

# Arti- fact- ual

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# Forensic and Documentary Knowing

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EXPERIMENTAL FUTURES

Technological Lives, Scientific Arts, Anthropological Voices

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



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**1.1**

Many would stop me in the middle of the street  
to whisper “secrets,” to point out a burial site  
or to share a story from their past....I have  
only been their “mouthpiece,” publishing what they  
want to say.

—Sevgül Uludağ, *Oysters with the Missing Pearls*

## The Only Terrorist Is the State

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On April 23, 2003, the Green Line bisecting Nicosia opened for the first time since 1974. The crossing began at Ledra Palace, a bombed-out luxury hotel in the center of the city that has served as the headquarters of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus since 1963, and the site of bicomunal diplomatic and activist meetings from the 1980s up to the present. This was the first pedestrian checkpoint to open in the divided capital city. According to media reports, on that day in April, thousands of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots turned up, seeking to visit homes on opposite sides of the Green Line that they had been forced to abandon some thirty years before. Many reported, to their surprise, being met with humility and hospitality by those—also refugees and exiles—who had occupied those homes since the division.<sup>1</sup> Additional checkpoints opened across the Green Line in the following months as cross-border traffic began to normalize.

I crossed for the first time a few years later, in July 2007, with members of a bicomunal organization called Stop War in Cyprus. Crossing still carried a charge then—a risk, or sense of risk—that it no longer does, for me or for most Cypriots I know, though some still face harassment from guards.<sup>2</sup> The group had been marching that summer in Freedom Square, in the southern part of the old walled city in central Nicosia, and publicizing their upcoming visit to two mass graves: one on the south side of the Green Line and one on the north side. The dead buried in those graves were Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots counted as missing since 1964 and 1974, respectively; the graves had recently been excavated by the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) in Cyprus, whose staff worked with information from witnesses and civilian investigators going back more than two decades by then.

About thirty people gathered for the event: Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, the latter having already crossed the checkpoint at Ledra Palace to meet the group on the south side. Many carried wreaths and flowers to lay on the graves. They were activists, university students, relatives of the missing, former politicians, and others; they had supported Kofi Annan's doomed plan for the reunification of Cyprus before its accession to the European Union in 2004.

D., a woman who arrived at the checkpoint shortly after me, introduced herself as a "Greek Cypriot" and a "private citizen." She told me it had been a cruel practice of the Greek-Cypriot government to allow the relatives of the missing to believe their loved ones might be alive: *The government knew very well they were dead*, she said. *In many cases, they even knew where the bodies were, because they had spies everywhere and close ties to the mili-*

*tia groups who had done the dirty work.* The mystification had persisted for thirty years: relatives of the missing would stage demonstrations at Ledra Palace, petitioning the state for information and progress in the investigations of the missing—and the state would turn these demonstrations to its own uses, jockeying for the moral high ground by accusing the other side of refusing to exchange information. As D. spoke to me of this contrived impasse, she pointed out a line of graffiti on the low wall around the grounds of Ledra Palace, reading aloud, in Greek: ο μόνος τρομοκράτης είναι το κράτος (the only terrorist is the state).

As I learned later, when I conducted fieldwork with the CMP, exhumations of mass graves in Cyprus were conducted occasionally in the late 1990s and early 2000s by international nongovernmental organizations such as Physicians for Human Rights and by consulting agencies like the for-profit British Inforce Foundation and the nonprofit Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF).<sup>3</sup> Despite these efforts, and even though the CMP had been established in 1981, it did not begin its own systematic investigations until 2004, when the recovery of the missing was de-linked from the prospect of a political settlement and newly framed as a “purely humanitarian issue,” as political scientist Iosif Kovras puts it, attributing this outcome to efforts by officials in the Republic’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under pressure from the European Union and lobby groups formed by relatives of the missing.<sup>4</sup> Since then, as of this writing, of the 2,002 people counted officially as missing, the remains of 1,177 individuals have been exhumed, and 1,024 individuals have been identified: 733 Greek Cypriots and 291 Turkish Cypriots.<sup>5</sup>

Although the CMP does not emphasize this point, its purview is limited to victims of intercommunal violence—that is, Greek Cypriots killed by Turkish Cypriots or Turkish military personnel, and Turkish Cypriots killed by Greek Cypriots or Greek military personnel. Many victims of violence cannot be counted in these communal terms of identity; it is well known that many Greek Cypriots, mostly leftists and other supporters of President Makarios at the time of the attempted coup in July 1974, were killed in that period by Greek-Cypriot members of ΕΟΚΑ-Β, a right-wing ethnonationalist paramilitary organization, or by Greek officers and soldiers.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, I have heard many accounts of the deliberate but secret bombing of Turkish-Cypriot homes and mosques by members of ΤΜΤ, a Turkish-Cypriot paramilitary organization that in many respects also governed Turkish-Cypriot enclaves between 1963 and 1967, or by the Turkish army, who attributed this violence to Greeks or Greek Cypriots in order to stoke fear and hostility between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and to rally support among Turkish Cypriots for partition.<sup>7</sup> At least two international agencies—the

Inforce Foundation and Physicians for Human Rights—have investigated cases of Cypriots killed by members of their own communities (conceived in ethnonational terms), and a few archaeologists who worked at the CMP at the time of my fieldwork participated in those investigations, but the investigations themselves are organizationally unconnected to the CMP. Intracommunal violence in Cyprus, which has left unclaimed bodies throughout the island, is thus secreted within the mission of the CMP; forensic knowledge of these deaths is not legible to the intercommunal politics of peace and reunification between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

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Residents on both sides of the Green Line have long accused the Greek, Turkish, and Cypriot states of fomenting and perpetrating violence in the period from independence in 1960 to the division in 1974. Few members of the police, military forces, and paramilitary groups active at that time have been tried for their crimes. I have heard from Cypriot friends and colleagues about the many such men (they are all men) who enjoy prominence as politicians and magnates today—a public secret that helps to account for the persistent impasse in reunification.

In labeling a “public secret” this widespread knowledge of war crimes committed by prominent Cypriot citizens, I aim to foreground Cyprus’s connection to many other postwar contexts where forensic and documentary knowledge projects have likewise taken shape around the revelatory impetus to uncover the truth of political violence. Michael Taussig, in his now-classic work on public secrecy, discusses in these terms the “law of silence” that governed the dirty war in Colombia (for example)—the kind of “smoke-screen” that obscured but did not conceal links between paramilitary violence and the state, which everyone knew that everyone knew: “Knowing it is essential to its power, equal to the denial. Not being able to say anything is likewise testimony to its power. So it continues, each negation feeding the other, while the headlines bleat *EL ESTADO, IMPOTENTE*” (1999, 5–6).

Public secrecy, as Taussig describes it here, is a shared condition of social life “where the secret is not destroyed through exposure, but subject to a revelation that does justice to it” (1999, 8). What he imagines (with Benjamin) as “doing justice” to the secret is not a matter of exposure, which would destroy the secret as such, but rather a showing of the secrecy of the secret—a kind of revelation that he calls “defacement”: a transgressive and mystical act of unmasking and illuminating that “creates sacredness” (51). If the public secret is a “pseudo-secret”—not secret at all, in fact, but rather a “deliberate deceit” known by all (149)—then nothing is revealed in its revelation but the play of surface and depth that gives the impression of a truth be-

hind appearances, and that, paradoxically, continues to give that impression after the play is revealed as such, making truth seem more real and pressing than ever. What Taussig calls the “ideology” of secrecy is this fantasy of a real secret behind the public secret—a real mystery to be solved, driving a “*drama of revelation*’ which, like unmasking, amounts to a transgressive uncovering of a ‘secretly familiar’” (58, 51).<sup>8</sup> That uncanny thing, he says, is experienced as sacred in the increase in “spiritual plenitude” generated by its unmasking (149).

In his ethnography of the missing in Cyprus, Paul Sant Cassia (2005, 220, 221) takes up Taussig’s formulation of public secrecy to explore the “masquerade” of ignorance regarding the fate of the missing in the south to which D. had drawn my attention. He relates the stories of Androulla Palma and Maroulla Shamishi, Greek-Cypriot women who had actively lobbied the Republic for years to determine the fate of their husbands, who went missing in 1974. Having given up on any resolution by the state, in 1997 they attempted to dig up their husbands’ remains from an anonymous mass grave in the Lakatameia military cemetery in south Nicosia, where they believed them to be buried. In 1999, the CMP, not yet conducting its own investigations, hired a forensic team from Physicians for Human Rights to excavate the grave at Lakatameia, where the remains of 126 Greek-Cypriot men—soldiers, reservists, and some armed civilians killed immediately after the second invasion in August 1974—were ultimately found. The names of the dead had been placed on the official list of Greek-Cypriot missing persons in 1974 and confirmed many times afterward, although it is now clear that authorities in the Republic knew not only of their deaths but also of the location of their bodies. The Lakatameia excavation, along with another undertaken by Physicians for Human Rights at the Saint Constantine and Helen military cemetery nearby, followed from a series of stories published in 1995 by Andreas Paraschos, a Greek-Cypriot investigative journalist then writing for the *Phileleftheros* newspaper, as well as by Makarios Drousiotis, writing mainly for *Politis*.

Sant Cassia (2005, 218) takes the publicity around this subterfuge on the part of the Republic—a “simulacrum of knowing” “manufactured” by the state, he says—as a revelation of public secrets: that the missing were in fact not missing but dead and, moreover, that not all the Greek-Cypriot missing had disappeared on the Turkish side at the hands of the Turkish army, as the Republic had insisted since 1974. In Sant Cassia’s view, the actions of Palma and Shamishi dismantled those particular forms of public secrecy—Greek-Cypriots could no longer “not know” these truths (though they already knew them)—but not the ideology of secrecy that has contin-





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ued to sustain a drama of revelation around the missing. Specifically, Sant Cassia points to the insistent centrality of the state in the sacralization of the remains of the missing after their revelation—certifying their identity scientifically, controlling relatives' access to them, and presiding over their ritualized reburial—as durable aspects of the ideology of secrecy that presents transparency as the state's business.<sup>9</sup>

By 2004, some five years after the Lakatameia excavation, the CMP had emerged as the institutional platform on which both state regimes in Cyprus—the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus alongside the Republic of Cyprus—could operate their centrality in this drama. Publicity surrounding the CMP's role in investigating the missing, arising out of the coverage of the missing in the 1990s and early 2000s by journalists such as Andreas Paraschos and Makarios Drousiotis in the south and Sevgül Uludağ in the north, has continued in print. During the time I was working with the CMP, in 2011–12, reporters routinely covered the exhumations and funerals of the missing, as well as many scandals at the CMP, including a dispute that led to the transfer of the Cypriot DNA databank from the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics to a forensic agency in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and an exposé of the purportedly poor qualifications and investigative procedures of CMP employees.<sup>10</sup> The CMP has long run its own public information office and regularly issues press releases in English, Turkish, and Greek, to newspapers in both the north and south—where they are often, however, mobilized for radically different political messages—and on its own website, where all its press releases are archived. Its publicity is addressed, then, to audiences conceived as multiple (including the international community); the style of this publicity is one of neutrality and balance.

In writing (before the advent of the CMP) about the revelation of public secrecy by Androulla Palma, Sant Cassia focuses on the role of publicity in the resolution of the mystery posed by her husband's missing remains. He notes the intense media attention paid to Palma in the days after the excavation she attempted at Lakatameia, and her tortured negotiations with the politicians she held responsible for deceiving her all those years, who now wanted to preside over his public funeral, and prevailed. At the wake she held afterward in her home, where she displayed her husband's remains and belongings, she told the story—different stories, actually, differently told—of how he had been found and identified at last. Sant Cassia (2005, 209), who notes he was the only man who entered the house for the wake, observes the way women relatives and neighbors “gathered” around Palma to listen, “like the chorus in an ancient Greek play,” “express[ing] collective feelings, social sentiments” in the tragic drama of the missing. These women, he seems to

suggest, are the public of public secrecy—those whose “knowing what not to know,” in Taussig’s (1999, 6) distillation, describes, in collective terms, both their complicity with secrecy and their drive to expose the truth, if only partially. They did not witness the “action” but “recounted” it, and, in their recounting, they named the accountability of the state.

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I suspect that something is being taken for granted, here, in Sant Cassia’s assignment of public status to a Greek chorus that could only be located in the Republic of Cyprus. (His interpretive references are to Aeschylus and Sophocles; his research, he notes, was conducted mostly in the south and concluded before the checkpoints opened in 2003; his experience in the north and its world of reference is, thus, extremely limited [see Sant Cassia 2005, x].) The same something may be taken for granted, too, in Taussig’s reading of secrecy as a mediation of law—in his swift slipping from law to state to head of state, as he reads Julian Pitt-Rivers’s new preface to his old book about a southern Spanish village during Franco’s dictatorship, in which preface, Taussig indicates, Pitt-Rivers all too easily recasts his village ethnography as an “ethnographic explication of secrecy” (Taussig 1999, 65). This something is the condition of Taussig’s attention to public secrecy as an “arm of statecraft” in the Franco dictatorship, and indeed of his understanding of the “dissimulation” Pitt-Rivers finds characteristic of Andalusian sociality as instead “the very quintessence of the state, occupying the moral high ground of the public secret” (69)—a line of thinking that specifies public secrecy as a modality of state fetishism and thus of (potential) defacement.<sup>11</sup>

In the introduction to this book, noting the impossibility of achieving a coherent perspective on a whole Cypriot society, I gestured toward what I think is being taken for granted in these theorizations of public secrecy: that is, a public isomorphous with the nation of a nation-state or, in a more Foucauldian register, with the population of a state.<sup>12</sup> A modern public of the public sphere, of public discourse, of popular sovereignty. But what if there is no public to hold and behold the public secret? No shared language, no shared media, in which knowledge could be disclosed and debated? No gathering around social divisions, as Sant Cassia sees women gathering around Palma, to recuperate a shared vision of justice and demand it from the gods?

There are reasons to think there may be no such space, no such discourse, no society, no state, that is shared by Cypriots across their profound and enduring division—despite the bizarre staying power of Cyprus as a nation-state with its anomalous status in international law and associated apparatuses of sovereignty and recognition. If that is so, the Cypriots whose knowledge projects I am examining here—peace-minded Cypriots address-

ing a (re)unified society—perhaps stood in for a Cypriot public retrojected as a loss and projected as an impossible hope. The state (and its fetishism) cannot function as a stabilizing frame for understanding public secrecy in this context, despite the accusation: *the only terrorist is the state*. The predicate of that line is not an answer but a puzzle: what (is the) state? The very nature of the power capacitating and flowing through the social is in question here.

*What state?* In Cyprus, this question certainly has determinate referents: the Republic of Cyprus, the TRNC, Turkey, perhaps also Greece, depending on who is asking. But the very multiplicity of referents makes it clear that one cannot only ask after determinate referents; the question “What state?” is also an ontological one about the nature of the state as such (“What is the state?”). As I noted in the introduction, Occupy the Buffer Zone posed questions about sovereignty, property, territory, and identity as distinctively Cypriot questions and ambitiously general questions about how human life is organized at this moment in history; to answer them, classical liberal and sociological theories of the state that take the stabilizing hyphen in “nation-state” for granted will not do. My research in Cyprus has thus led me to ethnographies and theories of the state that explore its ideological and imaginary dimensions, its margins and borders, and its implication with para-state entities.<sup>13</sup>

Such works on the state have powerfully shaped my perspective on Cyprus, which confounds liberal models of statehood in many quite obvious ways: from the residues of minority corporate governance left by Ottoman imperial and British colonial rule, in which communities rather than individuals were treated as subjects of rights (see Bryant 2016); to the gray economic zones on its southern and northern coastal borders as well as at the internal so-called border between the two regimes, where formally illicit exchange is actively facilitated by both state and nonstate actors (traders, police, customs agents); to the paramilitary groups that perpetrated so much of the violence in the 1960s–1970s that is routinely called intercommunal; to the centrality of refugeehood to the “whole structure of citizenship,” as Olga Demetriou (2018, 217) argues in writing about the massive displacement of Cypriots on the island between 1963 and 1974; to the utterly anomalous status of the Republic of Cyprus in international law, produced in part by the establishment of a breakaway state in the north, the TRNC, whose sovereignty and legitimacy are perennially in question.

Indeed, the TRNC appears in much of the political science and social science literature on Cyprus as an archetypal fake state, though anthropologists who have treated it as an ethnographic object have been careful to

plumb the intricate complexities of its apparent fakeness. Yael Navaro, for example, offers an ethnographic account of life in the TRNC in the period before the opening of checkpoints in 2003; she locates the state-ness of the TRNC in “phantomic” space (2012, e.g., 13, 15, 18): in both affective forms (haunting, melancholy) and material ones (built environments, household objects, documents) that “exert” affective force, where its being “phantasmatically crafted” (15)—that is, made-up—is most evident.

In their new book, written well after 2003, Rebecca Bryant and Mete Hatay address the peculiar and exceptional but nonunique status of the TRNC as a *de facto* state—a state, they write, with “*de facto* police, *de facto* judiciaries, *de facto* civil servants, and *de facto* politicians” (2020, 6). They meticulously document the building of this “state”—marking with scare quotes the heightened factitiousness of the term’s referent—from the earliest physical separation of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots during the 1950s through to the present. They trace three central processes—“territorialization, Turkification, and the creation of a new polity”—that entailed the design and normalization of “a sense of territorial integrity” in the region north of the “border;” a “perception of wholeness” there, and “a sense of separateness” from the Republic of Cyprus (33). In their introduction to the text, Bryant and Hatay note that “Greek Cypriots very rarely appear in these pages. . . . [They] tend to enter the picture at particular levels of discourse, especially in the realm of what we call the factitious” (24–25), which is to say insofar as, and exactly when and where, Greek Cypriots make claims to the real status of the Republic of Cyprus in explicit or implicit contrast to the TRNC’s pseudo status.

In taking up the paradox of the *de facto* state in northern Cyprus, and the variety of ways in which Turkish Cypriots have become citizens of that state over the last sixty years, Bryant and Hatay presume as the very condition of their research the inexistence of a single Cypriot state, and likewise, of a single Cypriot society. The division is ineradicable, in their depiction; moreover, the process of division began much earlier than most Greek Cypriots account it, and it was not a shared experience. In an article written not long after the opening of the checkpoints, Olga Demetriou observed “an aporia at the heart of *Greek Cypriot* political subjectivity, whereby ‘division’ is the knot that binds nationalism and innocence . . . trauma and pride . . . the continuation of the conflict and pursuit of peace” (2006b, 64, emphasis added); she later wrote of a “dwelling on division that has come to define Greek-Cypriot subjectivity” (Demetriou 2018, 3). Bryant and Hatay suggest that division has not been as wounding or foundational for many Turkish Cypriots, for whom there is no going back—not only because the

violence before division did too much damage that cannot be repaired; not only because the state and society that have come into being in the TRNC are capacitated and conditioned by the existence of the division; but also, perhaps—it is hard to know—because there was no unified Cypriot society before the division to count now as a loss, or to hold out as a utopic future.<sup>14</sup>

The bicommunal group I accompanied on that visit to mass graves in July 2007 had, on the contrary, a decidedly pan-Cypriot or “Cypriotist” mindset. The many obstacles we faced that day helped them articulate the need for it, starting from the long delay in our visit to the first grave. We waited an hour for police escorts to arrive, and this gave the media time to join as well: newspaper reporters and photographers, and cameramen from four major TV networks. The police rode ahead of our bus on motorcycles, lights flashing and sirens blaring, attracting as much alarmed attention as possible. On the bus, D. talked to me about her motivation for coming along. She was not a member of any of the organizations, she said, but she was interested in bicommunal activities and had many Turkish-Cypriot friends. She noted that a good friend of hers, who was also very active in bicommunal work, had made excuses not to come along that morning; finally, this friend had admitted to D. that she did not want to participate in public events. *She has her own private way of going about her activism, and she doesn't want any of her clients to see her on TV or in the news. There's no common, public experience of the new Cyprus: after the checkpoints opened, each person's experience has been individual and isolated.*

The first grave we visited was on the south side, at Strovolos, on the southwestern outskirts of Nicosia, a peri-urban area then being developed as a residential neighborhood. The grave was located along the main road, marked by a tall chain-link fence covered in orange mesh and danger signs. We gathered around two large holes that had been excavated and left open. Speeches began when the cameras were ready; the entire event was recorded and broadcast later that evening on Greek-Cypriot news channels. Several journalists spoke about their involvement in the investigations. Members of Stop War in Cyprus addressed the crowd in Greek, Turkish, and English. They told the story of the graves, formerly wells supplying a small village that had been razed in the 1970s. In 1964, when violence broke out in Nicosia, Turkish-Cypriot residents of the city were rounded up and brought here, shot, and thrown into the wells. So far, three bodies had been found in one of the wells, but there were five grave sites on this same patch of land, and the investigators estimated they might find twenty or thirty victims altogether. Those who had come to memorialize the dead left flowers and wreaths. A banner was laid over them, reading, “Our common pain

and common future unite us." Reporters interviewed and photographed the mourners and the speakers.

As we were leaving the first grave, D. struck up conversation with E., a Turkish-Cypriot student at Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta who was sitting behind us on the bus. She had come to the event with A., her grandmother. D. had met them both at a public event at a university in the south the previous week, when E. read an essay she had written on the final passing of the missing across the border, now that the checkpoints were open. *It made such an impression on me, D. told her. I've been telling all my friends about it.* E.'s grandmother, A., was a vibrant, funny woman, who spoke to us in Greek. She explained that she had grown up in the mixed village of Louroujina, and all her family there had known Greek. A. left the village in 1963, during the first episodes of violence, and moved with her husband to north Nicosia, where they bought a house and raised their children.

E.'s other grandmother was a "sad person," she said. After the war began in the summer of 1974, her grandfather had taken his sisters to the airport so they could leave for Turkey. *He hired a taxi to take him back to the village. They crossed through two checkpoints along the road, but they got lost somewhere before they reached the third. My grandmother still believes he'll come back someday. She thinks maybe he was taken to Greece and he's still alive. But the rest of the family knows he's dead.*

It was on this grandmother's account that E., still a teenager at the time of the referendum on the Annan Plan in 2004, had gotten involved in bi-communal work and advocacy for relatives of the missing. She had recently gone to Brussels with a delegation of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot students, and told us she was surprised at how little the Greek Cypriots knew about their history. *They believe "the Cyprus Problem" is that Turkey invaded and killed Greek Cypriots. They didn't know about the massacres of Turkish Cypriots at Muratağa (Maratha) and other villages. They didn't know that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had committed the same crimes.* D. agreed: *It's true. Many Greek Cypriots don't know this history, and that makes it impossible for us to reconcile.*

We traveled by bus to a roadway checkpoint at Agios Dometios, used then for highway traffic through Nicosia. The organizers warned us that we might have trouble with the guards. If they agreed to let us through, we would fill out our visa forms and cross in the bus; if they did not let us through, the Turkish-Cypriot passengers would disembark, cross the border on foot, and continue in a van on the other side. Greek Cypriots who wanted to cross would have to do so in private cars. The organizers had been negoti-

ating permissions for several weeks. One explained that it was better to keep "open relations" than to risk being blacklisted by the Turkish army: *They've been playing this game with us for years, but we will go on!*

In the event, we were stopped at the checkpoint. As we waited, conflicting accounts circulated on the bus: a similar group had been allowed to cross only a few days before, and so this group would also be able to cross; or Greek Cypriots could cross privately, in rental cars, but not as part of a group (one of the organizers asked wryly, *Oh, so we can cross separately, but not together?*); or Greek Cypriots could not cross at all, and, if they tried, their names would be written on the blacklist, and they would never again be allowed to cross; or the reason Greek Cypriots were not allowed to cross was that they were forbidden to participate in demonstrations or "public political activity" in the TRNC. *That's how "demonstration" is defined here*, a young man said: *Any activity that takes place in public. If we wanted to cross to buy Persian rugs, we'd have no trouble at all.*

Eventually, we learned that Greek Cypriots would not be allowed to cross, even in private cars. They decided to stay on the bus. The rest of the group, presumed to be Turkish Cypriots, had been given permission to get out of the bus, cross on foot, and continue in a van on the other side, but they rejected this plan and disembarked in order to stage a protest. It began on the tarmac very close to the northern checkpoint. Blocked in by cars, the protesters held up a banner—*Our common pain unites us*—and chanted, addressing then-presidents Papadopoulos (of the Republic) and Talat (of the TRNC) by name: *Peace in Cyprus cannot be stopped!*

And so the group split, despite their best efforts. The Turkish Cypriots who would continue on—a group of about fifteen people—took flowers from the Greek Cypriots and promised to place them on the mass grave: *The flowers can cross—they have no nationality!* D. stayed behind. With my US passport, I was able to cross on a temporary visa. But the protest was not over. The Turkish Cypriots of the group held out their banner and began walking back toward the checkpoint, chanting, *No police state in Cyprus!* The guards physically blocked them, grabbing for the banner, pushing back the men in the group. One of the young organizers took pictures with his cell phone until it was confiscated by a guard. The protesters sat on the ground to evade physical contact. One of the Greek-Cypriot cameramen filmed from the other side of the checkpoint.

After some negotiations with the guards, the protesters moved on to the van that was waiting for us on the north side of the checkpoint. As we pulled away, members of the group laughed darkly about the scuffle. E. told me





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that our photographs had been taken by military surveillance as we crossed. *This could cause problems for us in the future*, she said. I asked her how the military would be able to identify us from the photographs, and she told me they already knew who the group members were, since they had attended so many other demonstrations. The military was keeping track, making connections. She joked with me: *If there's a blacklist, you're on it now!* She noted that the border guards were Turkish army, not Turkish-Cypriot police: *If it had been our own police, they would have let us through.*

In the new van, we headed on to the second mass grave near Balikesir (Palaikythro), a small village northeast of Nicosia. The site was outside the village, in open land. When we turned off the highway onto the country road, the driver lost his way. We had been going aimlessly for some time when two passengers on the bus noticed we were being followed by a white sedan. The drivers were immediately identified as civil police, meaning Turkish-Cypriot police, who had apparently been following us since the checkpoint but only became visible as they repeated our twists and turns on this isolated country road.

Our driver finally found the grave site. Two official Turkish-Cypriot police vehicles were already parked there, lights flashing; they had been notified of our visit in advance. The white sedan parked off in the distance. No media appeared. We got out and gathered around a small pile of dirt marking the grave, which had been excavated and filled in some time before. One of the police officers took photographs of us while some members of the group, including me, photographed the grave. A mourner pointed them out to me: *The Greek Cypriots have more freedom than we do. They have police, but at least they're not secret police.*

The story of the second grave was told by Sevgül Uludağ, the Turkish-Cypriot journalist who had located it. When she began her investigations, she said, no one would speak with her: there was a "law of silence" around the civilian violence of the 1960s, as opposed to the state violence of the 1970s. But eventually, on condition of anonymity, some villagers showed her the site. It had been a mixed village until the invasion, she explained, but less than a month later, in August 1974, a dozen Greek-Cypriot villagers were killed by their Turkish-Cypriot neighbors and buried here—in retribution, it was said, for the rape of their wives perpetrated by other Greek Cypriots who had passed through the village during military mobilizations in the area. Thirty years later, when the grave was excavated, the bodies were removed and identified by forensic teams from the CMP. The hole was filled back in immediately, Uludağ told us, "to cover the guilt." *Can you imagine?* E. asked me. *The families were brought here to see their loved ones, just*

*skeletons, and they recognized them by their clothes—the same dresses, the same shirts they were wearing that day.*

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Our visit to the two mass graves that day refracted the border (or “border,” as Bryant and Hatay have it) dividing north and south. On the south side of Nicosia, it involved a swift passage through an open checkpoint; a large public event at an open grave that was staged, photographed, and filmed from beginning to end; and a dramatic but protective show of security by official police. On the north side of Nicosia, it involved a protest at the checkpoint, ending in an armed scuffle and the confiscation of cameras; a refusal to allow Greek Cypriots to cross; a formal restriction on public demonstrations; and a small event at a closed grave in an isolated site, closely monitored but not visibly secured by secret police—and the oblique expression of threat: *If there’s a blacklist, you’re on it now!*

While these two phases of the event might appear as an antithesis between regimes of democratic transparency and repressive secrecy—that antithesis was, after all, expressed by participants, and I believed them, at the time—I rather think that this bicomunal, border-crossing, peacemaking, truth-seeking event shows how an ideology of secrecy works to sustain the enduring division of Cyprus. The revelation of the mass grave in the south was broadcast that evening only to a Greek-Cypriot audience; there was no broadcast at all in the north, though knowledge of the event traveled by other routes and had its effects. If there was a public whose members experienced the same event together, it was instrumental and fleeting. D. had told me earlier that day that the opening of the checkpoints in 2003 had the effect of making people feel “isolated” and “individual”; in this event, the Cypriots who purposively came together in solidarity were forcibly redivided at the border.

In a sense, this event was a reenactment in reverse of a series of public demonstrations that took place during the year before the opening of checkpoints, when Turkish-Cypriot activists attempted to cross the border in Nicosia in innovative ways: “jumping from one of the bastions on the Venetian walls of Nicosia, slipping through buildings on the narrow stretches of the line, using the old sewerage system,” as Demetriou (2007, 993) reports. In the repetition of those protests in which I participated in 2007, bicomunal activists showed that “the border” was still a border, even after the opening of checkpoints: that the opening was not the definitive event it had seemed at first, and that the fight against division must go on.

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

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

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

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

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

30 — Cited and discussed in Connolly 2011, 62.

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

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

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

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

#### ONE. FORENSIC

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

the Republic estimated that 200,000 people crossed from the south to the north (Demetriou 2006b, 57, citing the Republic of Cyprus Statistical Service report, July 2003).

2 — Demetriou (2018, 1–8) discusses the differential impact this opening had on different people in Cyprus at the time. What was celebrated by many Cypriots as a liberation of their movement—if calibrated differently for Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots at the two ends of any given checkpoint—led to restrictions on the movement of other people, including those working in Cyprus on short-stay visas. Thus “changes in the operations of bordering (the materialities of borders, the apparatus that govern them, and the practices that develop around them) are not evenly distributed across populations” (5). As I discuss in the epilogue, all checkpoints were closed starting in February 2020, ostensibly part of COVID lockdowns in both regimes. The Republic was the first to act, unilaterally closing four of the nine crossings on February 28, 2020; the TRNC closed two additional crossings on March 12, 2020, and both regimes ordered full lockdowns shortly afterward, including bans on international travel. Protesters at certain crossings (especially at Ledra Street/Lokmacı), met with tear gas by police, argued that the Republic was using COVID as a pretext to prevent residents in the south from crossing to buy goods in the north, where they were much cheaper. Over the next eighteen months, some restrictions on crossing were temporarily relaxed for certain groups and then reinstated; for most Cypriots, crossing became practically impossible for nearly a year and a half, until the checkpoints reopened on June 4, 2021.

3 — According to an archaeologist I knew at the CMP, the Turkish-Cypriot side of the CMP had insisted that the Greek-Cypriot side conduct investigations into Greek-Cypriot graves in the south before the CMP could proceed with investigations into Greek-Cypriot graves in the north. According to this archaeologist, Physicians for Human Rights still had a lab in Cyprus in 2012, but no one was working there.

4 — See Kovras 2012 for a detailed account of this breakthrough in the Republic's policy toward the problem of the missing. Two organizations of relatives formed in 1975: the Turkish-Cypriot Association of Martyrs' Families and War Veterans, and the Greek-Cypriot Organisation of Relatives of Undeclared Prisoners and Missing Persons. At the time of my fieldwork, the only organization representing both Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot families was the Bicomunal Initiative of Relatives of Missing Persons, Victims of Massacres and Other Victims of 1963–74 Events (otherwise known as the Bicomunal Initiative of Relatives of the Missing and Other Victims of War), founded in 2005. See the section “Lost Heroes of the Republic” for a discussion of funerals for the missing organized by members of the Bicomunal Initiative.

5 — These were the figures reported on the CMP website on their page “Statistics,” February 28, 2022, accessed March 10, 2022, <https://www.cmp-cyprus.org/statistics/>.

6 — ΕΟΚΑ is Εθνική Οργάνωση Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών (National Organization of Cypriot Fighters). In the 1950s, ΕΟΚΑ, a Greek-Cypriot armed resistance group, waged a successful guerrilla campaign against the British—also targeting Turkish-Cypriot civilians and armed irregulars then forming in response to ΕΟΚΑ's actions—with the ultimate aim of uniting Cyprus with Greece. The 1960 Constitution instead established the independent sovereignty of Cyprus and a power-sharing framework for Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot authorities. The irredentist movement initiated by ΕΟΚΑ, however, was revived by its successor group, ΕΟΚΑ-Β, an overtly ethnonationalist parastate terrorist group that targeted not only Turkish Cypriots but also Greek-Cypriot leftists and even mainstream supporters of President Makarios between 1971 and 1974; their alignment with Greek military officers and Greek political operatives representing the interests of the Greek junta (1967–74) in finally “restoring” Cyprus to its Greek “homeland” led directly to the attempted coup in July 1974 and the war that ensued. See the work of Demetriou (2018, esp. chap. 2), for a rigorous “inventory” of fatalities within the Greek-Cypriot community during this period, and the means by which their counting was mystified by the shifting boundaries of the ethnic category of “other” in reports produced by the UN and the Republic. Thus, Demetriou shows, deaths of Greek Cypriots accountable to “intra-communal” or “co-ethnic” violence in the 1960s through 1974—that is, Greek Cypriots killed by Greek Cypriots—were either not counted at all or counted in such a way as to be easily conflated with deaths at the hands of Turkish Cypriots or Turkish military (2018, 30–31, 37).

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7 — ΤΜΤ is Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı (Turkish Resistance Organization). See Bryant and Hatay (2020, 11ff.), who discuss the process by which the ΤΜΤ turned control of the enclaves over to civil authorities that developed in the early years of the enclave period (1963–67; Turkish Cypriots continued to live in enclaves until the division in 1974), while the ΤΜΤ became a “standing army” concerned largely with security. Yael Navaro (2012, 12ff.) also discusses the ΤΜΤ's role in governing enclaves and defending them from Greek-Cypriot paramilitary groups, especially ΕΟΚΑ.

8 — Taussig notes how this fantasy stabilizes the ideology of secrecy: “To put it bluntly, there is no such thing as a secret. It is an invention that comes out of the public secret, a limit-case, a supposition, a great ‘as if,’ without which the public secret would evaporate” (1999, 7).

9 — In 2001, Palma brought a case against the Republic of Cyprus for knowingly concealing information about her husband's death and the location of his body, in violation of her right to know. In June 2012, Judge Michalis Papamichael found in favor of Palma, awarding her €300,000 plus interest from 2001, including €60,000 in punitive damages. See the *Cyprus Mail* article elaborating this decision by Makarios Drousiotis (2012), who testified in the case.

10 — See Paraschos 2012 for an example of such critical coverage in a Greek-language newspaper. I learned of this article when several Greek-Cypriot archae-

ologists at the CMP brought copies with them to the field excavation where I was working at the time; it was a topic of discussion among the team members for many days afterward.

11 — See Taussig 1992, esp. chap. 7.

12 — See Begoña Aretxaga's (2005, esp. chap. 9) troubling of the hyphen in "nation-state," as she considers the perplexing desire for statehood pressed by Basque nationalists in the 1990s.

13 — Perhaps the most persistent and trenchant criticism of liberal theories of the state in anthropology is to be found in Michael Taussig's corpus of works on state fetishism. In *spirit possession and shamanic healing* (1987, 1997), in the construction and defacement of monuments and symbols (1999), and in the deployment of public secrecy as a weapon of war (1992, 1997), Taussig examines the work of fantasy and ideology that arise from and sediment into political and social forms of power. In these works, the state is a symbolic focus—a sacred thing—at the imaginary center of the pervasive, heterogeneous violence and terror of colonialism, capitalism, and racism. Taking a related but distinct tack, Aretxaga (2005) explores the psychic dimensions of state power in the Basque region of Spain where she grew up under Franco, and where she returned for ethnographic research after the dictatorship. There, she tracks the proliferation of stories about violent events in which the state and its "other," terrorists—that is, the police and the Basque separatists—were locked in an ideological process of uncanny mimesis and doubling, one of whose stakes was the "outlaw" status of the state itself and another, obversely, the separatists' fervent desire to form their own state and thus to become the center of power.

In the past two decades, too, many anthropologists have decentered the state in their analysis, foregrounding the border regions and informal zones of state administration, and tracking the paradoxes and irrationalities of state power. This approach crystallized in the now-classic introductory essay by Veena Das and Deborah Poole (2004) to their edited volume, *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*. Here, they venture to extend the reference of the descriptor "state" to a variety of economic and political activities, sites and techniques and languages of governance, that fall outside classic liberal theories of the state and its rule-of-law discourses on administration, bureaucracy, social order, and military power. Their perspective, powerfully shaped by Michel Foucault's work on biopolitics and governmentality and aligned with his insistence on breaking the juridical equation between state and sovereignty, frames the anthropological theorization of the state as a question of ethnography—that is, of situated attention to the very specific ways in which the state, or the idea of the state, appears in the everyday lives of people at different moments and in different locales.

In contexts of war and postwar "reckoning," to borrow a term from Diane Nelson (2009), anthropologists have also documented the clandestine shape-shifting of state power in the activities of "para-state" forces, such as the paramilitary

groups in Guatemala forcibly recruited from Indigenous communities to carry out the state genocide of Indigenous people, examined by Nelson (2004, 2009, 2015) as well as Victoria Sanford (2004); and the Chimès (“ghost” gangs) in Haiti, in Beckett’s (2010, 39, 40) account, who were “reportedly formed” by President Aristide as the “armed wing” of his party but then turned against him to stage the coup in 2004.

14 — Whether there was one Cypriot society before the war in 1974—or, for that matter, before British colonialism or Ottoman imperialism—is the central preoccupation of modern Cypriot historiography, according to a study conducted over a decade ago by Mete Hatay and Yiannis Papadakis, who observe the powerful efficacy of representations of history in shaping political subjectivities and promoting “political objectives” (2012, 46). In the post-1974 period, they document the rise of the reunification “paradigm” in Greek-Cypriot historiography—in historical scholarship, if not in history education—which entails a belief in “peaceful coexistence” between the two communities as the norm throughout the history of Cyprus, and frames conflict and nationalism itself as “comparatively recent” developments (37, 38). On the other hand, Turkish-Cypriot historiography, on their account, has for the most part represented division as a long-enduring feature of relations between the two communities, emphasizing the victimization of Turkish Cypriots by Greek Cypriots. Only briefly, during the administration of the left-wing Republican Turkish Party (2003–8), did Turkish-Cypriot historiography and new history textbooks promote the vision of a peaceful, plural but unified Cypriot society whose recent division was largely due to British colonial rule. The textbooks were extremely controversial in the north, Hatay and Papadakis show, and denounced by right-wing newspapers, which pushed the view that “there is no such thing as a ‘Cyprus people’ or ‘Cypriotism’” (45). With the election of the right-wing National Unity Party in the north in 2008, the new textbooks were replaced by renovated versions of familiar nationalist histories. If, for many Turkish Cypriots, there is no going back to the time before division, it may be in part due to the success of right-wing nationalist historical narratives of the kind Hatay and Papadakis document here.

15 — On distinctions and affinities between bones and corpses, see Fontein’s discussion of the “agencies and affordances entangled in the affective presence and emotive materiality” (2010, 436) of human remains vis-à-vis dead bodies in distinct historical moments of mass death in Zimbabwe, along with their “complex political efficacies” (2018, 337; cf. Fontein 2014). Fontein observes symbolic contrasts between the “dry bones” of the liberation war dead from anticolonial struggles in the 1890s and the 1950s–1970s, on the one hand, and on the other, the “leaky, tortured bodies” of civilians killed during the 1980s (2018, 337) and the “fleshy, leaky bodies” of people killed in political contestations since the early 2000s (2010, 436). Yet he also observes the mutual entailment of these different kinds of human remains in the “processes by which bones are formed from decaying bodies” in the “passage of time” from burial to decomposition, and in the transhistorical prophecy by libera-