

Introduction

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This volume deals with a cluster of concepts that constitute the components of memory in a historical perspective: visuality, corporeality and mobility. Its chapters examine various interactions between the three terms of this cluster. ‘After’ or ‘post’ 1968 is the temporal positionality that we have decided to take in this book for the contextualization of these themes. Therefore, we have chosen to start with a reflection on the temporal positionality of our collection of essays, trying to clarify in which sense we use the expression ‘after 1968’. The field of knowledge that will be explored concerns the performative dimensions of remembering and communicating. In this perspective, memory is considered as an interactive process, in which the body, both mobile and constrained, is a point of both departure and reference.

‘Performance’ and ‘performing’ are terms that have taken up multiple meanings, being used in various research fields as well as in the arts. To give a complete survey of the state of studies would require a very large space, as it involves a series of disciplinary domains that would rather call for a survey of the state of the arts, which is outside the scope of the present book. However, we would like to specify that we retain some of the shared meanings of these terms as they are employed in memory studies and cultural history. Among such meanings, the following are particularly relevant to define our field. First of all, we take into consideration the aspects of memory that concern the execution of bodily actions (including the refusal of movement and the resulting forms of passivity), which can also have a dimension of activism aimed at producing change (see Reinisch

and La Parra-Pérez in this volume). Secondly, we stress the public element of corporeal memory and its performances, their sides as somatic exhibitions and cultural enactments touching both everyday life and special moments connotated as artistic (see Nordera, Kuhlmann and Olinghouse in this volume). Finally, we include the reference to the ability to present – in words too – one’s and others’ experiences in various contexts, including the educational (see Shumylovych and Smucker in this volume), thus closing the circle of oral, visual and bodily memory’s implementation. The inter- and trans-disciplinary nature of these terms takes inspiration from history, anthropology, theatre and dance studies as concerns our present effort.¹ Memory studies is thus confirmed to be a cross-field of disciplines and forms of knowledge connecting a plurality of disciplinary approaches.²

A recent innovation in the field of memory has been enlarging its scope to the visual and the corporeal, from the oral and the written.³ We have taken as a point of departure for the present volume – with the intention of going further, by implications, associations and contrasts – the European Research Council project ‘Bodies Across Borders: Oral and Visual Memory in Europe and Beyond’ (BABE).⁴

The BABE research combined various lines of enquiry on memory, the main ones being: (1) the exploration of the construction of visual memory through art, notably video art, photography and cinema, focusing on migration across European borders; and (2) the collection of visual memories through interviews with subjects moving towards and across Europe – subjects who were asked not only to narrate their itineraries of migration but also to offer some visual documentation (drawings, photographs, short videos) of their journeys. This methodological procedure recognizes that visuality is closely connected with corporeality and, in the project’s case, with mobility, moving bodies being conceived as embodied subjects. The main research achievement of the BABE project has been the exploration and analysis of the changes induced by global mobility into oral and visual memories of Europe, focusing on the traces of memory produced by mobile people and visual art production and circulation. This interpretative approach considered oral and visual data as documentation of subjectivity and used textual and content analysis as well as the analysis of the narrative structure.

The BABE project generated a series of debates, workshops and exhibitions, from which the present collection has extracted and updated a selection of writings, united by a temporal perspective (‘after 1968’), and an approach situating the Eastern-Western Europe link in the context of memory studies.⁵

Methodological Excursus

To make clearer the roots of our approach and contextualize it, we will now take what can be called a generational ego-historical digression. By this phrase, we intend to apply the category of ego-histoire not to a single person, as in the classic examples by Pierre Nora in his seminal collection,⁶ but rather to a generation – or, better, to some cohorts within a generation of oral historians working in the fifty years between the 1970s and the present.⁷ In those decades the concept of identity was superseded by the much larger concept of subjectivity, and soon of intersubjectivity. At the same time, the subjects of many oral history projects in Europe during those decades ranged from daily life and material culture of the subaltern classes to the history of specific jobs in the course of disappearance and especially to the exploration of various forms of identity (such as those of women and gender, ethnic groups, generations and ages). In the course of that whole process, it also became clear that discursive narration was not sufficient to record the phenomena under study, in which the visual and corporeal dimensions were of the utmost importance. For many oral historians, it was the experience of studying migration that represented the turning point. For some of us, it was especially the series of results and inputs that came from the BABE project that brought about the enlargement of the concept of intersubjectivity. The experience of interviewing mobile people strengthened the intuition on the connections between discursive narration and narrative images, which had been at the basis of the decision to adopt a type of methodology not restricted to words, whether written or oral.

Certainly, the request posed to BABE interviewees who were the subjects of migration to draw in visual format their itinerary of mobility and/or to present photographs and short videos of it was rather naïve. The naïveté stood primarily in the assumption that two separate domains existed, that of the words that composed the oral interview and could be transcribed, and that of the images, created in various ways by the subjects of the interviews. Their responses shattered this simplistic assumption, in as far as the respondents insisted on not separating images and words: their ‘maps’, as we called their visual products, almost never consisted only of drawings, but on the contrary, most of the time included written comments and explanations.⁸ Such recurrent coupling is undeniably linked with the functioning of memory, especially experiential memory.

The insertion of visuality in the effort to study the process of remembering movement and mobility necessarily brought with it the attention to the visual and the corporeal. In its turn, this pushed us to stretch the very concept of intersubjectivity from the mental and textual domains (as

had been the case in its first formulations during the second half of the 1970s) to visuality and corporeality. In the course of this itinerary, under-developed mentions of possible concepts such as ‘visual intersubjectivity’ occasionally emerged. It was the self-reflection on what this implied for the relationships between bodies that unfolded such types of ideas as well as the implications of the inter-relation between the interviewees and the interviewers. In the course of the BABE project, the researchers found themselves confronting similar experiences in the dual relationship typical of most interview encounters, both partners having experienced mobility in one way or another.⁹ The expression ‘bodies across borders’ thus assumed new meanings, referring not only to the bodies crossing actual borders, in the sense of ‘migrant bodies’, but also to the bodies of those who were eager to understand such experiences, themselves or their relatives and antecedents having often shared that type of movement. Taking ‘seriously’ the extension of the meaning of intersubjectivity to visuality and corporeality, therefore, originated from and at the same time contributed to an enlargement of the methodology adopted for recording memory as well as of the very technique in the procedure of interviewing, and consequently of the documentation resulting from it.¹⁰

Most importantly, the final stage of the process, that is, the way of writing the history of memory, or, better, writing historically about memory, underwent some modifications, curving decisively towards the use of dialogues and conversations, and privileging the publication of results and elaborations online – because of such advantages as allowing multiple images in colour – in respect to publications on paper.¹¹ Undoubtedly this change was also part of the general trend in history towards increasing and making explicit the role of the writing subject.¹²

However, adding the visual to the discursive in memory studies also presented some risks, such as over-rating the value of visuality and under-rating its deep links with verbal and written narration. It can happen that the attention to the expressions of the face and body of the interviewees – as well as to the tone and sound of their voices and other oral details such as interjections and laughter – can be reduced when delegated by the interviewers to technical means like the camera, at least in respect to the close and participant observation that was originally personal and could be documented only by ethnographical diaries of various kinds.

While it was the experience of interviewing mobile people that strengthened our intuition on the connections between word and image, given the recurrent joint presence of both in the replies by the BABE interviewees, the tension between the visual and the corporeal contributed not only to the stretching of the concept of intersubjectivity but also to our own reflection on its implications for ourselves as researchers. Interviewing

migrants evidenced the holes or erasures in documenting their lives, partially because of their own will, and partially because of the difficulties of the enterprise and the traumas impacting on the process of remembering harsh times.¹³

An important role was also played by the input from scholars studying dance performance and from performers themselves. The performance group ‘Company Tant’amati’¹⁴ interacted with the exhibition in Florence, as we will explain further below. Indeed, the comprehension of this dimension was highlighted by the experiment of staging three exhibitions of the results of the research project, in Palermo, Turin and Florence.¹⁵ With all this, the awareness emerged that the disconnections between memory and ways of performing it – which is a form of memorizing it – are real, and we should not go too far in stressing the coherence between the two, as if the process of remembering, especially when stimulated by the interview, could be smooth and full.

At the same time, stressing a wider sense of the intersubjective nature of the construction of memory implied for us an increased recognition of the process of historical research as always incomplete and unfinished – ‘interminable’, to borrow a Freudian term – and thus reflecting the erasures present in memory for various reasons, from voluntary silences to spontaneous forms of amnesia. There is always a certain degree of censorship in collecting testimonies because intersubjectivity is mediated not only by the past experiences of the involved subjects but also by the technology available.¹⁶ This was evident very early in the history of oral history, when reflection on the interview as a shared construction of memory was theorized, but also when the use of tape recorders became widespread.¹⁷ Later on, when the filming of interviews became a common practice because of low costs and easy technology, there was a further enlargement of the scope of the recorded testimony, but contemporarily a further form of censorship on the visual and corporeal experience of the encounter, whether dual or collective, appeared.¹⁸ This is especially relevant in recording for and during the didactic use of oral history, in which the operation of recording selects areas of the classroom and moments of exchange between learners and teachers.

Thus, the global diffusion of oral history went hand in hand with the complications of its technology, its advantages and risks. The wider the range of technical devices used for the purpose of recording, the subtler the possibility of censorship and erasures. Fortunately, this promoted increased attention to silences and lacunae: a more refined reflection on and interpretation of the intricate nature of memory stimulated borrowings from psychoanalysis and the attention to erasures became operative in the understanding of the testimonies.¹⁹ We hope to have at least to some degree reproduced all this in the present volume.

Finally, for what concerns corporeality, suffice it to say that to record a performance incurs even more risk of isolating it from its context, unless the performers themselves express the sense of loss and deprivation that constellates the lives of mobile people. And this was indeed tried out by the performers who made a special effort to incorporate the lessons of the BABE products and translate them into gestures and bodily movements. All this contributed to our understanding of the links and disjunctures between words and images, which we have tried to represent in the choice of papers for the present volume. After this methodological digression, it is time to return to the explanation of the reasons for our choice of temporality for this volume.

‘After’ 1968

In a purely temporal perspective, the period ‘after 1968’ is characterized by numerous features: a heightened level of oppression and exploitation; an increased threat of the destruction of the environment and the ecological system; more frequent and extended mobility, often with tragic motivations and consequences but also wider creativity, not only in the specialized fields of art but also in daily life; the challenge to create new social movements of protest continuing with the inspiration offered by the late 1960s, but also an increasing awareness of the legacy of colonialism and imperialism; and the spontaneous birth of new types of social phenomena, like the Occupy movements and the widespread ecological movements largely although not only composed of young and very young militants.²⁰ Not all these features are legacies of 1968; on the contrary. Legacies of 1968 are more easily found in the history of subjectivity. For instance, certain features of alternative lifestyles have become usual in many countries, such as the reduction of deference in work, family and gender relationships; and the postponement of institutional marriage for couples, and at the same time the increasing recognition of the right to form homosexual rather than exclusively heterosexual couples. All these processes had been underway for significant, even long periods of time, but have been evidenced by the types and levels of consciousness that the movements of 1968 promoted.

However, in the last two decades, the use of the term ‘post-1968’ has gone beyond a descriptive temporal phrase and has taken up the meaning of a historical change of global scope during the past fifty years.²¹ Some interpreters have analysed the 1968 movements’ repercussions that have taken place in a ‘perverse’ way, in the sense in which Boltanski and Chiapello used this term. They argued that global capitalism neutralized and counteracted the requests of the protests by perverting them, with a series of

appropriations such as the one that transformed the demand for freedom of work into the extreme flexibility of workers, forced to comply with obligations of mobility that were both geographical and professional. The ‘perversion’ consists in a series of *détournements* that touch on production, work, tourism, cultural industry, sexual life and leisure. Rather than considering the 1968 movements as characterized by political defeat, this interpretation combines the recognition of their impact on cultural and artistic domains with the political and economic uses of their message.²²

Another interpretation, which is very cogent within a history of subjectivity, is the relevance of the ‘post’ from the point of view of memory understood as involving psychological processes. Lisa Baraitser has interpreted waiting and delaying as modes of doing politics, considering the aftermath of 1968 as a period of particular turmoil. Again, 1968 – in a broad sense – covers the period of worldwide militant ferment from 1966 to 1977. According to this interpretation, 1968 both changed and did not change the world and was imbued with generative and traumatic elements that continued in its ‘aftermath’. These elements fostered a retrospective attachment to the scenes of 1968, suggesting a retrospective narrativization of collective action that at the time aimed at creating new political possibilities. In Baraitser’s view, such retrospective attachment is indispensable in order to situate 1968 into historical time by creating an intergenerational perspective: ‘what will come to have been a historical period when the noise of the present has subdued’. For Baraitser, the Freudian concept of delayed or deferred action (*Nachträglichkeit*) indicates the specific temporality of subjectivity. Retroactivity is also the key to the process by which the transition from the individual to the collective dimension takes place. Therefore, there are profound reasons for the obsession with the *longue durée* and prolongations of 1968: ‘the temporal delay that produces historical truth binds psychic time to the legacy of previous generations’.²³

While we take into account this kind of historical interpretation, we have not embarked on a search for the multiple meanings of the ‘aftermath of 1968’, given the specific goals of the present volume, that is, the focus on the cluster of the concepts ‘corporeality, visuality and mobility’ and how they relate to memory. In our intentions, which reflect those of some of the contributors to the volume, this expression includes a reference to possible changes of the balance of power in the state of the world, as well as of intersubjective politics and the relationships between individuals and collectivities. The exchange with the contributors to this volume has led us to connect the expression with other similarly used terms, like ‘long 1968’ and the ‘long 1960s’. We are aware that the existing scholarship has expanded these terms enormously in time and space, thus adding to their vagueness. Yet, we believe that our effort in the exchange between us – as

editors – and the authors will be useful to clarify some aspects of this historiographical tangle.

When we set out to invite scholars to contribute to this volume, we had not initially selected them for their temporal focus. It was only after we had compiled a list of contributors that the shared focus on the period after ‘1968’ became evident. This came as no surprise: 1968 presented a turning point in human history. Arguably, the events associated with that year shaped history and politics like no other moment between 1945 and 1989. ‘1968’ is a widely used designation that has profoundly impacted the social sciences. At the same time, this impact has not been coherent and mono-directional, as the contributions collected in this volume show, reflecting the multiple interpretations of the events associated with ‘1968’. Thus, this book reproduces the different understandings of ‘1968’ and ‘post-1968’ by the authors – some approach it pragmatically, discussing developments after 31 December 1968, while others use terms that range from ‘long 1968’ to the ‘long 1970s’. This volume reflects the broad and divergent interpretations of ‘1968’ and how it became a turning point in modern history, for all the chapters deal with events and developments that originated after 1968. For this reason, we do not aim to provide a definition of ‘1968’; instead, the contributors provide their own interpretations under the umbrella of the events that shaped post-1968 society.

Some interpreters converge on the conclusion that ‘1968’ is a historical period longer than just this year, adopting the expression ‘long 1960s’,²⁴ while others have introduced the term ‘long 1970s’,²⁵ such as Dieter Reinisch in his recent publications.²⁶ Indeed, the events that led to the worldwide movement of 1968 started much earlier with the emergence of the US civil rights movement in the late 1950s; some might point to the workers’ uprisings against bureaucratic regimes in the GDR and Hungary in 1953 and 1956, respectively, like the forerunners of the movement in the European East, and some might detect their roots in the immediate aftermath of World War I and the emergence of anti-colonial conflict. This struggle reached one of its most critical conjunctures with the Tet offensive launched by Vietcong fighters in 1968. The events of 1968 might not be a classical revolution in the Marxist sense, but they can rightly be described as a revolution, albeit more in the political and anti-colonial sense than economically. For Hobsbawm, 1968 was, if anything, a ‘cultural revolution’.²⁷

If 1968 was the start of the long 1970s, when did it end? A possible reply is 1979/80. 1979 was the last year of republican, anti-colonial revolutions, and, at the same time, the harbinger of religious violence. Iran, Zimbabwe and Nicaragua are three examples. The rise of the secular nationalist Saddam Hussein in Iraq and the intervention on behalf of a progressive, secular government in Afghanistan by the Soviet Union are other examples of initially

leftist – though eventually failed – attempts to establish a new, more multipolar world order. Simultaneously, these events foreshadowed a turning point in history. The Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua sparked the intensification of counter-revolutionary activities by the USA, most infamously linked to the Iran-Contra affair under President Ronald Reagan two years later. 1979 also saw the first signs of replacing secular movements with religious fundamentalist movements with the siege of the Great Mosque in Mecca in November of that year. However, we could argue that the main turning points marking the end of the long 1970s were the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the USA one year later. These two elections heralded the beginning of neoliberalism as the dominant ideological and economic system.

'1968' marked the emergence of new social movements, such as, but not limited to, environmental movements, feminist movements and cultural movements. In parallel, old social movements adopted new political programmes and tactics through the influence of these new social movements. Hence, '1968' became a critical crossroads for the worldwide protest movement to an extent not seen since the emergence of the organized working class and labour movements of the late nineteenth century. Over the decades, these new social movements changed their tactics and politics. Some, such as the environmental movement, developed into political parties and followed a parliamentary road in the form of Green parties. Yet, these new social movements remained the dominant protest movement until a new wave of social movements emerged in the aftermath of the economic crisis that hit the world in 2008. The anti-austerity protest movements replaced the children of 1968 with new forms of protest as the economic factor was brought back into the game – something lost in the repercussions of 1968, and accelerated by the events of 1989.²⁸ Adopting such an interpretation would stretch the 'long 1968' over five decades, even into the twenty-first century. However, it would ignore the fundamental break in human history that emerged in 1989/91 with the end of the bipolar world and the Cold War.

The above-outlined considerations sketch out the divergent interpretations and meanings of '1968'. For a long time, the term was associated predominantly with May 1968 in Paris, the student protests at Berkeley and Columbia universities, the US civil rights movement and the anti-colonial war in Vietnam. However, the two waves of protest that resulted in the longest and bloodiest conflicts – Northern Ireland and the Basque Country – are hardly ever associated with 1968.²⁹ Northern Ireland's 1968 started with the emergence of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), which held its first march in the summer of 1968 and ceased its work on 30 January 1972, when a British army regiment killed fourteen civilians

participating in a peaceful march. On this day, Northern Ireland's 1968 turned into a fully-fledged war that lasted until 1998.³⁰ The same goes for Eastern Europe. The Russian-influenced sphere and Yugoslavia saw the emergence of relevant protest movements in those years – the Prague Spring being only the most well-known of these in the West. We consider it a strength of this volume that these under-researched 1968s form a significant part of its content, with one chapter on Northern Ireland and two on the Soviet Union.

Besides defining our position in terms of temporality, we would like to clarify our positionality in terms of geopolitical space. We are aware that our approach is situated within the dimension of Eurocentrism, not only because it deals with a North Atlantic space – Europe and North America – but also because it grows out of debates concerning the cultural heritage of these areas.³¹ We have chosen to 'erode from within' this tradition, continuing and prolonging the approach exemplified by some of our previous works.³² Recognizing that we cannot simply jump out of the Western tradition and advocate its criticism and radical reformulation from its margins or externally to it, we decided to keep our engagement in showing the potential of contradictions and (interstitial or central) innovations within this culture. The regional focus of this volume is on the Global North in general and the Atlantic region in particular. Nevertheless, this volume emerges from a tradition in our historical discipline that aims to go beyond Eurocentric interpretations of history. In our opinion, an anti-Eurocentric approach is not an approach that leaves aside merely the geographical boundaries of the Global North but also historiographical conventions within European historical writing. How important and challenging a non-Eurocentric approach to historical writing about Europe is has recently been discussed by J. C. Sharman. In his thin volume, he attempts to analyse the rise of Europe to world domination in the early modern era from a non-Eurocentric perspective.³³ Our effort echoes these attempts. A non-Eurocentric approach to researching European history should try to understand the modern world system and its origins by acknowledging its dominant position since the Atlantic revolution at the beginning of the long nineteenth century and aiming for an understanding of how this dominant position came into being and how this domination is performed vis-à-vis other world regions since then.

The BABE project was an example of this understanding as it tried to draw the memories of those forced from their homes to Europe due to a world system that is controlled by the North Atlantic region. Its focus was, therefore, although located in Europe, anti-Eurocentric, by trying to understand the place of migration to Europe and the mechanisms that lead people to migrate. Giving voice to those from outside Europe who

migrated to Europe may contribute to widening the narrow margins of Eurocentric scholarship. Similarly, this volume also attempts to provide research on Europe and the Northern Atlantic region, writing the Global North into history as a subject of anti-Eurocentric historiography. In other words, we aim to unlink the European and North Atlantic perspective from regional perspectives of the world towards an understanding of the dynamics that shaped the Eurocentric world system.

Activism and Artivism

In the perspective of this book, centred on performativity, the meaning of the terms ‘after 1968’ and ‘post-1968’ retains a reference to activism and transgressive politics, although transformed by the context of our present time and the limitations of our effort to cross different disciplinary fields. One difference can be found in the fact that our time is often characterized by a sort of nostalgia for old forms of activism, while the contributors to this book do not indulge in regrets for the past.³⁴ Rather, they seek to find possible political reverberations of cultural practices (for instance, Kuhlmann and Reinisch, each in their own way), much in accord with the oppositional logic that has pervaded performance studies after the 1980s.³⁵ The implicit reference to events and processes of the 1960s and 1970s, such as civil rights protests, anti-war demonstrations, women’s liberation marches and other forms of social/political/cultural subversion and resistance, remains in the background against which the contributions to this book are posited.

The extension of the expression ‘post-1968’ signals the need to understand and give unity to a series of historical phenomena. Some are closely connected with protest, and in this sense the parameters defining the ‘long 1968’ have been pushed both backwards – to the 1950s – and forwards, given that for some historians that cycle of social and political struggles lasted well into the 1980s. It is noticeable that all these terms – ‘after/post-1968’, ‘long 1968’ as well as ‘long 1960s’ – can take up different meanings in various countries, indicating either a different timing of the ‘explosion’ (for instance, 1964 in Berkeley, California; 1972 in Ireland; 1973 in Greece³⁶) or the extraordinary length of the series of protests (as in Italy, where the unrest continued for ten years in various spheres of activity). Indeed, 1968 as an event and/or a process can be considered in different countries from the points of view of short, medium and longue durée. Such temporal multiplicity is linked with its global spatial dimension.

Insights into this question emerge from some contributions to the present book. Part II is an eloquent example. In his chapter on militant

cinema in Spain during the 1960s and 1970s, Pablo La Parra-Pérez adopts the term ‘long 1968’ in order to underline the transnational cultural transfer unleashed by 1968, exploring how ideas and images travelled across time and space – and the double dimension of the specificity of local context and the expanded circuit of referents. Indeed, one of the merits of La Parra’s chapter is to stress the relevance of the Latin American context for the study of a Spanish avant-garde film director. His chapter also makes another important reference to the change of the international scene on the basis of parallelism between Eastern and Western Europe, which is one of the subterranean themes of the present book. La Parra’s reference is to the similar destiny of two film festivals, one in Pesaro, Italy, in 1967, and the other in Leipzig, GDR, in 1968 (heavily censored by its own management). Both festivals contributed to generating a turning point in the history of cinema, not only in the sense of a radical transformation of international film festivals but also in the more general sense of promoting encounters and processes of mutual film learning and exchanges between actors and directors. Thus, the connection between activism and artivism emerges as one characteristic of the long memory of ‘1968’ and its transformation over time.

Still within the second part of the present book, Kuhlmann situates the cultural turn that took place with 1968 (not only within the institutional systems of education but also in the general cultural domain) in two events, the Prague Spring and Paris’s May ’68, respectively in Eastern and Western Europe, which converged in giving rise to various forms of the counterculture. From a historical perspective, Kuhlmann writes, this turn has affected our perception of memories, performances, interventions and actions so that the very notion of theatre changed rapidly. In the theatre, Kuhlmann argues, a shift took place from a text-based culture to a new media age of image and sound – which has much to say about our concern with orality and visuality. Her study of the Odin Teatret stresses the innovations in the tradition of exploring human life conditions in theatre laboratories through experimenting with bodily expressions in the performing arts. More specifically, she shows how the transformation of the cultural barter as social interaction into a spectacle was one of the consequences of the post-1968 era on the performing arts. Indeed, one aspect of ’68 that had an enormous influence on the arts, or perhaps originated from them, was the decision to destroy/reduce the walls between art and daily life, between politics and daily life, thus bringing the concept and practice of performance into every domain of social interaction, including corporeality in its various forms. In this case, too, artivism is understood as a development of past activism, a reformulation, and an afterthought of the legacy of the 1960s on the identification between art and daily life.

In his chapter within the same Part II, Bohdan Shumylovych, who analyses the Soviet media spectacle on the interplay of visibility, corporeality and identity in the late 1960s and early 1970s, provides a further example of the divergent understandings of ‘post-1968’. His analysis of Soviet television and how this visual medium created a specific form of corporeal identification in the post-1968 period is relevant also because he focuses on Soviet Ukraine. Other than the developments in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the developments surrounding 1968 in other Eastern European and Soviet-controlled countries are still a research lacuna. Little is known about the smaller Maoist, pro-Chinese protests in Moscow and the South Caucasian republics, and Maoist-influenced anti-Vietnam War protests in Central Asian republics, while even less focus has been put on Soviet Ukraine.

Shumylovych provides an intriguing insight into the role of Ukraine’s subjectivity and identity and how both were formed in the final two decades before the collapse of the Soviet system. He researches these phenomena by using letters from the post-1968 era. These letters provide a fresh insight into what Shumylovych calls the ‘everyday working of Soviet culture’. In this way, he describes ‘the post-1968 mediatized public imagination’. For him, the post-1968 period lasted until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The event that sparked these changes was the Czechoslovak crisis in 1968. He demonstrates how the Prague Spring had a lasting impact on Eastern Europe’s cultural life beyond the Czechoslovak borders. The late 1960s subsequently saw a reform of television, even in the USSR itself. In the following two decades, Soviet television unfolded before the background of multiple protests that evolved in cycles. To understand these protests and the modified cultural policies in the socialist countries after 1968, Shumylovych adopts the framework of the ‘long European 1960s’.

Visibility, Corporeality and Mobility

From our perspective, the issue of visibility is at the foreground in this triad, remaining at the core of our title and our book, which intends to explore how the three interact to shape the concept of performing memory. For instance, Shumylovych’s chapter presents the power of Soviet television to shape the imagination and to contribute to creating forms of corporeal identification after the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1968. It suggests that Soviet Ukrainian media created popular phenomena, which were not only visual but also shaped explicit corporeal practices.

This is particularly interesting because of the correspondence it indicates with the conjunction between visibility and corporeality, as analysed

in other chapters we have already mentioned, such as Kuhlmann's, in which the setting of the analysis is the theatre, understood as a privileged *locus* coupling visuality and corporeality. Moreover, she adds to this dyad the third element of our cluster, the mobility between countries and between creative genres, as well as between the role of media in daily life and social events. A similar international movement – of the gaze – is present in La Parra's analysis of militant films. This triad amounts to the specific composition of memory in the perspective we have chosen for this volume.

As hinted in our Excursus, some of the present book's chapters draw directly from experiences that occurred during the process of research for the BABE project, as is the case with Nordera's chapter, which takes its cue from the performance created for the BABE exhibition in the Florence State Archive.³⁷ The author draws on her own field notes taken during the preparation of the performance, which allows the reader to figure out some of the intersubjective links between the actors of the research project. Nordera was acting as promoter and advisor for the performance group 'Company Tant'amati', as well as advisor to the project team on the central issue of the presence of bodies and movement in studying new forms of European citizenship and mobility. Her chapter here represents an ex-post reflection on that manifold experience of advising. Nordera shows the relations between multi-perception, visuality and mobility, including migration, and introduces the concept of kinaesthetic empathy as embodied intersubjectivity, while mobility can be visualized and remembered as a form of choreography. Dancing is considered as a social practice (which is in keeping with the idea of theatre acting presented in Kuhlmann's chapter).

The experience of the migrants was a crucial clue in this process. The encounter with persons or objects allowed some migrants to talk about or visually depict their feelings and emotions in terms of intercorporeality. Most of them reflected on the inner perception of imaginary projection towards the future, the land, the person or the condition they were aspiring to, starting from concrete multimodal bodily perceptions, and expressing interculturality in creative ways. The performers practised immersion in the exhibition for several days, which resulted in the piece *Nos gestes migratoires* (Our migratory gestures). They started by observing audio-visual documents in which women and men presented the drawings they had realized remembering their mobility, and then the performers tried to establish a relation between corporeal dispositions, gestures, narratives and the graphic evidence itself.

In Nordera's contribution, dance knowledge is considered as an embodied conceptual tool employed in trying to understand how ways of standing, walking, moving, perceiving the body, its weight and shape in space and in time are evidence of particular ways of experiencing the

human condition and the world in which we live. It also investigates the intertwining of cultural memory, individual experience and embodiment in order to make explicit the non-discursive, tacit knowledge experienced and memorized through the body and movement during migration itineraries.

The Structure of the Volume

The present book starts with a contrast between the picture given by Dieter Reinisch of the bodies of Northern Irish prisoners, constrained in a way that was at the same time physical, moral and cultural, on the one hand, and on the other hand the analysis by Nordera of the possibilities of the human body in movement, in the ways and with the meanings described above. Reinisch's chapter opens with the description of a tragic hunger strike in Brixton Prison in 1920. Paradoxically, the description of how protesting prisoners used their bodies by inflicting pain on them – through no-wash protests or hunger and thirst strikes – acts as a revelation of more possibilities of the human body, even when deprived of mobility and visibility, and with the prospect – in the intents of the persecutors – of denying the memory itself of/to the embodied subjects. Thus, all the elements of our constellation combined into performing memory – visibility, corporeality, mobility – are evoked in the first section of Reinisch's chapter in a negative form, as produced by the 'militant performances' of the prisoners in their fight for national liberation. The practice of nudity took on political value as a form of resistance to the criminalization policy from 1976 onwards. The subjectivity of those resisting developed despite the very high cost it required, to the point of death. Thus, the link between individual and collective bodies on the one hand and individual/collective identities on the other becomes very evident in spite of the immobility and invisibility of the actors/subjects.

The contrast between these innovative violent performances and the creative performances theorized by Nordera creates a field of tension in which the rest of the book is inscribed. The chapter by Reinisch also offers an insight into the question of temporality when he refers to the historiographical neglect of the developments in Ireland and the Basque Country during the long 1960s. He mentions that in the late 1960s, Northern Ireland went through a war that would have the most violent and, arguably, longest-lasting consequences of the 1968 protest movement, and argues that the way this war started is a largely overlooked episode of the global events in 1968 and the following years. Not only have the Basque Country and Northern Ireland been overlooked so far, but beyond Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, Eastern Europe can also be added to this

list. At the time we are finalizing this Introduction, Europe has become the terrain of war, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It hardly needs mentioning that torture, detention and cruelty towards the bodies of the ‘enemy’ have become once again a current topic in this continent. We ascertain with dismay that this topic of our present volume is more up to date than we ever again expected on European territory. What follows in the present volume is organized along the lines touched on in this Introduction. After the first part, devoted to presenting two opposite ways in which human bodies can perform ‘activity’ and ‘passivity’ in different historical circumstances and contexts, the second part deals with the relations between spectacle and activism in visual and corporeal performative forms of memory. The third part is composed of contributions written as ‘Reports from the Field’, a title that intends to stress their nature as works in progress. They represent one of the results of the Summer School jointly organized at the European University Institute (EUI) by the BABE project (Department of History and Civilization, HEC, EUI) and the Oral History Master of Arts (OHMA, Interdisciplinary Center for Innovative Theory and Empirics, INCITE, Columbia University, New York, NY). Their value lies in the effort to show the performative sides of teaching and learning,³⁸ with particular attention to the research on and transmission of oral and visual memories. Our shared conviction is that the fields of experimental pedagogy and didactics, in which performativity plays a crucial role, should be one of the directions in which memory studies continue in the future.

A relevant methodological challenge of the BABE project was represented by the implications and consequences of the research for transmission and conservation of memory in its performed dimensions: teaching and archiving. An important implication of the triple nature of memory as performance can be found in teaching, as the contributions in the ‘Reports from the Field’ section show. Equally, the issues raised by the archival processing of materials collected during fieldwork resonated with exploring a wider meaning of ‘archive’ thematized by contemporary art practices and debates.

The contributions by Janneken Smucker and Cori Olinghouse aptly evoke the experiment of the above mentioned Summer School, an example of inter-institutional collaboration, in which both Smucker and Olinghouse participated.

Smucker’s contribution is valuable not only for its topic but also for the context in which the dimension of teaching is brought to the forefront. She focuses on a series of university courses, which she conducted at West Chester University with a colleague, on oral histories with immigrants to Philadelphia, PA. Such courses were not only based on new interviews carried out by the students but also drew on archival resources such as

interviews conducted in the early 1980s. While the archiving experience is particularly significant for any researchers engaged in the transmission of memory, it was even more so in this case because the students were trained in combining visual elements with audio, and they were expected to create digital storytelling projects by comparing two historical waves of immigration. Therefore, this teaching included a reflection on the multisensory experiences of memory and its transmission through historical work, including the use of digital technology. The instructors gave particular attention to the ways in which the subjectivity of the students was affected by the narrations on/of migration and developed the concept of multisensory subjectivity, thus enlarging the scope of the relationship between visuality, the nexus corporeal/virtual, and mobility, and exploring its potential for teaching and transmitting memory. In this perspective, historical interpretation could be understood as an intersubjective act.

The reflections by Cori Olinghouse on embodiment, memory and performance enlarge this picture to the transmission of memory in the experience of creating the special archives required by corporeality. In fact, she analyses the process of transmission between curators, choreographers, artists in general and archivists in the show *WALL*, an experiment that gathered an intergenerational cast of Black women in a performance layered with sounds, rituals and actions. Performance requires multiple strategies for archiving as it resists being rendered into reproducible forms. As an artist-archivist who has trained alongside archivists handling experimental film and video, Olinghouse set out to archive performance and found connections between the archiving of time-based media and the very act of performing.

Tracing the author's own experience in designing a method for the migration of embodied knowledge into a museum's collection, her chapter emphasizes the systems of care required to develop an unconventional archive that is uniquely generative for the artwork. The author's role relies on closely listening to the work and the artist to develop a model that extends the ethics of the work itself. Using an embodied approach to archiving, which explores the body as a repository of knowledge and draws from performance forms and cultures that use orature, improvisation, ritual, storytelling and choreography, this method focuses on the somatic and sensorial dimensions of memory and history. Significantly for this book, Olinghouse's approach combining oral history and dramaturgical sensibilities favours the relational and intersubjective dimension of our type of research.

We want to end by pointing out what we consider significant features in the structure of the present book. The chapters insist on some methodological similarities: the connections between bodies and words, between

politics and domains currently labelled as ‘artistic’ and daily life, the interpretation of memory as intersubjectivity in its various forms. Thus, there are concerns that are central to all the chapters, although in different ways, places and disciplines.

Appended to all this, the Afterword by Alexander Etkind is a significant conclusion to our work, we feel. First of all, because it testifies to the links between our research and a cultural institution like the European University Institute, dedicated to forming young cultural and political operators. Second, because Alexander Etkind is a scholar who has deeply innovated the field of memory studies and has always encouraged us to pursue new ways of reflection through exchanges and joint initiatives. Third, and decisively, because he draws a link from the long 1968 to what he calls the long 2020. Etkind emphasizes the bodily protests that we discussed in this volume and witnessed in the recent protests in Russia and Ukraine, the role of hunger strikes and prison protests, outlining the similarities between the Irish protests and those by Oleg Sentsov and Alexei Navalny. Thus, his Afterword points at some crucial aspects of the research and traces the links between our historical research and contemporary events.

Luisa Passerini is Professor Emerita at the European University Institute, Florence, where she was also Principal Investigator of the European Research Council Project ‘Bodies Across Borders: Oral and Visual Memory in Europe and Beyond’, 2013–2018. Passerini has analysed the concepts of Europeanness and European identity from the theoretical and historical points of view. She has studied the subjects of social and cultural change: the African liberation movements; the movements of workers, students and women in the twentieth century; and the mobility of migrants to and through Europe in the last decades. In this endeavour, she has used memory in its oral, written and visual forms. Among her books: *Conversations on Visual Memory* (2018); *Women and Men in Love: European Identities in the Twentieth Century* (2012); *Memory and Utopia: The Primacy of Intersubjectivity* (2007); *Europe in Love, Love in Europe* (1999); *Autobiography of a Generation: Italy 1968* (1996); *Fascism in Popular Memory* (1987).

Dieter Reinisch is a Government of Ireland Irish Research Council Fellow in the School of Political Science and Sociology, University of Galway, and an Adjunct Professor in International Relations at Webster University, Campus Vienna. He holds a PhD in History from the European University Institute in Florence, and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (FRHistS). Before joining the University of Galway, he held research positions at the Central European University in Budapest, the University of St. Andrews, and Ruhr University in Bochum. Since 2016, he has served on

the editorial board of the academic, open access journal *Studi irlandesi: A Journal of Irish Studies*, published by Florence University Press. In addition to this volume, he is the author of *Learning Behind Bars: How IRA Prisoners Shaped the Peace Process in Ireland* (University of Toronto Press, 2022) and *Irish Republican Counterpublic: Armed Struggle and the Construction of a Radical Nationalist Community in Northern Ireland*, co-edited with Anne Kane (Routledge, 2023).

Notes

1. Possible references would constitute a huge list, but among the classics that can be quoted from this genealogy of thought are: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990); Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (1996); Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (2002); Liedeke Plate and Anneke Smelik (eds), *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* (2013); Philip Auslander (ed.), *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies* (2003).

2. Berger and Niven, *Writing the History of Memory*; Berger, *History and Identity*.

3. Luisa Passerini, 'Preamble: The Mobility of Memory in the Context of Intersubjectivity', in Passerini, Trakilović and Progljo, *The Mobility of Memory*, 1–8.

4. The research project BABE was funded by the European Research Council; based at the European University Institute, Florence, 2013–2018; and directed by Luisa Passerini. It was hosted by the Department of History and Civilization, EUI, Florence, during the years 2013–2018. The project included several directions of research, the most important being the following: interviewing migrants towards and across Europe; interviewing artists who produced artworks on mobility at the borders of Europe and studying their production; and creating an archive of audio-visual material at the Historical Archives of the European Union, Florence, based on the testimonies of approximately four hundred interviewees and comprising around one thousand audio-visual documents.

The results of the research are based on the collection of individual and collective audio-visual interviews, visual material produced spontaneously or induced during the fieldwork, archival documentation, participant observation in exhibitions, theatre performances, and various websites including social media websites related to the topic of migration and colonial history. Besides the project's website and blog, close collaborations with art scholars, video-makers and curators played a crucial role in the organization of three exhibitions and the production of two documentaries. Finally, numerous collective and individual publications have been produced by the project.

5. More specifically, the temporal focus on the term 'post-1968' emerged as a consequence of a workshop organized by Alexander Etkind at the European University Institute in February 2017. Some of the contributors to this volume, including the editors, presented at the workshop.

6. See Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*; Nora, 'Between Memory and History'.

7. For an overview of the emergence of oral history, see Cauvin, *Public History*; Ritchie, 'Introduction'.

8. Passerini, *Conversations on Visual Memory*.

9. Passerini, Trakilović and Progljo, *The Mobility of Memory*.

10. See Williams, 'Doing Video Oral History'; Lichtblau, 'Case Study: Opening up Memory Space'.

11. Passerini, *Conversations on Visual Memory*.

12. Ariès, Perrot and Duby, *A History of Private Life*.
13. This thought has been adopted from the ‘right to opacity’ as argued by Edouard Glissant; see Crowley, ‘Edouard Glissant: resistance and opacité’.
14. Composed of Erika Zueneli, Olivier Renouf and Juan Benitez.
15. See attached links and references for the BABE project.
16. Dieter Reinisch discusses this aspect for his own field research: Reinisch, “‘Is Austria a Catholic Country?’”.
17. See, e.g. the journal *The International Journal of Oral History*, edited by Ronald J. Grele, and his contribution to oral history: Passerini, ‘In Conversation with Ron Grele’; ‘Ronald J. Grele: Selected Bibliography’.
18. Sheftel and Zembrzycki, ‘Slowing Down to Listen in the Digital Age’.
19. Freund, ‘Toward an Ethics of Silence?’; Romano, *Talking about Silence*.
20. Mathieu, ‘The Space of Social Movements’; Mark and Rupprecht, ‘Europe’s “1989” in Global Context’; Klimke and Scharloth, *1968 in Europe*; Passerini, *Autobiography of a Generation*.
21. Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements*; Tilly, Castañeda and Wood, *Social Movements, 1768–2018*.
22. Boltanski and Chiapello, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme*, 98n, 101.
23. Baraitser, *Enduring Time*, 93–113, 18.
24. Hall, ‘Protest Movements in the 1970s’.
25. Villaume, Mariager and Porsdam, *The ‘Long 1970s’*.
26. Reinisch, *Terror*; Reinisch and Sindelar, ‘IRA Terror in Austria?’.
27. Hobsbawm, ‘1968, the Year That Changed Everything’.
28. Della Porta, *Social Movements in Times of Austerity*.
29. Reynolds, *Sous les Pavés... the Troubles*.
30. De Fazio, ‘Political Radicalization in the Making’; Reynolds and Parr, ‘Northern Ireland’s 1968 at 50’.
31. For a state of the art and acknowledgement of an intellectual stance on the concept of European cultural heritage and its usage, see Tuuli Lähdesmäki, Luisa Passerini, Sigrid Kaasik-Krogerus and Iris van Huis (eds), *Dissonant Heritages and Memories in Contemporary Europe*, in the list of BABE products appended to this Introduction.
32. For instance: Stråth, *Europe and the Other*; Passerini, ‘From the Ironies of Identity’.
33. Sharman, *Empires of the Weak*.
34. Crangle et al., ‘Somewhere Bigger and Brighter?’; Della Porta and Tufaro, ‘Mobilizing the Past in Revolutionary Times’; Reinisch, ‘Sport, Memory, and Nostalgia’.
35. McKenzie, *Performance Studies*.
36. Kornetis, *Children of the Dictatorship*; Ó Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Annalites*; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*.
37. The exhibition *ImagineMemoria* was promoted jointly by BABE and the Historical Archives of the European Union in April 2018. See the documentary by Valerio Finessi, *ImagineMemoria* in the list of BABE products appended to this Introduction.
38. Garoian, *Performing Pedagogy*; Dolan, *Geographies of Learning*.

Links and References for the BABE Project

Website now including posts previously on blog: <https://babe.eui.eu/> (Site of the Department of History and Civilization, EUI).

Ebook: Luisa Passerini, *Conversations on Visual Memory*. <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/60164>.

Documentary by Valerio Finessi, *ImagineMemoria*, <https://youtu.be/98Rnim9giCw>.

- Tuuli Lähdesmäki, Luisa Passerini, Sigrid Kaasik-Krogerus and Iris van Huis (eds), *Dissonant Heritages and Memories in Contemporary Europe*. London: Palgrave, 2019. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030114633>.
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