were lost. *You cannot let yourself forget*” (141,

emphasis original). Alia does not comprehend what “remembering...her mother meant, what lie” (141).¹³¹ Salma wants Alia to remember what those oranges represent: their lives in Palestine before dispossession and removal. Although she carries her childhood memories of Jaffa with her in diaspora, Alia ends up holding them within herself, and that concealment has several effects across the generations. To illustrate this, Alyan utilizes words with connotations of concealment. The narrator observes that “Their marriage had a glove compartment, a hollow, cluttered space where emotional debris went.” In this compartment, “Palestine [was] tossed in there like an illegible receipt, keys that no longer opened any door” (145). Although Alia passively forgets that she cried specifically for Jaffa’s orange groves, she actively chooses not to speak memories of Palestine in general because it triggers her husband Atef’s traumatic memories. As the narrator remarks, “*Why would we*, Atef seemed to beg her silently in those early years after the war, his face tightening with pain when she spoke of Nablus (145, emphasis original). Over time, Alia ceases discussing Palestine. The narrator observes, “So she spoke of it less and less, everything they’d left behind, her dreams of walking into her childhood bedroom, the way her entire body drummed when she thought of the place that was, suddenly, not hers anymore. She *folded* it away” (145, emphasis added). To reinforce that Alia chooses not to speak of Nablus, Alyan presents a situation in which Alia is cognizant of how members of the previous

¹³¹ Regarding this scene, Wael J. Salam and Safi M. Mahfouz argue that the “reader, though not Alia, infers that she refers to the 1948 Palestinian exodus, the 1967 setback, and other tragic events that have caused the loss of home and land” (304). Moreover, they aver that “Salma passes the burden of retaining the memory of the lost homeland to her daughter Alia, a mission that she has to continue. Since these memories are engendered in the Palestinian collective consciousness and act as repositories of history, Palestinians who cling to these memories are obliged to retrieve and recall them” (304). In explicating how Alia and Atef’s narratives exemplify postmemory, Salam and Mahfouz do not find significance in omissions in the transmission of traumatic knowledge. Instead, they emphasize how the novel portrays “Palestinian collective memory and consciousness” including “resistance tactics against forgetfulness and memory erasure” (300).

generation actively recall Palestine. As Alia watches the construction of palaces in Kuwait City, she concludes that there is a generational difference in awareness about the history of the city. Youth do not know a time before the changes in the city while the elders “remember the desert before all the construction” (74). This different generational perception reminds Alia of the “aunts and uncles in Nablus who spoke of a Palestine before the big war, before soldiers and exodus” (74). The scene implies that memory is not transmitted in the maternal line, an act that repeats itself when Alia becomes the matriarch. Succeeding generations rely on other people to access stories about the everyday of Nablus and Jaffa.

Similar to Abu-Lughod’s identification of her relationship to the 1948 Catastrophe as that of a wound, Alyan presents the severed intergenerational relationship to the land as an open wound. The narrator observes that “Palestine was something raw in the family, a wound never completely scabbed over” and that Alia and Atef “rarely mentioned it” (281). What is key here is that Alyan refers not to the traumatic events but the geography of a place, the Palestinian landscape.¹³² The trope of the garden planted in diaspora by women of the Yacoub family allows Alyan to map how succeeding generations negotiate a fractured relationship to the nested Palestine back home on the one hand and the nested Palestine in exile in which they grow up on the other hand. From the third generation, Riham bonds with her grandmother Salma. In Amman, Salma plants a garden with “plants and flowers and one large, gnarled olive tree” (106). While Riham “has been told” (106) about the garden in Nablus, “tails of it are hazy to her, almost fictional” and “All she knows is this garden was in Palestine, and it burned down” (107). In using passive voice, Alyan makes it unclear from whom Riham has heard stories of Nablus.

¹³² On constructions of Palestine in everyday exile, see Dima Saad, “Materializing Palestinian Memory: Objects of Home and the Everyday Eternities of Exile.”

Riham also knows that “it is linked to the war she learned about in school and to her father being away a long time ago” (107). Ultimately, though, Riham knows little about Palestine because the “adults rarely speak of these things, giving vague responses to questions” and she does not press them for more information because “It is clear they find this talk painful” (107). “Things” refers to her father’s experience during the Naksa, but Alyan does not name the event as such thus emphasizing Riham’s inheritance of memory is marked by proximate testimonies much like Kricorian’s portrayal of Maral in *All the Light There Was*.

This withholding carries into the fourth generation. When one of Linah’s elementary school friends in Lebanon bullies her and taunts her for her “weird Arabic accent” and makes Linah feel as an outsider, Linah wants to “say something about how no one ever really talked about being Palestinian in her house, the same way that no one talked about being Iraqi, that when either set of grandparents came over, they spoke of things like villages and bombings with a sort of mournful resignation, as though the places in question had vanished into thin air” (230). Moreover, when Manar makes a return to roots trip to Jaffa, she realizes while she knew her grandparents were from Jaffa and went to Nablus after 1948, she “had never applied that to her grandparents” and imagines asking her grandmother, who back in Amman shows signs of Alzheimer’s, “*Where did you grow up?*” and “*What do you remember of it?*” (292, emphasis original). “For the generation of descendants for whom the world of parents and grandparents is not a world they shared in the same fold of time,” write Nancy K. Miller and Marianne Hirsch, “going back to the city of origin...is a way of coming to grips with the mythic dimensions of a place they would have to apprehend on new terms” (12). They further assert that the “experience of return to an earlier generation’s lived places is mediated by story, song, image, and history”

(12).¹³³ Manar has an image of Nablus in her mind, an “expansive, generous land peppered with olive groves, valleys between yellow hills” (Alyan 287). She is disappointed when she finds otherwise and feels “like an interloper, trespassing on memories that had nothing to do with her” (288). She forms this image in her mind from the “infrequent” stories of her grandparents, two photographs she carries with her in the hopes of finding her ancestral home in Nablus, and Atef’s letters. Through Manar’s views on the significance of Jaffa, Alyan demonstrates that rites of return are not just about the realization of the need for “new terms” to apprehend the homeland given this disconnect between imagination and the reality of the landscape in the present. The rite itself may be an act of opening up a discussion on the ordinary homeland and breaching what has been withheld in the transmission of memory.

Manar takes her grandfather’s letters in her return to roots journey; her two cousins discover them hidden in a book in the family’s Beirut apartments. Atef’s doctor had suggested he write the letters to his wife and family back in Palestine as a means to process the trauma he experienced in Nablus. Regarding the significance of the letters, Atef thinks to himself, “*Here is Palestine*” as well as “*Here are the streets we’d walk in Nablus, the neighborhood we grew up in*” and “*Here is everything we loved*” (271, emphasis original). In their analysis of the novel to

¹³³ In her study of Arab American literature and transnational configurations of belonging, Carol Fadda-Conrey puts forward the concept of “rearrival” to refer to “short-term returns to original homelands [which] ultimately lead to the reassessment and reclaiming of US terrain” (67). By this Fadda-Conrey means that the “paths of return to an Arab country undertaken by the protagonists in these texts ultimately lead them back to the US, where they arrive with new self-understandings of their Arab identity. These self-understandings enable them to ultimately rethink the ways in which they interact with, belong to, and claim the US as a permanent home” (67). Fadda-Conrey develops this framework in part by analyzing two Palestinian American texts, arguing that they “underscore...how fragmented, impossible, or partial returns to Palestine bring about particular rearrivals in the US” (89). Alyan’s novel can complicate Fadda-Conrey’s framework in that Manar ends up in the novel in Lebanon, which functions as a third country for identity negotiation and suggests transnational belonging across Arab homelands and not just a dichotomy of Palestine and the US.

carry forward trauma studies, Wael J. Salam and Safi M. Mahfouz argue “Atef’s success in writing out, and hence passing on, his haunting legacy to his grandchildren is an act of resistance” that “adds a political dimension to the dimension of trauma” (304). It is evident that the “letters become valuable assets for recording the history of the family” (304), but the everyday life of Jaffa pre-removal remains an unspoken heritage on the matrilineal side of the family given Alia’s withholding and later loss of memory. As illustrated by my reading of multidirectional memory work in *All the Light There Was*, the convergence of histories may facilitate a discussion on the everyday. Such is not readily the case in *Salt Houses* because characters are distant witnesses who also live parallel lives.

In an essay about her personal search for home and transnational identity formation, Palestinian historian Sherene Seikaly writes: “Sitting and writing in my latest stop, Haifa, I have come to understand that Beirut was (and in many senses continues to be) one part of Palestine for me” (292). In that same essay, Seikaly recalls how in Beirut she once asked her grandmother to imagine the afterlife. Her grandmother responds, “it is a grove, full of fruit, lemons, oranges, and, you know, a garden, a grove” (300). Seikaly notes how her grandmother then stopped, looked at her, and said “Palestine” (300). In *Salt Houses*, Alyan utilizes the trope of the garden to conceptualize a transnational Palestine in the afterlives of removal. There is Salma’s garden in Nablus and Amman, Alia’s garden in Amman, and Riham’s garden in Amman. After so many years of indexical references to Palestine, Atef’s great-grandchildren find him seated in the garden of his and Alia’s home in Amman. The narrator observes, “*He has to remember for the both of them*” and to that end, Atef tells them how Alia “used to live in a house with a garden, In Palestine” (Alyan 273). Manar yearns to have asked her grandmother more about her life, a life that Atef recalls in terms of the salt houses. As he touches soil, he recalls the “sloping roof of his

mother's hut, the marbled tiles in Salma's kitchen, the small house he shared with Alia in Nablus. The Kuwait home. The Beirut Apartments. This house, here in Amman. For Alia, some old, vanished home in Jaffa" (273). He further thinks to himself, "They glitter whitely in his mind, like structures made of salt, before a tidal wave comes and sweeps them away" (273). The title of the novel, then, evokes the impermanence of home that each generation of the Yacoub family feels, given salt is easily dissolvable.

In providing a testimony of their multiple displacements and narrating their family history, Atef references Jaffa and in so doing provides a proximate testimony for individuals like Manar in the Yacoub family who want to ask Alia, "Where did you grow up?" In Jaffa, Manar writes her family members names in the wet sand of the shoreline, producing a family tree and calling it a "testimony" (295). As she looks at the names, she says out loud to herself, "We were all here" and "Even you, Teta" (296). A "large wave washes over the sand the water eating her words, her family come and gone in this sea that belongs to none of them" (296). Alyan juxtaposes this final scene in the last vignette and the Epilogue. Unlike the vignettes, Alyan does not provide a date for the Epilogue, likely in line with the characterization of Alia having Alzheimer's at this stage in her life. It is not until the end of the novel, indeed, in the last few lines of the Epilogue, that a lullaby Manar sings to her baby that "alights within Alia a remembering akin to joy" and that memory consists of "Her mother's garden, a courtyard somewhere in Kuwait, as she sang to a baby at her own breast" (310). When it comes to Atef, *Salt Houses* emphasizes that Palestine is nested in letters, material objects that index the everyday conditions of exile. When it comes to Alia and her yearning for home, Alyan echoes the conclusion that Seikaly makes in reference to her own search for home. She writes, "The long road home is one I will always travel. The search for belonging is based on its very

impossibility. It is *the search for the sense of home that is more important and more powerful than the destination*” (Seikaly 301, emphasis original). By not ascribing a character’s name to the Epilogue, Alyan leaves open-ended for readers whether the story concerns Alia or Manar. Or, rather, Alyan leaves readers with an image of juxtaposed characters who have in their own ways sought home. The novel may end in Beirut in an undisclosed point in the future, but it is ultimately an image of the multigenerational search for home that Alyan ends on.

Seikaly goes on to contend that the “fragmentation of Palestine relies on a continuous process of removal and distancing, distancing people from land and history, and, perhaps most painfully, distancing people from one another” (301). In *Salt Houses*, Alyan conceptualizes how Palestinians can witness and live this ongoing removal together yet apart. Alyan characterizes Salma as growing up in poverty but “possessing a docile beauty” (11) that led her to be chosen for marriage with her husband, Hussam, son of a wealthy family. They are “lucky” (10) the narrator further observes, to have money which “carried them to Nablus” (11). Although their children, Widad, Mustafa, and Alia, “might have known gunfire and war...they were protected from it with the armor of wealth” (11). That wealth “separates them from the refugees in the camps dotting the outskirts of Nablus” (11). While Salma may feel “*Shame*” (20) for her “queasiness about the camps, her irrational fear that they are somehow contagious” and how she “still holds her breath, her childhood defense against bad luck, when she has to drive past them” (11). Through her depiction of Raja, the housekeeper, Alyan further conceptualizes this notion of parallel lives under occupation. Raja “hummed the haunting, throaty ballads Salma’s own mother used to sing, unknowingly hinting at a kinship that made Salma feel guilty” (11). While Salma lives in a large home, Raja goes “home to a tent” (11). Salma thinks to herself, “It was a matter of parallel lives, one person having lamb for supper, the other cucumbers. With fate deciding, at

random, which was which” (11). Alyan’s depiction of local relationality here adds another layer to Seikaly’s point about the repercussions of removal, and that, in turn, has implications for the study of memory. In the study of collective memory of removal, one can also read testimonies within a diasporic community in relation to one another.

Alyan offers a related notion of living parallel lives through her portrayal of Riham and Riham’s relationship to what she and her husband call the “Fixture” in their garden. It is a “plain space with five cots and drawers full of medical instruments” that Latif, Riham’s husband, a doctor, uses to treat the “desperate and moneyless” who had been “sent by family in other countries,” knowing that Latif would treat them “without taking a single dinar” (178). At times, spikes of people arrive after wars and invasions; at other times, it is a steady flow of individuals. At first, Riham is proud of her husband for the help he gives, but she develops “resentment” for the Fixture and feels “relief” (178) when Latif announces he will cease the home practice upon taking a position at the hospital. While she believes that she will never be “reminded of it” (178), it is precisely memories of those they treated that allows her to forge a bond with her stepson. In one scene, they stare out the window into the garden and at the Fixture. Riham tells him that Latif considers “put[ting] a greenhouse over there,” and he observes, “It’s strange....Isn’t it?” (201). Riham “knows exactly what he means” (201). That is, “They were joined in this, after all, weren’t they, in the aftermath of strangers’ lives, the detritus that Latif brought to them” (201). Riham feels like she “can still hear them” and “think[s] of them all the time” (201). In the present narrative strain, a memory comes to Riham’s mind, “one of the refugees helping her rinse parsley years ago, over this very sink” (201). Riham’s stepson disrupts Riham’s memory of “this woman she’ll never see again” (201). He tells her, “No one ever talks about them. We never say anything. It’s like they were a dream, like we’re all pretending” (201). These comments then

spark Riham to speak about how “people can leave their mark even after decades” (201) and the dreams she still has of the refugees, conversations it is implied that she has not had with others.

Coupled with these constellations of parallel lives, Alyan also presents characters in the Yacoub family as what I will call “distant witnesses.” While visiting her sister in Kuwait in 1967, Alia cannot “wait for home” (53). The final week before she plans on returning to Nablus, Alia visits a dressmaker and there she sees “Explosions of light” on the television screen and a plane which drops “something from its belly, something that ignite[s] the air” (55). The dressmaker remarks that its “The Israelis! They’ve done it. *They’ve done it*” and “They’re in Sinai” (55). Soon, “Naksa songs” appear, “sorrowful violins and intonations lamenting the losses of the war. The defeat” (57). Indeed, “Every day on every channel the songs play, haunting the living rooms, the marketplaces, all over Kuwait and, Alia knows, other Arab cities. Grieving the death of men, all the land lost, but mostly the defeat itself, the hot, mushrooming shame of it” (57). But to watch the war on television and to hear about it on the radio is not the same as living through it. “Snatches” of the war may be “harvested in Widad and Ghazi’s living room” (61), but it is Atef and Alia’s brother Mustafa who experience the Naksa in Nablus. Alyan repeats this structure when in July 1982, on the road to a beach in Amman, the family hears on the radio: “In southern Lebanon...Several shot dead...Tanks have rolled over...” (114). Salma remarks, “That poor country. All that slaughter, and now Israel’s joined the party” (114). Similarly, Souad is in Paris where she sees television news reports about the “tanks and bombing” (165), learns about “The United Nations...releas[ing] its strongest condemnation” (164), sees “images of troops barricading the city” (171), and footage of a “park, blazing” (173). The latter prompts Souad to recall these figurines of angels with caps found at the gate of the park, a memory she shares with Elie, her then boyfriend. Finally, parts of the family, including Alia, Atef, Latif, and Abdullah,

are in Amman when the 2006 Lebanon War takes place. The position of a distant witness ultimately nuances the rubric of nested memory work. In Abulhawa's novels, succeeding generations experience collective violence. But, the relational witnessing that Abulhawa presents through the plotline concerning David/Ismael and Amal is not the same as the relational witnessing that Alyan portrays. However, the notion of distant witnesses may open up avenues of study in terms of Amal's relationship to the Sabra and Shatila massacres given that she hears about them while living in the US.

Moreover, Alyan's attention to relational witnessing differs from that represented by Kricorian in *All the Light There Was*. Part of the difference stems from the spatial-temporal perception of the 1915 Armenian Catastrophe versus the 1948 Palestinian Catastrophe. To recall, Harootunian in his memoir emphasizes that the Armenian Genocide as an "event did not necessarily end one hundred years ago and has continued to persist as an afterlife in every present since the inaugural moment" (11). Harootunian's publication comes several years after Kricorian's novel. In the Palestinian case, the Nakba, writes Abu-Lughod, "is not just something of the past. It continues into the present in every house demolished by an Israeli bulldozer, with every firing from an Apache helicopter, with every stillbirth at a military checkpoint, with every village divided from its fields by the 'separation' wall, and with every Palestinian who still longs to return to a home that is no more" (135). In also discussing memory work in the context of this ongoing catastrophe, Edward Said has argued that "Perhaps the greatest battle Palestinians have waged as a people has been over the right to a remembered presence and, with that presence, the right to possess and reclaim a collective historical reality, at least since the Zionist movement began in its encroachments on the land" ("Invention, Memory, and Place" 184). In this context of scholarly discourse and in this context of Palestinian American literature, *Salt Houses* ultimately

demonstrates the need to understand how internally displaced and externally displaced Palestinian communities disrupt settler mnemonics in relation to one another. In the mobilization of nested memory work as resistance efforts, one can also ask what is the relationship between remembrances of the extreme and the everyday? On this question of nested memory and social movements, I turn to Susan Power's *The Grass Dancer*.

The Nation Witnesses at a Place of Soldiers, Treaties, and Immigrant Trains in *The Grass Dancer*

The Grass Dancer begins with an undated Prologue told from the perspective of an unnamed third-person narrator while the main text features eleven titled sections. Each section features a single vignette titled after the name of a character. Specifically, the first section is set in 1981 and commences with the preparation of grounds for a “three-day dance festival, the Dakota Days Contest Powwow” on an unnamed reservation in the “state of North Dakota” (12). A critical detail, Power’s phrasing of the “state of North Dakota” as opposed to “North Dakota” epitomizes the spatial and temporal situatedness of the memory work that unfolds in the novel. Through reverse chronology narration, Power depicts the directionality of mnemonic practices of the US settler nation-state as it is born out of territorial conquest from East to West in the nineteenth century and maintains itself in the twentieth century.¹³⁴ “State,” then, refers both to

¹³⁴ Power’s conceptualization of memory work can illuminate the settler mnemonics on display in President Trump’s 2020 Fourth of July Speech, remarks which he gave at the deliberately selected location in front of Mount Rushmore, in Keystone, South Dakota. Lakota tribal leaders and activists called for the removal of Mount Rushmore, a “symbol of white supremacy” (Tilsen qtd in Pember) and a “vandalize[d]...holy mountain [carved] with the faces of colonizers in memory of European encroachment, broken treaties, human rights violations, and acts of genocide against Indigenous and BIPOC people throughout Turtle Island” (“NDN Collective”). Clearly cognizant of the protests, Trump asserts: “This monument will never be desecrated, these heroes will never be defaced, their legacy will never, ever be destroyed, their achievements will never be forgotten, and Mount Rushmore will stand forever as an eternal tribute to our forefathers and to our freedom” (“Remarks”).

the geo-political territorial state and the state as in condition. In moving from the twentieth-century narrative arc set in North Dakota towards the nineteenth-century narrative arc set in “Dakota Territory” (239), Power emphasizes that across both centuries, tribal national memory work unfolds in Dakota homelands. Similarly, the phrasing of “Dakota Days” serves as more than a title for a three-day gathering. Dakota Days articulates how indigeneity is present and ongoing and disrupts US nation-state collective memory, History-writing processes, and settler cartography or place-making practices. Bringing nested memory and nested sovereignty to bear on this location of testimony—Dakota Days in the state of North Dakota—we see that Dakota Days persist through each iteration of imposed geo-political borders. Moreover, Power weaves in marginal but strategic references to the Holocaust during World War II, the Korean War, and the Apollo 11 moon landing during the Cold War. While readers may recognize these references to global US nation-state to nation-state relations, they may not catch onto the domestic international relations Power presents.¹³⁵ The Powwow is an intertribal gathering and the chapter that takes place in Dakota Territory can best be understood in the context of the US government’s legal relations with the Oceti Sakowin or Great Sioux Nation and US imperial territorial

¹³⁵ I do not know what to make of this yet in relation to Power’s novel, but in that same speech, Trump regularly invokes the term “memory” when claiming that protestors are “attacking” and “defil[ing]” the legacies of Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, and Roosevelt. To set “history’s record straight,” he expounds US territorial conquest and assertion of imperial power domestically and internationally. For instance, he identifies “Americans [as] the people who pursued our Manifest Destiny across the ocean, into the uncharted wilderness, over the tallest mountains, and then into the skies and even into the stars.” He also tells his audience, “We are the country of Andrew Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, and Frederick Douglass. We are the land of Wild Bill Hickock and Buffalo Bill Cody.” Moreover, he asserts, “We settled the Wild West, won two World Wars, landed American astronauts on the Moon — and one day very soon, we will plant our flag on Mars.” Meanwhile, more than one-hundred Lakota “treaty defenders” and other protestors gathered on a highway leading to Mount Rushmore to defend the Black Hills as sacred land and as unceded territory in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 (“Treaty Defenders”).

expansion.¹³⁶ From this perspective of the vectors of inter-national memory work, we can best understand the withholding about the everyday.¹³⁷

While the Prologue ostensibly provides a background story for the protagonist Harley Wind Soldier, it allows Power to foreground the workings of US empire against which Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota peoples' testimonies of removal must be understood. Harley is seventeen years old at the start of the novel. In contrast, the Prologue recounts how four weeks before his birth, Harley's father and older brother are killed in a car accident by a non-Native drunk driver, Henry Burger. Henry regularly drives on that road and sees "twisting shadows beyond the road" (6). The narrator continues, "At such times he remembered stories from his childhood about vengeful Indians: fierce warriors who were always ready to die, and even a beautiful woman wearing a crimson flap of a dress, who lured men to death" (6). He "hear[s] voices moving with the wind, mocking voices speaking a language unfamiliar to him," which, he guesses, is "*Sioux*" (6, emphasis original). Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota nations never called themselves "Sioux"; rather, as a political confederacy, these nations called themselves the "Oceti Sakowin Oyate," translated as the "Nation of the Seven Council Fires" (Estes, *Our History* 69). What is more,

¹³⁶ I say intertribal because in the narrative arc that features Harley, we meet the character Pumpkin, a Menominee, and three of her friends, also Menominees, who travel to participate in the Powwow. Pumpkin wins first place. She is the first "girl grass dancer" (24) other characters have seen. Pumpkin and her friends die when one of them loses control of their car on the drive to the next powwow.

¹³⁷ Palestinian literary theorist Steven Salaita proffers "inter/nationalism" to broadly mean a "commitment to mutual liberation based on the proposition that colonial power must be rendered diffuse across multiple hemispheres through reciprocal struggle" (ix). Specifically, Salaita writes that he names this "type of decolonial thought and practice" that has appeared in "different strata to American Indian and Palestinian communities" (ix). Leanne Simpson, whose collection of essays I take up for analysis in the next chapter, and Glen Coulthard also advance a theory of inter-nationalism in terms of First Nations nation-to-nation relations, respecting each other's system of Indigenous governance, jurisdiction, and sovereignty, and place-based solidarity. See "Grounded Normativity/Place-Based Solidarity" and "Leanne Simpson and Glen Coulthard on Dechinta Bush University, Indigenous Land-based Education and Embodied Resurgence."

“European and US explorers, traders, and settlers dubbed the many nations here [in the Northern Plains] ‘the Sioux,’ mythologizing them as the most hated, the most feared, and the most violent North American Indigenous people” (68).¹³⁸ In the Prologue, Power underscores the pervasiveness of the mythologization of Oceti Sakowin peoples that Estes describes. Henry believes that “It was the old enemy rising up to challenge him” and thinks to himself, “*Those goddamn Indians, they never quit*” (Power 6, emphasis original). Power implies that Henry identifies the Sioux as the internal enemy based on frontier narratives that advance settlers’ imaginary of the West and of Indigenous peoples in their homelands. There is a through line, Power suggests in the Prologue, between racialized violence against the Oceti Sakowin in the nineteenth century and in Dakota Territory and racialized violence against the Oceti Sakowin in the twentieth century and in the state of North Dakota. Henry’s logic that the “old enemy ris[es] up to challenge them” reflects the pervasive rhetoric of frontier narratives penned by early settlers. Nineteenth-century settlers “often described the Missouri basin as an irrational and violent country, plagued by endless Indigenous warfare” (Estes, *Our History* 68). Exclaiming “I’ll slam you back to hell,” Henry “charge[s] his four-wheel drive pickup into their strange light, blinding them forever” (Power 6). This act of White supremacist violence against American Indians is reported as a car accident, and Henry dies alongside Harley’s kin.

The Prologue previews several narrative arcs in the novel. The overarching narrative focuses on Harley’s journey in recovering Dakota tribal national memory through the relationship he develops with his ancestor, Red Dress. The Prologue alludes to the character Red

¹³⁸ Specifically, the “term derives from an abbreviation of ‘Nadouessioux,’ a French adoption of the Ojibwe word for ‘little snakes,’ denoting the Ojibwe’s enemies to its west. Instead, they simply called themselves the ‘Oyate,’ the ‘Nation,’ of the ‘People,’ and sometimes the ‘Oyata Luta’ (the Red Nation)” (Estes, *Our History* 69). For an overview of the homelands of the Oceti Sakowin, see Estes, *Our History*, pp. 69-72.

Dress, the “beautiful woman wearing a crimson flap of a dress, who lured men to death.” The chapter devoted to Red Dress’s story takes place in 1864 and at Fort Laramie. Power identifies that fort as a “place of soldiers, treaties, and immigrant trains” (246). Through reverse chronology narration, Power illustrates how Dakota Days extend from before the history of settlement and mass violence through what Red Dress and each succeeding generation witnesses and into the future with Harley. A related narrative arc is that of Harley’s mother, Lydia Wind Soldier, and her own experience of singing again at the Dakota Days Contest Powwow after years of mourning the loss of her loved ones. Finally, the two material dresses in the novel—one sewn by Harley’s ancestors and housed in the Chicago Field Museum and one sewn by his mother for the Powwow and modeled after the dress in the museum—evinced the withholding of memory.

My study of the transmission of memory pertaining to the everyday of traumatic pasts and the everyday of living in exile as depicted in *All the Light There Was* and *Salt Houses* tended to consider the act of state-sponsored removal as an event and not part of a larger structural project of the elimination of the native. The novels lend themselves to this conceptualization because of their respective constellations of characters as living parallel lives and, in the case of Alyan’s novel, their subject positionalities as distant witnesses. An understanding of settler coloniality as it relates to the formative violence of removal is imbricated with the site of arrival: does that nation-state speak of settler coloniality, whether about its history or that of other states? The history of the Nazi genocide of European Jewry and the Occupation of Paris informs the depiction of multidirectional memory work in Kricorian’s novel. One can ask, though, why has no evidence surfaced yet that Armenians in France drew connections between their experience in the Ottoman Empire and the trajectory of settler colonialism in French Algeria? Or, did discourse

in the French public and political sphere on the legacy of that settler colonialism prompt any comparative discourse?¹³⁹ Relatedly, *Salt Houses* takes place in Kuwait, Jordan, and the US. We can ask, how do these nations speak of settler coloniality and how does that presence or absence of a discourse inform the taken for granted event-based model of theorizing collective trauma?

Again, memory work in *The Grass Dancer* takes place in Dakota Territory, of which the state of North Dakota is part (not the other way around). Power's conceptualization of space makes legible structural violence. As Estes argues about the #NoDAPL Indigenous resistance movement, "What happened at Standing Rock was the most recent iteration of an Indian War that never ends" (*Our History* 10, emphasis added). The 1864 chapter of *The Grass Dancer* commences after the 1862 removal of the Oceti Sakowin. Power alludes to that event briefly when one of the characters, Anna Thunder, remarks during the Great Depression: "I imagined angry ancestors fed up with Removal grabbing fistfuls of parched earth to fling toward Washington, making the president choke on dust and ashes" (Power 220). Just as Estes discusses an extreme situation through the phrase "never ends" so too does Power in her description of the "Removal" imply that the experience of removal has not ended roughly a hundred years after President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act in 1830. Interestingly, in a brief passage in *The Unspoken as Heritage*, Harootunian cites Jackson's Removal policy to argue that "it was the United States as it moved west that provided the model for the equation of expropriation and dispossession, a form of internal colonization, resulting in deportation marches and ultimately genocide in the service of primitive accumulation" (157).¹⁴⁰ *The Grass Dancer*

¹³⁹ I pose these questions because in a conversation, Uğur Ümit Üngör disclosed that A. Dirk Moses suggested the applicability of the rubric of "inner colonization" to him. Moses's research interests include genocide, settler colonialism, and indigeneity in the case of Australia.

¹⁴⁰ Harootunian continues, "Subsequent efforts to push Native Americans from their lands, to the reaches of less hospitable regions and ultimately into reservations, and the coercive violence

matters in these scholarly conversations because the everyday and extremity are not easily cordoned off from one another in hundreds of years of occupation.

In the conclusion to *Multidirectional Memory*, Rothberg asserts: “The polemical thrust of my argument has been to reject the reductionism of the nation-centered, real-estate development model in favor of a more open-ended sense of the possibilities of memory and countermemory that might allow the ‘revisiting’ and rewriting of hegemonic sites of memory” (310). The competitive model, he reminds us, “takes the scarcity of civic space” and “public resources” as the “basis for its understanding of public memory” (310). To illustrate his claims, he turns to the example of the Mall in Washington, DC, a sight which became a “staging ground for a zero-sum conflict over the relative presence of memory of slavery and the Holocaust in a highly nationalized context” (310). What if we were to look at the open-ended sense of possibilities of countermemory when we treat the US nation-state as a hegemonic site of memory production vis-a-vis its narratives of its founding? Or, to bring *The Grass Dancer* to bear on these questions of multidirectionality, what if we understand memory worlded not into the state of North Dakota but into and on Dakota homelands? Such questions build upon the line of argumentation Rothberg develops in engaging with the work of Chickasaw theorist Jodi Byrd.

In taking seriously the “claims of American Indians and the legacies of indigenous genocide,” Rothberg avers, one sees that “such claims and legacies break the frame of the nation-state and call for recognition of the United States’s ongoing colonialist status” (310). In this context, Rothberg cites Byrd who asserts: “while twentieth-century genocides external to the American continent are avowed, those genocides intrinsic to American economic and territorial

used to carry out these seizures of land brought the relationship between theft and dispossession and primitive accumulation closer to home. Genocide is never far from the occurrence of primitive accumulation” (157).

expansion—slavery and the removal and ‘reservation’ of American Indians—remain an essential abjection at the heart of American identities” (quoted in *Multidirectional Memory* 310).

Reflecting on Byrd’s discussion of the “tense demands that arise when divergent memories converge,” Rothberg further asserts:

There can be no doubt that it has thus been ‘easier’ (relatively speaking) for Americans to confront genocides elsewhere than to confront continuing dispossession of Indians—precisely because ‘real estate’ is one of the factors involved—but it remains the case that memory’s multidirectionality provides a critical resource, as Byrd also recognizes, for contesting that unequal distribution of attention. (*Multidirectional Memory* 311)

The Grass Dancer exemplifies this latter potential of multidirectionality that Rothberg identifies.

Power depicts that potential through characters who are recipients of testimony. In turn, these characters recount for others how they witnessed their loved ones carry and work through traumatic memories. Harley’s father and other Dakota men serve in the Korean War. Calvin explains to his wife Lydia that the “COs always made Indian boys scout for them. It went back to the movies, I think, to Custer’s Last Stand and all that” (Power 203).¹⁴¹ Through Calvin’s exchange with Lydia, Power alludes to the mythologizing of Custer, a “less well-known veteran officer of the Civil War who history would only remember because he was killed by the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho alliance in 1876 at the Battle of Greasy Grass (Battle of Little Bighorn)” (Estes, *Our History* 111). As Estes clarifies, “popular accounts of the Battle of Greasy Grass and histories of the West over-romanticize the extreme violence and wanton slaughter of what became known as ‘the Great Sioux Wars’” (115). In *The Grass Dancer*, the COs tell the Dakota

¹⁴¹ Estes clarifies: “Despite popular myths, Custer and his men never mounted a brave last stand but were instead taken down as they ran away from the Indigenous warrior men and warrior women” (*Our History* 114).

men that “they could track like bloodhounds and move so quietly [they] might as well be invisible” (Power 203). These stereotypes, Lydia indicates “were not the bad things, the memories that seized my husband when his mind opened to dreams” (203). Calvin is “haunted by the Silver Star and what he had done to merit the award, the terrible work of his own hands that he wouldn’t describe for me, no matter how many times I insisted, wishing to free him” (203). Calvin’s participation in the Korean War is one of many events of US national and collective memory Power weaves into the narrative.

In a chapter framed around the 1969 Apollo 11 moon landing, Lydia’s mother Margaret Many Wounds recalls her work as a nurse in a camp for “prisoners of war” in Bismarck (109). Although Power does not name the site, it is likely the Fort Lincoln Internment Camp located south of Bismarck.¹⁴² During that period, Margaret meets Dr. Dei-ichi Sakuma, a surgeon from San Francisco who “volunteered to work at the camp after his wife died of food poisoning in Mazanar” (109-110). Manzanar War Relocation Center was one of ten camps where Japanese Americans were incarcerated (“One Camp”). When her twin children, Lydia and Evelyn, are adults, Margaret reveals to them that Dr. Sakuma is their father. The novel’s convergence of histories matters because, to borrow Estes’s words, the “design and development of the carceral reservation world was well under way by the time Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Arapahos made Custer and his Seventh Cavalry famous” (115). Yet, there has not been critical study of multidirectional memory work in this context of incarceration in the US.¹⁴³ Another narrative

¹⁴² The Fort Lincoln Internment Camp now United Tribes Technical College is located on the East side of the Missouri River. Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park then Fort Abraham Lincoln military post sits on the West side of the Missouri River.

¹⁴³ One site for study on multidirectional memory work concerning internment is the protests that occurred at Fort Sill. See, for instance, Gillian Brockell, “Geronimo and the Japanese Were imprisoned There. Now Fort Sill Will Hold Migrant Children Again, Sparking Protests.”

strain features the character Charlene Thunder, of similar age to Harley. In a chapter titled “Morse Code,” which takes place before Charlene’s birth, Charlene’s grandmother recounts how her husband “was in one of those tank regiments that liberated the concentration camps in Germany” (Power 142). She also remembers her husband telling her that “his hair turned pure white from what he saw, pure white in just a couple of days” (142). Just as *All the Light There Was* brings to the fore the convergence of histories once relegated to the footnotes, so too might *The Grass Dancer* in the context of US empire, settler colonialism, and indigeneity.

In an article titled “Decolonizing the 1862 Death Marches,” Waziyatawin Angela Wilson recalls how she first learned that her Dakota people were sent to concentration camps. Specifically, she learned about it from her grandmother, Elsie Cavender, who carried a narrative account passed down to her from her grandmother, Maza OkiyeWin (WomanWho Talks to Iron). Maza OkiyeWin was ten years old at the time of the war. Wilson notes: “Elsie entitled this story of her grandmother’s experience ‘Death March,’ consciously drawing a parallel between this forced march and that of the Bataan Death March during World War II during which 70,000 American and Filipino soldiers were forced to walk a sixty-three-mile journey to a prison camp while facing starvation and poor treatment” (“Decolonizing” 195). Wilson presents a transcript of Elsie’s account of removal, arguing that Elsie was “well aware that she was subverting the usual historical narratives from the 1862 war” and “well aware that the perpetrators of atrocities against the Dakota had gone unpunished” (198).¹⁴⁴ In Wilson’s interpretation of the significance of her grandmother’s testimony, even if she does not name it as testimony, we see how a granddaughter recognizes her grandmother’s participation in multidirectional memory work.

¹⁴⁴ While the “Japanese commander in charge of the Bataan Death March was tried, convicted, and executed by an American military commission for his actions,” the leaders behind these 1862 forced marches of the Dakota “remain celebrated heroes in Minnesota history” (198).

Published before that 2002 commemorative march and before the 2004 special issue of *American Indian Quarterly* concerning those activist efforts, the history of that removal, and remembrances of it, Power confronts the ways in which monuments and memorials that dot the landscape of Dakota Territory are as Wilson puts it, “Dedicated to the preservation of the settler’s memory of the 1862 war” (“Manipi” 156) and which restrict the “notion of memory” in support of “colonialist claims to land” (157). Elsie’s testimony and Power’s novel both model a multidirectionality that calls for recognition of the everyday colonialist status of the US.

Critical study of the everyday and extremity in settler colonial contexts has also emerged in the case of Canada. For instance, Naomi Angel invokes the everyday in her analysis of the “ways in which photographs from the Indian Residential School era in Canada have been used as evocative tools in representing both the ‘everyday’ experiences of students at the schools and something more ‘spectacular,’ a history of colonial oppression that is only now coming to light” (60). By “now,” Angel refers to the period immediately after the establishment in 2008 of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (IRS TRC). More specifically, on October 15, 2009, the Governor General of Canada, Michaëlle Jean, gave an opening address for an event in which she spoke of Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s official apology to survivors of the Indian Residential School system. She asserted, “Those photos were heartbreaking, infinitely sad, showing Aboriginal children forced by the dozens onto the backs of trucks, eyes wide with alarm, terrified”; “You know what I am talking about” (60). As Angel argues about Jean’s statement, the “implication is that Canadians know this history, and know it through its visual representation, particularly through the proliferation and circulation of archival images from the schools” (60). The photographs were circulated through personal scrapbooks, church pamphlets, and the state press and ended up in church or state archives. The images “spoke to the

efficacy of a system designed to ‘kill the Indian in the child’” (61). In the present, “they speak to the subtle and not so subtle violence of that system” (61). By the everyday Angel means the daily activities of children posing for the camera. They include children “standing at the chalkboard, as part of team photos or school plays....doing chores or learning a trade...Young girls are sewing or cleaning. Boys are learning carpentry or doing yard work” (61). In this way, she argues that the “photographs from the [residential school] system reveal complex social relationships, between students and staff, between colonized and colonizer, and between the students themselves” (61). To put it differently, they “reveal the tangled nature of the traumatic and everyday” of the schools (62).

Power explores the tangled nature of the traumatic and the everyday by revisiting the pervasiveness of the rhetoric of the frontier. Of many monuments that have “fixed in stone” (Wilson, “Manipi” 155) the historical narrative penned by White settlers, one in New Ulm, Minnesota was “dedicated to the ‘Guardians of the Frontier’” (156). What is more, in detailing the three goals of late nineteenth century federal Indian policy, Estes asserts that the legal disintegration of political and social structures of the Oceti Sakowin “was the last frontier” (116). The three policy goals were “to concentrate Indigenous peoples onto fewer reservations, to allot remaining lands, and to expand US laws and courts’ jurisdiction over reservations (115-116). Finally, it was a vision of the memory of the frontier that Josiah C. Trask penned in the preface to the “General Laws, and Memorials, and Resolutions of the Dakota Territory” of 1862. In diplomatic use, a memorial refers to an informal state paper “presented by an ambassador to the state to which he or she is accredited, or by a government to one of its agents abroad” (“Memorial” 5a) or a “statement of facts forming the basis of or expressed in the form of a petition or remonstrance to a person in authority, a government” (5b). Trask writes in the preface

to the document: “The history of Dakota is written in the past history of the Western states” (viii).¹⁴⁵ By this, Trask envisions that “the journey of the gold hunter for California and Washington will be shortened by the more glittering attractions of the Black hills and the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains” (viii). Trask ends the preface with: “This vast *terra incognita* is already undulating with the breath of civilization and the time cannot be far distant when its noble prairies and fertile valleys must yield up their wealth to the restless, aggressive, and all-conquering energy of the American people” (viii). When Harley’s ancestor Red Dress travels to Fort Laramie, the character Reverend Pyke has her transcribe his “vision of America: a place where animals were bred for food behind neat fences, mountains were leveled, valleys filled, rivers straightened, and grass trained with a ruler” (Power 256). In *The Grass Dancer*, the rhetoric of “the last frontier” takes on additional meaning. Beyond the genocide of American Indians in the quest for territorial acquisition, the last frontier also encapsulates the suppression of Dakota tribal national memory of what contemporaneous memorials in governmental use do not document. One of those memories concerns the buffalo nation.

In one scene, Harley’s grandmother, Margaret Many Wounds, tells him about her own grandmother’s blue-beaded dress which featured “buffaloes and Dakota warriors on horseback running through the sky, pictures of their spirits, because so many of them were dead” (114). Power uses the passive voice in Margaret’s speech and in the chapter, she utilizes the third-person narrator to provide an explanation of the history that the dress documents. Given that the 1864 chapter is told from the first-person perspective of Harley’s ancestor Red Dress, we can situate the dress as a material object that gives testimony to settler encroachment and Indigenous

¹⁴⁵ I need to confirm this, but there is a Josiah C. Trask who was a militia man in the 1862 Dakota Wars, and briefly, the owner of *The Dakotian*, the first settler newspaper in the territory. In the document, he is identified as “Public Printer, ‘Dakotian’ Office.”

elimination. The depiction is moreover significant given that in theorizing “settler mnemonics,” Kevin Bruyneel focuses on twentieth century political rhetoric to address how national remembrance practices concerning the US Civil War, a history narrated in terms of North-South relations, are imbricated with collective memory of the US Indian Wars, part of the project of Manifest Destiny and the nineteenth-century movement of settlers from West to East. While there is a growing body of research on the ways in which “contending memories” of the Civil War have “clashed or intermingled in public memory” (Blight 1), much work remains to be done on how many state actors in this North-South history were also participants and advocates of East-West US continental imperial expansion. There is a need to do just that: “In Minnesota the Dakota Conflict is sometimes called ‘the other Civil War’ because it ravaged the state at the same time as the wider Civil War” (Derounian-Stodola 21). Such need to understand the relationality of nineteenth-century events and US nation-state memory of them is even more prescient given Power’s description of Fort Laramie as a “place of soldiers, treaties, and immigrant trains” (246). Through these few words, Power alludes to a larger history overlooked in discussions of public memory of the US nation-state. Construction of the Union Pacific Railroad, which “Restrict[ed] Indigenous mobility by enabling colonial mobility” and “provided infrastructure for continental imperialism” (Karuka 75), was overseen by individuals like Ulysses S. Grant. In his capacity as acting secretary of war, Grant was quoted as arguing that the railroad construction would “go far toward a permanent settlement of our Indian affairs” (qtd in Karuka 73).¹⁴⁶ In the twentieth-century strain of the novel, Margaret shares the story about the dress as her family watches the Apollo 11 Moon landing in 1969.

¹⁴⁶ For a larger discussion on the development of industrial capitalism on the Plains and the extension of U.S. territorial claims, see Manu Karuka, *Empire’s Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad*, pp. 60-81.

Power juxtaposes that event, remembered in public memory through Neil Armstrong's statement "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" (qtd in Wolchover), and the intergenerational transmission of memory pertaining to US imperial relations with the Dakota. Wilson identifies the purpose of the Dakota Commemorative March of 2002 as "giving testimony to the truth about a shameful past that had been largely hidden in the previous 140 years" ("Manipi" 152). In decolonizing the history of this removal by situating it in a broader "cycle of invasion, conquest, removal, and colonization that occurred repeatedly in the settlement of America," Wilson further reflects that "those controlling the writing of history" made "little comment" about this removal and that "limited records of the events were recorded by the perpetrators, and few oral accounts among the victims have been documented" (153). In this context of the omissions in collective memory, it is no mere coincidence that Power sets up this scene against the background of the twentieth-century space race. In 2002, NASA developed the "New Frontiers." Upon his acceptance of the Democratic Party's nomination as presidential candidate for the 1960 election, then Senator John F. Kennedy gave his "New Frontier" speech at the Democratic National Convention and used the slogan for his political campaign ("Acceptance"). In the twentieth-century strain of the novel, this latter political context also recalls the activism of the American Indian Movement, including the occupation of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota from Feb 27, 1973 through May 8, 1973. The exchange between Margaret and Harley occurs before the occupation of Wounded Knee, and we can read this passage as Power portraying Dakota countermemory to the nation-state. What might that countermemory encompass? Wilson contends that 1862 war is a major turning point, in part, because it "marks the loss of our homeland and the subsequent diaspora of our people" (153). Although Margaret tells Harley about the existence of the dress, she does not

tell him the history that the dress records. On the surface level, there is silence in the transmission of memory.

Still, the image of the buffalo and Dakota warriors indexes both the extremity of collective violence and the everyday, including the Oceti Sakowin's relations with the buffalo nation. Lakotas understood the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty which established a thirty-two-million-acre permanent reservation in the present-day West River region of South Dakota as "not just an agreement between two human nations, but also an agreement among the nonhuman ones as well—including the buffalo nations" (Estes, *Our History* 109). Around this time, the US military began taking seriously how the relationship between the Oceti Sakowin and their kin, the buffalo, sustained Indigenous resistance. The frontier army decided on a new strategy: elimination of the buffalo to defeat the highly mobile Plains nations. As Estes puts it, "The 'Indian problem' was also a 'buffalo problem,' and both faced similar extermination processes, as much connected in death as they were in life. The destruction of one required the destruction of the other" (110). Harley's family no longer has the dress because "Someone got hold of the dress after Grandma died, and now it's in the Field Museum in Chicago" (Power 114). Margaret further recounts, "The Plains Indian section. I was in Chicago just once, years ago, and that was the only thing I wanted to see. I stood there all day practically, trying to figure out how I could get that dress back" (114). Upon hearing about the existence of the dress, Harley promises, "I'll get it for you someday" (114). Harley does not, but the depiction of the family's deprived access to the dress sets up the larger narrative which concerns Harley's relationship to Red Dress who identifies herself as "*memory*" (282, emphasis original).

As Margaret's explanation of the dress reveals, the beadwork is a material remembrance practice. The possession of the dress by the museum sets up the larger narrative about how

Harley needs access to Red Dress's testimony so that he can make meaning of settler colonial violence and to "danc[e] a rebellion" (332). To apply the arguments of Lisa Blee and Jean M. O'Brien to Power's novel, the location of the dress reveals the following about American memorial culture: "a certain elasticity of historical imagination; a tight-knit relationship between consumption, experience, and commemoration; and the twinned urge to sanitize and grapple with the meaning of settler colonialism" (10).¹⁴⁷ The current mission statement for the Chicago Field Museum reads: "The Field Museum fuels a journey of discovery across time to enable solutions for a brighter future rich in nature and culture" ("About the Field Museum"). The language of discovery has permeated rhetoric of "new frontiers" on land, sea, and space in the project of US imperialism. Indeed, Byrd goes so far as to argue that "discourses of savagery, Indianness, discovery, and mapping" (*Transit* xvi) undergirded the project of Enlightenment liberalism and "imperial planetarity that sparked scientific rationalism and inspired humanist articulations of freedom, sovereignty, and equality" (xv-xvi). Read in this context, it is significant that Power depicts the dress as housed in a museum. Eighteenth-century scientific and humanistic inquiry propelled surveys of the world that resulted in "European possession" and the transformation of "indigenous peoples into a *homo nullius* inhabitants of lands emptied and awaiting arrival" (xxi). Through her depiction of the significance of the ancestral dress and who has access to it over the course of a hundred plus years, Power centers for readers the larger US colonialist agenda to "liberate Indians of their lives and lands" (xxii). The novel counters the work of institutions,

¹⁴⁷ Concerning the presence of the Massasoit statue in locations across the US, Lisa Blee and Jean M. O'Brien argue: "The statue is a public history phenomenon that offers a window into the complexity of how monuments relate to historical narratives and, in particular, into the question of how national narratives 'travel' along with monuments that seek to 'freeze' vital origin stories in time and place" (8). Such need to discuss the silences of the transmission of the everyday seems even more exigent given the call to remove colonizer monuments alongside the call to remove racist and white supremacist monuments erected during and after the Jim Crow era.

including museums, which do not address their implication in “replacing Indigenous peoples and ways of life, relegating them to the past by modernity in the guise of the American nation” (Lee and O’Brien 13).¹⁴⁸ When Harley says he will retrieve the dress for his grandmother, little does he know that he will end up retrieving memory of the past. Nor does he know that the “responsibilities of that very lived condition of colonialism” (Byrd, *Transit* xx). Red Dress teaches him will serve as the basis for disrupting foreclosed Indigenous futurity fostered by US empire.

Memory of the American nation in the nineteenth century has traveled from Dakota Territory to Chicago and been decontextualized. Over the course of several years, Harley’s mother Lydia beads a dress modeled after her great-grandmother’s dress, once worn to important ceremonies now “untouched” and “unworn” in the Chicago Field Museum (Power 321). Lydia has access to the design because of a faded photograph that her mother, Margaret, has of the dress. There is a play on words here with “untouched” and “unworn” in that Lydia’s construction of the dress in the present participates in a kind of reparative and recontextualization work that Angel speaks to regarding the photographs from the Indian Residential School system. The dress represents familial history, but in extracting the dress from the community and placing it on display, the museum presents a material item from the everyday under occupation while not recognizing that very history it documents. In Lydia’s version of the dress, an “expanse of blue beads formed a brilliant sky, and streaming through the glittering air were the slender forms of

¹⁴⁸ The current Chicago Field Museum website mentions the museum’s colonial origins but does not offer self-reflexive commentary about it. The original Museum opened in 1894, and the collection grew out of items on display in the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in the “White City” (“About the Field Museum”). Considered a premier natural-history museum, the website touts: “Our more than 150 *scientists and researchers travel to the far corners of the world in search of new discoveries* and clues to what life was like hundreds, thousands, and millions of years ago” (“About the Field Museum,” emphasis added).

Dakota women waving to their husbands, warriors on horseback *leaping across death*, and shaggy, tireless *buffaloes that were never brought down*” (321, emphasis added). The visual depiction is part of Lydia’s testimony of the events in nineteenth-century Dakota Territory that Harley has not been told. The narrator indicates that at the Dakota Days Contest Powwow, Lydia “would never use her voice to tell Harley what he needed to hear. She would offer a story he could read with his eyes” (322). Where the field of cultural memory studies has taken for granted oral or written testimonies as means by which to transmit memories, Power suggests other means of transmission can be powerful. Lydia thinks to herself, “*We will dance together*” and, “*He will finally know me and understand where he comes from*” (322, emphasis original).” The narrator notes, the “memories Lydia wore that evening were a gift to her son” (322). Beyond Lydia’s dress of memories, Harley in *The Grass Dancer* goes on to learn about his community’s past and present from Red Dress.

Through her portrayal of Red Dress, Harley’s ancestor, Power reimagines the site of the fort as one of disenfranchisement to one of power and resurgence, of presence over absence. In her article “Venus in Two Acts,” Hartman invokes the phrase “listening for the unsaid” (3) and the phrase “respect the limits of what cannot be known” (4) when discussing the ubiquitous reference to enslaved women as Venus in the archive of Atlantic slavery, where archive encompasses a “death sentence, a tomb, a display of the violated body, an inventory of property, a medical treatise on gonorrhoea, a few lines about a whore’s life, an asterisk in the grand narrative of history” (2). As she does in *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*, Hartman in this essay addresses the everyday experience of collective violence when she asks, “How does one listen for the groans and cries, the undecipherable songs, the crackle of fire in the cane fields, the laments for the dead, and the shouts of victory, and then assign words to all

of it? Is it possible to construct a story from ‘the locus of impossible speech’ or resurrect lives from the ruins? (“Venus” 3). Why the need to narrate these details and “‘exhume buried cries’ and reanimate the dead” (3)? She clarifies, “There is not one extant autobiographical narrative of a female captive who survived the Middle Passage. The silence in the archive in combination with the robustness of the fort or barracoon, not as a holding cell or space of confinement but as an episteme, has for the most part focused the historiography on quantitative matters and on issues of markets and trade relations” (4). It is significant that Red Dress’s narrative takes place at a fort. Fort Laramie was established by the US government in 1849. Its strategic location meant that it was a “symbol of increasing US presence and authority” (Estes, *Our History* 94) at a time when Congress outwardly promoted “peace” and a “civilizing mission” (95) but put into practice increased military occupation. After having had a “nightmare” in which she walks a landscape emptied of its grass, leading her to feel that “Death crackles beneath [her] moccasins” (Power 246), Red Dress takes action and travels to Fort Laramie. Power characterizes Red Dress as a representative of her tribal nation, even if settlers do not recognize her as such. Moreover, Power characterizes Red Dress’s spirit as the episteme, the nest of memories, that counters the settler mnemonics generated at the fort.

“Time,” Red Dress claims, “extends from me, flowing in many directions, meeting the horizon and then moving beyond to follow the curve of the earth” (Power 282). What is key here is that time does not just flow in a circular motion from Red Dress’s spirit, what she means by “me,” but from memory. Red Dress reflects, “I am a talker now and chatter in my people’s ears until I grow weary of my own voice. *I am memory*, I tell them when they’re sleeping” (282, emphasis original). Red Dress also reflects a hundred years after the events of Fort Laramie, “I can bear witness to only a single moment of loss at a time” (282). Red Dress’s testimony disrupts

the history-writing processes evinced by such documents as the General Laws, and Memorials, and Resolutions of the Territory of Dakota. Power thus presents a character who participates in a kind of “directional memory” that encodes domestic inter-national events. Mishuana Goeman offers “directional memory” to describe her experience as a Seneca woman migrating within what is now the US.¹⁴⁹ Specifically, Goeman asserts, “stories about who we were provided me strength and remained with me as we moved from place to place. The stories we continue to make reflect earlier stories and influence our everyday practices” (7). Directional memory work is testimony work. Red Dress observes: “There have been too many soldiers and too many graves. Too many children packed into trains and sent to the other side of the country. Many times I ran alongside those tracks and waved at the bleak copper faces. *You are Dakota*, I called to them. *You are Dakota*” (Power 281-2, emphasis original). Here, Red Dress alludes to American Indian boarding school history, especially the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, open from 1879 to 1918. One character in the novel returns to the reservation from Carlisle in 1912, and his community notes that “he didn’t remember one story about his own tribe. He didn’t remember one honor song” (107). The founder of Carlisle was Richard Pratt, a “former Indian fighter who marched under Custer against the Oceti Sakowin” (Estes 118). As Estes summarizes, “To his military mind, the Indian War would no longer be waged on the battlefield but in the classroom” (118).¹⁵⁰ In detailing this history, Estes further asserts: “Complete removal from their parents, it was believed, was the only way to prevent relapse to Indigenous ways” (118). Some critics have interpreted *The Grass Dancer* as an example of

¹⁴⁹ Goeman borrows this term from the title of one of Esther Belin’s (Diné) poems.

¹⁵⁰ Pratt developed his designs for the modern off-reservation boarding school system when he oversaw Indigenous prisoners of war at Fort Marion in Florida. He was assigned to oversee the confinement of Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne inmates and in his role, he began putting into practice assimilation through education (118).

magical realism.¹⁵¹ Or, as another critic has argued, Power “problematizes the typical boundaries of realistic fiction” by “call[ing] into question Western or mainstream conceptions and understandings of what constitutes reality” (Schweninger 48). Taking seriously the history Power presents through Red Dress’s narrative arc can expand analysis of the novel from a discourse on the real versus the unreal. In so doing, we see that Power, through Red Dress, portrays directional memory. Though Harley does not retrieve the red dress in the museum, he inherits something valuable from Red Dress: a means to envision resurgence.

Whereas maps or historical documents may “designate land as existing only in certain places” (Goeman, *Mark My Words* 5), directional memory emphasizes communal upbuilding. In the narrative strain of the novel set in the 1980s, Harley meets Red Dress in a vision and prayer ceremony. There, Harley’s other ancestors tell him, “a warrior is not what you think” and that he must “learn something new each and every time” he recalls the “many things” his relatives in the vision tell him (330). It is Red Dress who tells Harley that she wants him “to be happy” because she “know[s] what it is to be sad” (332). As a “witness to what followed” (220), meaning after the character Reverend Pyke kills her at Fort Laramie, “a place of death” and “a place of ghosts” (273), Red Dress remembers not just dispossession and devastation but also resistance. The location is no mere coincidence. The first Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851, which was “short-lived,” “deeply flawed,” and never ratified by the Senate, permitted the US to build wagon roads and railroads in exchange for compensation for “damages caused by the overland emigrations” (Estes, *Our History* 94). The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty likewise granted the US the right to build

¹⁵¹ See Roland Walter, “Pan-American (Re)Visions: Magical Realism and Amerindian Cultures in Susan Power’s *The Grass Dancer*, Gioconda Belli’s *La Mujer Habitada*, Linda Hogan’s *Power*, and Mario Vargas Llosa’s *El Hablador*” and Lee Schweninger, “Myth Launchings and Moon Landings: Parallel Realities in Susan Power’s *The Grass Dancer*,” pp. 48-52.

railroads through Oceti Sakowin territory (110). Red Dress witnesses all of this. “One time,” she reflects, “I stood in front of a chuffing engine and tried to keep it from moving forward, but it blasted through me” (Power 282). Her “spirit never abandons the Dakota people, though sometimes all it can do is watch” (281). She also watches over Ghost Dancers, breathing a “refreshing wind into their faces” when they faint in “desperate, useless ecstasy” (281). Time extends from Red Dress, and her directional memory of not just settler violence but also this “political movement [that] spread like prairie fire across the West, promising Indigenous rebirth” (Estes, *Our History* 122) gets passed onto Harley.

As the carrier of memories in the face of the legacies of the fort, she tells Harley, a grass dancer at the Dakota Days Powwow, to “remember” that “through the old steps” he is “dancing a rebellion” (Power 331). After three days in the vision pit, an “honor song swell[s] in Harley’s ears” and he realizes “the truth,” that what he hears is “the music of his own voice, rising” (333). Here, “rising,” connects back to the opening of the novel, in which Harley, prepares for the grand entry to the Powwow by drawing markings on his face, passed down from one generation to the next, making him feel as if he “slip[s] behind an ancestral mark” (19). As he does so, he hears “the dead grandfathers’ voices scratching the house with hoarse whispers, rasping like static from the radio” (20). They hum “We are rising, we are rising” and “We are here, we are here” (20). Here. Present tense. Across the US nation-state, “Time is a structuring force...that shapes collective memory” and the “creation of a ‘year zero’ in settler time makes anniversaries possible, which then foster potent forms of collective memory” (Lee and O’Brien 202).¹⁵² To

¹⁵² As O’Brien and Lee also argue, “It nurtures narratives of peaceful colonization and Indigenous acquiescence, of European settlement as a force of modernity and Indian disappearance as a yardstick for progress. Such calendrical commemorations reproduce the political temporality of settler colonialism” (202).

borrow the words of Lee and O'Brien again, against calendrical time, Red Dress's testimony "set[s] in motion an alternative timeline that emphasizes Indigenous resilience throughout a shared past" (203). That alternative temporal consciousness disrupts settler memory, a long-standing production as Power so keenly depicts in *The Grass Dancer*.¹⁵³

Imperial Intimacies and Memories of the Everyday

Bringing Hartman's argument for reading the fort or barracoon as an episteme in the context of transatlantic slavery to bear on Power's novel and occupation of Dakota homelands opens additional avenues for the study of inter-colonial and inter-imperial memories of the everyday of traumatic pasts. Estes asserts that the "aftermath of the war to maintain slavery, which cost half a million lives, was profoundly different from the aftermath of the Dakota uprising—and rarely are the two stories told side by side" (*Our History* 102). In making this critique, Estes's point is not to promote or facilitate competitive memory work in regard to violence against American Indian and Black communities. Rather, we can see his argument as a call for the study of multidirectional memory. One way to develop this connective practice is to expand upon the study of withheld memories of the everyday of traumatic pasts that I delineated through my analysis of *All the Light There Was*, *Salt Houses*, and *The Grass Dancer*. Indeed, such possibilities have been lurking right in front of us. In the introduction to *Imperial Intimacies: A Tale of Two Islands* (2019), Hazel Carby writes that her book project is a "very British story. It is a story of the everyday ties, relations and intricate interdependencies of empire and colonialism. It does not conform to the way in which most stories of empire have been told and it questions what we think we know about our shared colonial past" (1). Estes's argument

¹⁵³ On calendars as evidence of the mutually constitutive relationship between collective memory and political temporality as well as their place in nation-building, see Kevin Bruyneel, "The Trouble with Amnesia: Collective Memory and Colonial Injustice in the United States."

about the need to tell the story of the aftermath of the US Civil War and the aftermath of the so-called Indian Wars of the 1860s functions as a similar call to take another look at a colonial past that has not yet passed. In bringing Harootunian's concept of the "unspoken as heritage" to bear on the interrelatedness of the afterlives of transatlantic slavery and of Manifest Destiny, we can also see that Carby juxtaposes history and the everyday, the relationship between family narratives and institutional archives, and questions of withholding in the inheritance of traumatic memory.¹⁵⁴ She writes:

But family stories and historical accounts sit uneasily side by side. When I assembled the various pieces I found that rather than cohere into a unified narrative their juxtaposition revealed the shards of conflict and contradiction that familial, national and imperial ideologies work to conceal. I used family memories as a guide to navigate material in the National Archives of Jamaica and the UK, but when I stumbled I had to put aside the voices of my relatives because they hindered my ability to see what they had *disguised, hidden, or had no intention of passing on*. (2, emphasis added)

The potential to extend the conceptualization of the withholding of memories that I developed specific to Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases is also exemplified by the unidentified but methodologically possible discourse on inter-imperiality that *The Unspoken as Heritage* gives rise to.

¹⁵⁴ As Hartman reflects about writing *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*: "The goal was to expose and exploit the incommensurability between the experience of the enslaved and the fictions of history, by which I mean the requirements of narrative, the stuff of subjects and plots and ends" ("Venus" 10). In other words, while "History pledges to be faithful to the limits of fact, evidence, and archive, even as those dead certainties are produced by terror," Hartman "wanted to write a romance that exceeded the fictions of history---the rumors, scandals, lies, invented evidence, fabricated confessions, volatile facts, impossible metaphors, chance events, and fantasies that constitute the archive and determine what can be said about the past" (9).

Harootunian does not cite Hartman in invoking the term “afterlife” throughout the memoir (and, once, “afterlives”), but his work addresses similar questions.¹⁵⁵ Hartman herself does not explicitly identify silences as one aspect of the afterlife of the transatlantic slave trade in *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* although she theorizes the entanglements of the unspoken, the everyday, and the intergenerational and transnational migration of memory.¹⁵⁶ Similar to Harootunian as he reflects upon his parents’ disinterest in discussing the past, Hartman also interprets the significance of the silences that pervade testimonies of her ancestors. Of her grandparents’ departure from Curacao and vow to “make good in New York and to return home” (*Lose Your Mother* 14), Hartman observes that “When it became clear that they would never return home, my grandparents erected a wall of half-truths and silence between themselves and the past” (15). Moreover, in discussing how as a graduate student completing a dissertation she stumbled upon her great-great-grandmother Polly’s testimony in a volume of slave testimony from Alabama, Hartman notes that her ancestor replied “Not a thing” when a “white interviewer in Dixie in the age of Jim Crow” asked her “what she remembered about slavery” (15). Hartman reflects that Polly’s decision not to speak the violence of enslavement for this interviewer “stirred [her] own questions about memory and slavery: What is it we choose to remember about the past and what is it we will to forget?” (15). She

¹⁵⁵ “Afterlives” appears in the following: “In response to the absence of extensive correspondence between each and their relatives, no family archive of photographs from that time, and a general reluctance to impart the experience of this episode in their lives, I had to resort to a recomposing of what they might have gone through on the basis of what the three of us were able to recall or thought they had endured from the afterlives of the genocidal moment” (Harootunian 6-7).

¹⁵⁶ Carby also uses aftermath. For instance, she concludes about her project to trace her family’s history and the entanglement of two islands, England and Jamaica: “It is a story of imperial intimacies, of geographies of pain, of the continuing aftermath of enslavement, a story of land, of sea, and of water” (4).

continues, “Was the experience of slavery best represented by all the stories that I would never know? Were gaps and silences and empty rooms the substance of my history?” (15-16). One can with deference to the particularities of the histories Harootunian and Hartman engage still recognize that Hartman raises similar questions as Harootunian when he comes to view his parents as witnesses to silence and himself as someone who has more empty than filled rooms in his inherited memoryscape of the Armenian Genocide.

What is more, both memoirists grapple with the agency of the dispossessed in practicing silence in a new environment.¹⁵⁷ In her discussion of how slave revolts in the Americas were for a century and a half motivated by the enslaveds’ longing to return to the homelands from which they were dispossessed, Hartman asserts: “Inevitably, time did erase the Old World or, at least, blunted its features and silenced its image. No doubt there were also those who chose to ‘murder the memory’ because it was easier that way. Forgetting might have made it less painful to bear the hardships of slavery and easier to accept a new life in a world of strangers” (97).¹⁵⁸ She concedes, though, that “Perhaps it wasn’t a choice at all, and the past slowly disappeared over the course of the years, or the shock of enslavement destroyed it in one fell swoop” (97). Through a series of rhetorical questions, Hartman further underscores that knowledge of everyday life has been truncated for descendants of the enslaved:

¹⁵⁷ In describing his parents’ diasporic migration to the US, Harootunian writes: “Arrival in a foreign and alien environment demanded involuntarily entering somebody else’s history without knowing the coordinates of this new space-time” (71). Harootunian also writes, “Diasporic migration meant leaving one’s history behind because it was or is in the process of being destroyed” (71). About the Armenian experience broadly, he writes: “The settlements of the Armenian diaspora throughout the world were attempts to remain connected to that lost history—however imagined, abridged, and symbolized by Ani’s once greatness---in the midst of a larger urban configuration that belonged to others” (71). Ani was an Armenian city in Anatolia.
¹⁵⁸ Although Hartman uses “forgetting” here, she makes a distinction elsewhere. Hartman clarifies, “silence and withholding were not the same as forgetting” (*Lose Your Mother*, 154-55).

How long did it take for the mother tongue to be eradicated by a new language? Was the ephemera of everyday life—the pat and scratch of women’s feet in the compound at dawn, the low rustles of reeds in the lagoon, the rhythm and nonsense of childhood games, the murmur of trees at nightfall, the mutter of wakeful spirits, the charcoal skies of harmattan, the aroma of boiled cassava, the spire of anthills, or the amber color of grasslands in midafternoon—the first thing to disappear or the only thing that lasted? (97).

None of the novels addressed in this chapter of “A Map of This Place” engage the legacies of transatlantic chattel slavery. While foregrounding the differences in the experiences of collective trauma and recognizing the particularity of different forms of violence that Hartman addresses and those addressed by Kricorian, Alyan, and Power, I want to suggest that Hartman’s theorization on descendants’ critical self-reflexivity on their own demands of wanting to know about the Old World but the factors which prevent them from knowing opens up avenues of inquiry in the study of cultural traumatic memory in Armenian, Palestinian, and American Indian/First Nations cases. That is, Kricorian, Alyan, and Power seem to ask in their respective novels: how can a descendant let the past fall away when that past has remained unspoken and, until the convergence of histories prompts a breakthrough, a past that has not yet been transmitted?

Building off on the transcultural and transnational transits of memory that I have so far delineated in chapters two and three of “A Map of This Place,” the following chapter takes a closer look at the workings of nested memory when memory travels within diasporic formations and not just across geopolitical borders or cultural communities.

CHAPTER 4: WE WHO BECOME TOGETHER: NETWORKS OF INTER- AND TRANS- CULTURAL MEMORY TRANSLATION

Հայերէն: Ես հայ եմ: Ես հայերէն կը խօսիմ:

Հայերեն: Ես հայ եմ: Ես խոսում եմ հայերեն:

Քիչիւք Չօճուգարըն Իք Քիթապը

To a reader not familiar with the Armenian language, the first two lines above appear to be the same. Indeed, translated into English, each passage reads as follows: “Armenian. I am Armenian. I speak Armenian.” To a reader familiar with the orthography of the pluralistic Armenian language, the է in Հայերէն (Armenian, Hayerēn) in the first line is indicative that the first line is written in the Western Armenian language. է is taken as the cultural symbol for էութիւն (ēut‘iwn), which means “substance, essence, or existence” (Kouyoumjian and Torossian 79). In this case, the է makes up the suffix -էն in Հայերէն, and -էն as a suffix means “of.” We might make a literal translation of the word Հայերէն as “being of Armenians” where “Հայեր” is the plural of what we in the Armenian language call ourselves, “Հայ.”¹⁵⁹ But, the է, to me, reflects how I live my life in relation. Հայերեն (Armenian, Hayeren) in the second line with the ն in the suffix -են reflects the reformed orthography under Soviet rule. That line is written in the Eastern Armenian language. In both Eastern and Western Armenian, the final sentence of the first two lines read “I speak Armenian,” but the conjugations are different: Ես հայերէն կը խօսիմ (Yes hayerēn gë khosim) versus Ես խոսում եմ հայերեն (Yes khosum em hayeren).

Although the government of the Republic of Armenian lists Հայերեն as the official language, those of us on the ground know that the statement is a half-truth (“Demographics”).

¹⁵⁹ Definitions include “Armenian language” and “in Armenian” (Kouyoumjian and Torossian 146).

For, I the արեւմտահայերէն (Western Armenian) speaker would be an outsider carrying my mother tongue among արեւելահայերէն (Eastern Armenian) speakers and on land that purports to be my father or mother land but that which I identify as only a part of my homeland. The root արեւ (arev) in արեւմտահայերէն means “sun,” and “արեւմտ” (arevměd) derives from “արեւմուտք” (arevmudk´) meaning the cardinal “west” direction, the geographic “Occident,” and “sunset” (Kouyoumjian and Torossian 31). I remember the difference between the terms արեւելահայերէն and արեւմտահայերէն through the mnemonic that the sun rises in the east but sets in the west. After all, արեւելք (arevelk´) means the cardinal “east” direction, the geographic “Orient,” or the “Levant” (Kouyoumjian and Torossian 33). When I read արեւել (arevel) I think of the sun rising given ելլել (yellel) means to “get up,” “rise,” or “ascend” (Kouyoumjian and Torossian 65). While the Western and Eastern division, or some may say two halves of a unity, is evocative of the localized histories in our territorial homeland, Western Armenian as Talar Chahinian identifies it, is our “stateless language,” reflective of its circulation and regeneration in Turkey and the Armenian diaspora (“The Literary Canon”). The term has taken new meaning, in this sense, then, as those like me born in that colonial West, define our էութիւն, our being, in relation to the East, meaning the Republic of Armenia and its history during and post-Soviet Union. After all, the legacy of Soviet rule is palpable in the independent nation-state—from the instruction of Russian alongside Eastern Armenian in public education, to generations of bilingual or Russian-language dominant speakers, to official government correspondences released in Eastern Armenian and Russian, to innumerable newspaper publications or advertisements which take as the norm bilingual publication in Eastern Armenian and Russian.

As I hope to have shown, one of the afterlives of the 1915 Catastrophe is the act of linguistic translation. The third sentence of the set in Հայերէն/Հայերէն encapsulates another

history. For, if I cannot locate myself in the East, this remnant of our territorial homeland, what about the West? The third line, Քիչիկ Զօնուզարնն Իլը Քիթապը, is Turkish written in Western Armenian. It is the title of a children’s school textbook published in 1892. Transliterated in Turkish, it would read Küçük Çocukların İlk Kitabı. In his study of the reach of Armeno-Turkish (Hayatar T’rk’erēn), Bedross Der Matossian juxtaposes microhistories of Armenians, who despite having different generations, socio-economic backgrounds, and provinces of the Ottoman Empire, all had a common knowledge of Armeno-Turkish.¹⁶⁰ As a twenty-first century reader who grew up in an Armenian speaking household in Utah and who was an eavesdropper to kin who spoke Turkish, these words are foreign yet familiar. I comprehend most of the title, yet my mind recognizes that this is and is not my mother tongue. The text underneath the cover of this book is written in Ottoman Turkish. I find additional significance in this book cover. Unless I learn the language of the Ottoman perpetrators, I cannot read the rest of the cover of this textbook or the documents that ordered the extermination of my people. Most citizens of the Republic of Turkey cannot read those governmental documents either. The documents are traces of what was to come: language reform aimed at “homogenization, standardization, and simplification” that alongside other “means of social engineering that focused on religious, cultural, and artistic expressions” would lead to a “particular kind of rupture” (Karaca 290). As Banu Karaca clarifies, “citizens born into the Turkish republic found themselves disconnected from the written sources of the generations before them, whereas those who had learned reading and writing in Ottoman times were deemed illiterate” (290). Without knowledge of Armenian,

¹⁶⁰ To produce this connective history, Der Matossian refers to that 1892 textbook; the ledger of an Armenian merchant in Ankara who recorded his daily business transactions in Ottoman Turkish using Arabic script but in his private notebooks accounted for his business transactions in Armeno-Turkish; and a literacy test presented to Turkish-speaking Armenian refugees who escaped the Armenian Genocide and arrived at Ellis Island (1).

citizens may walk in Taksim Square not knowing that the northern part was once Surp Hagop Armenian Cemetery and that its tombstones were used in the building of the Gezi Park's steps in the 1930s.¹⁶¹ We remnants must rely on translators to prove to the state, to government and law, the pillars upon which the modern Republic of Turkey was formed.

This chapter of "A Map of This Place" brings nested memory to bear on emerging discourses in memory studies that conceptualize translation as a process of rendering across (denoted by the prefix *trans*-) and between (denoted by the prefix *inter*-) languages and cultures. This subfield has tended to focus on how memories travel outside of any given culture and into another. That is, scholars have addressed the transference of memory as a theme in literature, turned to migrant objects and other media such as television and film, and taken up social sciences-based approaches to the study of diasporas. Another way to understand this subfield's focus is to see how scholars address the nexus of the intergenerational and transcultural transmission of memory. One recent collection, *Translating Worlds: Migration, Memory, and Culture* (2020), summarizes the work of some of its featured authors as taking up "translation in the context of intergenerational and *intra-ethnic* relations" (Radstone and Wilson 7, emphasis added).¹⁶² In this chapter of "A Map of This Place," I consider a different matrix of inter- and trans- cultural memory translation. That is, this chapter identifies "intercultural" to mean within diasporic communities and in so doing, it understands diasporas as networks in which communities that make up the larger collective peoplehood are themselves relationally constructed and maintained.

¹⁶¹ See Abiral et al., "Mobilizing Memory Through Collective Walking and Storytelling in Istanbul."

¹⁶² From the collection, see Katarzyna Kwapisz and Jacqueline Lo, "Can We Talk About Poland?" Intergenerational Translations of Home" and Rita Wilson, "Changing Places: Translational Narratives of Migration, Cultural Memory, and Belonging."

My understanding of network connectivity in diasporic belonging is derived in part from recent scholarship on the Armenian case. In a 2012 interview on Armenia diaspora and homeland relations, Khachig Tölölyan, asserts: “The variety of communities in the Armenian diaspora today is one of the many reasons why it is difficult to coordinate their actions, let alone ‘unify’ them.” He goes on to list a sampling of the innumerable communities that otherwise get subsumed into the singular rubric of “the Armenian Diaspora.” I argue that Tölölyan’s overview of “the Diaspora” as “theoretically or conceptually real” but in quotidian “deeply fragmented” and made up of “diverse communities” illustrates a need for temporal and spatial relational understanding. What I am asserting in my interpretation of Tölölyan’s arguments and its application to the study of the memoirs I take up in this chapter is a call for “expanding our usual definition of form in literary studies to include patterns of sociopolitical experience” (2), to borrow the words of literary and cultural theorist Caroline Levine. As she clarifies, “Forms are at work everywhere” (Levine 2). Once we understand form as inclusive of “literary text and its content and context,” then we see that “Formalist analysis turns out to be as valuable to understanding sociopolitical institutions as it is to reading literature” (2). In this vein, Levine takes up a broad definition of form to “mean all shapes and configurations, all ordering principles, all patterns of repetition and difference” (3). Literary critics and cultural studies scholars of the last few decades, she contends, have understood that forms constrain, differ, overlap, travel, and do political work in particular historical contexts (4-5). Having established these five influential though implicit ideas about form that have guided previous literary and cultural studies scholars, Levine then borrows the concept of “affordances” from design theory to understand the organizing principles of aesthetic objects and sociopolitical conditions. “Affordances point us both to what all forms are capable of” (10), she concludes, “and also to

their limits, the restrictions intrinsic to particular materials and organizing principles” (11). With this application of affordances, Levine goes on to investigate how four major forms—wholes, rhythms, hierarchies, and networks—have structured cultures, political communities, social institutions, literary works, and knowledge of both literature and the social. At stake in Levine’s project is linking formalism to historicism and literature to politics.

Of particular relevance to this chapter of “A Map of This Place” and its concern for translation in the study of memory is Levine’s conceptualization of networks. As a form, networks “link people and objects” in the social plane and “national cultures, writers, and characters” in the literary plane (21). Network as an organizational rubric for inquiry has been applied to the study of “transnational markets, transportation, and print culture” (112). It has also been used in “mathematics, physics, and sociology to show how these connective configurations follow knowable rules and patterns” (112).¹⁶³ However it has been taken up, the key takeaway, Levine claims, is that “network organization allows us to consider how many formal elements connect to create nations or cultures. It is thus a form absolutely crucial to our grasp of significant assemblages—including society itself” (113). Levine does not apply network to the study of diasporas and relatedly, nor does she consider how a formal analysis of networks in literature might reveal much about diasporas.¹⁶⁴ This chapter of “A Map of This Place” does just

¹⁶³ In detailing the genealogy and scope of the “concept of the network,” Caroline Levine writes that it has “expanded to include animal and plant tissues, natural crystalline structures, and, since the nineteenth century, social relationships—including any string or structure of interconnections, from transportation and communication systems to property, business, professional associations, and even literature itself” (113). She does not cite American Indian or First Nations sources here, though as we will see, Leanne Simpson writes about network connectivity in relation to plant and animal nations.

¹⁶⁴ Specifically, Levine analyzes Trish Loughran’s *The Republic in Print* (2007), “which makes the case that multiple, overlapping networks—mail, print, money, and roads—interrupted each other and frustrated the work of consolidating a new nation” (115). The second example Levine

that. That is, this chapter takes the following as foundational for conceptualizing the links between translation, memory, and the afterlives of Indigenous removal and dispossession: “All networks afford connectivity; all create links between disconnected nodes” (114). Seemingly unified wholes that diasporas purport to be are made up of networked connections or to put it differently, a set of relations.

To build on these observations, in this chapter of “A Map of This Place” I contrapuntally interpret Michael J. Arlen’s *Passage to Ararat* (1975), Jean Said Makdisi’s *Beirut Fragments* (1990), and Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg Leanne Betasamosake Simpson’s *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (2017). Each author undertakes a kind of return to roots journey. Arlen tours Soviet Armenia to learn about his heritage, prompted by older Armenian men in the US who attempt to establish kinship by sharing memories of the genocide. At the genocide martyrs monument in Armenia, Arlen comes to realize how émigrés to the Republic and those born there have a different perspective on the past and the future of their transnational community, especially given how those back home are subjugated under the rule of another “great autocratic empire,” the Soviet Union (263). Memory is nested in the sense that it is carried back into the homeland from diaspora. Reflecting upon her decision to stay in Beirut during the Civil War, Makdisi asserts: “Let those who would comment lightly on us beware: We are unforgiving judges of those who have not shared our experiences” (*Beirut Fragments* 211). Makdisi also weaves in transliterations and translations of Arabic to demonstrate how the generation who grew up during the war and stayed developed a “new language” and “adapted [it] to live-saving use” (49). Although the memoir is framed as Makdisi’s attempts to narrate and

cites is Charles Dickens’s *Bleak House* (1853). Dickens, Levine argues, “uses narrative form to convey society itself as a network of dynamically unfolding networks” (115)

make meaning of the Lebanese Civil War, she ends up extensively discussing her personal experience as a Palestinian woman. In so doing, Makdisi's confrontation of her relationship to personal and collective memory of the 1948 Catastrophe gets nested within the memoir. Finally, Simpson recalls the more than two years she spent on her community's reserve with twenty-five Nishnaabeg Elders and identifies them as theorists and their worldview as the core of her theory of an Indigenous "radical resurgent present" (10). Furthermore, Simpson identifies two Indigenous conceptualizations of internationalism—her community's "Nishnaabeg internationalism" (58) and "Dene internationalism" (64)—which she comes to understand by spending time at fellow First Nations theorist Glen Coulthard's "homeland" (65) or as, she also puts it, "as a Nishnaabeg person in Dene territory...demonstrat[ing] respect and peaceful intent between our two nations" (64). In including Simpson's text, I recognize the limitation of the rubric of memoir. As Simpson herself writes about her project, "There are those who will...position this work not as theory or an academic contribution but as a soft intellectual work or narrative or creative nonfiction. That latter positioning is both racialized and gendered, and I have no desire to center whiteness and answer to their positioning" (32). As I illustrate later, however, Simpson begins many of her individual essays which make up the whole of *As We Have Always Done* by narrating and making meaning of experiences from her past.

When read together, these memoirs challenge the assumption that cultural memory inherently functions as a unifying force for a people connected by collective trauma located in the past. These memoirists confront the haunting presence and material ramifications of past mass violence. They also make meaning of their personal identities and places within a construct of a "we," or a larger kinship network. Arlen, Makdisi, and Simpson, I argue, elucidate that in the process of recovering roots and staking claims for kinship, collective traumatic memory has

the potential to function as a root for tensions, divisions, and distances among those, to adapt Saidiya Hartman's words, who "[make] possibility out of dispossession" (*Lose Your Mother* 7). As I show, these memoirists ultimately envision a more inclusive, global "we" based on memories of survival and narratives of hope.

My readings of Arlen, Makdisi, and Simpson's memoirs is also informed by my reading of Saidiya Hartman's memoir *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (2006). I identify Hartman's memoir as a theoretical text on networks of inter- and intra- cultural memory translation and use it to expand the discourse on the nexus of translation studies and memory studies as previously articulated in two monographs and an edited collection. Two of these publications—*Mapping Memory in Translation* (2016) by Siobhan Brownlie and *Translating Worlds: Migration, Memory, and Culture* (2020) edited by Susannah Radstone and Rita Wilson—situate their conceptualization of translation and memory in relation to arguments set forth by Bella Brodzki in *Can These Bones Live: Translation, Survival, Cultural Memory* (2007). For Brodzki, translation is a "literary theme, a critical practice, a medium of intergenerational transmission and intercultural exchange, and a mode of memorialization" (15). In other words, Brodzki identifies remembrance practices as one mode of translation among several, where translation, in general terms, refers to a process of transformation. In analyzing Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* (1976), Brodzki clarifies the following about her formulation of translation as an analytic:

Translation is an intercultural as well as translingual phenomenon, a transcultural as well as interlingual process. It involves the transfer of a narrative or text from one signifying form to another, the transporting of texts from one historical context to another, and the tracking of the migration of meanings from once cultural space to another. Because

translation is a movement never fully achieved, both *trans*, meaning ‘across,’ and *inter*, meaning ‘between,’ are crucial to an understanding of the breadth of the workings of translation. (4)

In referring to Brodzki’s work, both Brownlie and Radstone and Wilson emphasize the inter- and trans- lingual and cultural senses of translation.¹⁶⁵ Specifically, Brownlie offers three conceptualizations of the translation and memory nexus, the first referring to Brodzki’s analytic, or what Brownlie calls “critical processual translation” (2). The other two are “cultural translation” (3) and “interlingual translation” (1). Similarly, Radstone and Wilson identify the “translation paradigm as a medium of communication, re-narration, trans-creation, and localization across a diverse range of domains including disciplines, cultures, generations, places, institutions, media, and genres” (1). The prefixes *inter-* and *trans-* matter for this chapter of “A Map of This Place” insofar as they denote movement. Where Brodzki, Brownlie, and Radstone and Wilson attend to the renderings of knowledge, stories, and memories as they migrate from one narrative form to another, one historical period to another, or one cultural community to another, this chapter attends to the circulation of memory internal to peoplehoods maintained in the afterlives of Indigenous removal.

In their different articulations of the migration and translation nexus, all three publications emphasize that translation is a process that results in both the “living on” and transformation of the source material. Brodzki, for instance, draws on Walter Benjamin’s view of translation as survival and the work of others such as Jacques Derrida to clarify that translation is

¹⁶⁵ Susannah Radstone and Rita Wilson write: “Interlingual translation is a potentially difficult enterprise when there is a lack of shared linguistic, literary, and cultural memory between source and target cultural groups, but translation can also act as a fruitful means for propagating memorial knowledge across linguistic and cultural borders.” (3)

“not imitation” (2). Rather, “In the process of being transferred from one realm or condition to another, the source event or idea is necessarily reconfigured; the result of translation is that the original, also inaccessible, is no longer an original per se; it is a pretext whose identity has been redefined” (4). Moreover, the language with which these scholars delineate their formulations of translation as a theoretical framework reveals a commitment to encapsulate some kind of transformation. In *Surviving or Living Beyond*, Brodzki writes, a source text is “reclaimed,” “reconstituted,” “reclected,” “reinscribed” (6). Or, to put it differently, “remnants and fragments” of a source text are “altered and reinscribed into a history that also undergoes alteration, transformation, in the process” (6) of translation. Relatedly, Radstone and Wilson argue that previous studies which address the “‘transmission’ of culture by memory” or “‘transmission’ of cultural memory” risk the methodological pitfall of “leaving unexamined the processes by which these transmissions come to be realized” (2). What studies of “memory’s translation across time (as well as across domains, genres, forms, and institutions)” need, they argue, is an engagement with translation studies as the latter field “promises to produce a fuller understanding of the processes of articulation through which these transtemporal processes of remembering become actualized” (4). By focusing on process rather than the end product of translation, Radstone and Watson focus on “[m]apping memory’s mediations, transformations, and transmissions across time, space, media and institutions, and scales” (6), similar to others invested in bringing translation studies and memory studies in conversation. In this chapter, I illustrate that acts of translation define memory work since peoples who share origins and cultural ties go on, given the condition of dispersion, to make possibility out of dispossession in different sites. Situated knowledges of past and ongoing trauma migrate in networks of hubs and

spokes, they meet to reveal shared resonances and divergences, and can produce union as much as disunion in nationhood collectivities.

In Brownlie's study, all case studies have interlingual translation as their basis but also evince cultural translation, critical processual translation, or both. As she clarifies, the monograph attends to the "variety of ways in which memory concepts can be brought to bear on translational texts and contexts, the creative possibilities of translation in relation to memory, and the achievement of human rights in which both translation and memory participate" (12). To that end, Brownlie addresses the usefulness of concepts from translation studies to nine categories of memory: Personal memory, group memory, electronic memory, textual memory, national memory, transnational memory, traditions, institutional memory, cosmopolitan connective memory. Radstone and Wilson expand these previous studies on translation and memory by engaging contemporary debates on global migration flows. Their edited collection illustrates that "cultural memories are translated in new cultural worlds, how memories of lost homes act as aids or hindrances to homemaking in new worlds, and the relations between migration, affect, memory, and translation" (1). Moreover, Radstone and Watson argue that there is an "inevitable process of cross-cultural translation that accompanies migration" and an "inescapable passage of movement between different languages, cultures, times, and worlds" (7). As their arguments illustrate, emphasis in this emerging discourse has been on rendering across cultures, not on nodes or a network of relationalities within diasporas.

Yet, Radstone and Watson are cognizant of the future possibilities that serious consideration of translation affords. "Encompassing a focus on translation, agency, and power, as well as on translation's ethics and limits," they write, "this new field will inevitably remind us that like memory, translation is a process rather than a product and like migration, translation and

remembering never stand still” (8). The production of nested memory in the afterlives of native removal and dispossession proves a timely way to expand upon such frameworks. Similar to other scholars committed to the study of the migration of memory and to the study of migration and memory, Radstone and Watson’s edited collection depends on an encompassing rubric of “migration.” As they articulate, “Increased attention to the connection between translation and migration is due to a combination of factors: it is a consequence of the marked visibility of migration phenomena in the contemporary world and of the centrality they have acquired in the social, economic, and political spheres” (5). Still, they caution scholars from assuming that “materials related to cultural remembering carry equivalent meanings across diverse locations” (5). In this context, “Translation Studies, with its understandings of how languages—understood in the broadest of terms—speak and importantly, can’t quite speak to each other, promises illumination” (5). I have a slightly different take on the notion of speaking to and against each other. I affirm that the “ability of texts and screen media to travel—particularly digitally—is unquestionable (though the question of the forces that block or hinder travel remains extremely under researched)” (5). I also support their claim that the “existence of, say, digital cultural memories of the Vietnam war, or the Rwandan genocide, can tell us little of how those memories might articulate within memory cultures on the ground when downloaded in, say, Ljubljana or Lismore” (5). As I will illustrate through my readings of *Passage to Ararat*, *Beirut Fragments*, and *As We Have Always Done*, Arlen, Makdisi, and Simpson witness the ways in which their respective communities speak to, or do not quite speak to, one another when nested memories come into contact.

As I indicate earlier, my conceptualization of network as a form and an analytic for the study of translation and remembrance practices in diasporic contexts also derives from my

reading of Hartman's memoir. In describing her motivation to undertake a return to roots journey, Hartman clarifies that "Neither blood nor belonging accounted for my presence in Ghana, only the path of strangers impelled toward the sea" (7). Still, she reflects that she traveled to Ghana because she wanted to seek those who had been "making possibility out of dispossession" (7). On her desire to seek kinship with those who were left behind, Hartman also reflects, "I had grown weary of being stateless. Secretly, I wanted to belong somewhere or, at least, I wanted a convenient explanation of why I felt like a stranger" (4). In Hartman's case, "stranger" refers to the term Ghanaians use to identify her: "*Obruni*. A stranger. A foreigner from across the sea" (3, emphasis original). "Stranger" also encodes Hartman's feeling of outsidership within the U.S. She reflects, "I was born in another country, where I also felt like an alien and which in part determined why I had come to Ghana" (4). Racism, "national indifference, if not downright hostility" towards black communities' memories of transatlantic slavery (165), and "the ongoing crisis of citizenship" Black Americans face in the U.S. (133) produce the feeling of "stranger" within the US that Hartman delineates. This realization leads her to conclude:

What each community made of slavery and *how they understood it* provided little ground for solidarity. African Americans wanted to regain their African patrimony and to escape racism in the United States. Ghanaians wanted an escape from the impoverishment of the present, and the road to freedom, which they most often imagined, was migration to the United States. (165, emphasis added)

These instances of not quite speaking to each other that Hartman articulates exemplify how translation studies can illuminate the unstable, heterogeneous transmission of memory. Where Radstone and Watson harness the lived reality of languages speaking to or past each other in their argument about the need for applying methodologies from translation studies to critical

analyses of remembrance practices, Hartman in this passage implies that one of the afterlives of enslavement is the two languages of memories with which the Black community in the US and in Ghana define their kinship. Rather than assuming a uniform, global memoryscape of transatlantic slavery, Hartman seems to say, one must take a closer look at the ways in which pockets of collective memory interact with one another.

Indeed, throughout the memoir, Hartman demonstrates that one legacy of the “rift of the Atlantic” is the question of how to conceptualize what connection “had endured after centuries of dispossession” (29) and how to actualize this connection in decolonial projects on both sides of the Atlantic. Such questions about kinship between African Americans and African peoples across waters and within land borders is “no less vexed since there was no collective or Pan-African identity that preexisted the disaster of the slave trade” (29). The passage quoted in the previous paragraph nicely articulates two key arguments that the memoir sets forth and that Hartman previews in the Prologue titled “The Path of Strangers.” First, she writes, “But then I learned to accept it. After all, I was a stranger from across the sea. A black face didn’t make me kin” (4). The second critical argument that Hartman posits in the prologue is that “Being a stranger concerns not only matters of familiarity, belonging, and exclusion but as well involves a particular relation to the past. If the past is another country, then I am its citizen” (17). Such distinctions encapsulate how Hartman and those she meets in Ghana must translate to one another their definitions of “kin” and address exclusionary practices interwoven in institutions aimed at unifying people. By institutions, I mean the memory tourism sponsored by the Ghanaian government, a point I return to in my analysis of Michael Arlen’s *Passage to Ararat*.

For now, I want to further illuminate how Hartman’s memoir can contribute to frameworks that attend to migration, translation, and memory by turning to her reflection on a

research trip in which several of her colleagues born in countries in Africa make her feel that much lonelier and that much more of an outsider. Hartman takes away from that interaction an understanding that her colleagues “didn’t experience slavery as a wound, at least they feigned that they didn’t. A terrible history had not begun for them in 1492 that had yet to end. And if they believed this was the case, they refused to admit it” (215). To theorize what she witnessed, Hartman finds that Anthony Appiah’s distinction about different kinds of pan-Africanism holds true. He stresses, “It is crucial that we recognize the independence of the Pan-Africanism of the diaspora and the Pan-Africanism of the continent” (218). This rift opens because of the ebbs and flows of remembering and forgetting. In her own commentary on forgetting, Hartman underscores that descendants of those who experienced collective trauma turn to cultural memory to make sense of lived conditions as they unfold. She observes:

Every generation confronts the task of choosing its past. Inheritances are chosen as much as they are passed on. The past depends less on ‘what happened then’ than on the desires and discontents of the present. Strivings and failures shape the stories we tell. What we recall has as much to do with the terrible things we hope to avoid as with the good life for which we yearn. But when does one decide to stop looking to the past and instead conceive of a new order? (100).

In this statement, Hartman calls attention to the struggles of descendants as they choose “if,” rather than assuming “when,” to mobilize traumatic cultural memory and if so, to what end. She also expresses that as descendants look to the future, forgetting, or at least decentering traumatic memory of the past as the “right” or “best” way to forge personal and collective identity, may actually serve as a foundation for more open conversations between and across communities on how to combat present injustices. Hartman’s statement ultimately raises two difficult questions:

When and how does traumatic cultural memory come to be seen as a burden? And what possibilities might arise through the act of decentering a feeling of obligation to identify one's self and one's community through traumatic narratives? I cannot do justice to do those questions in the scope of this dissertation. However, I hope to have demonstrated that memoirs can serve as ripe sites of theory work on the themes of translation, migration, and memory and how they might lend themselves to critiques of the singular Diaspora to richer formulations that understand dispersion in terms of networks of relations, connections, and tensions. On these notes, I turn to my analyses of *Passage to Ararat*, *Beirut Fragments*, and *As We Have Always Done*.

Subject to Another Autocratic Empire: Discourses of Survival in *A Passage to Ararat*

While Arlen does not invoke terms such as “stranger,” “stateless” or “belonging” to explain to readers his reasons for his passage to Armenia, it soon becomes apparent that he takes the journey to then Soviet Armenia to understand not just himself better, but his father, especially his father's relationship to his own Armenian identity and to Armenia in its nation-state form. In the beginning of the memoir, Arlen indicates, “I set out on a journey to discover for myself what it is to be Armenian. For although I myself am Armenian, or part Armenian, until then I knew nothing about either Armenians or Armenia” (3). Arlen's father, Dikran Kouyoumjian who changed his name to Michael Arlen, was born in Bulgaria in 1895, after his own family fled there to escape persecution under Sultan Abdul Hamid II in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. Arlen senior's family then moved to England and in turn France; Arlen junior would live in France, England, Canada, and the US. Neither blood nor belonging, to adapt Hartman's words, account for Arlen's presence in Soviet Armenia since the two generations before him had not lived in an internationally recognized Republic of Armenia. Later, Arlen notes that he and his father “were strangers” (12) and as his narrative unfolds, his coming to

terms with this detachment mimics the distance he bridges in finding his place in relation to the fatherland, or Armenia. As Sarkis, an Armenian émigré to the Soviet Union and the Arlen's unofficial guide (whom Arlen paints as having more knowledge of Armenian history than their official guide) remarks to Arlen, "Fatherland, father. It is the same thing" (136). Moreover, the question of statelessness implicitly informs Arlen's voyage. Early in the memoir, Arlen indicates, "I had a sense of 'Armenia' as a fragile network of restaurants inhabited by people who seemed to live elsewhere—in somebody else's country" (10). William Saroyan, arguably the most well-known writer in the Armenian American canon, offers Arlen an alternative account that inspires Arlen's decision to visit Soviet Armenia. Saroyan tells Arlen, "I found out that there was an Armenia" and "Of course, it isn't what it used to be, but it *is* there; it is something" (51, emphasis original).¹⁶⁶ Arlen's memoir nuances the inter- and trans- cultural memory translation framework that I previously delineated through my discussion on emerging scholarship that bridges translations studies and memory studies and my reading of Hartman's *Lose Your Mother*. That is, Arlen is not a direct descendant of a genocide survivor. He is not only a stranger by way of not knowing much about Armenian people or culture, but also by way of not having an inheritance of traumatic memory in the way that so many of the Armenians of his generation that he meets in the U.S. do. Arlen does not inherit traumatic memory of the genocide since his father and grandparents did not experience these atrocities; they had emigrated from the Ottoman Empire by 1915.

Similar to Hartman's memoir, though, *Passage to Ararat* illuminates the friction between on the one hand, interpreting one's self and forming one's identity in relation to a larger narrative

¹⁶⁶ For Saroyan's writings concerning his own visits to the sovereign nation-state, see *An Armenian Trilogy*. See also the *New York Times* article "William Saroyan's Long Journey from Fresno to His Ancestral Land" by John F. Burns.

of trauma and on the other hand, being interpreted through this lens. *Passage to Ararat* matters for the theorization of nested memory, then, as it provides a social commentary of how one may feel burdened to identify one's self in relation to his people's cultural memory or narrative marked by collective violence and how this feeling of obligation may lead the individual to resist this ascribed self-perception. Before embarking on his trip to Soviet Armenia, Arlen makes an effort to interact with different generations of Armenian American community members in New York. In the memoir, Arlen presents the older generation as alienating him. They define Armenian collective identity through the trauma they witnessed or learned about from others. At first, Arlen does not have access to the necessary language about trauma and its effects to comprehend and critically engage this generation's experiences and memories. Such narratives have an unintended effect. Arlen reflects after such an encounter with an older Armenian man, "I know that somewhere there exists a different type of Armenian, a prosperous, vigorous, robust type of Armenian, one who does not live in dark rooms and weep about the past" (24). Arlen perceives collective traumatic memory as an illness and seeks to avoid contagion by distancing himself from this past. It is not a coincidence that right after a scene in which his wife, whom he never names, shares what she reads about the atrocities and responds to his reaction with, "Oh, I'm so sorry. Of course, they're your people" (31), Arlen turns immediately to narrating Armenian history, or what he reads "about the Armenian past—the faraway, historical past" (32).¹⁶⁷ Rather than memories of mass violence and dispersal, Arlen invokes the phrase "we Armenians" (33) early on, still from the site of the US, when describing Armenians' "ancient and textured history" (33-34). Later, in response to his wife's pressing questions about what bothers

¹⁶⁷ Since Arlen never identifies his wife by her first name, I refer to her in this paper as Arlen does in the memoir. Furthermore, Arlen does not share the name of his mother or Sarkis's wife. In contrast, Arlen provides the names of his father and men he meets in the US and in Armenia.

him about this traumatic history that he has just learned, Arlen notes that it is in part because it reminds him of “the Germans and the Jews” and “the fact that the Armenians were so helpless” (143). His wife shows him that he assumes this is the case. She asks him, “How do you know they were?” (142) and he responds, “Because everyone says so” (144). Interestingly, decades later, upon the publication of his *The Resistance Network: The Armenian Genocide and Humanitarianism in Ottoman Syria, 1915-1918* (2021), historian Khatchig Mouradian would respond when asked about what motivated him to write his own book: “Because I wanted to read it. I wanted to read a book depicting Armenians not just as victims *being* killed, or objects of Western humanitarianism *being* saved, but subjects who organized and led a humanitarian resistance effort” (emphasis original).¹⁶⁸

Arlen’s drive towards disaffiliation from the rhetoric of helplessness and victimhood may inform the structure of the memoir. Though a return to familial and geographical roots journey, extensive passages on Armenian history from Urartu to the present allow Arlen to present himself as an alternative historian to his community. Though such passages seek to offer a richer history of Armenians than the “horrors” and “often terrible history of the Armenian people” as the blurb on the back of the book summarizes the narrative, what has escaped critical attention is the ways in which Arlen portrays that history through a masculine gaze. He even explicitly notes that he “was drawn to revelations of Armenians as soldiers, as warriors” (75). To attend to the gendered passages would necessitate a set of theoretical tools that I do not take up in “A Map of

¹⁶⁸ Mouradian continues, “And I chose to do it by focusing on Ottoman Syria, where Armenians were sent to die of deprivation and disease, where the largest and most brutal massacres of World War I took place. If I showed the action (genocide) and the reaction (resilience and resistance). in the region referred to as “ground zero,” the Auschwitz of the Armenian genocide, the point would be made in the strongest possible way.” See the remainder of the interview for a discussion of why scholarship has tended to portray Armenians as passive victims of violence and subjects of humanitarianism rather than as agents as Mouradian details in his intervention.

This Place.” I want to make note of the structure, though, to suggest that Arlen in the memoir is keenly aware of writing to multiple audiences. That is, he writes a “masterful account of the affirmation and pain of kinship,” as the book blurb puts it, not just to a broad US audience but to the very Armenian communities inside and outside of Soviet Armenia with whom he engages. The book blurb also invokes the singular “Diaspora.” The dichotomy of “Soviet Armenia” and the “Diaspora” does not accurately reflect the memoir’s contents as it does not account for the spatial movement of inherited memories and the renderings of speaking to/not quite speaking to that *Passage to Ararat* documents.

The larger Armenian community in the US passes onto Arlen memories of collective trauma so that he may carry them forward spatially and temporally. Yet, as he seeks further information on Armenian identities and visits Soviet Armenia, he suppresses these memories and turns instead to “a large satchel full of books about Armenia” to read “about Armenians ‘on location’” (56). For Arlen, Soviet Armenia has the potential to serve as an escape. That is, he imagines that he will meet Armenians and Armenia while distancing himself from the “ill” male bodies he witnesses. After listening to several members of the older Armenian generation in New York recount horrific stories of the genocide, Arlen finds himself thinking, “This cannot be Armenia, this cannot be what it is. Tears. Stories of evil times. Dark interiors and the croon of old men” (23). Arlen’s visit to Armenia, then, is motivated as much as it is by a personal quest to understand his father as it is a means for him to articulate Armenian identities beyond a rhetoric of trauma and loss. He notes, “All my life, Armenia and Armenians had been part of a dream; it and they were *out there* somewhere hazy, nearly invisible” and “I was traveling into the dream. I would see what I would see. I would find what I would find” (56, emphasis original). It takes Arlen several sojourns into Armenian history by way of reading history books in his apartment in

Soviet Armenia before he sees and finds how he (a stranger to Armenia), Sarkis (an émigré to Armenia), and Soviet-born Armenians (like the official tour guide) negotiate together yet apart the role of this traumatic history in the upbuilding of Armenia as a nation once again ruled over by another power.

However, in Soviet Armenia, an Armenian chooses memories of the genocide to establish kinship, adding another layer to our understanding of the distances between people that cultural memory has the potential to foster. Sarkis, a repatriated Armenian from Egypt, establishes himself as the Arlens' unofficial tour guide. He describes himself as maintaining "connections" (65) with the Soviet Union Cultural Committee that sponsors the Arlens' visit, and he "periodically offers his services to visitors—to sympathetic visitors," meaning Armenians since he reasons, that "All Armenians are sympathetic to one another (65). On their first day in Yerevan, the capital of the Republic of Armenia, Sarkis takes them to the Monument to the Armenian Martyrs. Sarkis reasons, "I am taking you on a special trip—to a place that all Armenians would want to visit. I am taking you to a *hallowed* place" (68, emphasis original). Once there, Sarkis continues with, "Every Armenian in the world should visit this monument" and that "Every Armenian should know what it is to stand before it and feel in his bones the tragedy of Armenia" (69). These portions of the memoir in which Sarkis appears matter as they reveal similarities to the kinship-making experience that Arlen has in the US. Just as the Armenian community in the US provides Arlen narratives with which to understand his heritage, so too does he meet guides in Soviet Armenia who attempt to establish a relationship with him through memory work concerning the genocide. As in New York, Arlen in Yerevan attempts to read beyond what community members deem as a defining event for Armenian identity. More specifically, Arlen resists defining himself in the way that Sarkis defines Armenians. Sarkis tells

Arlen, “To be an Armenian is to have this intolerable weight of sadness on one’s soul” (70). Sarkis identifies Arlen as one of his fellow “countrymen” (72) by assuming Arlen shares the same sentiments about the place of this traumatic history in his contemporary life.

In response to Sarkis’s attempts to build a bridge that has its foundation in traumatic collective memory, Arlen initially shuts himself off from Sarkis and opts to live “a curious life” by “stay[ing] indoors whenever possible and read[ing] [his] books” (74). He secludes himself and does not partake in Sarkis’s attempts to show him modern Armenia and we learn why when Arlen thinks to himself, “Sarkis has been trying to *define* me as an Armenian—but a certain kind of Armenian. Those damned massacres” (79). Arlen does not know that Sarkis is an émigré until his wife later tells him and justifies to Arlen that Sarkis’s subject position as a repatriated Armenian “makes him more excessive” (91). Arlen does not explore the implications of his wife’s statement; however, one can interpret Sarkis’s views within a larger tumultuous history of Armenian repatriation to the Soviet Union. Many repatriates experienced poverty, isolation, and repression, and a sizable portion was deported to Central Asia in 1949 due to their affiliation with an Armenian political party, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (“Dashnaktsutyn” in Armenian) (Laycock 124).¹⁶⁹ Armenian repatriates had to adapt to social norms of Soviet life while being “constantly reminded of their foreignness in a society trained to look out for spies, class enemies, and socially harmful elements” (Lehmann 172). These repatriates’ Eastern-Armenian-speaking kin discriminated against them by derogatorily using the term “aghpar” (Lehmann 172; Panossian 362). In Western Armenian, “aghpar” means “brother” and can colloquially replace the formal word, “yeghpayr.” To this history of repatriation, we may also

¹⁶⁹ To clarify, readers never learn about Sarkis’s affiliation with any Armenian political party, inside or outside of the Soviet Union.

add the experiences of, to borrow Ayşenur Korkmaz's terms, "ex-Ottoman Armenians" in Soviet Armenia who had arrived as refugees in then Tsarist Russia in 1915-1916, seeking "safety from the massacres and mass deportations" while "waiting to be repatriated to Anatolia" (129-130). Over time, these refugees saw the Sovietization of the short-lived Democratic Armenian Republic (1918-1920) and the emergence of the Turkish Republic. In their "new homeland" of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, these refugees "maintained feelings of attachment for their vanished 'home', which they referred to as '*Ergir*'" (130), or the homeland. Caught between the emergence of nation-states East and West, these Armenian refugees "had to come to terms with the collectivisation programme and ideological restrictions imposed by the Stalinist regime and reappraise their beliefs and rhetoric accordingly" (130). From natives to minorities in the Ergir to outsiders made to assimilate during the period of Stalinism (1928-1953), Armenians removed in the genocidal process would survive in the face of Turkish and Russian state-sponsored suppression of cultural and literary expressions (132). This brief history of refugee integration and repatriation illuminates how Sarkis functions as a figure in the memoir who manifests at least two axes of inter- and trans- cultural memory translation: he situates the genocide as a shared history to enter the polity of Soviet Armenia and he turns to it also because he assumes that as an outsider like himself, Arlen will sympathize with his experience of trying to stitch into the fabric of Armenia and a larger Armenian peoplehood. Similar to Hartman's experience, one's awareness of how a "kinsman" reads one's own identity through a memoryscape that one may not hold has the potential to generate a different kind of belonging, a belonging that looks to the present and the future rather than just the past.

To better explicate this, I want to turn to the memory tourism Hartman discusses, which can illuminate the memory tourism that Arlen portrays, even if he does not formally name it

memory tourism. Hartman aptly summarizes the tensions that arise when her body travels into the space of Ghana and activates inherited traumatic memories to those who have similar but also different concerns than she does regarding citizenship and belonging. In describing how the Ghanaian state attempts to create a public memory of enslavement through tourism on slave routes, Hartman asserts that “most Ghanaians weren’t fooled by the mirage” of establishing “solidarity with their newfound kin,” meaning African Americans returning to their “African home,” and doing so “through freshly minted memories of slavery” (*Lose Your Mother* 165). She continues, “The story of slavery fabricated for African Americans” through this memory tourism industry aimed at economically developing the state “had nothing to do with the present struggles of most Ghanaians” (165). While the state formalizes memory work that requires Ghanaians to “strike *obruni* from their vocabulary and welcome their African American kin back home” (164), a lack of mutual conversation about the aftereffects of transatlantic slavery for descendants in *both* the US and Ghana produces a project in which diasporic-born and nation-state-born individuals see each other as speaking a language not compatible with their own. Indeed, Hartman asserts that in critiquing returnees, Ghanaians do not consider how “the two decades of political setbacks and economic decline” that African Americans experienced actually motivate these trips or that many African Americans also lived in poverty (171). African Americans, she continues, “were encouraged to mourn because it generated revenue,” but their “grief struck no common chord of memory, no bedrock of shared sentiment” (171). A lack of discussion on the ongoing effects of transatlantic slavery on both sides of the Atlantic engenders a failed memory-based kinship making process. It seems that both Ghanaians and African Americans who return want the other group to hear their succeeding experiences after the abolishment of transatlantic slavery. The tension between members evinced here implies that a

successful project of establishing kinship through memory work necessitates looking not only backwards, but to the afterwards.

To bring this argument to bear on *Passage to Ararat*, we see how Sarkis interrupts the work of the official tour guide in Soviet Armenia to bring the Arlens to the Armenian Genocide memorial complex. Given the context of refugee integration and repatriation, Sovietization, and Stalinist purges, we see that Sarkis attempts to introduce Arlen to Western Armenia. In her study, Korkmaz turns to oral history interviews that she conducted with the descendants of the refugees in Yerevan as well as childhood memoirs, autobiographical novels, short stories, poems, and exilic folk songs produced by Armenian refugees or their children in Soviet Armenia. These sources lead Korkmaz to discern that the “post-Stalin era also marked a new phase in the ex-Ottoman Armenians’ ‘homeland’ orientations in Soviet Armenia, with which they drew parallels between the two trajectories of Armenian suffering in the twentieth century: the Armenian genocide and the Stalinist purges” (132). As of my writing of this dissertation, I have not come across a piece of scholarship that discusses the encounter between these two memoryscapes, especially their potential multidirectionality and roles in kinship-making. *Passage to Ararat*, however, can serve as a springboard for filling this gap.

Distance away from Yerevan affords Arlen an opportunity to confront Armenian history post-1915 and to witness hardships Armenians faced under the rule of the Soviet Union. Just as Hartman realizes that diasporic-born and nation-state born individuals’ different yet related experiences produce layers of cultural memories, so too does Arlen come to see cultural memories as stacked, sedimented, or accumulated over time. In the village of Byurakan, Arlen asks about life in the 1930s. He learns about famine, hunger, the loss of lives due to starvation, and silence. At the same time, he learns from citizens’ palpable knowledge about forced labor

camps and the disappearance of family members. He observes that the “snowy silences of Armenia had been but one of the terrible acts that men had been required to contend with” (155). He hears memories of the “Stalinist nightmare of the nineteen-thirties and forties” (156) and notes that in the aftermath many Armenians of multiple generations hold themselves “upright and proud” (156), innovate, and build up their country. This witnessing in the present leads Arlen to reassess Armenians’ relationship to remembrance practices surrounding the genocide. In so doing, he describes a kind of postmemory before the codification of the term: “[I]t seemed that even those who had not been personally involved, such as Sarkis, carried with them an ‘experience’ of those earlier massacres—perhaps some racial memory of events—like a poison” (156). An awareness of survival under recent harsh conditions and subjugation prompts Arlen to finally read about genocide, to understand the conditions and structures that make such orchestrated violence possible, to map how this case study informs succeeding acts of mass violence in the twentieth century, and to realize how Turkish nation-state denial frames Armenians’ individual and collective remembrance practices. With this multifaceted view, Arlen reinterprets his “search for Armenia and the Armenian ethos,” especially why many of the Armenians he met in the US “always came back to this matter of the ‘massacres,’ of the ‘genocide’” (246). He observes, “One knew that this fixation came from something deep, as deep as trauma” (246).¹⁷⁰ The inter- and trans- cultural memory translation that Arlen and others

¹⁷⁰ This line and the way that Arlen “reads” the experience of collective violence and its transgenerational resonances by invoking the term “trauma” also proves fascinating in that published in 1975, the memoir precedes significant theoretical and methodological developments in cultural and Humanities-based trauma studies. Ruth Leys situates this period in the field of trauma studies as the “contemporary literal-critical fascination with the allegedly unrepresentable and unspeakable nature of trauma” (16) in *Trauma: A Genealogy* while Michael Rothberg identifies it as “the intellectual genealogy that culminated in the poststructuralist theorization of trauma in the 1990s” (xii) in the preface to *The Future of Trauma Studies*.

participate in functions as a kind of “becoming” in the sense that they start to produce a language for trauma and memory studies, a method to make meaning of the pervasiveness of memories tied to mass violence well after such an event ends.

On the surface, *Passage to Ararat* ends the way it begins: a visit to “the Monument on the plain of Ararat” (251). However, the memoir also closes differently than it begins because, as Arlen notes, he “had been different when [he] last went” to the memorial site (251). As Arlen revisits his relationship to traumatic memories, he looks to Ararat, which he identifies as “that primeval monument” which rises up from the open plain (253). This image of rising, of “life and death side by side” (256), encapsulates the message of survival that Arlen takes away from his visit to Soviet Armenia. As he stands between a monument to loss and a monument to resilience, Arlen feels that he is “home” (254), identifies Sarkis as “kinsman” and as “brother” (255), and believes that he had brought his father alongside him to this place and to this moment. When Arlen and his wife leave Armenia, Arlen offers readers an aerial view of modern Armenia, “a tiny island in the ocean of the Soviet Union,” and its people as “subject-citizens of yet another great autocratic empire” (263). From his position in a plane looking down below, Arlen concludes, “there was something quite grandly human in the Armenian experience, with its misfortunes, and pride, and survivorship, and hope: the hope of something better to come, periodically dashed” (269). Indeed, notions of survival, hope, and dreams for a better future ultimately lead Arlen to conclude that he, Sarkis, and the other Armenians he meets are “kin to begin with” (293). Perhaps this latter understanding of kinship forged around becoming or rising up influences the selection of a title for the memoir. It is, after all, *Passage to Ararat* and not *Passage to (Soviet) Armenia*.

By way of a transition into my analysis of *Beirut Fragments*, I want to return to the scene in New York. An older Armenian man introduces Arlen to the duduk, an ancient Armenian double-reeded woodwind instrument made of apricot wood. This man instructs Arlen that when two people play music together, “One of them holds a single note. The other plays the song. The song always gets the applause. But to hold the single note is very hard” (21). The relationship that the elder Armenian man articulates between the two duduk instrumentalists serves as a useful metaphor for interpreting Arlen’s experience of carrying traumatic memory into Soviet Armenia. If we use the image of playing the duduk as a framework to understand an act of carrying and making meaning of traumatic memory, then we must take a closer look, as Arlen ultimately does, at the instrumentalist holding the sustained note from his or her position within a nation-state rising out of the ashes but still not fully independent or autonomous. Although *Passage to Ararat* ostensibly focuses on Arlen, the memoir also draws attention to the other instrumentalists, the carriers of traumatic memory, who arguably have a more difficult task than Arlen in bearing witness to the past in the face of state-sponsored silencing and discrimination. Back in the US, Arlen’s wife asks, “does the Armenian story end with Kouyoumjian going to Australia? With Sarkis in Erevan, waving behind the police? Here in America?” (290). Arlen responds, “It seemed to be that probably the only point to the ‘Armenian story’ was that it continued” (290). In his wife’s line of questioning, the Kouyoumjians are an Armenian family Arlen visits in Istanbul after leaving Soviet Armenia and on their way back to the US. Arlen finds them by looking up his father’s last name in the local Istanbul phone book. This Dikran Kouyoumjian tells Arlen that he had believed Armenians were treated better in Turkey but that a new sentiment of Turkish state nationalism leads to renewed othering of Armenians, including his children’s schoolmates addressing them as “giaour” (285). This was a derogatory term, which

meant “unbeliever” or “infidel,” and it was used to discriminate Armenians and other non-Muslim minorities in the Ottoman Empire (Suny 114, 132). That Kouyoumjian family plans to emigrate to Australia, and the memoir leaves open-ended whether they do. This stop in Istanbul and the scene exemplify the relationality of Armenian belonging. For memory and translation, it means juxtaposing nested memory in the sites we call home in diaspora, holding those nests in relation to the homeland and Republic of Turkey’s denial of Armenian presence there, and comparing both of these spheres in relation to the Republic of Armenia and its iterations as a nation-state before, during, and in the wake of Sovietization.

That relational model proves timely. In 2020, the USC Institute of Armenian Studies launched the “Voices on Karabakh” digital essay series, described as “short reflections and observations on the war in and for Karabakh/Artsakh” by scholars, intellectuals, and artists to “make sense of this time, this region, this body of knowledge, and about life, values, scholarship, and the world at large” (“Voices on Karabakh”). In a piece titled “Armenian Exceptionalism No More,” Shushan Karapetian, a scholar of Armenian language instruction in diasporic contexts, makes observations that resonate with the thematic concerns that I highlighted from *Passage to Ararat*. Karapetian asserts, “There is no question that Armenia has had its own share of trauma in the last 30 years – earthquake, economic and energy collapse, war, poverty, corruption.” She continues:

I would still argue that in Armenia, one is not born with the burden of proving or validating one’s Armenianness. Most importantly, one is not born or bred in victimhood and resistance, trapped in the yearning for recognition or acceptance; one is not systematically traumatized in the transmission of unrecognized trauma. There, one is too busy leading a difficult normal life to think about being Armenian.

War, however, changes this reality. Reflecting on being in Armenia during the war, she concludes, “I witnessed the normal Armenians of my childhood morph into a template that I am more familiar with in the diaspora. I observed the current suffering of war being processed through the lens of the recycled traumas of genocide, pogroms, and previous wars, which have all been forced into the present.” She implies that citizens in Armenia, “hardened with every personal loss, every new list of the perished, every hospital bombed, every hate-filled statement, and the silence of the international community,” started to grapple with their identity in ways that the post-1915 diaspora had long done. As she writes, for those in the Republic, the “Armenianness they had taken for granted is, all of a sudden, thrust to the forefront of their existence.” Time will tell whether this global network—in the aftermath of war which itself has been perceived on the ground as part of the afterlives of removal and dispossession—will find itself performing acts of inter- and trans- cultural memory translation as part of establishing kinships of the future.

We Are Like a Secret Society: A Vocabulary for Crisis in *Beirut Fragments: A War Memoir*

Makdisi’s memoir was published in 1990, right after the signing of the mid-1989 Taif Accord which sought to bring about the end of the Lebanese Civil War but before the 1997 amnesty law that pardoned all political crimes. *Beirut Fragments: A War Memoir* opens with a chronology detailing the main events of the war, its actors, and the outcomes. *Beirut Fragments* was re-published in 1999 and featured an untitled afterword in which Makdisi, from the vantage point of nearly a decade after the book’s initial publication, describes her family’s life after the formal conclusion of the war and what has changed or remained the same in terms of Lebanese politics and civil society. The last line of the afterword reads: “There is nothing unusual about our family’s story. It is the story of many of those who lived through the war here, or who are

today living through a war somewhere else” (259). While Makdisi claims that there is nothing extraordinary about her account of the Lebanese Civil War, I take it up in this chapter in part because it defies easy generic categorization. In contrast to Arlen’s *Passage to Ararat*, *Beirut Fragments* is not straightforward prose. In addition to the chronology and afterword, the main content of *Beirut Fragments* spans eight sections. In order, they are: “Prologue,” “Crisis, with a Glossary of Terms Used in Times of Crisis,” “Beirut: A New Topography,” “Mirrors, or Contradictions: A Self-Portrait,” “Summer 1982: The Israeli Invasion,” “Ghosts: A Meditation on the Massacres,” “Remnants,” and “Beirut: An Alphabet.” Throughout the main narrative, Makdisi experiments with form such that this “document that witnesses witnessing” (Goodman 27) is as much a meditation on language, narration, and translation as it is about the contents of her memories during this period of upheaval.

While a handful of literary critics who have written about this memoir have focused on Makdisi’s recollections of the Lebanese Civil War, none have offered a thorough reading of passages concerning Makdisi’s rumination on her relationship to collective and personal memory of the 1948 Nakba.¹⁷¹ *Beirut Fragments: A War Memoir* proves useful for the study of nested memory, translation, and network connectivity in that Makdisi addresses Palestinian cultural memory in section four, “Mirrors, or Contradictions: A Self-Portrait,” roughly in the middle of the memoir. Her personal narrative as a self-identifying Palestinian woman is nested in the larger narrative. As I will show, the title of that section, mirrors and contradictions, is an apt metaphor for the tensions and possibilities she sees in understanding her Palestinian history in relation to

¹⁷¹ See Robin Truth Goodman, “In a State Without State: Jean Said Makdisi’s *Beirut Fragments* as a Thought Experiment in Public Sphere Disintegration”; Saadi Nikro, “Disrupting Memory: The Memoir of Jean Said Makdisi”; and Caroline Rooney, “A Question of Faith in Humanity: Jean Said Makdisi’s *Beirut Fragments* and Other Beirut Fragments.”

that of the Lebanese Civil War. It is also an apt metaphor for Makdisi's conceptualization of the experience of those who stayed in Lebanon versus those who left and became part of the Lebanese Diaspora.¹⁷²

In the Prologue, Makdisi contextualizes for readers that the memoir is her attempt to answer the following questions: "How can I write about Beirut? How can I collect it all into one volume: the years of pain; of watching a world collapse while trying to stave off that collapse; the layers of memories and hopes, of tragedy and even sometimes comedy, of violence and kindness, of courage and fear?" (*Beirut Fragments* 19). To her own questions, she responds, "All I can do is set down what I have seen, my glimpses into the heart of violence and madness, of a society being—dismembered? constructed? reconstructed? destroyed? resurrected? —*changed*. I can do no more than that" (32, emphasis original). The memoir, though, is more than just her struggle to find a narrative form appropriate for documenting the havoc wreaked by the war on civil society and the architecture of the city of Beirut. As she continues, "Above all, how can I express my strange love for this mutilated city; how to explain, both to myself and to others, the lingering magic of the place that has kept me and so many others clinging to its wreckage, refusing to let go, refusing to abandon it?" (19). What emerges is a multigeneric composition that may remind readers familiar with novels about the Lebanese Civil War of Rabih Alameddine's *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters* (2001). Alameddine's novel features a first-person female

¹⁷² I use "Lebanese Diaspora" strategically here because it seems to me that Makdisi identifies the Palestinian diaspora as part of, if also distinct from, Lebanese civil society. When she discusses the toll the war takes on civilians in Beirut, I understand her conceptualization of Lebanese society to be inclusive of peoples of different cultures, religious faiths, and political orientations. Moreover, in the sections where she discusses vocabulary in Arabic used to articulate the experience of war, Makdisi does not say that she refers to only Palestinians. Rather, she makes statements such as "apparently innocuous phrases are actually part of a life-saving code that Lebanese have developed in the face of sudden violence" (50).

narrator and is composed of forty-three “first” chapters to a memoir, presented in different typesets, sometimes featuring chapter numbers, occasionally in other languages, and in different lengths. Alameddine’s novel has been read as an example of “trauma fiction” in Arab Anglophone literature, and by that literary critic Syrine Hout means “narrative form that mimics the very symptoms of traumatic experience - repetition of scenes and images, temporal disorientation, and narrative indirection” which results in “textual fragmentation” (76). On the one hand, Makdisi’s discussion on her motivation for writing the memoir exemplifies Cathy Caruth’s argument that traumatic experience is “not fully assimilated as it occurs” and therefore must be “spoken in a language that is always somehow literary: a language that defies, even as it claims, our understanding” (*Unclaimed Experience* 5). In taking up a formal analysis of *Beirut Fragments*, with an eye toward reading and listening to the “language of trauma” and the “silence of its mute repetition of suffering” (9), I want to also draw out the themes of translation that emerge in Makdisi’s attempts to find the right narrative form with which to document and then make meaning of the Lebanese Civil War.

In the Prologue, Makdisi articulates, “The question remained, however, how to write, what form to choose. I tried to force the experience into a comprehensible shape. I searched for a form to fit it into, for some implement to help me impose my need for order on the chaos around me, and I found instead that chaos instead imposed itself on me” (*Beirut Fragments* 22). She indicates that at the onset of the war, she believed she “should keep a diary” and to illustrate what that might have looked like, she provides several italicized paragraphs in which she imagines a diary account of the first night her home was shelled, March 22, 1976. She prefaces those diary passages with: “might perhaps have been described like this” (22). Additionally, the paragraphs in this envisioned record begin with fragments, including: “Hardly slept at night,”

“Collect children from playground” (23), “Newspaper men at garage entrance,” and “A quick conference,” (24). Reflecting on these paragraphs that are framed around actions and thoughts over the course of a single day, Makdisi concludes: “Part of the trouble with a diary is that it limits one to one’s personal experience or that it reduces vast events to small anecdotes” (26). Makdisi abandons the thought of diary entries as an appropriate form capable of achieving what she seeks, revealing that she “once envisaged a whole book of such tales” (30). By that she means recording the “collapse of an entire society by recounting a series of episodes centered, for example, around car thefts” (26). She asks herself, though, “How to relate those awesome events that are not reducible to anecdote?” (30). Here, she means the “underbelly of the monster War” or any number of occasions identified as the “latest horror” such as car bombings (30).

Essay form serves as an alternative for the shortcomings of diary form. Makdisi recalls how at the beginning of the war she “wrote the occasional essay spontaneously and effortlessly” but that as “time went on, anger and pain grew far beyond the bonds that mere essay could contain, and then it seemed that only satire, which turns reason and logic inside out in response to a world gone mad, could deal with the problem. But that, too, proved insufficient” (31). Beyond form, then, Makdisi finds herself struggling to find the right tone with which to account for the war. For instance, she provides a series of rhetorical questions. “Should I write with hope?” (30). “Should I write with despair?” (31) “Bitter humor? Black anger? Denunciation? Irony? Sorrow?” (31). Finally, she asks, “will symbolism suffice?” (31). To this question, she responds: “In the early days of the war, I plumbed the most morbid recesses of my imagination to find a metaphor or image capable of expressing some of the pain of Beirut, and then I watched in horror as that vision turned into bloody, unspeakable reality” (31). Although she does not name language or translation as metaphors capable of expressing the task she sees for herself in

the project of documenting the “pain of Beirut,” they notably emerge in the form of the memoir, especially in the sections titled “Crisis, with a Glossary of Terms Used in Times of Crisis” and “Beirut: An Alphabet.” The first of these two appears before the section where she revisits her relationship to her personal and collective memory of the Palestinian Catastrophe. The second in this pair comes at the end of the memoir, thus making it the conclusion before the revised edition in 1999 would feature an afterword.

In that same Prologue, Makdisi articulates the exigence of her project. It is here, through her discussion of audience and her construction of insider/outsider subject positions, that we also see translation emerge as a metaphor. She reflects, “In the beginning, I had a sense that history was in the making and that I was a witness to it. There was a certain excitement in that position, a kind of exuberance at living an important moment and trying to cast an oblique light on it by recording how people—ordinary, everyday people—react, how they live during such momentous events” (207). To whom does she write? She refers to “Outsiders [who] look at Beirut from a wary distance, as though it has nothing to do with them; as though, through a protective glass partition, they were watching with immunity a patient thrash about in mortal agony, suffering a ghastly virus contracted in forbidden and faraway places” (20).¹⁷³ She also takes note of how the “world watched with indifference, or, at best, revulsion, even while feeding it with more weapons” (20). Makdisi has a point. A contemporaneous book review of the memoir in the *New York Times* begins: “After 15 years of civil war in Lebanon, the world is numb to Beirut's agony; many of us skip over news reports of the latest broken cease-fire or car bomb with a weary sigh” (Edgar). That same review, published in September 1990, evokes the term “outsiders”: “What is

¹⁷³ Makdisi also writes: “So, at all costs, we doggedly, stubbornly carry on, but always with an obsessive eye on the outside world against whose established reality we measure our own, fraught with doubt” (*Beirut Fragments* 210).

perhaps most perplexing to outsiders is that so many Beirutis, even those privileged enough to have other options, choose to remain in their battered city” (Edgar). One motivation for the memoir, then, is to address these outsiders who “speak of Beirut as if it were an aberration of the human experience” and to show them that in actuality, “Beirut was a city like any other and its people were a people like any other. What happened here could happen anywhere” (Makdisi, *Beirut Fragments* 20). Following Makdisi’s reflections, one can see that the memoir is an act of translation. Makdisi is aware of the gaze of outsiders to the plight of Beirutis. In light of translate as “To bear, convey, or remove from one person, place or condition to another” (I.1.a.) or “To interpret, explain; to expound the significance of (conduct, gestures, etc.); [or] to express (one thing) in terms of another” (II.3.), we see how Makdisi is familiarizing the experience to her audience.¹⁷⁴ As Makdisi clarifies in the Prologue, “From the inside, I watched and I recorded. I wrote to master that experience which was consuming me and the world in which we lived. I wrote as a witness to the common experiences of common people, feeling that in the trial of history there should be a record, a vindication, of their pain” (*Beirut Fragments* 20). Makdisi goes on in the memoir to nuance that construction of “Beirutis” versus “Outsiders” insofar as the succeeding sections detail a network of relations among civil society.

At the same time, Makdisi writes to another audience: those who departed Beirut during the war. In the section titled “Remnants,” she recalls, “From the beginning, there has been a peculiar keeping of accounts of who was here for what and who went away when and why and for how long” (209). She then asks rhetorically “What does it mean, then, to have stayed?” (109). There is another level of translation in the memoir: Makdisi presents those who stayed during the

¹⁷⁴ Additional definitions of translate include: “To change in form, appearance, or substance” (III.4.) and “To turn from one language into another; to render; also, to express in other words, to paraphrase (II.2.a.)

war, whether by choice or not, as a society that develops its own language.¹⁷⁵ Over time, this society, those who “chose to stay” (208), faces the reality that “with every new departure, the task [to stay] becomes more difficult and the gamble riskier” (208) since the “stakes are [their] lives” (209). On the one hand, Makdisi asserts that the formation of this community during upheaval has meant that Beirutis “have understood our own and each other’s limitations in a way that has made us all more tolerant of humanity” (210). She continues, however, that not all consequences of this communal formation have been positive:

We have paid a heavy price for this community. Let those who would comment lightly on us beware: We are unforgiving judges of those who have not shared our experiences. We are like a secret society. We have our own language; we recognize signs that no one else does; we joke about our most intense pain, bewildering outsiders; we walk a tightrope pitched over an abyss of panic that a novice does not even perceive, let alone understand. We are provoked to anger and fear by the smallest detail while suffering calamity calmly. We are, each of us, bundles of nerves wound up so tightly into little balls of extra-awareness that we bounce off the walls of our personal and collective catastrophes with an apparent ease. Every new battle, every new death, every new car bombing and massacre, every new piece of bad news is felt by each of us as a personal injury to be borne silently. (211)

¹⁷⁵ Makdisi is careful to point out that not every inhabitant of Beirut or Lebanon had equal opportunity in deciding whether to stay or emigrate. She clarifies, “In the beginning, people left for a few weeks, a few months. They took their suitcases and a few valuables. Today, more permanent moves are being made, yet few are those who have not left behind a flat or a house to return to in the event that peace is finally restored. For some people, of course, there never was a choice: Economics or the lack of the right papers dictated their staying” (*Beirut Fragments* 208).

Makdisi implies that rather than bearing witness silently, a statement that foreshadows the “No Victor, No Vanquished” state-sponsored attitude towards the war, this secret society forms a thick, many-faceted collective memory of the period. Furthermore, she implies that the language with which to speak about these events is inaccessible by those who did not experience the events on the ground. The second section of *Beirut Fragments*, “Crisis, with a Glossary of Terms Used in Times of Crisis,” and the final section, “Beirut: An Alphabet,” can be best be understood in the context of these constructions of insiders (Beirutis) and outsiders as well as those who stayed and those who departed.

The first part of “Crisis, with a Glossary of Terms Used in Times of Crisis” reads like a montage. That is, to depict the Crisis indicated in the title, Makdisi begins “It is a beautiful evening” (25). In the second sentence, she describes how from her balcony, she watches the sunset. This idyllic image of calm and comfort soon fades, and the next paragraph begins: “Suddenly, the quiet catches my ear” (36). Succeeding paragraphs begin with declarative sentences, including: “Dread and excitement churn in my stomach” (36), “The children rush in” (37), and “Another tremendous crash follows the whiz of a shell, and the windows rattle” (37). In similarly framed succeeding paragraphs, Makdisi portrays how night transforms into day, thus presenting a roughly twenty-four-hour time lapse. She then comments on that day from the vantage point of having witnessed the “Ceasefires come and go; the battles rage on” (42). Makdisi continues this process of zooming in on a day and detailing the actions that unfolded then making meaning of it in the context of the totality of the war. After several pages of portraying the Crisis in this way, Makdisi disrupts the narrative style of this section by introducing a subsection titled “A Glossary of Terms Used in Times of Crisis.”

To frame this interruption, Makdisi indicates:

As the war progressed, there grew up a new language which Beirutis on all sides adopted to life-saving use. Most of the words are perfectly ordinary, vernacular terms or refer to places that have achieved significance as landmarks in numerous battles, but subtle nuances have changed their meaning entirely. With a touch of irony here, a metaphorical use there, or even with their literal meaning intact but loaded with profound emotion, these words came to represent a body of experiences, memories, and hopes for the future.

(49)

She further clarifies for readers that “Like an organic being, the vocabulary is in a constant state of growth and change. Words and meanings metamorphose endlessly. The following list can only hint at this extraordinary aspect of the war and provide a skeletal guide to those who wish to understand” (49). Makdisi then lists words, transliterated into English from Arabic.¹⁷⁶ Sometimes she provides a single word, phrase, or sentence and its connotation in English. At other times, she provides pairs of words or clusters to illustrate how conjugations, word order, or inflection inform meaning. For instance, she lists:

<i>shu fi?</i>	What’s going on?
<i>fi shi?</i>	Anything wrong?
<i>fi shi</i>	Something
<i>ma fi shi</i>	Nothing

After providing transliterations and definitions, Makdisi provides paragraphs underneath in which she further explicates events during the war in which such expressions were used.

Regarding the terms above, for instance, Makdisi clarifies that “*Ma fi shi*” may also be used

¹⁷⁶ On her transliteration process, Makdisi writes: “In keeping with the tone and spirit of the words, only the most informal transliteration has been attempted in rendering them into English” (*Beirut Fragments* 49).

ironically, as when all hell has broken loose but you say, ‘*Ma fi shi,*’ and smile bitterly” (50, emphasis original).¹⁷⁷ Another example is the phrase “*mashi-l hal*” or “things are all right” which Makdisi explains is a “sad remark usually made when the opposite is meant, and indicates that, in spite of everything, at least one is alive” (52, emphasis original).

In addition to words like those above with specific affective attachments and situational applications, Makdisi lists and defines two words that exemplify the formulations of insider/outsider relations that she thematizes in *Beirut Fragments*. First, *muhajjar* or “refugee.” She writes, “If the War in Lebanon needed a symbol, the *muhajjar* would surely be it” (65, emphasis original). Makdisi admits, though, that that translation is limiting given the “proper translation of ‘refugee’ is *laji*’ with its parallel emphasis on ‘refugee or haven’” and that “*muhajjar* has far more negative connotations” (65, emphasis original). Moreover, *laji* “implies arrival and safety” while *muhajjar* “rests on departure and emigration; and in this grammatical form of enforced departure or emigration—the *muhajjar* is ‘one who is made to depart’” (65, emphasis original). These distinction matters: “Of the hundreds of thousands of people who have been uprooted since this war began, no reference is ever made to them as *laji*’in, that word being reserved exclusively for the Palestinians who came to Lebanon for refuge, but even they, when they have been forced to move again, have become *muhajjareen* in the context of war” (65, emphasis original).

Right after this paragraph, the second to the last word in the glossary is the phrase “*al hawadith*” or “the events” (65). The term “refers to the war that began in 1975, unless otherwise

¹⁷⁷ I am grateful to Annie Makhdoumian who served as a patient interlocutor as I asked about translations and who thus became my translator for this project. Admittedly, I highlight this constellation of words as I grew up hearing “ma fish” and “mashil hal” dropped into Armenian conversations or in Arabic conversations among my extended family.

specified: That is, people will sometimes refer to the ‘events’ of 1958 or the ‘events’ of 1973” (65). Commenting on the limitations of language to fully articulate this experience of collective trauma, Makdisi observes: “Perhaps nothing expresses so well the poverty of language in conveying the experience as this mildly and faintly contemptuous understatement that, with its close relation to the Arabic word for ‘accident,’ summarizes a catastrophic national saga” (65). In his *Disruptive Situations: Fractal Orientalism and Queer Strategies in Beirut* (2020), Beirut-born anthropologist Ghassan Moussawi argues, “For as long as I can remember, people in Beirut have used the term *al-wad*’ to capture the complexity of everyday violence, disruptions, and lack of basic services. *Al-wad*’ is the Arabic equivalent of the term ‘the situation’” (5, emphasis original). He continues:

‘The situation,’ then, is a general and nebulous term, commonly used in post-civil war Lebanon to refer to the shifting conditions of instability in the country that constantly shape every day life. It simply refers to the way things are, the normative ordering of things and events. However, it produces feelings of constant unease, anticipation of the unknown or what the future might bring, and daily anxieties. (5)

Or, in the words of a cab driver that Moussawi cites from a May 2019 encounter, *al-wad*’ produces a sense of living “in a state of everyday war” (5). “Perhaps,” writes Moussawi, the “power of *al-wad*’ is its generality and untranslatability to those who do not experience it as a daily, precarious, and normative state” (6). In Lebanon people “distinguish between ‘the events’ (*al-ahdath*) in reference to the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) and ‘the situation’ (*al-wad*)” (5). Moussawi’s articulation of the overlaps and divergences of the two words, one seeming to emphasize the historical condition and actors who carry out violence the other seeming to

emphasize the condition of living through collective violence, helps illuminate the final section of *Beirut Fragments*.

In “Beirut: An Alphabet,” takes the English language alphabet and produces a kind of acrostic poem. She begins with the letter Z and works backwards to the letter A, repeating a couple of the letters.¹⁷⁸ For W, Makdisi writes:

Waiting	<i>always waiting, for the others, for the solution, waiting for them to let the water come gurgling into our empty taps, waiting for the walls to crumble</i>
Weary	<i>of the never ending</i>
War	<i>we listen, overwhelmed with sorrow and anger to the empty</i>
Words	<i>the empty rhetoric which has only brought More</i>
Violence	<i>while the</i>
Veneer	<i>of fashion glitters like a worthless, forgotten coin in a mound of rubble as it catches the sun.</i>

Drawing out a sentence that begins “*Zbale*” for Z and “garbage surrounds us” (250) across the letters Z (once), Y (once), X (once), W (four times), and V (twice), Makdisi attempts to translate what Moussawi and Makdisi would call the situation and not just the events. The fifth section of the memoir, titled “Summer 1982: The Israeli Invasion,” presents what Makdisi indicates would be understood by Lebanese civil society as “*al hawadith*” or “the events” (65) of a particular year. In this acrostic-like poem, however, Makdisi attempts to illustrate to readers what was felt as part of the totality, the lived situation of precarity during the war.

¹⁷⁸ In the selection from the poem that I quote, I follow the italicization, spacing, line breaks, and punctuation.

In between these sections where Makdisi engages translation in a literal sense, *Beirut Fragments* presents translation in a metaphorical sense. Here I mean Makdisi's meditation on her relationship to Palestinian cultural memory. Even though "Mirrors, or Contradictions: A Self-Portrait" is the longest of the eight sections, literary critics have not extensively analyzed it. Similarly, a contemporaneous *New York Times* book review indicates, "For Ms. Makdisi, a Palestinian Christian who was born in Jerusalem and grew up in Egypt, and whose migrations led her to Vassar and Washington before she settled in Beirut in 1972, the city was a haven where the conflicting strands within her own background could coexist in harmony" (Edgar). This reviewer has a point. In the Prologue, Makdisi reflects, "My family came originally from Palestine, but I grew up as an outsider. I was educated by Englishmen and Americans, absorbing their culture and values along with those handed down by my own Arab ancestors. I was tossed about in the gales the two worlds blew at each other" (*Beirut Fragments* 21). Makdisi's use of "outsider" resonates with her brother Edward Said's work, most notable his own memoir *Out of Place*. As Said shows through his commentary on his memories of "experienc[ing] Palestine as history" (119), one's memories of traumatic history and mass violence become most powerful when one performs the difficult task of analyzing what these memories reflect about larger issues. Said notes that through his Aunt Nabila, he experienced Palestine as "cause in the anger and consternation [he] felt over the suffering of refugees, those Others" and that she communicated "the desolations of being without a country or a place to return to, of being unprotected by a national authority or institutions, of no longer being able to make sense of the past...nor of the present" (119). These experiences, "the lived unhappiness of unhealthy, disoriented people," had the most influence on Said and led him to believe "that the only remedy was personal commitment and...independence of thought" (121). Here, Said articulates the

difficulty in distancing one's self from the memories of dispossession that one experiences personally or that one's community experiences. But it is this independence of thought or critical self-reflection that ultimately shows Said how "the many displacements from countries, cities, abodes, languages, [and] environments" cause him to have "a fear of not returning" (217). He understands the risks of "being encumberingly full of memories" (233). In other words, by returning to and ruminating over the effects of the memories of exile and displacement, Said understands that just as structural institutions like schools and governments lead him to feel out of place, so too does he inadvertently participate in continually locating himself out of place.

Just as Said's writing is often as much personal as it is political, so too does Makdisi in *Beirut Fragments* provide her own political commentary on Israel and Palestine and Palestinian diasporic belonging in Lebanon. Makdisi asserts that "To have been born in Palestine means to be bound to a memory and to a sense of loss. The attempt to retrieve Palestine is at the center of the politics of the region; and to have Jerusalem stamped on one's passport is to be identified with this attempt and forever tied to it" (*Beirut Fragments* 94). To the audience of outsiders, she also explains that a "great part of the war in Lebanon has to do with the Palestinian question, and the presence of the PLO in Beirut was at least one of the factors that helped spark the conflict" (94). But, if Said's confrontation of memories focuses on how it makes him feel out of place, then Makdisi's focus is on how the upheaval of the Lebanese Civil War, as it unfolds, prompts her to confront the Palestinian experience. "Mirrors, or Contradictions" is an apt metaphor for the memory work that she describes in this section. One experience has the potential to illuminate the other; the present has the potential to make legible to "outsiders" the Palestinian experience. Still, contradiction denotes Makdisi's understanding that one collective trauma cannot simply be equated with the other.

“Mirrors and Contradictions” features four numbered subsections. Each is meant to illustrate a sentence that Makdisi “nursed...in the hope that one day [she] would produce it at the beginning of a cultural autobiography that, using [her] life as a kind of microcosm, would illustrate some of the intractable conflicts that have exploded in the area” (93). That sentence is: “*I was born in Jerusalem, grew up in Cairo, aged in America, and died in Beirut*” (93, emphasis original).¹⁷⁹ To conclude the introductory material of “Mirrors, or Contradictions, a Self-Portrait” and segue into the first subsection, Makdisi writes:

It is said that, as a person drowns, his whole life flashes through his mind just before body and mind together are engulfed. Memory is the last gasp of life, then. Here in this sea of despair and waste and sadness that is Beirut, events call up moments that flash out of my past and interpret the present. I am led by them through a corridor of mirrors into which I have wandered, looking for understanding. Impelled by my own private agony as I flail against the overwhelming and pitiless force of things around me, I am brought up short sometimes by the reflection and sometimes by the reality. I cannot always tell which is which. (97)

Makdisi’s arguments about the relations between Palestinians and Lebanese in Beirut can shed light on the structure of “Mirrors and Contradictions.” In an autobiographical essay titled “Becoming Palestinian,” Makdisi writes that “Palestinians in Lebanon, separated from their homeland and their fellow Palestinians in Lebanon, abandoned by a leadership that has moved on, continue to have to bear the memory of the conflict like a sack full of heavy rocks, both in their wretched camps and outside them” (176). While monographs and edited collections have

¹⁷⁹ The fourth section of “Mirrors and Contradictions” pertains to Beirut and is broken down into three additional unnumbered subsections.

been published about how Lebanese civil society and the diaspora remember “the events” (*al-ahdath*) and “the situation” (*al-wad’*), to recall Mouusawi’s distinction, the question remains, do such discourses mirror or differ from those by Palestinians who carry with them nested memories?

One of the rooms in the corridor of mirrors that Makdisi encounters is her inheritance of familial and collective memories of the 1948 Nakba. During the 1948 Nakba, Makdisi was a child in Cairo. At first, she describes faint memories of the past: “We were in Cairo when the Palestine war broke out in 1948. A very dim picture of this time filters through the years: We would sit around the dining room table, I in my usual place to my father’s right, sitting on a cushion so I could reach the food” (99).¹⁸⁰ In taking this memory seriously in the present context of the Lebanese Civil War, Makdisi goes on to describe what she felt and heard from her distant position. That is, “One time, although no one explained, it was clear even to a small child that something awful had happened, and that it had happened far away” (100). Looking back, she observes, “No one was wearing black so I knew that there had been no death in the family, and I was far too young to know that the death of a country is mourned in a different way” (100). Those solemn encounters become quotidian: “The scene would be repeated over and over again, as the same uncles and aunts and cousins and friends who had visited before came now, all of them changed, all their faces drawn in the same way, all the discussions tense and nervous” (100). Recalling her childhood perspective on the new normal for the family, she writes, “I came to dread the visits that I had once enjoyed. In the old days there had always been little gifts and smiles, and now there was nothing but gloom and sadness” (100). Makdisi is not quite the

¹⁸⁰ Visitors include “Uncles, aunts, cousins, friends: There was always a parade of them there at the large table. They would come from Jerusalem, from Safad, from Haifa” (99).

outsider as Arlen is when it comes to a genealogical connection to the history of removal and dispossession. That is, Makdisi was born in Jerusalem. Though she discusses in *Beirut Fragments* not seeing West Jerusalem since 1948 but visiting East Jerusalem several times before 1967, it is in “Becoming Palestinian” that she most explicitly questions whether to identify Jerusalem as her home. In that essay, she writes, “I no longer have a home in Jerusalem; I can no longer clearly identify the places of my childhood memories. I do not know if I could ever again lay down my head on a pillow of peace and tranquility and the security of belonging in the place where my father, and his fathers before him walked” (160-161).¹⁸¹ Given these reasons, she concludes: “I would be a stranger in Jerusalem” (161). That essay, “Becoming Palestinian, seeks to answer her rhetorical question, “How is it that after all these years of separation I have remained a Palestinian in my heart, mind and soul?” (161). In *Beirut Fragments*, she seems to ask what meanings collective memory holds.

Indeed, in *Beirut Fragments*, Makdisi indicates: “I do not know whether some of the little details of that great watershed year and the loss of Palestine and of what the loss meant were gleaned from the conversations at those unhappy meals, or whether I placed them there—loose petals from a thousand dead flowers—as, year after year, the stories were retold” (*Beirut Fragments* 100). She goes on to list phrases she would hear over time:

¹⁸¹ In light of translation, Makdisi’s word choice matters here. I am not sure yet what to make of her use of “*heimat*” from German. She writes, “By its very nature my *heimat* is unattainable, and exile, the state of not belonging, has become an essential aspect of my existence” (“Becoming Palestinian, 161, emphasis original). She uses it elsewhere in the essay when she argues that “Shweire is not a *heimat* for me, only a substitute, a temporary resting place for my soul, as it is for my body, my memory and my imagination” (163, emphasis original). During her childhood and young adulthood, Makdisi and her family used to spend summers in Dour el Shweire in the mountains of Lebanon.

‘All I got were the wedding pictures.’ ‘I wish I got the wedding pictures.’ ‘I didn’t even have time to bring my jewelry.’ ‘We were working in the garden.’ ‘Just the clothes we were wearing, nothing else.’ ‘What about the shop?’ ‘What about the olives?’ ‘We were the last to leave. We were all alone. What could we do?’ ‘I don’t know what happened to him. The last time I saw him we were at my brother’s house, and then I heard no more about him.’ ‘She went to her cousin’s in Beirut.’ ‘The truck came for us at six. There was no time to pack anything.’ (100-101)

These fragments make up a whole: “Much later, 1948 assumed in my consciousness the grandness of history, of justice and politics, of natural destiny and international morality. In the little corner of my mind, however, history will always mean the tragic smashing of individual lives by its cruel hands and the scattering of bewildered people reeling from its blows” (101). The passage ends abruptly there, and there is a blank line between the conclusion of this paragraph and the next. In what follows, Makdisi shares a story about the last time she was in Jerusalem, in 1966. She goes with her father, who had not been since 1948, “having shunned it since its division, unwilling or unable to bear the pain of seeing it thus” (101). He goes this time for a cousin’s wedding. Makdisi shares how she and her father climb to the top of the YMCA building near the Mandelbaum Gate, where he points out “with a hesitating finger...the streets of his childhood” (101). She believes that his recounting of his childhood was “cathartic” and that “perhaps he came to terms of sorts with the loss and the barricades” (102). At the same, she interjects, “in passing his memories on to me, he passed also the burden of memory, central to the Palestinian experience” (102). Makdisi implies in the section “Mirrors and Contradictions,” though, that it is not until she experiences the Lebanese Civil War that she makes meaning of her inheritance of memory concerning the 1948 Nakba.

How might *Beirut Fragments* and network theory matter for understanding Palestinian national, global, and simultaneously diasporic identity formation post 1948 Nakba? As illustrated in the previous chapter of “A Map of This Place,” Hala Alyan’s *Salt Houses* disrupts the categorization of the singular “Palestinian Diaspora” insofar as its polyphonic narrative structure relies on characters who negotiate their identity in several nation-states: Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, the US. In the novel, then, the depiction of the family becomes a way for Alyan to illustrate that diasporas are often transnational but that transnational communities are not always diasporic in origin.¹⁸² But while the Palestinian diasporic condition as also transnational in scope has implicitly been taken as fact, that understanding of internal relationality has not been applied to the study of memory. In the introduction to their groundbreaking *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*, Lila Abu-Lughod Ahmad H. Sa’adi have a section titled “Dis/placement.” It focuses on how the “places of Palestine are so central to memory” (16). To that end, they discuss physical attachments Palestinians have to their lands Pre-Nakba—as evinced by the preservation of deeds and keys to the houses they left behind—as well as sensual attachments—as evinced by the ways in which the smell of fruit or everyday objects used for living facilitate memory work. They also discuss place in terms of mapping and cataloguing, as evinced by Walid Khalidi’s *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (1992), and emotional attachments to place, as evinced by the

¹⁸² On the overlaps and divergences between the rubrics of the diasporic and transnational, see Tololyan, “Rethinking Diaspora (s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment” and his “The Contemporary Discourse of Diaspora Studies”; Susan Koshy, “Theorizing a Neo-Diaspora,” “The Fiction of Asian American Literature,” and “Minority Cosmopolitanism”; Thomas Faist, “Diaspora and Transnationalism: What Kind of Dance Partners?”; and Michel Bruneau, “Diasporas, Transnational Spaces and Communities.”

memorial books Palestinians wrote about their destroyed or depopulated villages.¹⁸³ What is more, titles such as Khaldi's *Before Their Diaspora: A Photographic History of the Palestinians, 1876–1948* (1984) imply a heterogeneous collectivity post-Nakba and abroad. Relatedly, we have *Being Palestinian: Personal Reflections on Palestinian Identity in the Diaspora* (2016), an edited collection that brings together the voices of 102 Palestinians in North America and the United Kingdom.¹⁸⁴ Once again, “the Diaspora” is taken for granted as a cohesive whole rather than as a collective formation made up of hubs or spokes of connectivity.

Abu-Lughod and Sa’adi further write, “Considering the kind of conditions Palestinian live under and their transnational connectivities, Palestinian identity exists in a state of constant alert” (3-4). Transnational here is taken up to mean the relationship between homeland and abroad, or the nation-state and the diaspora. In “Becoming Palestinian,” Makdisi argues that the “story of Palestine is precisely a story of division, scattering, distance, but at the same time the will to reconnect, to regather, to reunite and to restore” (176). To explicate what she means when she asserts “Our exile is a community exile from the root, the spurs, the center, that which holds us all together,” Makdisi quotes “The falcon cannot hear the falconer. Things fall apart / the center cannot hold,” the opening stanza of William Butler Yeats's poem “The Second Coming,” and concludes, “We are at once the falcon and the falconer” (172). On the relationship between the falcon and the falconer, she also asserts that “Together they form a unit, a single entity, and each owes his being to the other” (172). To her question “But what if the connection between

¹⁸³ See Susan Slyomovics *The Object of Memory: Rab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village* (1998).

¹⁸⁴ Yasir Suleiman, the editor, notes that not all the contributors use diaspora in this collection; some prefer exile while others “prefer the term *Shatat*, meaning ‘dispersal’ in Arabic, to refer to their situation of being forcibly uprooted from their native land, painfully separated from family, agonisingly scattered around the world and illegally denied their right of return - all within living memory” (3).

them is broke,” I would add, why the singular falcon? After all, Makdisi’s familial migrations have taken her from Jerusalem, her birthplace, to Egypt, Lebanon, the US. Indeed, she reflects that her time “constantly fixing, repairing, painting walls and shutters” is an “aspect of [her] Palestinian history” (163). And what of, as Alyan’s novel illustrates, communities elsewhere? For Palestinians in Kuwait or Jordan, for instance, might not respective experiences in these locales be considered part of their Palestinian history? Network theory, then, allows us to consider falcons, plural, the nests they create, and nested memory as also informed by acts of inter-communal memory translation.

A Rebellion of Love: Teaching Nishnaabeg Brilliance in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*

Leanne Simpson’s *As We Have Always Done* is in its own way a “document that witnesses witnessing,” to adapt the description applied to Makdisi’s *Beirut Fragments*. Simpson identifies herself as a witness when she writes:

As an instructor in many different Indigenous land-based programs, I often have the honor of witnessing our people link the circumstances of their lives—that is, how they experience the personal trauma of colonialism through the child welfare system, the state education system, gender violence, addictions, poverty, the prison system, or mental health issues—to the larger structures and process of settler colonialism. (27)

As We Have Always Done is a document that witnesses witnessing in the sense that Simpson details how she comes to recognize the ways in which her First Nation and the network of First Nations communities of which it is part confront ongoing colonialism. While the term “document” is a loaded term given longstanding anthropological approaches that have shaped scholarship in the US academy concerning Indigenous Peoples of North America, to identify the

book as a document that witnesses witnessing seems apt precisely because Simpson challenges the White settler gaze and discourses that have so defined indigeneity. Or, as Joanne Barker (Lenape) articulates in *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies* (2017), American Indians who call out the “racially gendered and sexualized image...of a particular kind of Indian woman/femininity and Indian man/masculinity” are “written off as not understanding Indigenous identity at all” (2). Citing the repetitive imagery of the headdress in the public spaces of fashion, film, music, and politics, Barker further asserts: “It is the point. Imperialism and colonialism require Indigenous people to fit within the heteronormative archetypes of an Indigeneity that was authentic in the past but is cultural and legally vacated in the present” (3).¹⁸⁵ Cognizant of how such tropes undermine Indigenous people’s “knowledge over their own culture and identity in an inherently imperialist and colonialist world” (2), to adapt Barker’s words, *As We Have Always Done* witnesses resurgence as much as it theorizes resurgence. On her experience in First Nations land-based programs, Simpson further asserts, “These are powerful moments to witness, and in my own person these moments have been the most theoretically generative, particularly if these moments are housed and nurtured within grounded normativities” (27). Simpson makes clear that her purpose in *As We Have Always*

¹⁸⁵ Full disclosure: One example Barker cites is that of Khloe Kardashian, who identifies as Armenian. During her niece North West’s first birthday, themed “Kidchella,” Khloe Kardashian wore a headdress and posted an image of herself on her Instagram page with the caption “Ray of clouds. Chirping of birds. Gurgling of water. Granting desire. One with water.” She was rightfully called out, but to my memory, no Armenian organization released a statement. This was not Kardashian’s first participation in redface. Additionally, the singer Cher wore a headdress in her music video for her single “Half Breed.” With Cher, there is an online discussion on whether she is a Pretendian, as at some point there emerged a discussion of her being “part Cherokee” on her mother’s side. See Adrienne Keene, “No Khloe, I Do Not Like Your ‘Tribal Look’”; Ryan Kristobak, “Khloe Kardashian Under Fire After Posting Native American Headdress Photo”; and Whitney Kimball, “Cher Will Not Apologize for ‘Half Breed.’”

Done is to explicate the intellectual origins of what she has come to call resurgence theory and its lineaments. I want to argue, however, that Simpson ends up presenting acts of memory translation within and across First Nations communities and that her conceptualizations of relations in terms of networks or constellations of belonging speak nicely to emerging scholarship on Indigenous transnationalisms in American Indian and First Nations cases.

Broadly, resurgence refers to a “set of practices through which the regeneration and reestablishment of Indigenous nations [can] be achieved” (16). Moreover, the Radical Resurgence Project, or resurgence theory as praxis, “begins from a place of refusal of colonialism and its current settler colonial structural manifestation. It refuses dispossession of both Indigenous bodies and land as the focal point of resurgent thinking and action” (34). *As We Have Always Done* is fundamentally theory, and I recognize it as such. *As Beirut Fragments* and *Passage to Ararat* illustrate, though, memoir can also do the work of theorizing culture. I uphold Simpson’s astute critique of the potential dismissal of her work via its identification as creative nonfiction and heed her caution that that generic label can lead the US academy to position her work as a “lesser” form of theory. Simpson pushes back on the need to justify story or memory as theory for a White audience and the US publishing industry. There is an act of translation here, and she thoughtfully articulates that she has no desire to participate in the debate on the credibility or legibility of her work.

Still, I want to strategically identify the book as a memoir because Simpson frames several of the chapters around recollections of her personal interactions with community members and the influences they had on her thinking about Indigenous intelligence, freedom, and relations between humans and non-humans. Each chapter can be seen as an individual essay; the chapters work together, though, to achieve a narrative structure. That is, in developing

resurgent theory, Simpson takes readers on her self-reflective journey which begins by her crediting the Elders at Long Lake #58 for their formative influence. As she writes, “Over two years, spending time with a group of twenty-five Elders who had known each other and their land for their entire lives was an extremely rare situation. One that in the next twenty years of my life wouldn’t be repeated with the same depth” (11). She concludes about the experience: “I’ve gone back to this experience over and over again in my head and in my writing because it changed the way I think in a fundamental way. It changed the way I am in the world. I want to reconsider it here because this experience is foundational to my work on resurgence and to who I have become” (11). Simpson does not use the phrase “return to roots,” perhaps purposely so given her awareness of the publishing industry, but the collection of essays renders this narrative arc as a kind of return.¹⁸⁶ I have in mind Simpson’s statements that “This is the context within which I experience resurgence” and “This is the very real urgency of resurgence” (5). To theorize resurgence, she returns to and makes meaning of the foundational lessons she learned from the Elders at Long Lake. At the same time, the first memory that she shares in *As We Have Always Done* demonstrates that her time spent with the Elders felt like a return to the communities from which she had been removed through the workings of settler colonialism and empire and a return to a kinship network from which she had been separated.

The Introduction begins “I am writing this chapter” and Simpson goes on to describe how she sits at a cafe in a sports complex where her children take swim lessons. Simpson articulates the relationship her children have to their community and in particular the ways in which they have had access to community in their youth that she herself did not at their age. On their

¹⁸⁶ I have not yet made meaning of this, but perhaps indigeneity and the legal, political category of Indigenous as outlined in UNDRIP trouble that phrasing of “return to roots.”

experience, she asserts: “This intimate resurgence in my family makes me happy” (1). In this opening passage of *As We Have Always Done*, Simpson presents a kind of insider-outsider relationship, one wrought by colonialism.

Moreover, in her discussion on witnessing later in the Introduction, Simpson articulates the recursivity of trauma: “We live with the ongoing trauma of the Indian Act, residential schools, day schools, sanatoriums, child welfare, and now an education system that refuses to acknowledge our culture, our knowledge, our histories, and experience” (4). She continues, “Over the past two hundred years, without our permission and without our consent, we have been systemically removed and dispossessed from most of our territory. We have fought back as our homeland has been stolen, clear-cut, subdivided, and sold to settlers from Europe and later cottagers from Toronto” (4). It is here that she clarifies: “This is the context within which I experience resurgence. This is the very real urgency of resurgence. Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg, like other Indigenous peoples living in the most urban and industrialized parts of Canada, have virtually no land left to be Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg” (5).¹⁸⁷ A passage a few pages later previews how this work on resurgence also theorizes the nexus of translation and memory in the afterlives of Indigenous removal. She asserts, settler colonialism “is the force that has removed me from my land, it has erased me from my history and from contemporary life” (7). Erasure from contemporary life recalls Barker’s argument that the “modernist temporality of the Indigenous dead perpetuated the United States and Canada as fulfilled promises of a democracy

¹⁸⁷ As a kind of preview of Indigenous Internationalism that she later theorizes, Simpson here also observed: “There are very few places to retreat to the bush, and almost none where you can’t hear the rumble of traffic or run into a cottager or tourist. My kids regularly remind me of this. On their first visit to Yellowknives Dene First Nation territory, they remarked that they could be more Nishnaabeg in Dene territory than in their own. They asked why there were no police or white people watching us fish, a hundred kilometers off grid outside of Sombe’ke (Yellowknife). Settler surveillance for them is a normalized part of being on the land. They expect it” (5).

encapsulated by a multicultural liberalism that, ironically, is inclusive of Indigenous people only in costumed affiliation” (*Critically Sovereign* 3). What of the claim “erased me from my history”? Simpson may have inherited history, knowledge, and a kinship network, but it is the Elders whom she meets who serve as translators and bring her back to and into her history.

In sharing this memory, Simpson also hints at future acts of translation along intergenerational lines. She notes that in contrast to her, her children “have grown up in their territory, learning with a community of artists, makers, and elders, a luxury that not all of us, including myself, have had. Because of that, I see a strength in them that I don’t see in myself. I see an ability to point out and name colonialism, resist and even mobilize to change it” (1). Moreover, she suggests a generational situated knowledge when she observes “They know more about what it means to be Nishnaabeg in their first decades than I did in my third” (1). The phrases “this context” and “this urgency,” then, do not just refer to colonialism and imperialism. These phrases also refer to the ways in which different generations have been removed from their histories and how they return to them.

Similar to the Introduction, Chapter One, “Nishnaabeg Brilliance as Radical Resurgence Theory,” begins by Simpson looking back at the time she spent at the Anishinaabeg reserve community of Long Lake #58 to create a land-use atlas. She and Professor Paul Driben, an anthropologist from Lakehead University, had been hired by the Effects on Aboriginals from the Great Lakes Environment (EAGLE) project of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). Alongside other Traditional Ecological projects of the 1980s and 1990s, the idea for this one was that policy makers would use information “documented on paper” to then “minimize the impacts of development on our lands and ways of life” (12). Ultimately, the project sought to “gather the individual cognitive, territorial maps Elders held in their heads into a collective, a visual

mapping and translation of some aspects of Indigenous Knowledge into a form that would be *recognized* by industry and the state” (12, emphasis original). In part, Simpson’s account of that time emphasizes how Driben exemplified an “overwhelmingly different way of conducting research” than Simpson had experienced in earning two biology degrees (13). She notes how Driben “actively and continually divested himself of the false power the academy bestowed upon him when he drove onto the reserve.” He does so by coming into the community “on the terms of the experts, the Nishnaabeg Elders, not the other way around” (13). The narrative Simpson uses to frame this essay exemplifies decolonial methods. That is, Simpson emphasizes the importance of the ways in which Driben “asked the Elders if they thought the project was a good idea,” “asked them how best to proceed,” and “asked them if they would be the decision makers” (13). This narrative that begins by critiquing the methodologies derived from “Western theories, epistemologies, or knowledge systems” (13) and offering alternative models soon becomes a narrative of the author’s experience of translation.

Looking back, Simpson asserts that the Elders of Long Lake #58 in the middle of the 1990s “gifted me with my first substantial experience with Nishnaabeg thought, theory, and methodology in a research context, and Nishnaabeg intelligence in life context. Paul showed me the kind of researcher I thought I wanted to be, but in reality I wanted to be able to think like those Elders, not him” (15). I use translate here as Simpson describes how, having been trained in the US academy, she had to learn to see what the Elders taught her as “Nishnaabeg brilliance—theory, methodology, story, ethics, values all enmeshed in Nishnaabeg politics and encircled by the profound influence of the world” (15). She positions herself as an outsider when she writes that she “came into their circle” as a “young Nishnaabeg person with very few useful skills to them other than youth” (13). The Elders bring her into an “alternative Nishnaabeg world

existing alongside the colonial reality [she] knew so well” (16). Years later, Simpson continues, “the seeds those Elders planted in [her] would start to grow with a strong feeling, more than thinking, that the intellectual and theoretical home of resurgence had to come from within Indigenous thought systems, intelligence systems that are continually generated in relationship to place” (16). Translation as a process also serves well as a descriptor for Simpson’s time at Long Lake and her meaning making afterward given the instances she describes when she felt as if she and the Elders were speaking past each other.

Years later, Simpson implies that she wished she had entered the community with the knowledge that she needed to listen to them on their own terms and conditions.¹⁸⁸ To illustrate:

I kept asking them about governance, and they would talk about trapping. I would ask them about treaties, and they would take me fishing. I’d ask them what we should do about the mess of colonialism, and they would tell me stories about how well they used to live on the land. I loved all of it, but I didn’t think they were answering my questions. I could see only *practice*. I couldn’t see their *theory* until decades later. I couldn’t see intelligence until I learned *how* to see it by engaging in Nishnaabeg practices for the next two decades. (18-19, emphasis original)

To have resisted the Elders’ conditions and approached their community as a graduate student would have led Simpson to write about the Radical Resurgence Project “within the confines of the academic literature and thinking of the academy in the 1990s” (25). Fortunately, she continues, that academic mode of writing did not “become [her] record of these events” (25). Instead, she held that experience “as a seed that in the right Nishnaabeg context grew and gives

¹⁸⁸ Specifically, Simpson asserts: “I feel grateful, looking back, that I was able to interact with the Elders of Long Lake #58, these Nishnaabewin theorists, on their own terms, as opposed to as a graduate student” (25).

credence to the idea that the fuel for our radical resurgence must come from within our own nation-based grounded normativities because these are the intelligence systems that hold the potential, the theory as practice, for making ethical, sustainable Indigenous worlds” (25). It is in the course of developing radical resurgence and expanding upon grounded normativity, a concept proffered by Glen Coulthard which Simpson adapts from and contributes to, that we also see Simpson discuss kinship in terms of networks.

There are two ways that Simpson discusses Indigenous nationhood in terms of network connectivity. First, Simpson references Doug Williams, whom she identifies as “my elder” (1) and who calls their “nation Kina Gchi Nishnaabeg-ogamig, the place where we all live and work together. Where Nishnaabeg are in deep relationship with each other” (8). She continues, “Our nation is a hub of Nishnaabeg networks. It is a long kobade, cycling through time. It is a web of connections to each other, to the plant nations, the animal nations, the rivers and lakes, the cosmos, and our neighboring Indigenous nations” (8). To define “kobade,” Simpson turns to the words of another elder, Edna Manitowabi, who identifies “kobade [a]s a word we use to refer to our great-grandparents and our great-grandchildren” (8). Put differently, “It means a link in a chain—a link in the chain between generations, between nations, between states of being, between individuals” (8). Simpson further clarifies that “Kina Gchi Nishnaabeg-ogamig is connectivity based on the sanctity of the land, the love we have for our families, our language, our way of life. It is relationships based on deep reciprocity, respect, noninterference, self-determination, and freedom” (8). In addition to recognizing herself as a “link in a chain,” Simpson conceptualizes her community’s “nationhood based on a series of radiating responsibilities” (9) and extends that metaphor when she asserts, “My nationhood doesn’t just radiate outwards, it also radiates inwards” (9). She even goes so far as to conceptualize

nationhood in terms of neural pathways: “Indigenous intelligence systems set up, maintain, and regenerate the neuropathways for Indigenous living both inside our bodies and the web of connections that structure our nationhood outside our bodies” (19-20). Whether she invokes the image of radiating waves or neural pathways, Simpson emphasizes Nishnaabeg Indigenous futurism:

I think about the maps those Elders carried in their bodies as two-dimensional representations of the networks they live and their parents and grandparents lived. I think about the maps my generation carries in our heads or maybe in our phones. I think about the networks the next generation will carry in their bodies. I think about how the networks we have in our heads today create the networks our children have in their heads as adults. It is this experience more than any others that has led me to center Nishnaabeg intelligence in my life, in my work, and in my thinking about resurgence. (16)

Networks, as Simpson articulates it, encompasses intergenerational relations; relations among members of a single generation and a single First Nation; and relations across First Nations communities. Although Simpson does not name memory work explicitly in *As We Have Always Done*, these axes of inter- and intra- communal relationalities can serve as a springboard to study the pathways of memory in the afterlives of removal.

The second conceptualization Simpson provides is of constellations. She comes to constellations as an appropriate description of connectivity from a larger understanding that “Collections of stars within Nishnaabeg thought are beacons of light that work together to create doorways” as well as the notion that constellations “work together to reveal theory, story, and knowledge representing a mapping of Nishnaabeg thought through the night sky and through time” (212). The concept of the constellation proves useful for Simpson insofar as the rubric also

allows her to articulate “collectively ordering beyond individual everyday acts of resurgence” (216). By this she means Indigenous social movements, and one that she discusses extensively in *As We Have Always Done* is the Idle No More Movement during the winter of 2012–13.¹⁸⁹ She recalls how she witnessed “small collectives of people coming together to organize a particular event, or to create or hold Indigenous presence that in some way was disruptive to settler colonialism” (216). Constellations, she clarifies, can “become networks within the larger whole” (217). To explicate the relationship between constellations and networks, she also addresses the level of individual stars. On the one hand, individual stars “shine in their own right and exist, grounded in their everyday renewal of Indigenous practice” (217). On the other hand, individual stars can be located in “constellated relationships, meaning relationships that operate from within the grounded normativity of particular Indigenous nations, not only with other stars but also the physical world and the spiritual world” (217). Beyond “small collectives of like-minded people working and living together, amplifying the renewal of Indigenous place-based practices,” constellations “can be larger Indigenous nations working within their own grounded normativity yet in a linked and international way” (217-218). Movements are built when “these constellations work in international relationship to other constellations” and in particular when “constellations of coresistance create mechanisms for communication, strategic movement, accountability to each other, and shared decision-making practices” (218). To bring the concepts of constellations and networks to bear on each other Simpson cites social media use during the Idle No More Movement as an example. She recalls, “More than once, I asked friends and family

¹⁸⁹ Specifically, Simpson writes “Idle No More, and I am using the term ‘Idle No More’ in the broadest sense and in a temporal sense as well; that is, I am referring to the diverse movement that was at its peak during the winter of 2012–13. I am not referring to the organization Idle No More (www.idlenomore.ca) nor the ongoing work that has continued to occur under the banner of Idle No More to the present day.” (218)

who so-and-so was, and most often they knew a friend or a cousin of the person I was asking about. In a sense, the networks that social media created between individuals were an overmapping of kinship networks that already existed, but not entirely” (220). The theoretical frameworks of radiating waves, neural pathways, or constellations that Simpson uses to articulate the significance of social movements like Idle No More can also be applied to illuminate the more intimate instances of nation-centered yet simultaneously international practices of grounded normativity that played a formative role in Simpson’s life and her development of the Radical Resurgence Project.

The chapter titled “Nishnaabeg Internationalism” begins by Simpson recalling how in her years pursuing a biology degree she and an antiracism group attended a conference at another university. She describes meeting two Haudenosaunee scholars and orators, John Mohawk and Trish Monture, and how they told her that “everything that they had said, all of their knowledge existed in my nation too, although expressed differently, and that it was [her] responsibility to seek it out” (55). In this way, they encouraged her to seek out her “intellectual home” (55). Looking back on that day, she writes “although I didn’t realize it at the time, they had just engaged me in what I later think about as Indigenous internationalism” (55). Developing the Radical Resurgence Project in this chapter, Simpson asserts that “internationalism has always been a part of [Nishnaabeg] intellectual practices” (56).¹⁹⁰ One of the ways Simpson illustrates the centrality of internationalism in its Nishnaabewin formation is by discussing the work of Dene scholar Glen Coulthard. This subsection of this essay starts by Simpson reflecting on her

¹⁹⁰ Simpson clarifies: “With our complex ways of relating to the plant nations, animal nations, and the spiritual realm, our existence has always been inherently international regardless of how rooted in place we are. We have always been networked. We have always thought of the bush as a networked series of international relationships” (56).

time in Denendeh and working with Dene people at the Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning. At first, she was “reluctant to teach in the program” (63), recognizing her positionality as a “non-Dene from the south” (64). Still, both Dene and Nishnaabeg encouraged her to “figure out a way of contribution that honored the ethics, politics, and histories of both nations” (64). Territorial acknowledgment, for instance, allowed her to “act in a peaceful manner and with respect for Dene sovereignty, self-determination, and governance” (64). In a discussion about “operating as an Nishnaabeg person in Dene territory in a careful manner so as to continually demonstrate respect and peaceful intent between our two nations” (64), Simpson cites Coulthard’s explanation of his work, *Red Skin, White Masks*, in the context of his own community and nation. She explicitly uses the word “witness” (64). Moreover, she writes how she as “seen” Coulthard explain *Red Skin, White Masks* to “uncles and cousins, elders, hunters, Dene theorists, and to my favorite, a group of young Dene feminists” (64). Simpson finds this fear admirable given that *Red Skin, White Masks* is a “difficult and challenging work” penned in a “language and a manner that are fundamentally Dene—gentle and tough, careful and expansive, and riding a current of profound love” (64).

Simpson goes on to use the phrase “I’ve watched” (64) twice to articulate having witnessed how Coulthard’s “people in his homeland” draw connections between the “concepts of recognition and resentment and the pitfalls of reconciliation” that he delineates in this academic publication that references Marx and Fanon and the “grounded normativity” of Dene indigeneity (64). Dene “*recognize* themselves and their experience in this book” because “*Red Skin, White Masks* is in part reflective of their history, their resistance, their mobilizations, their reality, and their way of life” (65, emphasis original). Simpson ends this section of “Nishnaabeg Internationalism” by arguing: “The most critical test of our work is whether it validates, clarifies,

challenges, inspires, and confounds our own communities. We don't always need to rely on the theories generated within grounded normativity, but we do need to interpret and apply those within the ethical frameworks of grounded normativities" (66). Simpson argues for the need to develop theories like grounded normativity from within the very Indigenous communities whose intellectual contributions inform the concept and who are affected by resurgence as a praxis. Her observations on network connectivity and acts of translating memories within and across First Nations communities also has implications for the study of Indigenous transnationalisms.

When it comes to the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples of North America, Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee) argues, "Given the necessarily high degree of attentiveness that such relations and their ongoing health require to maintain both inter- and intracommunity harmony (with other humans and with other-than-human beings of this world and those beyond), it wouldn't be a stretch to argue that a localized indigeneity is, by its very nature, also profoundly transnational" (172). Justice makes this claim in his explication of how an event, the visit of seven Cherokees in 1730 to England for diplomatic, political, and economic reasons, is one event in a vast archive that "offers useful commentary on our understandings of the complementarity of indigeneity and transnationalism" (172). Although he does not elaborate on it, Justice's use of "inter-" complements and also serves as a way to expand upon work unfolding on Indigenous transnationalisms by Chadwick Allen, Shari Huhndorf, and others.¹⁹¹ Indeed, though he does not comment on the fact that he holds together yet apart the inter- and intra- rubrics for relationality, Justice models one way for scholars to apply both. That is, he situates this time period as "immediately preceding the more famous consolidation of power from over thirty autonomous

¹⁹¹ See Shari M. Huhndorf, *Mapping the Americas: The Transnational Politics of Contemporary Native Culture* (2009).

Cherokee towns to a unified constitutional republic in the early decades of the nineteenth century” (175). He goes on to argue that “After consolidation, Cherokee leaders...continued the traditions of transnational engagement: among constant negotiations with the fledgling United States, Cherokees maintained political relations with other Native nations and remembered their commitments to non-Native friends and allies across the ocean, as when they provided funds for Scottish famine victims in 1847” (175). What Justice does in articulating the Cherokee nation’s “deeply rooted sense of distinctive peoplehood” is to offer networks of connection.

Scales of network connectivity, then, can nuance what scholars like Jodi Byrd have argued about American Indian transnationalism. Byrd contends, “In taking Indigenous political sovereignty as foundational to understanding Indigenous communities as distinct in and of themselves to other Indigenous communities, the emphasis on Indigenous nationalism necessitates the transnational as the preconditional for any comparative work in the field” (“American Indian Transnationalisms” 179). If we are to also take for instance, Chadwick Allen’s methodology of juxtaposition over comparison in the study of distinct Indigenous texts, performances, and contexts, we see that American Indian and Maori transnationalisms have relied on a model of nation-to-nation sites of connection, the intra-model. It is that model that informs Byrd’s conclusions about the relevance of transnational studies to American Indian and Indigenous studies. Byrd writes, “In practical terms, this foundational recognition that American Indian and Indigenous studies has always already been transnational is quickly followed by the daunting realization that subject mastery is fundamentally impossible” (179). My aim in thinking about the applicability of network to the study of memory work in the wake of native dispossession and removal in American Indian/First Nations cases is not to end up reproducing a singular model of connectivity while complicating the invocation of the transnational in the field.

Rather, my aim is to highlight that Justice and others like Audra Simpson offer models of network connectivity, even if they do not name them as such. For instance, Audra Simpson writes, the “Mohawks of Kahnawa:ke share a genealogical kinship relationship with other native peoples in North America and they *know this*. They refuse to *let go of this knowledge*. In fact, they enact this knowledge through marriage practices, political engagements, and the way they live their lives” (2, emphasis original). A reader may glaze over the implications of political formations, kinship, and relationality in her following statement: “Their genealogical and political connectedness is part of a covenant—the decision-making Iroquois Confederacy called Haudenosaunee—which is made up of clans that spread across territory” (2). In reading Heath, Byrd, and Audra Simpson’s arguments together, what I am asserting is that taking seriously Indigenous political sovereignty opens doors for theorizing the circulation of memory within and across Indigenous communities.

What do conceptualizations of network connectivity in *As We have Always Done* and these other theoretical texts have to contribute to studies on translation and memory? Siobhan Brownlie makes a case for the study of the memory and translation nexus by discussing the legal document that marks the founding of New Zealand. Through the Treaty of Waitangi, the British crown proclaimed sovereignty over New Zealand and transformed Indigenous Maori lands into a British colony. The treaty was translated into the Maori language. The “English treaty uses British terms and concepts (sovereignty, ownership of land), which in the Maori text are substituted by very different Maori terms/concepts (kawanatanga - governorship; rangatiratanga - chiefly authority over land” (ix). What is more, the British dignitaries signed the English language version while the Maori chiefs signed the Maori language one. Other scholars have gone so far as to situate this particular treaty within a larger history of a “whole string of

deliberate mistranslations and cultural misunderstandings” that facilitated White settler “possession of New Zealand Maori soil by the British Crown” (Masiola and Tomei 73). Moreover, the “exclusive right to determine the meaning of the Treaty rests with the Waitangi Tribunal, a commission created in 1975 to investigate alleged breaches of the Treaty by the Crown” (75). On the one hand, “For the Maori people the first article of the English version of the treaty had been the instrument of their loss of sovereignty.” On the other hand, “thanks to maintaining its memory alive, the Maori version of the treaty, and also the second article of the English version that stipulates protection of Maori rights, were to be the cornerstone of Maori protest and resistance” (xi). Beyond translation as it pertains to the Treaty of Waitangi, the theoretical discourse that Simpson develops in *As We Have Always Done* could inspire a line of inquiry on what acts of translation inform remembrance practices in Maori kinship structures and within specifically Maori grounded normativity.

Additionally, the edited collection *Translating Worlds: Migration, Memory, and Culture* features two essays on Australia. In “‘Having Left, Not Having-yet-Arrived’: Migrant Interiority, Translation, and Memory” Maria Tumarkin, who identifies herself as a “first-generation migrant who avoids visiting immigration museums” (72) describes her co-development of a sound installation titled “The Unending Absence” in the Melbourne Immigration Museum. The project aimed to “speak from *inside* the immigrant experience, to translate emotional and psychological realities of being an immigrant for a public institution that doesn’t usually invite and isn’t much-practiced at giving home to that kind of deep translation work” (73, emphasis original).

Tumarkin frames her discussion around a critique of museum displays: “The versions of migrants and migration they produce and reproduce are two-dimensional enough to become easily instrumentalized; they deny migrants the right to ambivalence and to simple emotional

responses to their circumstances in which, say, gratitude and grief coexist. They infantilize migrants and allow corrosive categories such as ‘model minority’ and ‘good migrant’ to persist” (72). Also focused on the Australian context, Kyle Harvey and Kate Darian-Smith study the role of Broadcast media in teaching English language skills and cultural values to migrants arriving in Australia during WWII. Specifically, they argue that English language education through the television program *You Say the Word* (1971-8) which screened nationwide on commercial stations “perpetuated, albeit clumsily, an idea of the assimilated migrant at the very time the nation was changing and adopting an official policy of multiculturalism that supported the maintenance of cultural and linguistic diversity” (119). In highlighting these critical articles which attend to memory and translation, my point is not to exchange histories of Indigenous dispossession, nation-building, and migration in Canada with that of Australia. Rather, my point is to emphasize that in these other sites of settler colonialism, there may already be existing conceptualizations of Indigenous network theory that have not received attention in the translation studies and migration studies nexus.

At the same time, these modes of inquiry could help carry forward the work of scholars such as Rosanne Kennedy who has written on the testimony of Stolen Generations, referring to “children of mixed descent who were removed from their Indigenous mothers and communities with the aim of assimilating them into white Australian culture” (“Australian Trials” 333). In taking up trauma studies scholars’ calls to address geopolitical sites beyond Europe and North America, Kennedy illuminates “how and when authoritative institutions and players—Indigenous people and their advocates, judges and human rights commissioners, literary authors and the like—knowingly draw on the discourse of trauma to frame events and responses to them” (334). While studying how Indigenous peoples of Australia speak truth to power on the

level of the state, we may also ask how examples of translation, memory work, and kinship-making in these other sites of settler colonialism may also complicate Levine's work on networks, as I sought to do with memoirs in this chapter of "A Map of This Place."

To Make Possibility Out of Dispossession

By means of a conclusion, I want to return to Hartman's *Lose Your Mother*, the root of my thinking on migration, translation, and memory. At first, Hartman presents her journey to find a sense of belonging as a failed project informed by the dissonance between her emphasis on this past history as central to identity formation and individuals in the US and Ghana who deem other issues as more pressing and more central to identity development. This split stems from the ways in which Ghanaian cultural and national memory resists integration or inclusion of the temporally and spatially migrating memories that travel with Hartman. In returning to the past in and through the present of Ghana, Hartman identifies herself as "the relic most preferred not to remember," "the reminder that twelve million crossed the Atlantic Ocean and the past is not over," and that she is "the progeny of the captives" and "the vestige of the dead" (*Lose Your Mother* 18). One could read these lines in reference to her position within the US and in so doing, interpret these lines as staking a claim for how bodies function as physical manifestations of traumatic legacies that disrupt structural forgetting imposed by perpetrators and that call attention to "crushing effects of racism in [black people's] lives" (165). Relic, progeny, and vestige make legible "that the United States ha[s] been founded on slavery" and its "wealth created by enslaved labor"; these three manifestations also resist attempts to "brush aside three centuries of legal subjection" (166). In this way, one could interpret her claim that "history is how the secular attends to the dead" (18) as an argument for how the US government, "unwilling even to acknowledge that slavery was a crime against humanity" (166), narrativizes transatlantic

slavery as a historically-bound event in the past so as to distance itself from questions of reparations and from recognizing how “the ghost of slavery haunts the present” (133) through continued structural violence against black bodies. Still, we can reread Hartman’s comments about her bodily presence in terms of the cultural memory translation she and Ghanaians undertake.

A different kind of movement frames the ending of Hartman’s memoir, one that offers a model for establishing kinship through a third language of memory, a language that centers memories of resilience and coming together. Hartman goes to Gwolu, a town in northern Ghana built in the nineteenth century by those who fled the raids, pillaging, capturing, and slaughtering waged by Babatu, an infamous Zambarima warrior. In Gwolu, “the fugitives and multitudes were called the Sisala, which means ‘to come together, to become together, to weave together’” (225). This understanding of one another serves as means to “remember what they had lost and what they became, what had been torn apart and what had come together” (225). Here, “It didn’t matter that they weren’t kin or that they spoke a different language” since “they put down their roots in foreign soil and adopted strangers as their kin and intermarried with other migrants and runaways, and their gods and totems, and blended their histories” (225). The kinship structure established by the community in Gwolu offers an alternative to the state-sponsored becoming project in Ghana that ends up fostering the building of walls rather than bridges between Ghanaians and African Americans. Instead, in Gwolu, “‘We’ was the collectivity they built from the ground up, not one they had inherited, not one that others had imposed” (225). Hartman raises complicated but critical questions about agency, inherited memory, and the imagining of a peoplehood generations after a traumatic event that so marks a group’s belonging.

In this space marked by becoming, Hartman reassesses her assumptions and realizes the slipperiness of pinning down a single definition of “we” since “it mattered whether the ‘we’ was called *we who become together* or *African people* or *slaves*, because these identities were tethered to conflicting narratives of *our* past, and, as well, these names conjured different futures” (231, emphasis original). The memory of those in Gwolu, she realizes, “wasn’t the memory of loss or of captivity, but of survival and good fortune,” and this view on memory stands in contrast to her view on the “history of defeat” she inherits, “which at best was the precondition for a victory, long-awaited, but that hadn’t yet arrived” (233). Hartman ultimately sees how others see her through their own memoryscapes, leading her to conclude, “I had been trying to find this story of defeat” and “in listening for my story I had almost missed theirs” (233). This knowledge in turn leads Hartman to redefine “African people” and delineate the potential for kinship with an eye towards the future and individuals working to secure justice for one another and with one another. With this new conceptualization of “African people,” Hartman also redefines “African identity” by no longer viewing slavery as a historically-bound event. She writes, “If an African identity was to be meaningful at all, at least to me, then what it meant or was to mean could be elaborated only in the fight against slavery, which, as John reminded me, was not about dead people or old forts built by white men but the power of others to determine whether you lived or died” (234). In this way, the language of memory that Hartman comes to share with African people grounds itself in the “reminder of what abolition and decolonization had failed to deliver” and its “promise of affiliation better than that of brothers and sisters” (172). Memory and imagination, the memoir ultimately posits, underpin resilience, activism, and empathy for others within and across groups.

As I hope to have shown, *Passage to Ararat*, *Beirut Fragments*, and *As We Have Always Done* each in their own way also demonstrate that collective memory in diasporic contexts is heterogenous and that relational thinking may more accurately account for the networks of nested memory.

CONCLUSION: WHAT HAD ONCE BEEN THE NATIONAL THEATER

‘Her father’s name was Hüseyin, and her mother’s name was Esma.’

No sooner has my aunt said these words than she turns to me, as if to seek my approval, or so it seems to me.

Relieved to have extracted the answer he wants from this group of tight-lipped women, the man turns back to the all-male crowd that has gathered around the funeral stone, and as he does so, these words rip from my heart through the silence:

‘But that’s not true! Her mother’s name wasn’t Esma, it was İsguhi! And her father wasn’t Hüseyin, but Hovannes!’

This man has taken it upon himself to furnish the imam with the names of the deceased’s parents, and now, just as he prepares to do so, I am declaring those names to be false; he turns around, fixing me with a hostile stare as he struggles to understand what I have said.

My aunts begin to cry. Then all the other women join in, as if my aunts have given them a sign. Usually crying is contagious. I can’t stop my tears either. I fall silent, anxious that I might make those around me cry even more if I repeat my accusation or stand by my words. I bow my head as I cry inside, ashamed that even here, we have to carry on pretending.

- From *My Grandmother: An Armenian-Turkish Memoir*, Fethiye Çetin, pp. 2-3

When I visited Kars years later, I had a tour of what had once been the National Theater. Half the building had been torn down; the other half had been turned into a warehouse for the Arçelik dealership. The owner, Muhtar Bey, was my guide; and it was, I think, to deflect my questions about the evening of the performance and the ensuing terror that he told me how Kars had been witness to an endless string of murders, massacres, and other evil things dating all the way back to the time of the Armenians. If I wanted to bring some happiness to the people of Kars, he said, I should, upon returning to Istanbul, ignore the sins of the city’s past and write instead about the beautiful clean air and the inhabitants’ kind hearts.

- From *Snow*, Orhan Pamuk, p. 161

These two passages seem a fitting way to draw “A Map of This Place: Memory and the Afterlives of Removal” to a close. The first is from the translation of Fethiye Çetin’s memoir, in which she details discovering a truth kept hidden in her family: that her grandmother, a Muslim housewife named Seher, was born Heranuş, a Christian Armenian. Corporal Hüseyin,

commander of the Çermik gendarmerie headquarters, “snatched [Heranuş] from her mother’s arms” (66) during the death marches and brought her home to his wife, Esmâ. Though they had wanted children, they had not been able to have any. The memoir opens with Çetin recalling her grandmother’s funeral and the moment when she breaks the silence about her grandmother’s identity, after one of the men in attendance prompts the group of women, “Auntie Seher’s mother and father - what were their names? (2). Çetin, a lawyer, would go on to represent the family of Hrant Dink, the editor of the Turkish and Armenian bilingual newspaper *Agos*. Dink was assassinated on January 19, 2007 and though the perpetrator was identified and sentenced in 2011, the trial of 77 people accused of involvement in his murder still continues in the Turkish court.¹⁹² The passage seems even more pertinent as a way to close this dissertation given that on March 26, 2021, the Turkish court sentenced four former public officials to life in prison for their role in the 2007 assassination. Dink’s family plans to appeal the ruling, indicating in a statement after the trial: “We will never be convinced by a judicial process that does not take into account this entire mechanism” (“Dink Family”). An explanation of the “entire mechanism” can be found in the family’s belief that the “operation did not end with the murder; it continued with negligence, cover-ups, the destruction of evidence and misleading information” (“Dink Family”).

The second passage is from the translation of the novel *Snow* by Nobel prize winning Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk.¹⁹³ Dink and Pamuk share a commonality in their respective

¹⁹² For a case history through March 2020, see Uzay Bulut, “Family of Slain Armenian Journalist Hrant Dink Awaits Justice 13 Years On.” For a case history through December 2020, see Özgür Öğret, “To Finally Solve the Hrant Dink Murder, Turkey Must ‘Face Itself.’”

¹⁹³ Another notable passage in *Snow* on the theme of memory is: “Relaxed now, they were able to chat (briefly) about their mothers and (at greater length) about the demolition of the old Kars train station. They soon turned to the pastry shop in which they were sitting; it had been an Orthodox church until 1967, when the door had been removed and taken away to the museum. A section of the same museum commemorated the Armenian Massacre (naturally, she said, some tourists came expecting to see remnants of the Turks’ massacre of the Armenians, and it was

histories. Both had been tried for “denigrating” or “insulting Turkishness” under Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code which makes it illegal to insult the Republic of Turkey, Turkishness, parliament, government, or institutions including the judiciary, military, or security structures (“Turkey: Article 301”).¹⁹⁴ For Dink, several charges were filed over time for language he used in his writings concerning the Armenian community in Turkey, including his use of the word “genocide.”¹⁹⁵ For Pamuk, charges stemmed from the 2005 interview he gave for the Swiss newspaper *Tages Anzeiger*, in which he said that “thirty thousand Kurds and a million Armenians were killed in these lands and nobody but me dares to talk about it” (Freely).¹⁹⁶ Juxtaposed, these passages from Çetin and Pamuk’s works illuminate the afterlives of territorial dispossession and forced migration in the Armenian case.

More specifically, Çetin asks in the opening of her memoir: What does it mean to “carry on pretending” in the public sphere when one wants to remember, to mourn, to grieve, and to continue living without fear of state surveillance on one’s Othered identity? The experience Çetin details is gendered. I choose to begin this conclusion by citing this passage in part to acknowledge that I did not take up gender as a lens through which to develop my rubric of nested memory. Moreover, I pair these passages to emphasize that the lived afterlives can best be understood in the context of the afterlives of nation-state remembrance practices. The site of the

always a jolt to discover that in this museum the story was the other way around)” (32). See also minor reference to “Armenians” on pp. 11 and 25.

¹⁹⁴ For an overview of the genesis of the law and its application, see Jahnisa Tate, “Turkey’s Article 301: A Legitimate Tool for Maintaining Order or a Threat to Freedom of Expression?” For the language of the revised penal code from 2008, see the *Human Rights Watch* news release titled “Turkey: Government Amendments Will Not Protect Free Speech.”

¹⁹⁵ See “Hrant Dink” in Pen America’s “Writers at Risk” profile for an overview of the charges under Article 301 brought against him.

¹⁹⁶ For an overview of how the case against Pamuk proceeded into 2011 and the outcomes, see Nanore Barsoumian, “Nobel Laureate Fined for Mentioning Armenian, Kurdish Deaths.”

“National Theater” is no mere coincidence in this passage from *Snow* which gestures to the need to understand contemporary violence by confronting foundational crimes. That is, the words “deflect,” “bring some happiness,” and “ignore,” point to the will to avoid confrontation of implication. Here again, I acknowledge that implication is not something I take up in detail in “A Map of This Place.” Certainly, this project on the afterlives of removal will have its own afterlives and these are places from which I can develop my ideas. For now, I want to suggest that when read together, these passages illustrate the different planes of afterlives that I sought to theorize through a contrapuntal study of Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations literatures. There is what is felt and remembered within these displaced communities. There is also what is remembered by institutions and government actors.

In this dissertation, I proffered the rubric of “nested memory” specific to the study of literary representations of descendants who are themselves witnesses to collective trauma. In developing “nested memory” to articulate the intergenerational transmission of memory in the face of the recursivity of trauma and as experienced by those who hold this subject-position of the generation after or member of a succeeding generation, I am left ultimately asking whether the examples of nesting that I delineated can also be applied to the subject-position of the survivor. Moreover, in a few places of this dissertation, I gestured towards additional avenues of inquiry, such as Indigenous removal in Australia and New Zealand. “Nested memory” may also be applicable beyond that scope. For instance, the District 6 Museum in Cape Town features a panel titled “Displacement of Memory.”¹⁹⁷ The first paragraph reads:

Countless stories have been told by residents who were subjected to forced removals.

Many of these stories reflect on the traumas associated with removals: the difficulties

¹⁹⁷ I am grateful to Michael Rothberg who called my attention to this panel in the museum.

associated with starting new lives from scratch and the intensification of apartheid control over the lives of the millions who were relocated. The Land Claims Commission, established in 1994, has once more brought many of these memories to the fore. With it, however, have come stories of resilience, life histories and accounts of struggle.

South Africa as a potential point of comparison to the work I have undertaken in “A Map of This Place” seems productive given that when I started this project, I did not realize the extent to which scholarship from Black Studies would inform my work—from Saidiya Hartman’s *Lose Your Mother* and other essays, to Hazel V. Carby’s *Imperial Intimacies*, and to Kevin Bruyneel’s engagement of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in his theorization of “settler mnemonics.” Where might the legacy of the “Natives Land Act of 1913” in South Africa factor into memory work and the afterlives of removal? I do not envision adding this additional body of literature into the fold of my contrapuntal method of analysis, for various reasons, but it can be the springboard for other projects. Finally, when I began writing “A Map of This Place,” I could not envision that recent scholarship on the Oceti Sakowin, #NoDAPL, and history in Dakota Territory would play such a significant role in my conceptualization of memory work and the afterlives of removal. As “A Map of This Place” takes on a life past dissertation stage, I will continue to grapple with using knowledge generated from this specific context to illuminate the spectrum of American Indian primary texts that I take up.

Still, while bearing in mind the limitations of my project and possible further avenues of study, I want to end on a hopeful note that memory studies can and will grapple with difficult questions. I conclude this dissertation a little more than a year into a pandemic that has facilitated isolation and social distancing. Stasis runs counter to the theme of migration that has concerned trauma studies and memory studies scholars in recent years. In some ways, then, it seems

premature for me to envision what “Նորից գարունն եկաւ, գարունն աննըմասն” (Spring arrived again, a spring unlike any other) could mean for memory and migration, the migration of memory, or the memory of migration.

Nonetheless, one answer might be found in how we can analyze a scene from Carol Edgarian’s *Rise the Euphrates* (1994). The novel follows three generations of women who confront the trauma of the Armenian Genocide, starting with the survivor grandmother who immigrates to the US. Told from the perspective of the granddaughter, when she is an adult woman looking back to her youth, the plot unfolds in a fictional Northeastern town called Memorial. In the novel’s climax, the granddaughter has a dream in which women of different races, ethnicities, and nationalities help her recover her grandmother’s birthname and the silenced traumatic history within her family. In the dream, these women converge around a statue downtown named Squaw. An American Indian woman of any nation is noticeably absent from the collective of women participating in this transcultural memory work. Problematic scenes like this one raise an important question: In what ways do individuals inadvertently participate in “colonial unknowing” (Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein) when nested memory work serves to facilitate repair, healing, and survival? In developing the concept of colonial unknowing, Manu Vimalassery, Juliana Hu Pegues, and Alyosha Goldstein argue that “In North America and the Caribbean, the predominant lack of acknowledgement or engagement with the histories and contemporary relations of colonialism—especially with regard to the specificities of Indigenous peoples and colonial entanglements of differential racialization—is not simply a matter of collective amnesia or omission.” Rather than words such as “forgotten or hidden past” the authors choose language such as “disavowal” and an “act of ignoring” to characterize colonial unknowing. Ultimately, they assert that “Colonial unknowing endeavors to render

unintelligible the entanglements of racialization and colonization, occluding the mutable historicity of colonial structures and attributing finality to events of conquest and dispossession.” Although a fictional scene in an imagined narrative, the rendering of memory work at the end of Edgarian’s novel could help us take a closer look at the ways in which we ask questions in trauma studies and memory studies. What if we ask, how is nested memory emplaced in the context of the “colonial present,” “broader imperial formations,” and the “ongoing imperative of decolonization,” to adapt the words of Vimalassery, Pegues, and Goldstein?

I want to suggest that questions like these are critical given the #NoBanOnStolenLands Indigenous hashtag and social movement developed in response to then U.S. President Donald Trump's 2017 travel ban. The hashtag, I want to suggest, is the on-the ground theorization of concepts such as settler mnemonics and colonial unknowing, even if activists did not identify the work of the hashtag by naming these theories. What is more, that hashtag and that movement brought theory work from Indigenous studies and settler colonial studies to American public consciousness. American Indian communities and their allies countered the rhetoric that the “US is a nation of immigrants,” including sometimes using an asterisk on signs. Just as snow covers, though, the pandemic seems to have rendered irrelevant such questions about memory work in the context of the ongoing colonial present and the imperative of decolonization. Spring will arrive again and with it, transnational movement during and after the pandemic. For the field of memory studies, that means sitting with and thinking through constellations of nested memory as well as what those examples might illuminate in a moment deceptively marked by distance rather than proximity, closed borders rather than crossings, and cordoned off histories rather than entanglements of injustices. That sitting with matters and is needed because indigeneity endures, to return to the words of J. Kēhaulani Kauanui.

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