

2018

We will re-member them: Muslims in the British and French World War I centenary

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Dissertation

**WE WILL RE-MEMBER THEM:
MUSLIMS IN THE BRITISH AND FRENCH WORLD WAR I CENTENARY**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

2018

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the memory of my grandparents:

Dorothy N Bender, Donald W Bender, Reable Griffith Tinsley, and Tuck Tinsley II.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation is the product of innumerable conversations and collaborations with more people than I can name. I would like to acknowledge some of the many people who have helped me, in so many tangible and intangible ways, to reach this point.

A number of fellowships and institutional partnerships enabled me to pursue research and devote time to writing. At Boston University, the Morris Dissertation Research Grant, the Morris Dissertation Writing Grant, and the Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship all provided support at various stages. I am also thankful to the Center for the Study of Europe, and in particular to Elizabeth Amrien, for helping set up the logistics for my fieldwork. The Sociology Department at the University of Warwick, and particularly Professor Gurinder Bhambra, provided an anchor for my fieldwork. Finally, the Berlin Summer School in Social Sciences provided travel funding that enabled me to make sense of my findings with a wonderful community of junior scholars.

I am tremendously thankful to the members of my dissertation committee for their insights at every stage of the process. Professors John Stone and Melissa Weiner have seen my project develop from prospectus to defense draft, and their advice has pushed me to think about my research questions and my findings in new ways. I am also thankful to Professors Ashley Mears and Odile Cazenave for joining my committee at the defense stage and contributing insights from their areas of expertise.

I am especially grateful to my advisor, Professor Julian Go. Since the beginning of this project, he has challenged me to consider new theoretical perspectives, seek out previously overlooked connections, and pursue new explanations for my findings.

Further, his commitment to global and postcolonial sociology has shaped the way I approach my own work, and the way I foresee my own career as a sociologist. The dissertation that I have produced is significantly stronger because of Julian's advising.

Many other faculty members at Boston University have contributed to this project through productive conversations and feedback on earlier drafts. In particular, I would like to thank Professors Susan Eckstein, Saida Grundy, Nazli Kibria, Erik Goldstein, and Kimberly Arkin. Faculty from other universities also provided helpful advice at various stages; among them are Professors Ruha Benjamin, Sigrun Olafsdottir, Suzanne Bardgett, John Bowen, Santanu Das, Naomi Davidson, Karen Farquharson, Richard Fogarty, Paul Gilroy, Peggy Levitt, and Vron Ware. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Professor Humayun Ansari, who, in 2013, first pointed out to me that the World War I centenary would begin the following year, and that this could present a fascinating opportunity to study the memory of Muslim soldiers.

My respondents were generous with their time and energy. I deeply admire their dedication to commemorating Muslims in World War I and appreciate their willingness to share their important work with me. Several respondents went above and beyond my request to sit for an interview by keeping me abreast of developments after I left the field; inviting me to closed commemorative events; joining me for informal conversations as I considered various explanations for my findings; and giving me guided tours of sites of memory. For all of this and more, I am thankful to Frédéric Couffin, Elizabeth Cuttle, Luc Ferrier, Zafar Iqbal, Jamil Sherif, Stéphanie Trouillard, and Serge Volper.

Many Sociology graduate students, at Boston University and elsewhere, shared ideas and feedback that enriched my research. They were also an essential source of camaraderie in the often-isolating process of writing a dissertation. I would like to thank my student mentor, Zophia Edwards, alongside my current and former colleagues Elyas Bakhtiari, Taylor Cain, Daryl Carr, Pamela Devan, Rici Hammer, Kelsey Harris, Christina Jarymowycz, Alaz Kiliçaslan, Mustapha Kurfi, Meaghan Stiman, Sasha White, Trish Ward, and Jake Watson. Outside of the Sociology Department, I would like to thank Sarah Farkas and the members of the Dissertation Writing Group for seeing me through these last few intensive months of writing.

Many friends have provided balance over the past several years and reminded me that there is life outside of academia. For that, I am thankful to Cindy, Mary Beth, Tara, David, Sarah, Kahini, Jess, Chris, Julie, Emily, and Jake. Additionally, the various spiritual communities in my life have kept me grounded and given me community alongside space to breathe. I am grateful to the members of The Crossing Boston and the Moot Community, and to the sisters at the Islamic Society of Boston.

I would never have reached this point without the love and support of my family. My parents, Tom and Donna Tinsley, have encouraged me unceasingly in my academic pursuits. Their conviction that I should choose my career path based on my own passion led me to think that getting a PhD was a real possibility. I have never doubted their support for the path I have chosen. My sisters, Abby and Sarah, are both social scientists in different ways. I'm proud of who they have become as adults, and I love that we can talk about our work together and understand what drives each one of us. My in-laws,

Ganpat and Roma Kumbhat, have taken a personal interest in my work and sought out resources, which often provided insights that I hadn't considered before. Finally, I am incredibly grateful to my husband, Prashant Kumbhat, who has spent the first three years of our marriage listening to dramatic readings of dissertation chapters, offering honest feedback on ideas of wildly varying quality, using his technical skills to take my PowerPoint presentations to the next level, seeing me through long writing sessions with chai and homemade bread, and, above all, demonstrating his tremendous support for the path I have taken. I could not ask for a more supportive partner, and as we look ahead to the next chapter of our lives, there is no one I'd rather have by my side.

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Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2018

Major Professor: Julian Go, Professor of Sociology

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the representation of Muslim colonial subjects in British and French commemorations of World War I. This conflict, widely remembered as a European civil war fought in the trenches of Flanders, remains a catalyst for constructing national identity in post-imperial, multicultural Britain and France. Drawing from theories of nationalism, collective memory, and race, I pose the following questions: first, how does memory change when the nation seeks to encompass members who previously had been excluded? Second, how do transgressive sites of memory unsettle the nation? Third, under what conditions are transgressive narratives of collective memory constructed? My methodology consists of a content analysis of sites and commemorations; archival research; and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders. I find, with regard to representation, that national commemorations seek to restore national unity by inverting traditions of collective memory. At the local level, national differences dissolve; sites of memory in each country produced narratives of mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. While the former two narratives restore national unity, the third unsettles the nation in three ways: first, by highlighting the historical interdependence of metropolis and empire, they challenge the idea that the nation is a discrete entity. Second,

by highlighting the interconnectedness of those who belong, those who do not belong, and those whose status is contested, they disrupt the idea of the nation as a compact between citizens. Finally, by revealing the history of passive forgetting and deliberate erasure in the service of national memory, they disturb the common memory of the nation. In order to construct a narrative of melancholia, I argue that three factors are necessary: individual intentions, access to resources, and an unencumbered physical form. These findings hold implications for theory in three ways. First, I draw attention to collective memory as a means of unsettling moral unity. Second, I analyze the relationship between nationalism and memory through the lens of postcolonial theory, bringing a social scientific perspective to the literature on postcolonial memory. Third, I contribute to the literature on cultural production by emphasizing the cultural process of unsettling memory.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

7/7	July 7, 2005
9/11	September 11, 2001
AFMA	Armed Forces Muslim Association
ANAI	Association Nationale des Anciens et Amis de l'Indochine
ANT	Actor Network Theory
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BMHC	British Muslim Heritage Centre
CFCM	Conseil Français du Culte Musulman
CWGC	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
EDL	English Defence League
FLN	Front de Libération Nationale
FNAOM	Fédération Nationale des Anciens d'Outre-Mer
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
IWGC	Imperial War Graves Commission
MP	Member of Parliament
OBE	Order of the British Empire
STS	Science and Technology Studies
UK	United Kingdom
Ukip	United Kingdom Independence Party
U.S.	United States
VVM	Vietnam Veterans' Memorial

WW1..... World War I

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

On November 11, 2010, at 11:00am, Britons observed two minutes of silence, collectively remembering the official end of hostilities in World War I. During those two minutes, outside of the Royal Albert Hall in London, two groups of extremists engaged in a highly publicized clash: one, members of an organization called Muslims Against Crusades, set two large plastic poppies on fire and chanted “British soldiers, burn in hell”; while the other, the far-right English Defense League, waved the St. George’s cross and oversized poppies with the caption, “Try burning this one!”

In the aftermath of the dueling protests, one member of Muslims Against Crusades, Emdadur Choudhury, was convicted of disturbing public order and fined fifty pounds. District Judge Howard Riddle, handing down the fine, stated that Choudhury had engaged in a “calculated and deliberate insult to the dead and those who mourn them” (BBC 2011). His actions, in other words, constituted an affront to collective memory. Media coverage of the event referred to it as a “poppy burning”, emphasizing that act over the group’s anti-military chants and posters. Tabloids accused Muslims, collectively, of trying to ban poppies, and claimed that people who wore poppies faced harassment in Muslim neighborhoods. Throughout the controversy, attention remained focused on the poppy itself.

In October 2011, Muslims Against Crusades announced plans to repeat the poppy burning, and the tabloid press repeated their narrative that the action would disrespect the dead. Facing mounting outrage from veterans’ groups and the media, then-Home

Secretary Theresa May banned the organization on the day before Remembrance Day. The planned poppy burning was canceled. Yet since 2010, the trope of British Muslims disrespecting the poppy—and, by extension, the memory of soldiers—has festered. More recent incarnations of the story have claimed that ISIS was ordering British Muslims to shun the poppy (Gutteridge 2015), and that the Royal British Legion was not selling poppies in “certain areas” where they were considered “offensive” (Cooksey 2016). These have been countered by self-conscious stories of British Muslims enthusiastically participating in rituals of national memory: in 2014, a London fashion student, Tabinda-Kauser Ishaq, designed and marketed a poppy-patterned *hijab* with the support of the Islamic Society of Britain and British Future (Sanghani 2015); and in 2015, Muslim schoolchildren volunteered to sell poppies in their neighborhoods, with the support of the Ahmadiyya Trust (Ali 2015).

The case of the poppy burning reveals that the meaning of World War I, a conflict long-since formally ended, remains highly contested. Further, this conflict, most widely remembered as a European civil war waged in the muddy trenches of the Western Front, holds implications for what it means to be British and Muslim in the twenty-first century. The events surrounding the poppy burning—dueling protests, media outrage, and official condemnation—encapsulate, in a single site, the puzzle that has been foregrounded during the 2014-2019 World War I centenary: in a highly contested, post-imperial, multicultural nation, a century-old conflict widely perceived as a European civil war remains a catalyst for constructing national identity.

This dissertation examines the representation of Muslim colonial subjects in British and French commemorations of World War I. I analyze these representations as a case of collective memory. Taking as my starting point Durkheim's claim that collective memory serves to foster moral unity, I ask how memory changes when the nation seeks to encompass members who previously had been excluded. I analyze national and local commemorations that differ in their national context, relationship to the state, scale of event, scope of audience, and material form, asking whether these sites remembered Muslim soldiers differently. I examine which stories were emphasized, and which omitted, in particular contexts. Finally, I identify three overarching narratives of memory: mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. Of these three, mourning and re-memory fulfill Durkheim's claim that collective memory restores moral unity; the third narrative, melancholia, disrupts moral unity.

Second, I ask: How do melancholic sites of memory unsettle the nation? To approach this question, I examine how the nation historically was constructed through the bifurcation of metropolis and empire, such that the metropolis depended upon the empire for its own existence but erased the empire from national identity and memory. Decolonization unsettled the spatial and racial dimensions of metropolitan identity, such that the nation was forced to reckon with the violence of its own imperial past. Consequently, those in power sought new sources of collective identity and new ways to entrench the racialized character of the nation. I examine the ways in which sites of mourning and re-memory constructed new understandings of the nation, while sites of

melancholia drew attention to the violent processes of bifurcation and erasure that had created the nation. By extension, melancholia unsettles the nation itself.

Third, I ask: under what conditions are transgressive narratives of collective memory constructed? Answering this question requires making sense of the relationship between various human and non-human actants, including individuals, the state, and physical space, which take on particular meanings through intentions, interpretations, and time. Collectively, these actants produce meanings that serve to construct or destabilize particular narratives. Answering this question reveals whether, and how, individual sites of memory can cultivate narratives that challenge racialized, binaristic understandings of the nation.

Together, these three research questions illuminate the narratives that sites of memory articulate, the implications of those narratives, and the factors explaining their emergence. To approach these questions, I draw from theories of nationalism, collective memory, and race.

Nations and Nationalism

Among advocates of nationalism, it is widely believed that nations are ancient social units that encompass distinct and cohesive groups of people (Hobsbawm 1992; McCrone 1998). Political sociologists, however, generally conceptualize the nation as a modern phenomenon that originated in Western Europe, gained international credibility as an intellectual concept in the twentieth century, and is now widely associated with the fundamental right of groups to pursue self-determination. Beyond these commonalities, however, the nation conveys numerous, often contradictory, ideas of group membership:

the nation may create citizens by unifying them around shared goals (Rénan 1986[1882]), or it may give political salience to an ethnically defined *Volk* (Barnard 2003). It may take on the political form of the state (Anderson 1983) or encompass a transnational diaspora (Smith 1999). The nation changes meaning across space and time, reflecting the particular identities and interests of its constituents. Through the discursive process of creating a shared understanding of the nation, constituents proclaim the reality of the nation and their affinity with their co-nationals.

Nationalism, like the nation, is a contentious concept within political sociology. The multiplicity of perspectives and approaches to nationalism have made any general overview of the concept difficult (Brubaker 2009). Further, nationalism interacts with other identities and movements to produce political and social action; thus, analyzing nationalism in isolation is impossible (Calhoun 1993). The areas of contention in nationalism studies reveal the margins of the nation; by extension, drawing attention to the nation's shifting borders reveals the processes by which they are constructed and contested. Generally, theorists understand nationalism as an ideology, originating in Western Europe in the wake of the Enlightenment, emerging forcefully with the French Revolution and gaining strength across Europe after 1815, with a clear goal: the establishment of the nation-state (Calhoun 1993:212). One point of contention is the relative role of elites and masses in the historical emergence of nationalism, with some scholars (Hobsbawm 1982; Eley and Suny 1996; Hedetoft 2009) arguing that it began as an elite attempt to secure the loyalty of the masses. Without denying these elite origins, Gellner (1983) emphasizes the inherently egalitarian nature of nationalism in its

commitment to ethnic self-determination. Hobsbawm (1992), while concurring with Gellner's definition, draws particular attention to the people: he argues that while nationalism is conceptualized from above, it is only comprehensible if analyzed from below. That is, the elite constructs nationalism but cannot control its effects; populations embrace nationalism unevenly across any given territory and its social groupings. Elite and popular actors alike participate in the creation and expression of nationalist ideologies. Greenfeld (1992) also integrates the role of the elite and masses, arguing that nationalism originated with the Tudor aristocracy, former commoners who, recalling their origins, extended the concept of the nation to encompass the people. Finally, Hroch (1993) asserts that the most significant group in the formation of nationalist movements was not the ruling class, but upwardly mobile intellectuals committed to an egalitarian system and frustrated by the dominance of hereditary rulers. The primary political goal of nationalism is the establishment of the nation-state (Anderson 1983).

While theorists of nationalism generally emphasize the elite or bourgeoisie in the formation of nation-states, the role of the masses takes on a greater salience in the everyday processes of creating, maintaining, and disseminating nationalist ideologies (Bonikowski 2016; Brubaker 2004; Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008). This is particularly true at the individual level: for political psychologists, nationalism is an individual feeling of attachment to the nation (Berezin 1997; Conover and Feldman 1987) or a closely held belief in national superiority (Kosterman and Feshbach 1989; Lamont and Molnar 2002). These feelings acquire meaning, and power, when large numbers of people adhere to them and transform them into policy and practice. Alongside this political goal are social

and cultural goals, including the establishment of a national language (Citrin et al 1990; Kohn 1944), national culture (Edensor 2002; Miller-Idriss 2009), national values (Kohn 1944; Lipset 1990), and national memory (Bourdieu 1990[1980]; Brubaker and Feischmidt 2002; Rivera 2008). Yet these processes of national homogenization are internally heterogeneous: citizens discursively elevate some identities over others, rewriting and erasing histories and identities as they do so (Spillman 1997). Further, the internal dynamics of these everyday processes are power-laden, such that elites hold an interest in constructing a national identity that legitimizes their own hold on power (Eley and Suny 1996). Marginalized groups, conversely, seek to claim greater space for themselves in the national narrative—or articulate counternarratives if they are excluded from the dominant narrative.

In the literature on nationalism, the process of constructing national identity historically has given rise to cross-national variations, such that British and French nationalisms are constructed as ideal types. I detail these two variations of nationalism in Chapter Two. In both cases, the selective, power-laden process of constructing each type omits the imperial character of nationalism; I delve into this in Chapter Three. Finally, as I discuss in Chapter Four, constructing national narratives and counternarratives entails the interaction of various human and non-human actants in order to produce (or fail to produce) an agreed-upon meaning.

Collective Memory

During the emergence of the nation-state, as detailed above, elite and popular nationalists seek to construct a common understanding of the nation. Developing a

common orientation to the past is pivotal to this process. Making sense of the past serves to imagine a shared experience and, by extension, a collective memory—that is, “the distribution throughout society of beliefs, feelings, moral judgments, and knowledge about the past” (Schwartz 2007; see also Nora 1989; Olick and Robbins 1998; Warner 1975[1959]). Throughout this dissertation, I refer to national memory, which frames the nation as both the basis for, and the result of, a particular form of collective memory. National commemorations are central to the construction of national memory, though scholars provide differing explanations of why they matter: for functionalists, the observance of rituals produces social integration (Parsons 1937; Shils 1966; Warner 1975[1959]). Others foreground the form of rituals: by taking place at specified dates, and in specified places, they are linked to the event being commemorated (Durkheim 1912). The sacred character of a ritual is established by its aesthetics (Alexander 2004a) and by the performance of participants (Tambiah 1985; Cossu 2010). For Durkheim (1912), as a society modernizes, the state increasingly becomes the primary bearer and transmitter of collective memory. Citizens, in turn, become members of a cohesive nation by sharing a common orientation to the past.

Scholars of collective memory since Durkheim have problematized his emphasis on elite commemorations by drawing attention to contested, power-laden narratives of past and present. According to these theorists, national commemorations are one component of invented traditions, which unify the nation around a particular ritual while distinguishing citizen participants from non-participant outsiders (Gillis 1994; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992; Nora 1989; Spillman 1997). Further, they emphasize

collective memory as a discursive process, in which citizens project their own beliefs and values onto national narratives (Anderson 1983; Lukes 1975; Halbwachs 1992; Olick and Robbins 1998; Schwartz 2007; Warner 1975[1959]). This process of collectively constructing the past entails privileging some histories over others (Assmann 1995; Jones 2013; McCartney 2014; Todman 2009; Watson 2004; Zuercher 2015). In particular, the dominant narrative effaces marginal memories and the individuals and groups who produce them (Kertzer 1989; Lorimer 1978; Mamdani 1996; Mandler 2006; Rich 1988). Marginalized minorities, in turn, may occupy a peripheral role in these narratives and lobby for greater inclusion; they may deem the dominant narrative irrelevant to their own experiences and decline to participate in commemorations; they may find themselves represented as a prominent Other and loudly proclaim their loyalty to the nation in response; or they may construct private and local counternarratives that challenge the Self/Other binary. In this way, the dominant narrative of collective memory is always articulated alongside counternarratives.

Chapter Two presents the dominant traditions of national memory in Britain and France, as well as the collective memory of World War I in each country over the course of the past century. Chapter Three turns to the literature on difficult and disunifying memories as it discusses the memory of empire. Finally, Chapter Four addresses the dynamics of producing sites of memory.

Race, Racism, and Racialization

Definitions of race, like definitions of the nation, differ spatially and temporally. While contemporary sociologists generally acknowledge race as a relatively recent

Western construction (Mason 1995; Fredrickson 2002; Hannaford 1996) bound up with capitalism, colonialism, and slavery (Williams 1944; Grosfoguel and Mielants 2006; Malik 1996), controversies center on the particular time and place of the concept's origin (Mason 1995; Winant 2000); the social implications of any given definition of race (Osborne and Sandford 2002; Thomas 1928); the nature of membership in the dominant group (Bonilla-Silva 2004; Isaac 2004; Winant 2000); and the possibility of classifying ethnic, national, or religious groups as racial categories. I elaborate on the final controversy below. As these characteristics indicate, race has no single, universal definition; rather, race is constantly being constructed, and the borders of racial categories are being blurred and brightened. Drawing from Magubane (2004), I use the term "race" to refer to a socially constructed group of people that is essentialized and placed in opposition to another group of people in order to entrench the power of the dominant group. This definition does not specify whether racial categories are constructed on the basis of phenotype, religion, or class; rather, the essential elements of race are its ability to flatten internal diversity in the service of group cohesion, its creation of an insurmountable boundary between racial categories, and its differential allocation of power on the basis of group membership. Thus, race is inextricable from racism. The emphasis on ascribed identity, the overtness of opposition to racial Others, and the de-emphasis on geographic unity all distinguish racism from nationalism in principle. In practice, however, the two phenomena overlap, and should be treated as a unified field.

Racism, like nationalism, is a global, socially salient means of creating categories of insider and outsider and ascribing rights and value on that basis. Further, as with

nationalism, the elite in any given society play a disproportionate role in constructing the racial order. This, in turn, serves to entrench their own power. Those on the margins of the dominant racial group may ardently proclaim their status as insiders, or may construct counternarratives on the basis of their exclusion. Racism, the construction and entrenchment of racial categories, takes on social, political, economic, cultural, and interpersonal dimensions that vary across contexts. It also intersects with other categories of oppression, including nationalism, such that these two forms of exclusion are strengthened through their interaction. As nations construct racialized self-conceptions, they develop a logic for the conquest and exploitation of external Others, and the deportation and extermination of internal Others.

Integrating racism and nationalism into a unified field holds implications for theorizing. First, it acknowledges the universality of both racism and nationalism alongside their cross-national differences. Thus, cross-national case studies provide insight into the dynamics of racism and nationalism in particular national contexts (Van den Berghe 1978[1967]; Hroch 1985). Studies of the transnational construction of racism within individual nations also reveal the extent to which “internal” dynamics are global in character (Armstrong 1982; Breuilly 1993; Weiner 2012). This is particularly important given the U.S.-centricity of the sociology of race and racism, which foregrounds the black-white color line and its domestic manifestations (DuBois 1989[1903]; Omi and Winant 2015). Integrating the study of racism and nationalism provides the opportunity to place U.S. theories of the black-white color line in conversation with scholarship on

black Europe (Goldberg 2008; Modood and Werbner 2003; Moschel 2011; Nimako and Small 2009; Wekker 2009).

Approaching racism and nationalism as a unified field also integrates the two phenomena temporally. Comparing expressions of racism and nationalism across time reveals the moments at which nationalism became more or less racialized, making it possible to examine the discourse and policy associated with racialized nationalism and the circumstances underlying its emergence. For example, twentieth-century cultural racism, closely associated with nationalism, derives from the same desire to establish clear lines between insider and outsider as does nineteenth-century biological racism (Small 1994). Similarly, the present global wave of far-right populist nationalism derives from the same white supremacist logic as did its twentieth-century predecessors (Gilroy 2000).

Treating racism and nationalism as a unified field emphasizes the changing expressions of both alongside the continuity of their underlying logic across space and time. Thus, racialization refers to the process of transforming diverse individuals into a monolithic racial group (Small and Solomos 2006). Yet theorists of race and racism differ in the extent to which they emphasize change versus continuity in analyses of racialization. By extension, they place varying degrees of emphasis on political and social institutions—particularly the state. Racial formation theory argues that race is constantly constructed, interrogated, and reformed through social interaction. The specific articulations of race are shaped by the interactions of social, economic, and political forces; the state, in particular, is a key player. While power dynamics make racial

categories sticky, race is always being transformed (Omi and Winant 2015). Critics of racial formation, while affirming the socially constructed character of race, argue that its emphasis on fluidity underestimates the enduring power of racism. In particular, Feagin and Elias (2013) highlight the power of white interests to shape social institutions—a fact they claim is obscured by abstract designations like “the state”. Golash-Boza (2013) makes sense of the differences between the two theories as differences in emphasis (on the construction of race versus the construction of racism), arguing that the two are most instructive in combination. An integrated approach to racism and nationalism, with its corresponding attention to continuity across time and space, provides an additional perspective on this debate: racialization is a constant process of reifying categories of insider and outsider. When borders are blurred, racialization serves to brighten them. This process may entail the creation of new racial categories as a nation fears new Others, or changing compositions of categories in order to specify the conditions for membership. What remains constant is the existence of an insider/outsider binary.

In Chapter Three, I delve into the historical construction of Britain and France as racialized nations in opposition to a Muslim Other. This trope dates to the Middle Ages, and has been intertwined with anti-Semitism and anti-black racism to produce political, economic, social, and cultural exclusion. Yet anti-Muslim racism has become particularly salient in the twenty-first century. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 brought about a radical shift in the dominant narratives of race and nation. In Britain and France, Muslims have come to occupy a more prominent place as the racialized Other against which the nation is constructed. French Muslims pose a challenge to the conventional model of Frenchness

accessible to all through assimilation, particularly in their willingness to defy—or, even more threateningly, to reconceptualize—the republican ideal of *laïcité*. Since 9/11, the dominant French stereotype of Muslims as marginal and unassimilable ex-colonial subjects has fused with the new stereotype of Muslims as foreign terrorists who seek to destroy the nation. Controversies surrounding Muslims in the twenty-first century—the debate over the veil, which has raged incessantly since 1989; the strong showing of the Front National in recent elections; the passage of Article 4, stipulating that French schools emphasize the positive aspects of colonialism; and the 2005 riots in the Parisian *banlieue*—link a wide variety of Muslim stereotypes, all of which set a racialized religious group in opposition to the dominant image of the nation. In Britain, 9/11 was less damaging to national ideology than the 7/7 attacks in London, perpetrated by four British Muslims. The shock of the attacks left politicians across party lines finding blame in a politics of multiculturalism that had failed to create a sense of shared identity among citizens (Cantle 2001). Likewise, it has become popular to critique multiculturalism in British academia (McGhee 2005; Joppke 2004; Kundnani 2002). The result has been what Grosfoguel (2010) unabashedly calls “epistemic Islamophobia”: just as one form of racism pervaded basic social ideas and institutions in the early twentieth century, so does anti-Muslim racism encroach on politics, economics, the media, and education in the early twenty-first century.

Muslims and Islam in World War I

The idea of Islam, and the reality of Muslim soldiers, played a significant role in the history of World War I. This case study exemplifies the racialization of Muslims, the

interconnectedness of racism and nationalism, and the role of national memory in constructing the contemporary nation. Below, I trace the history of Muslims and Islam in World War I; this provides the basis for analyzing the ways in which Muslims were remembered and forgotten after the war.

With the outbreak of war in August 1914, both Britain and France looked to their overseas empires as a source of raw materials, funding, manual labor, and soldiers. Each approached recruitment differently: Britain, a naval power, had a comparatively small infantry that could immediately be deployed to the Western Front. The Indian Army, however, was a professional force that was regularly deployed throughout the Empire. Recruits were drawn from elite and poor communities alike; a disproportionate number, however, were drawn from rural areas, enticed by the promise of stable employment with a higher wage than they could hope to earn as agricultural laborers (Basu 2015). Thus, approximately 150,000 Indian soldiers were transported to Marseilles in the autumn of 1914 to support the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders. Yet far more Indian soldiers—1.5 million by the end of the war—would serve on fronts in present-day Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Palestine, and southern Africa. Of these soldiers, 90,000 would be killed (Corrigan 2006; Koller 2008; Stadtler 2012). 400,000 soldiers in the Indian Army were Muslim, drawn primarily from Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Provinces of present-day Pakistan. Their overrepresentation within the ranks of the Indian Army was the deliberate consequence of martial races ideology, detailed below.

France, unlike Britain, had established universal male conscription in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, and drew from its reserves to wage war on the

Western Front. Among metropolitan French citizens, conscription was depicted as a hallmark of citizenship in a modern nation (Purseigle 2012). Conscription of colonial subjects, however, was not established prior to the war, and the logic of military service as a duty of citizens could not logically extend to those who were denied citizenship on the basis of their supposed religious and cultural identities. Thus, another logic emerged to justify the conscription of colonial soldiers: that of a “blood tax”. Because France had benevolently extended the privileges of French civilization to its overseas Empire, and had expended the funds of its treasury and the blood of metropolitan soldiers doing so, colonial subjects were morally obligated to repay the debt they owed to the metropolis with their own lives. Thus, colonial administrators set recruitment quotas for each colony in North and West Africa, while delegating responsibility for ensuring that quotas were met to local authorities. Local authorities, in turn, employed varying degrees of coercion to meet those targets. Subaltern members of society—the enslaved, infirm, and very young—were targeted first. If these numbers were insufficient to fulfill quotas, officials turned to blackmail, kidnapping, and violence. In some instances, colonial officials took local chiefs and priests as hostages until their recruitment quotas were met. Colonial subjects, in turn, resisted with varying degrees of violence; in many instances, colonial subjects mutilated or killed officials rather than surrender their loved ones to the French military (Fogarty 2008). Ultimately, over the course of the war, nearly half a million colonial troops were recruited into French military service: 166,000 *tirailleurs sénégalais* from West Africa; 140,000 soldiers from Algeria; 50,000 from Indochina; 47,000 from Tunisia; 46,000 from Madagascar; and 24,300 from Morocco. These soldiers were joined

by an additional 220,000 civilian workers from throughout the Empire and China (Aldrich and Hilliard 2010; Horne 1985).

Both Britain and France drew from ideologies of martial races to recruit colonial subjects into particular roles. The Indian Army recruited soldiers into ethnically and religiously segregated ranks, ascribing racialized tropes to each ethnic group. Sikhs were said to display lion-like courage on the battlefield, for example, while Pathans were prone to unpredictable behavior. Conversely, non-martial South Indians were dismissed as effeminate (Basu 2015). Recruitment quotas reflected each group's relative importance to the Indian Army; once inducted into military service, they internalized and enacted the "martial tradition" of their respective ethnic groups (Barkawi 2017). France, similarly, produced an ideology of *races guerrières* (North and West Africans) and *races non-guerrières* (Indochinese and Madagascans) and recruited soldiers accordingly. Soldiers were issued with uniforms that reflected metropolitan stereotypes rather than the needs of a twentieth-century army: West Africans, for example, wore red fezzes rather than helmets, and bright blue coats and red pantaloons rather than dull colors better suited for camouflage (Davidson 2012). Among *races guerrières*, the French drew distinctions based, in part, on their own Orientalist notions of Islam. Morocco was deemed the home of "pure" Islam, due in large part to its lack of a historical relationship with Turkey (Davidson 2012). By extension, Moroccan soldiers were deemed the most martial of all French colonial troops. Algerians followed, with the Kabyles holding a privileged status as the most European, and most martial, of all Algerian ethnic groups. Tunisians, in part because of their historical ties to Turkey, were derided as emotional and childlike.

Among all North African troops, despite differential treatment on the basis of ethnicity, Islam was their master status and the basis for their racialization. West African troops, in contrast, were racialized first as black, and second as Muslim. They were afforded a lower status and, frequently, more dangerous combat roles, than were North African soldiers; this contributed to the high casualty rate of West Africans, which was twenty percent higher than that of metropolitans (Fogarty 2008). Non-martial civilian workers faced a similar fate: of the one million indigenous porters who transported supplies and weaponry across fronts in Africa, approximately 100,000 died—a casualty rate comparable to soldiers on the Western Front (Stevenson 2004).

Colonial troops served in regiments that were segregated by religion and ethnicity. All were commanded by white officers: Britain established parallel paths for advancement for Indian and white metropolitan soldiers, such that no Indian officer would ever hold a position of authority over a white soldier or officer. While the initial class of white officers expressed at least basic familiarity with the languages and cultural practices of the Indian troops they commanded, as casualties mounted, these were replaced by white officers who often had no knowledge whatsoever of Indian languages. In the French case, African troops could attain officer status, but were prohibited from rising above the rank of Captain. The presence of exclusively white senior officers was justified using familiar racist tropes: white officers were said to embody bravery and shore up the morale of indigenous troops (Fogarty 2008). Tremendous efforts were made to prevent colonial troops from socializing across ethnic lines and, even more dangerously, with metropolitan civilians. Yet the reality of trench warfare made complete

segregation impossible: on the Western Front, metropolitan and colonial troops fought in the same trenches, and everyday cultural exchange was an undeniable reality. The breakdown of the spatial division between metropolis and colonies fed into metropolitan fears that colonial subjects would cease to fear and respect their white occupiers. This, in part, explained Britain's decision to transfer all of its Indian troops from the Western Front to fronts in Mesopotamia and elsewhere in December 1915 (Corrigan 2006; Koller 2008; Stadtler 2012).

An additional, equally significant factor in Britain's decision was the threat posed by the Ottoman Empire. After joining the war on the side of the Central Powers, Ottoman forces introduced new fronts on the fringes of their sprawling Empire. Thus, British diplomats enticed the Ottoman Empire's Arab colonial subjects, led by Sherif Hussein, ruler of Mecca, to mount a rebellion against their occupiers. In return, Britain promised Hussein that following the war, Ottoman territory would be ceded to him as an autonomous Arab state. Yet Britain never intended to fulfill that promise: in 1916, diplomats Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot agreed to partition the Ottoman-occupied Middle East into British and French zones of influence. A year later, the British Foreign Secretary issued the Balfour Declaration, promising a national homeland for Jews in Palestine. These agreements directly contradicted the promises made to Hussein in exchange for his military support (Pappé 2006; Schneer 2011).

The Ottoman decision to join the Central Powers posed an additional problem for Britain and France: the supposed religious authority of Sultan Mehmed V, Caliph of Islam, Commander of the Faithful and Successor of the Prophet. Early in the war, a

German diplomat and Orientalist, Max von Oppenheim, had persuaded Kaiser Wilhelm that the natural loyalties of all Muslims lay with the Ottoman sultan. Regardless of their ethnicity or colonial government, he claimed, subjects of the British and French Empires were, first and foremost, Muslims. As such, they would readily rise up against their occupiers when religion was invoked. Following Oppenheim's advice, the Kaiser persuaded the Sultan to issue a *fatwa*, proclaiming that holy war against Britain and France was the religious obligation of all Muslims, "old and young, cavalry and infantry". Those who neglected to do support the Ottoman Empire would be "punished by the wrath of God as being the cause of harm and damage to the Caliphate and to Islam". The *fatwa* was proclaimed in November 2014 inside a Constantinople mosque. Immediately afterwards, the German ambassador repeated the text from the balcony of the Germany Embassy, where he was joined by fourteen Indian and North African Muslim prisoners of war who shouted slogans against Britain and France.

The months following the proclamation of the *fatwa* saw a concerted propaganda campaign by Oppenheim and the German Foreign Office directed at Indian and North African Muslim soldiers. Leaflets in Arabic and Urdu were dropped into French and British trenches, calling Muslim soldiers fighting for the Triple Entente "the worst enemies of Islam" and accusing them of committing "a manifest impiety" (Fogarty 2008, p. 192). Other leaflets claimed that Kaiser Wilhelm himself was Muslim. Moroccan troops reported that German soldiers called out to them in Arabic from across the battlefield, asking them why they were fighting against their fellow Muslims. Muslim soldiers who were captured by German forces were housed in *Halbmondlager* (Half-

Moon Camp), where they were given access to a purpose-built mosque and subjected to German propaganda encouraging them to desert to the Central Powers. Despite this intensive propaganda campaign, only a handful of soldiers were actually recorded to have deserted. Of these, the most notorious was Lieutenant Boukabouya Rabah, the only indigenous officer to desert from the French military during the war. Rabah published a pamphlet, *l'Islam dans l'armée française*, in which he protested the racism of barriers to indigenous advancement within the officer corps. More worryingly for French colonial officers, he claimed that the French military was violating religious law by cremating Muslim soldiers who had died in French military hospitals.

The German propaganda campaign had a significant impact on the experiences of Muslim soldiers on the Western Front. Yet this was not due to any mass Muslim uprising—as stated above, very few soldiers defected to the Central Powers. In India and West Africa, Muslim religious leaders condemned the actions of the Ottoman Empire and affirmed their loyalty to the empires on whom they depended for their positions. While there were instances of Muslim soldiers refusing to take up arms against their co-religionists in particular battles, there were other instances in which Muslim soldiers were cited for bravery and valor in battle against the Ottomans. Indeed, the actions of Muslim soldiers in battle, like their non-Muslim counterparts, was highly individualized. Yet in Britain and France, the Ottoman *fatwa* was greeted with a recognition that Germany was attempting to establish its legitimacy as a Muslim power, and a corresponding fear that each empire's status in the Muslim world was at stake (Fogarty 2008). Thus, the *fatwa*, as well as the response to it, was grounded in an Orientalist understanding of Islam: for

Germany, Britain, and France alike, religion was the defining status of Muslim colonial subjects, and the lens through which political, cultural, and social events were viewed. Islam thus was embodied and racialized in each empire (Davidson 2012). In their interactions with linguistically, culturally, and geographically diverse societies, all three European nations perceived Muslims as a monolithic group, governed by a totalizing religion.

Britain and France responded to German propaganda by proclaiming their own legitimacy as Muslim powers. Faced with claims that they were failing to fulfill the religious requirements of Muslim soldiers, both nations ensured that soldiers on the front were provided with halal rations, and strongly encouraged (in many cases, required) them to fast and pray. Imams were embedded in North African and Indian Muslim regiments. When wounded in battle, Muslim soldiers convalesced in Muslim hospitals in France—including those in Nogent-sur-Marne and La Mulatière. In Britain, the largest hospital was in Brighton, where Indian troops were housed in religiously segregated wards and ate food prepared in religiously segregated kitchens. These sites were visited by political and military officials, and meticulously documented in propaganda photographs that were distributed to Muslim soldiers on the front. In death, Muslim soldiers were buried under the supervision of religious leaders according to religious law. A French ministerial circular specified these conditions in December 1914, including the process of washing and clothing bodies, and the depth and direction of graves. Thereafter, guidelines for burial were distributed to Muslim hospitals. The best-known Muslim burial ground for Indian soldiers was in Woking; at cemeteries in Flanders, Muslim soldiers were buried in

marked graves (whose permanent tombstones, with their Qur'anic inscriptions, were added after the war) alongside soldiers of other faiths. Burial sites, like hospitals, were carefully documented and publicized in order to counter German propaganda.

These directives were handed down from the national level, and were based on colonial and military officers' perceptions of soldiers' needs rather than soldiers' specific demands. Thus, in the French military, for example, more religious provisions were made for North African than for West African soldiers; regardless of their individual religious and ethnic identities, the former were racialized as Muslim, while the latter were racialized as black. Yet in other ways, Indian soldiers' individual voices were heard: their letters home were read and scrutinized by censors, who maintained careful records of their observations and reported these to the War Office. Of particular interest to the censors were any complaints that the soldiers' religious needs were not being met. Wary of the censors' gaze, Indian soldiers wrote coded messages to loved ones—referring to metropolitan soldiers as “red pepper”, for example, and themselves as “black pepper” (Das 2011).

Through scrutiny of soldiers' letters, conversations between colonial and military officers, and the mounting fear of anti-colonial nationalist movements, metropolitan officials increasingly recognized that reestablishing prewar colonial authority in the Empire would be virtually impossible. Soldiers had forged social relationships across racial and religious lines, and hierarchies of white officers and colonial troops had been breached in battle (Das 2011). Further, no longer could France demand a “blood debt” from the Empire to the metropolis; the blood of colonial subjects had been spilled, and

the question was posed of how the metropolis would express its gratitude. Even among colonial officials, this issue was contested: the French denial of citizenship to the vast majority of Algerians was predicated on the belief that Islamic law was incompatible with republican values. Yet in 1915, a legislative proposal in the Chamber of Deputies proclaimed that France had a moral prerogative to extend French nationality to colonial veterans (Fogarty 2008). In India, colonial reform was announced repeatedly during the war, and colonial institutions appeared to be shifting towards self-government. It seemed that the war would provide the impetus for large-scale social change and greater autonomy for British and French colonies.

Yet after the war, these gains were immediately and forcefully reversed. Martial law was extended throughout India in November 1918, in the same month as the Armistice. Months later, in February 1919, Mahatma Gandhi launched his first national campaign of civil disobedience. And in April, British troops fired upon a peaceful protest at Amritsar, killing over one thousand people. From this point forward, the Indian nationalist movement radicalized (Sondhaus 2011). In North Africa, too, the failure to extend citizenship rights to colonial veterans indicated that the colonial system was incapable of reform (Wilder 2005). Conscious of their betrayal by the nation for whom they had risked their lives, colonial veterans joined nationalist organizations in large numbers. In the following decade, those movements adopted a more radical agenda, calling for the expulsion of France from Algeria (Purseigle 2012).

For Britain's Arab allies, the betrayal was even more acute: the Paris Peace Conference revealed Britain's duplicitous promises throughout the war, and the

impossibility of fulfilling the promise of an independent Arab state. Rather, both France and Britain held a strategic interest in establishing mandates in the Middle East to secure their respective empires. In negotiations over the partitioned Ottoman Empire, France was granted a mandate for Syria and Lebanon, while Britain received a mandate for Iraq, Egypt, and Palestine (Fieldhouse 2008; Sluglett 2004). The latter was to become a Jewish homeland rather than an autonomous Arab state (Segev 2000). For the remaining territories, the eventual goal would be independence; the borders of these new states, however, would cut across historical territories and ethnic groups, destabilizing the geopolitics of the Middle East for the following century. Further, independence would be conditional: Britain and the U.S. would exercise significant influence in the use of the region's natural resources—including the oil fields that were just beginning to be discovered.

The history of Islam, and of Muslims, in World War I disrupts the dominant memory of a European civil war in the trenches of Flanders. Instead, the war is globalized, and its relationship to contemporary nationalism and geopolitics is made clear. Further, the actions of Britain and France during the war are inextricable from those of their overseas colonies. Yet, largely because the experience of war had so dramatically altered colonial power dynamics, memory quickly gave way to forgetting in the years that followed the war. North African soldiers were assimilated discursively (but not politically) into the “French family” who had fought because of their membership in that family rather than their repayment of any “blood debt”, coercion, or individual choice. Memorials were erected to colonial troops (most notably in the Bois de

Vincennes, Nogent-sur-Marne); however, the discourses that these sites produced were highly localized, and were not assimilated into French national memory of the war (Mann 2006; Jennings 2001). By 1931, when the former Muslim hospital in Nogent-sur-Marne hosted the Paris Colonial Exposition, North African veterans were indistinguishable from other indigenous people on display in the human zoos (Purseigle 2012). Forgetting the role of colonial subjects in the war enabled Britain and France alike to reestablish their belief that they were autonomous, bounded nations. Acknowledging their dependence upon their respective empires would have threatened each nation's very idea of itself. Yet in the empire, the war could not be forgotten. Once the metropolis' violent exploitation of its empire in the service of its own identity was made clear, independence from the metropolis became a viable choice.

The centenary of World War I also marks a half century since the decolonization of the British and French Empires. Both Britain and France, deprived of colonial Others against which to construct the metropolitan Self, continue to grapple with their postcolonial national identity. The colonial dimensions of World War I have also been largely forgotten: a 2014 seven-country survey by the British Council found that only eleven percent of French respondents were aware of African involvement in the war, while only twenty-two percent of British respondents were aware of Asian involvement (Bostanci and Dubber 2014). The geopolitical effects of the war had also been largely forgotten: fifteen percent of French respondents, and twenty-five percent of British respondents, had ever heard of the Balfour Declaration. Even more strikingly, only eight percent of French, and nine percent of British respondents, had ever heard of the Sykes-

Picot Agreement. The World War I centenary would provide an opportunity to revisit the forgotten global and colonial dimensions of the war. Yet doing so would hold high stakes for the nation's idea of its own past and present.

Argument and Contribution

This dissertation argues, first, that British and French national memory was unsettled during the World War I centenary. This unfolded in two ways: first, national commemorations inverted the expectations for each country based on the nationalism literature. That is, the expectation that British commemorations would present a decentralized, evolutionary approach to national memory was not borne out; rather, British commemorations remembered the war as a period of national unity in opposition to European tyranny. Conversely, rather than the expected universalizing, revolutionary approach, French commemorations presented a decentralized, multivocal national memory of the war. Yet both nations, I argue, pursued their respective narratives in the interest of national unity in the present. Thus, national narratives did not foreground people or perspectives that might unsettle the nation at large. The second way that national memory was unsettled was through local sites of memory that foregrounded Muslim colonial subjects. These sites produced narratives that challenged national memory (and the nation that produced that memory) to varying degrees. One narrative, melancholia, blurs the borders of the nation and, by extension, challenges the idea of the nation as a discrete entity.

The second component of my argument specifies how melancholia destabilizes the nation. I argue that contemporary British and French national identity is predicated on

the idea of each as a geographically bounded entity, composed of citizens who share a common memory of the past and a common will to live together in the present. This narrative cannot be challenged by looking exclusively at those who unequivocally belong to the nation; doing so does not unsettle the nation's geographic or symbolic borders. Thus, national commemorations of World War I, while they invert the expectations of British and French national memory, still reify the nation by appealing to unity. Melancholic commemorations, however, destabilize the nation in three ways: first, by highlighting the historical interdependence of metropolis and empire, they challenge the idea that the nation is a discrete entity. Second, by revealing the interconnectedness of those who belong, those who do not belong, and those whose status is contested, they challenge the idea of the nation as a compact between citizens. Finally, by revealing the history of passive forgetting and deliberate erasure in the service of national memory, they challenge the common memory of the nation. Collectively, these facets of melancholia both fragment and globalize the idea of the nation.

The third and final component of my argument concerns the conditions under which melancholic narratives emerge. These conditions demonstrate the relationship between producers, text, and audiences in the construction of meaning. I argue that in order to construct a narrative of melancholia, three conditions are necessary in combination: first, individual actors must advocate for a melancholic narrative at a particular site. Yet these individuals do not impose their narratives without resistance; rather, they require legitimacy and financial resources from the state. Thus, a second factor in the emergence of melancholia is access to resources. Yet as it appeals to the

state, each site must maintain its own autonomy; otherwise, the intentions of individuals are compromised by the conflicting narratives of stakeholders. The combination of individual intentions and access to resources reveals and the state explains why some sites emerged without resistance, others faced initial obstacles, and still others failed to materialize despite the involvement of key individuals. Finally, in order to construct a melancholic narrative, a site must be unencumbered in its physical form. Sites with preexisting or contested meanings, or sites with codes of etiquette governing their physical space, are bound by the narratives that have defined them in the past. Conversely, new sites, or sites with ambivalent physical forms, may take on the meanings that the key individuals intend.

My contribution has three components. First, I examine how collective memory unsettles unity. The first wave of literature on collective memory argues that its purpose is to establish moral unity among those who remember (Durkheim 1912; Halbwachs 1992). Subsequent work has focused on difficult memories that have been the source of fragmentation (Steidl 2013; Vinitzky-Seroussi 2002; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991). Yet these studies focus on highly salient memories that hold significant implications for collective memory and national identity in the present. Thus, in these case studies, commemorating difficult histories also serves to restore moral unity. In contrast, I examine how the commemoration of difficult histories can deliberately disrupt moral unity and, by extension, collective memory. The history that these sites engage with has been passively forgotten or actively erased, such that it holds little import for the

dominant narrative of collective memory. Drawing attention to these marginal memories calls the dominant narrative of national memory into question.

A second contribution is my integration of postcolonial theory, collective memory, and nationalism. Recent work on collective memory draws attention to its particularities in postcolonial contexts; in particular, work on postcolonial witnessing (Craps 2013), migration (Sanyal 2015), and trauma (Alexander 2004b; Hobuß and Jäger 2017) has challenged the Eurocentrism of memory studies. Yet the majority of this work has drawn from literary theory and foregrounded individual experiences. My dissertation brings a social scientific approach to this emerging critique by analyzing the relationship between nationalism and memory through the lens of postcolonial theory. While my data centers material sites and the individuals who produce them, these sites take on a sociological significance as components of, and challenges to, national memory.

Third, I contribute to the literature on cultural production by emphasizing the process of unsettling memory. Theories of cultural production examine the process by which individuals produce cultural objects, objects take on embodied meanings, audiences interpret and transform those meanings, and society at large incorporates those meanings into their lived experiences. I emphasize the multivocality of melancholic cultural objects, such that they embody multiple, conflicting meanings. The meanings of these objects are, in part, explained by the intentions of producers. However, they also carry embodied meanings that transcend any singular intention or interpretation. As these meanings are absorbed and transformed by audiences, and disseminated to society at

large, they remain multivocal. This serves to unsettle singular meanings of objects, and singular narratives of the nation.

Methods

I employ qualitative research methods to collect and analyze the data for this project. Since the goal of qualitative research is to identify how people make meaning of the social world, qualitative methods are well suited to assess how British and French citizens of varying identities and positionalities understand the nation and its past (Morrow and Smith 2000). Further, like comparative research methods, qualitative research in general emphasizes the temporal and spatial specificity of the research context (Creswell 1998). In so doing, it allows for the existence of multiple and conflicting perspectives, including marginalized perspectives (Morrow et al 2001). I draw data from two levels of analysis: national, state-led commemorations and local sites of memory.

Comparing national commemorations in Britain and France illuminates the continuities and distinctions of two national narratives that have been depicted as ideal types in the nationalism literature: British national identity has been described as individualistic-libertarian (Greenfeld 1992), evolutionary (Kumar 2006), fragmented (Burke 2007[1790]), and multicultural (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Gilroy 2005), while French national identity has been constructed as collectivistic-civic (Greenfeld 1992), revolutionary (Kumar 2006), universalist (Brubaker 1992; Reynaud-Paligot 2006), and assimilationist (Favell 2001). Comparing Britain and France is a valuable methodological choice with implications for theorizing. First, the comparison of Britain and France poses highly contextualized questions, acknowledging the historical

specificity of each country at each time. Second, and consequently, it offers a contextualized generalization rather than a universal claim by way of conclusion (Paige 1999; Small 2009). Third, centennial commemorations in Britain and France make sense of variations in nationalism between the two countries by utilizing what Skocpol and Somers (1980) term the “contrast of contexts” variation of interpretation. That is, the significance of each commemoration is made clear by its contrast with other commemorations within and across national contexts. Fourth, and conversely, a cross-national comparison draws attention to the global and transnational social forces underlying representation in each national context (Go and Lawson 2017).

The decision to study representations of one marginalized minority, Muslims, will also yield contextualized generalizations. Studying another racialized minority, such as African Caribbeans or Punjabi Sikhs, could lead to different conclusions. Further, anti-Muslim racism does not exist in isolation; as detailed above, anti-black racism intersects with anti-Muslim racism to racialize Algerian and West African Muslims, for example, in different ways. However, the racialization of each group cannot be understood fully in terms of phenotype or national origin alone. Rather, each group was also racialized on the basis of their Muslimness. Muslims, as detailed above, are a particularly interesting case study because of the deep-rootedness of the Muslim Other in each country’s overseas empire; the growing prominence and potency of negative stereotypes; the consistency of these stereotypes across the two countries; and the process by which an ethnically diverse religious group becomes racialized. I elaborate on the particularities of Britain and France

as national case studies in Chapter Two, and the implications of these specificities for representations of Muslims in Chapter Three.

Collective memory, as detailed above, serves as one means of constructing the nation. Events deemed historically significant by those in power are emphasized in the construction of national memory (Bodnar 1992; Elgenius 2011; Gusfield and Michalowicz 1984; Nora 1989; Spillman 1997). Chapter Two presents the history of collective memory of World War I, emphasizing the salience of its memory in both Britain and France throughout the past century. The World War I centenary provides an opportunity for state and local actors to remember the national past in ways that embody and/or challenge these ideal types.

Official commemorations of the centenary began in the summer of 2014, and will continue through June 2019. Although the centenary is ongoing, I highlight the earliest events of the centenary because these received national media attention and set the tone for the four-and-a-half years of events that would follow. I conducted a content analysis of four national commemorations in France: the national holiday on July fourteenth; the centenary of the call to mobilization on August third; the centenary of the Battle of the Marne on September twelfth; and the homage to soldiers of the war on November eleventh. In Britain, I analyzed three separate commemorations on the centenary of Britain's declaration of war on August fourth, alongside the events of Remembrance Sunday on November ninth. I attended events on July fourteenth and August fourth in person, and screened video coverage of the remaining events. I also analyzed the transcripts of speeches delivered at each event, paying particular attention to the portions

that were televised nationally, since these conveyed messages to the nation at large. Media coverage, while not a systematic part of my analysis, provided insight into the scope of the commemorations and their reception amongst the public (Franzosi 1987; Hocke 1998; Oliver and Myers 1999; Snyder and Kelly 1977). Finally, I conducted a political discourse analysis of speeches pertaining to the centenary that were delivered outside of the commemorative events (Dunmire 2012). These speeches, given by heads of state, national lawmakers, and other key officials tasked with framing the centenary, reveal how the significance and substance of the centenary were presented to the public.

Measuring an abstract concept such as the nation or its memory requires guarantees that both the research and its objects are scientifically valid (Abbott 1997; Carmines and Zeller 1979). Indeed, national commemorations provide a window into the dominant narrative of national memory. Yet this narrative is not equivalent to the sum of citizens' individual memories; rather, it is both the result and the source of counternarratives from below. Drawing from grounded theory, I identified the marginality of depictions of Muslims in national commemorations, and revised my research approach to encompass smaller commemorations that foregrounded Muslims (Glaser 1992; Strauss and Corbin 1998). Triangulating my research approach enabled me to gain a more comprehensive understanding of my research context (Bogdan and Biklen 2006; Campbell and Fiske 1959; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003). In order to analyze representations of Muslims more closely, and to identify their role in counternarratives that may unsettle national memory, I turned to local commemorations.

I analyzed six British and five French sites of memory that foreground Muslims in their respective narratives. These sites are summarized in Table 1. Among them are active cemeteries and the sites of former cemeteries; the ruins or foundations of hospitals and places of worship; old and new monuments; lectures, tours, and museum exhibitions; and documentaries. All of these field sites fall into the category of sites of memory, which Nora (1989, p. 12) defines as the material traces of a past that is no longer remembered organically. My eleven field sites do not constitute an exhaustive study of commemorations of Muslims during the centenary. They do, however, represent a cross-section that demonstrates the breadth of sites of memory dedicated to Muslims. Further, selecting a small sample of commemorations permits a detailed analysis of each.

SITE OF MEMORY	NATION	FORMAT	DOMINANT NARRATIVE
Birmingham Western Front Tours	Britain	Tours	Re-memory
Curzon Institute	Britain	Lectures	Re-memory
Forgotten Heroes	Britain	Book/lectures	Re-memory
Frères d'armes	France	Documentary	Cultivated Melancholia
Grande Mosquée de Paris plaques	France	Monument	Re-memory
La Mulatière Cemetery	France	Cemetery	Re-memory
Nogent Colonial Garden	France	Former hospital	Latent Melancholia
Nogent Cemetery/Kouba	France	Cemetery	Mourning
Stories of Sacrifice	Britain	Exhibition	Cultivated Melancholia
Woking Peace Garden	Britain	Former cemetery	Re-memory

The World's War	Britain	Documentary	Cultivated Melancholia
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Table 1. Local sites of memory.

My approach to local field sites is three-tiered: first, I conducted a content analysis of the material sites (Holsti 1969; Neuendorf 2001). This entailed using thick description to analyze the physical form, landscape, monuments, and accompanying texts (engravings and captions, as well as promotional brochures and official websites) of each site (Geertz 1973). Second, I traced the chronological development of each site. For sites with direct links to the war, or with longstanding histories, this entailed archival research. The history of new sites, in contrast, began with a particular individual or institution's decision to commemorate Muslims in World War I, then gradually took on material form as key actors lobbied for funding, secured support from the state, and publicized the new site to citizens. In every case, a site's current form was materially and symbolically distinct from its original form. The third component of my approach to field sites consists of interviews with twenty-one key stakeholders. These interviews both substantiate the history of each site and reveal how stakeholders make meaning of process and site alike (Seddon 2010). In addition to my own interviews with stakeholders, I draw from the published and televised interviews, op-eds, and tweets of these stakeholders and of eight other key individuals.

I interpret each tier of my research approach in conjunction with the others in order to make sense of the discourse on national memory surrounding the war. I analyze sites of memory as multivocal sites, through which collective memory is produced, interpreted, and contested. Following actor network theory, each site of memory is an

assemblage, produced by human and non-human actants, that convey particular meanings (Latour 2005). I also analyze sites of memory as non-human actants that engage with institutional actants (including schools, media, and the state) to produce the assemblage of national memory. Yet the production of memory is not a linear or hegemonic process; rather, sites of memory serve to re-entrench, complement, or unsettle the ever-changing dominant narrative of war and nation.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter Two presents the three narratives of collective memory and analyzes their expression in national and local commemorations. I begin by reviewing the literature on British and French nationalism, emphasizing the ways in which each has been constructed in opposition to the other, and the ways in which both have been constructed as ideal types. I then address the relationship between British and French nationalism and collective memory at the national level. Britishness, I find, has been constructed as individualistic-libertarian and fragmented, with an evolutionary orientation to the past. Frenchness, in contrast, has been constructed as collectivistic-civic and universalizing, with a revolutionary orientation to the past. I trace the collective memory of World War I in each country over the course of the past century, arguing that this case provides a window into each country's traditions of national memory and, by extension, each country's nationalism. In this context, I present the national commemorations of the World War I centenary. I find that, contrary to the literature on British and French nationalism and memory, French centennial commemorations were decentralized and

refrained from grand narratives. British commemorations, in contrast, sought to re-nationalize and valorize the memory of Britain's role in the war.

The unexpected distinction between British and French national commemorations raises the question of how these narratives of collective memory are applied and contested at the local level with regard to a marginalized minority. Thus, I turn to local sites of memory. I identify three narratives of memory: mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. Each was present in both countries, and at all sites of memory, to varying degrees. However, at each field site, a particular narrative of memory predominated. Mourning is backward-looking to the militaristic national past; re-memory is forward-looking to the multicultural national present. Both serve to construct a cohesive understanding of the nation that remembers the war. The third narrative, melancholia, may be latent in imperial ruins or cultivated in new sites of memory. Both variations draw attention to the violence of the imperial past in order to destabilize any cohesive narrative of the national present. The diversity of narratives in local sites of memory challenges the notion that British and French nationalisms are ideal types; rather, they draw attention to the transnational character of nationalism, empire, and memory.

In Chapter Three, I discuss the ways in which melancholic sites disrupt not only national memory, but the nation itself. To make sense of what is at stake when the nation remembers its collective past, I delve into the historical construction of the nation through racialization and empire-building. Drawing from postcolonial theory, I discuss the construction of the metropolitan Self in opposition to the colonial Other, the upsetting of this binary through decolonization and migration, and the reentrenchment of the

racialized Self/Other binary in the postcolonial metropolitan imaginary. Returning to the World War I centenary, I argue that narratives of mourning and re-memory created space for Muslim soldiers within the nation while strengthening the borders between insiders and outsiders. Narratives of melancholia, however, unsettle the border between insiders and outsiders—and, by extension, the nation itself as a discrete entity.

Having specified the ways in which melancholic narratives unsettle collective memory, I consider how the disruption of memory alters the nation's image of itself. Just as latent melancholia unsettles the nation by forcing it to confront its inherent violence, cultivated melancholia presents a national memory that is incompatible with nationalism. Civic nationalism, which Britain and France purport to exemplify, is inherently exclusionary and predicated on an imagined national past. When the violence of empire and the transnational character of the imperial nation are revealed, the nation cannot conform to this clear-cut idea of itself. In the present context of populist nationalism in both Britain and France, melancholic narratives of Muslims in World War I challenge the premises of nationalism, revealing that even at the peak of their imperial power, in Britain and France, the global was and is inescapable.

Chapter Four considers the conditions under which sites of memory construct melancholic narratives. To frame this question, I draw from theories of cultural production and non-human agency. I begin by examining the key individuals who framed and advocated for the sites. I find that while the demographic characteristics of a stakeholder does not significantly impact the narrative produced, the intention of the stakeholder does. Thus, I describe the intentions of stakeholders to produce sites of

melancholia as well as militaristic sites of mourning and re-memory. Yet this factor alone does not explain why some individuals faced obstacles, or failed to construct the sites they envisioned. Thus, I turn to the sites' relationship to the state as a source of legitimacy and financial support. I find that the development of a relationship with the state explains the eventual re-memory of some sites, while the absence of such a relationship explains the decision by others to change their physical form. This does not, however, explain the persistent latent melancholia of one outlying site: the colonial garden in Nogent-sur-Marne. I find that the distinctive history and physical form of this site—imperial ruins that were continually repurposed to celebrate the French Empire—made their assimilation into militaristic or multicultural narratives impossible.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I return to my research questions: How are Muslims represented in British and French centennial commemorations of World War I? How do transgressive sites of memory unsettle the nation? Under what conditions are these transgressive narratives constructed? I summarize my findings with regard to each question, as well as the limitations of those findings. I conclude by posing questions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: NARRATIVES OF NATIONALISM AND MEMORY

Introduction

Theories of nationalism present Britain and France as two ideal types that are constructed in opposition to one another. National memory is a central component of both: a shared understanding of the past instills a common set of values in citizens, and distinguishes them from outsiders. Thus, examining the way British and French citizens collectively remember the past reveals how the two nations perceive themselves in the present. In this chapter, I analyze national commemorations of the World War I centenary. I find that representations of Britain and France at the national level challenge the dominant understanding of both: Britain, described in the literature as individualistic-libertarian, fragmented, and evolutionary in its orientation to history, emphasized a cohesive, multicultural national idea that was undermined by memory wars during the centenary. Conversely, France, typically depicted as collectivistic-civic, universalizing, and revolutionary in its orientation to history, adopted a decentralized and pluralist centenary. This indicates that recent developments in national memory are changing each nation's understanding of itself at the national level.

In order to understand how these elite narratives are received, contested, and influenced from below, I turn to local commemorations. Additionally, by focusing on representations of Muslim colonial subjects, I consider how this group's inclusion in (and exclusion from) national memory reveals the shifting borders of each nation. I identify three narratives of memory at these local sites: mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. I find that national narratives dissolve at the local level; each of the three narratives is

present in both countries. Further, in various ways, these narratives challenge the dominant narrative of national memory—and, by extension, of nationalism—in each country.

Nationalism and Collective Memory

In theories of nationalism, Britain and France are depicted as ideal types. English nationalism—the predecessor and dominant component of British nationalism—is individualistic-libertarian, composed of free and equal citizens who do not diminish their autonomy by adhering to the nation (Greenfeld 1992). French nationalism, in contrast, is collectivistic-civic, with a national idea greater than the sum of its citizenry (Birnbaum 2001; Greenfeld 1992; Reynaud-Paligot 2006). The French national idea, in turn, holds universal appeal, such that any individual who adheres to the values it proclaims can, in theory, become French (Bell 2003). Theorists of British and French nationalism emphasize the ways in which the two are constructed in opposition to one another: French nationalism was constructed through *ressentiment* towards Britain (Greenfeld 1992), and particularly towards Britain's success in its imperial pursuits (Kumar 2006). Other theorists reverse the sequence, claiming that French nationalism was inspired by Enlightenment universalism and humanism (Calhoun 1993; Reynaud-Paligot 2006), while British nationalism took shape in response to European revolutions (Arendt 1944). For Burke (2007[1790]), British national identity was *anti-nationalist*, in that it opposed the radically egalitarian, collectivist philosophy that pervaded post-Revolutionary France. For the purposes of this chapter, the sequence of nationalisms is unimportant; in both

Britain and France, the construction of an external Other is required for the construction of the national Self.

Both British and French nationalism began as elite projects (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1982; Eley and Suny 1996; Hedetoft 2009). Over the course of two centuries, both ideologies were disseminated to the public in a discursive, power-laden process that changed their character (Fearon and Laitin 2000; Loveman 1999; Purseigle 2013; Zubrzycki 2010). In particular, both took on greater salience by transforming their internal colonial subjects into citizens (Brubaker 1992; Kumar 2012; Weber 1976) and by excluding racialized overseas colonial subjects (Cooper 2005; Drayton 2000; Pratt 1992)—a process detailed in Chapter Three. These developments served to unify the fragmented constituents of the nation (Hayes 1960; Kedourie 1960; Weber 1976).

In both Britain and France, collective memory is a central component of national identity. Yet the nation's orientation to the past has taken different forms: Britain experienced a continuous, evolutionary approach to the past, largely unmarked (with the exception of the Civil War) by violent internal ideological clashes (Butterfield 1945; Kumar 2006). The history of France, in contrast, was characterized by stark ruptures with the past (Butterfield 1945; Kumar 2006). The Revolution, as the foremost of these ruptures, became the catalyst for constructing a new nationalism predicated on republican universalism (Todorov 1989), which purported to unify the nation on the basis of a disconnection with the past (Gildea 1994; Sa'adah 2003). Yet Butterfield (1945) emphasizes the violent divisions that the Revolution had created in society and memory, describing this event as a "cataclysm" and a "wound". This division with the past, in turn,

had given rise to conflicting visions of the nation in the present: the nineteenth century was marked by clashes between ideologies and regimes, which conceived of France as either a Republic grounded in secularism, reason, and universalism, or as a sacred monarchy governed by tradition (Ben-Amos 1993; Lindenberg 1994). Thus, France celebrated its rupture with the past, even as internal battles raged in the present, while Britain conceived of history as a gradual progress towards greater openness and development (Butterfield 1945).

These differing orientations pervade each country's memory of its national past: the French observation of the *Fête Nationale*, which commemorates the French Revolution with a combination of military parades and mass celebrations, stands in contrast to Britain's absence of a patriotic national holiday. Instead, the annual day that unites Britons in recognition of the nation is Remembrance Sunday, a mournful commemoration of World War I (Elgenius 2011). These contrasting national days, each with a particular understanding of the past, highlight the centrality of memory in general, and the memory of war in particular, to the construction of national identity. They also reveal the World War I centenary as an opportunity to examine the endurance of, and challenges to, the dominant national narratives in Britain and France.

The memory of World War I historically has provided a window into each country's national memory. In France, the initial postwar years facilitated the democratization of memory, with the burial of the dead in individual tombs marked with identical headstones (Gillis 1994; Mosse 1990). Similarly, local memorials overwhelmingly featured the ordinary *poilu* ("hairy man", the nickname for French

World War I soldiers) and listed the names of the dead alphabetically, without regard to rank (Kidd 2006; Sherman 1994). At this stage, individual French citizens grieved the violent, premature deaths of family members, the invasion and destruction of French territory, and the lived hardships of a prolonged war. Additionally, World War I had shaken the ideology of a unified nation growing ever stronger through modernization; in the wake of a global war, citizens recoiled from grand narratives (Fussell 1975; Todorov 1989). Yet amidst these individualized memories, debates emerged: leftists and pro-Germanists disputed the dominant narrative of German responsibility for the war (Lindenberg 1994). After World War II, the memory of the latter war—in which France reckoned with uneasy memories of defeat and collaboration—subsumed its predecessor. Yet the semi-centenary of World War I, in 1964-68, brought renewed attention to the conflict, as a “good war” that recalled national unity. The 1980s and 1990s saw the emergence of “scientific councils”, in which historians played a greater role in decisions about representation and commemoration (Cossart and Haignou 2014). This triggered a new wave of debate, centering on the causes that compelled individual soldiers to fight and die, the rehabilitation of deserters, and the war culture of soldiers in the trenches (Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2000; Varley 2015). The early twenty-first century saw the waning of memory wars; instead, a new generation of museums in Meaux and Péronne adopted an individualized, interactive character that challenged the viewer to consider the limits of representation (Winter 2009). This increasingly decentralized approach coincided with a growing emphasis on local heritage and familial histories rather than grand national narratives of the past (Kowalsky 2012).

In Britain, immediately after the war, the new Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC, later the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, or CWGC), like its French counterpart, democratized memory by burying the dead in individual graves, marked by identical tombstones (King 1998; Saunders 2004). Yet because most of the dead lay on foreign soil, local war memorials became key sites of memory for families left behind. These became the natural loci of commemoration ceremonies that unified participants in mourning. During and after World War II, in Britain as in France, the importance of the latter war supplanted the former. Yet in Britain, World War II—in which Britons had successfully resisted the Nazis—provided a more unifying, positive memory than its predecessor. World War I was reread as a devastating conflict that had created the conditions for World War II (Fussell 1975; Winter 1998). In the 1960s, the memory of World War I reemerged in its own right. In the wake of decolonization and social change, commemorations of World War I expressed nostalgia for a lost era of national unity (Evans and Lunn 1997; Tinsley 2014; Watson 2004). Yet depictions of the war were far from idealized; much of the literature published during the semi-centenary berated the British military leadership for their inability to adapt to modern warfare and their willingness to sacrifice the lives of working class soldiers (Clark 1961). A fourth wave of national memory came in the 1990s, emphasizing the victimhood of soldiers forced to fight in an unjust war. This culminated in a 2006 blanket pardon for World War I soldiers who had been shot for desertion or cowardice (Hanna 2014).

In both countries, the memory of World War I has served to rally citizens around a shared understanding of the national past, and to construct a shared national identity in

the present. Some national differences are apparent: Britain's physical distance from the battlefields, coupled with the absence of any national narrative of invasion and defeat, enable that nation to adopt an evolutionary approach in line with its larger tradition of national memory. Thus, in Britain, the rituals surrounding Remembrance Sunday express collective grief; in France, despite characterizations of the "good war", the nation was embattled in memory wars nearly a century after the war's conclusion. This aligns with characterizations of France as a nation in pursuit of grand narratives, but internally embattled (Braudel 1993).

The World War I Centenary

France

In January 2014, speaking before members of the National Assembly, Minister of Veterans' Affairs Kader Arif announced the government's plans for the centenary. He emphasized national unity founded on shared values, and his determination to emphasize those values during the centenary:

I am preparing these memorial cycles with the constant concern of the search for national cohesion and a discourse that will be a source of appeasement. . . What I retain from my travels in France, including in many territories where peoples believe they've been left behind, is that this republican message must be audible. A nation is founded on its shared history and on its collective memory. The shared sentiment of belonging to a nation is the condition of living together; and in France, the nation is inseparable from the Republic and its values.

Arif foregrounded the national idea, in line with longstanding traditions of French nationalism. Yet the narrative that the centenary would produce would be decentralized and pluralist.

In France, official centennial commissions were planned and directed by the Mission Centenaire, a government-appointed body with Joseph Zimet at its head. Members included ministers, public institutions, universities, and one financial institution (“Dossier de Presse” 2014). The Mission worked alongside an international scientific council composed of thirty-three scholars and headed by historian Antoine Prost. Ten of the council members were women, and all were either European or American (“Les Membres Fondateurs” 2014). The Mission pursued a decentralized approach to the centenary, encouraging local governments and private associations to organize their own events. In turn, the Mission would provide an official “label” of endorsement and would include these events in the official database of centennial commemorations. Funding was provided by a deliberately diverse coalition, including the French government, local governments, the European Union, and private donors (Zimet 2011, p. 21). Additionally, the Mission partnered with the French National Library and the National Archives to organize the *Grande Collecte*, wherein families were encouraged to bring photos, letters, and other documents pertaining to World War I to local archives in order to assess their significance (“Thèmes des Précédentes Grande Collecte” 2018). This initiative had a dual function of contributing hundreds and thousands of personal narratives to national memory and demonstrating to families that their ancestors' lives had contributed to something greater than themselves. By presenting the war as an amalgamation of individual lives and stories, the Mission also eluded grand narratives and the controversies surrounding them (Fathi 2015; Kauffmann 2014).

Throughout the centenary, individualism took precedence over collectivism in political discourse. Minister of Education Najat Vallaud-Belkacem exemplifies this in her Armistice Day speech in 2015:

Above the tumult, voices still resonate. The voices of these *poilus*, anonymous or not, that rise above the heart of the battle, whether it was in Verdun, in the Somme, or elsewhere. It's a letter bidding farewell, because one never knows if this day will be the last. It's a text written to say what one has seen, what one has lived . . . It's the vertigo, described by Maurice Genevoix, when the scale of the massacre appears at the turn of a simple question: "Have you ever thought of the other dead, those whom we never knew, all the dead of all the regiments?"

Vallaud-Belkacem's emphasis on individualism both highlights the scope of the war and transcends it: the millions of war dead were millions of individuals. This perspective makes the memory of the war more accessible to her contemporary audience. Minister of Veterans' Affairs Jean-Marc Todeschini (2015), similarly, links familial narratives to national memory:

One hundred years ago, France was plunged into the Great War. The war mobilized more than eight million Frenchmen. But in losing 1.4 million of them, in leaving behind her a cortege of wounded, widows, and orphans, the war concerned all French people. This is why this memory of the Great War is one in which personal and familial stories blend with the destiny of our country. And because this war did not spare any family in France or any territory, the centenary should belong to all French people. And this is the case.

In Todeschini's view, national memory is a composite of familial memories; in turn, remembering familial history is a form of remembering the nation.

During the major events that composed the centenary, the tone was more mournful than celebratory, as leaders emphasized the scale of violence and the individual stories of lives lost. The nation's newest World War I memorial, the Ring of Memory at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, provides a vivid example. Designed by Philippe Prost, the

stainless steel and concrete structure is in the form of a lopsided ring, symbolizing unity and peace. One section juts over the edge of a hill, representing its precarious nature. Inside the ring, five hundred book-shaped panels are inscribed with the names of 576,606 soldiers who died in Nord-Pas-de-Calais during World War I—listed alphabetically, with no mention of rank or nationality. The final panel has been left blank, so that new names may be inscribed as additional bodies are identified.

At the monument's inauguration on Armistice Day 2014, President Hollande circled the ring with a small group of dignitaries, stopping intermittently to listen to three teenagers—one French, one British, one German—describe the experiences of three soldiers listed on the memorial. Following each presentation, a trio of musicians played a somber song. After completing the circle, Hollande walked to the center of the ring and unveiled a plaque, officially inaugurating the memorial. He then delivered a speech before an assembled crowd, in which he pointed out that the first name on the memorial was that of a Nepalese soldier. The scope of European empires in the early twentieth century, he explained, had ensured that families across the globe would feel the weight of war. Here, Hollande emphasized the unity of soldiers in suffering, and of families in mourning. Thus, he simultaneously emphasized the universality of the war and individualized its experience. Grand narratives that theorized the war's causes or assigned blame were incompatible with Hollande's narrative.

At the national level, French commemorations of the centenary paradoxically built consensus surrounding the pluralization of narratives. This marked a shift from the ardent memory wars that had characterized late-twentieth-century commemorations, and

a departure from the dominant understanding of French national identity as predicated on an overarching national idea. It also raises the question of why such a shift occurred. Kader Arif's January 2014 speech provides a clue: in his words, he oversaw the commemorations "with the constant concern of the search for national cohesion and a discourse that will be a source of appeasement." The need for such an appeasement implies that national unity was contested elsewhere; the World War I centenary would serve to restore a sense of unity that had been lost. Arif continues that "the shared sentiment of belonging to a nation is the condition of living together"; thus, he implies that people currently living in France do not share a common understanding of what it means to belong to the nation. At the national level, a decentralized approach to collective memory restored unity. Yet it remains to be seen whether divergent narratives at the local level sought the same goal.

Britain

In an October 2012 speech at the Imperial War Museum, Prime Minister David Cameron announced the government's plans for the World War I centenary. Like Kader Arif, he claimed that the nation itself was at stake: "Our ambition is a truly national commemoration worthy of this historic centenary. A commemoration that captures our national spirit in every corner of the country, from our schools and workplaces, to our town halls and local communities. A commemoration that, like the Diamond Jubilee celebrations this year, says something about who we are as a people." Cameron, like Arif, foregrounded national unity, and endowed it with normative value. Yet while the French

centenary would find unity in plurality, the British commemorations were marked by disagreement over the very meaning of the nation.

British commemorations were planned by an advisory board appointed by Prime Minister Cameron and chaired by Secretary of State for Culture Maria Miller. Its members were composed of ministers, historians, and authors. Yet of the seventeen advisory board members (including Miller), all were white British, and only three were women. This prompted popular criticism that Cameron's (2012) determination to say "something about who we are as a people" risked turning into a nationalist celebration (Mason and Furness 2013; No Glory 2014) that erased women and colonial subjects from Britain's national memory (Engelhart 2013; "First World War" 2012).

Divergent views grew stronger as the centenary drew closer: in January 2014, Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove penned a widely circulated opinion piece in the *Daily Mail*, in which he claimed, "Many of the new analyses emerging challenge existing Left-wing versions of the past designed to belittle Britain and its leaders. Instead, they help us to understand that, for all our mistakes as a nation, Britain's role in the world has also been marked by nobility and courage." Gove's article was met with condemnation by historians and Labour politicians (Helm et al 2014; Kennedy 2014). The following month, the BBC aired dueling documentaries on the causes of World War I, entitled *The Necessary War* and *The Pity of War*. Dueling memories became dueling commemorations: on August third, protesters assembled outside of Glasgow Cathedral to decry the glorification of a brutal war, and members of the anti-war group No Glory read the speeches of their early twentieth-century predecessors at a counter-commemoration

outside Westminster Abbey. These memory wars challenge the claim that Britain's orientation to the past is evolutionary, such that the past "folds seamlessly into the present" (Kumar 2006). Rather, they align more closely with the French tradition of an unsettled, continually contested relationship between past and present.

During the centenary, national commemorations took up Cameron's challenge to "say something about who we are as a people" by valorizing Britain's national cause. Thus, in a speech at St Symphorien Military Cemetery marking the anniversary of Britain's declaration of war against Germany, Cameron (2014) proclaimed:

We remember the reasons behind this conflict. Too often it has been dismissed as a pointless war, fought by people who didn't know why they were fighting. But that is wrong. These men signed up to prevent the domination of a continent, to preserve the principles of freedom and sovereignty that we cherish today.

The justice of the nation's cause was also emphasized through appeals to military valor. This often took an overtly Christian tone: during services at Glasgow Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, marking the "Commonwealth contribution" and the onset of war, respectively, hymns likened the sacrifice of Jesus to the sacrifice of soldiers, and prayers appealed to God to make soldiers loyal and dutiful. "When I am inclined to doubt," read the Soldier's Prayer of Commitment, "Strengthen my faith."

Elsewhere, by celebrating the "Commonwealth contribution", the commemorations reimagined the British Empire as a vast multicultural community committed to a common cause. Thus, at Glasgow Cathedral, the diversity of the service was limited to those who had fought on Britain's behalf; no other representatives of either the Triple Entente or the Central Powers were present. Drawing attention to the

Commonwealth gave the commemorations a global appearance while using the Empire to elevate the British metropolis over its European rivals.

These proclamations of a just cause during national centennial commemorations were not uncontested; at other instances, speakers cautioned against passing judgment on events long since passed. Yet the latter was directed largely at representations of the war as a futile endeavor—representations expressed by the protesters outside the doors of Glasgow Cathedral, or by historians condemning Michael Gove’s veneration of “true British heroes”. Further, both the proclamations of a just cause and the vehement debate surrounding them stand in contrast to conventional representations of British national identity as individualized, fragmented, and content to consign the past to history. The unexpected distinction between French and British national commemorations, and the debate surrounding national identity that leaders in both countries allude to, raises the question of how these narratives of collective memory are applied and contested at the local level. Below, I examine this question with regard to depictions of a marginalized minority.

Local Commemorations

As detailed above, nationalism in Western Europe was an elite project that gradually spread to the people as the elite sought to consolidate their power. For Brubaker (1992), key components of French nationalism took shape in the *ancien régime*, predating the Revolution. In the British case, Greenfeld (1992) argues that the Tudor aristocracy, former commoners, recalled their humble origins and extended the concept of the nation to encompass the people. Brass (1991) is more deterministic: he contends

that elite manipulation created a highly salient concept of ethnicity. Thus, the invasion of overseas empires, as detailed in Chapter Three, was pivotal to the spread of nationalism in Western Europe. Nationalism was disseminated to the people, who developed a sense of shared identity with one another, differentiated themselves from outsiders, and regarded the state as the political manifestation of their collective identity. Yet this process was not unidirectional: other scholars deemphasize the role of the elite, arguing that territorial and cultural consolidation (Smith 1986) or linguistic homogenization and print capitalism (Anderson 1983) gave rise to a strong sense of shared identity among the people. Finally, Hroch (1993) asserts that far more significant than the ruling class were upwardly mobile intellectuals committed to an egalitarian system and frustrated by the dominance of hereditary rulers. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive; Hobsbawm (1992) argues that while nationalism is conceptualized from above, it is only comprehensible from below. That is, the elite constructs nationalism but cannot control its effects; populations embrace nationalism unevenly across any given territory and its social groupings.

Just as nationalism cannot be understood solely by examining its elite origins, neither can national memory be understood solely by examining official commemorations. Rather, local commemorations provide insight into how elite narratives of the national past are understood, internalized, and contested. Further, local sites of memory provide the opportunity to make sense of individual motivations, the availability of resources, and changing narratives over time—a process I explore in Chapter Four. Local sites of memory are particularly noteworthy when they concern a marginal group:

these sites, the discourse surrounding them, and the obstacles impeding them represent the contested borders of the ever-changing nation. Thus, I examine local sites that foreground the role of Muslims, a marginalized minority (as detailed in Chapter One), in World War I.

I find that local sites of memory in Britain and France do not, overall, conform to the representation in nationalism literature of Britain as individualistic-libertarian, fragmented, and evolutionary, nor of France as collectivistic-civic, universalist, and revolutionary. Neither do they reverse these narratives, as is the case at the national level. Rather, local sites in both countries display three distinct narratives of memory: mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. Below, I define each narrative of memory in context. I then consider how they align with, and unsettle, narratives of British and French nationalism.

Mourning

I define mourning as the individual and collective process of grieving a loss—whether of a person, an object, or an idea—which gives way to the acceptance of a new reality (Freud 1957[1917]). In the process, mourning extolls that which has been lost. As a component of World War I commemorations, mourning venerates dead soldiers and, by extension, instills a militaristic national identity among mourners. In both Britain and France, mourning is the most established, most conventional narrative of World War I at the national level. The immediate postwar years, as detailed above, transformed national memory in both countries: the universality of individual grief gave rise to collective rituals of mourning which have become institutionalized. Further, social transformation

during the war led to the democratization and modernization of mourning, whose most visible legacy is the millions of individual, identical graves dotting former battlefields. The scale of this transformation has shaped the official memory of World War I at the national level ever since. Even as successive waves of memory criticize the conduct of the war, initiate debates regarding its causes and legacies, and become increasingly distanced from the individuals who experienced it directly, national rituals still foreground the dead. Contemporary citizens, by extension, take on the role of mourners. In both Britain and France, Armistice Day (or Remembrance Sunday) is marked by somber processions, the laying of wreaths at local war memorials, and—at the culmination of ceremonies—a collective two-minute silence broken, in Britain, with the words, “We will remember them.”

The predominance of mourning during the centenary, as indicated above, was contested at the national level. At the local level, it was contested further: new sites of memory, particularly those that foregrounded Muslim colonial subjects, emphasized the complexity of soldiers’ individual experiences and refrained from subsuming them into a militaristic national narrative. One site of memory, however, did present a narrative of mourning: the *kouba* and Muslim tombs in the Nogent-sur-Marne municipal cemetery. This site was distinctive for its backward-looking emphasis on the soldiers who had died, its militaristic tone, and its representation Muslim soldiers as the equal comrades of non-Muslim metropolitans. With these traits, the *kouba* served to affirm the universalizing, assimilationist character of French nationalism. However, by emphasizing continuity

with the past, it paradoxically broke with the French nationalist tradition of celebrating distance from the past.

On July 16, 1919, diplomats from Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco joined French administrators to inaugurate a *kouba* (small, symbolic mausoleum) in the municipal cemetery of Nogent-sur-Marne, bordering Paris. Surrounding the *kouba* were the graves of soldiers who had perished at the nearby Muslim hospital. The inauguration followed a year of advocacy by Émile Piat, the administrator charged with oversight of Muslim hospitals and cemeteries, who “had the impression that the erection of a monument in memory of the soldiers who succumbed to their wounds would have happy repercussions among the indigenous populations of our Africa” (qtd in Renard 2005). In the 1950s, as French imperial power waned, the *kouba* began to fall into disrepair, and it collapsed naturally in 1982. Yet the history of the structure was rediscovered in 2004 by historian Michel Renard, who, with the support of the Great Mosque of Paris and its rector, Dalil Boubakeur, secured funding from the government of President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008 to restore the site. The new *kouba*, festooned with the French tricolor, was inaugurated on April 28, 2011, its physical form identical to the structure that had preceded it.

At the Nogent-sur-Marne *kouba*, a first trait of mourning Muslim colonial subjects is the backward-looking character of these commemorations. By enacting mourning, the contemporary nation grounds itself in the past. Further, mourning rituals do not overtly reimagine the past; rather, they seek to remember the past as it was. The restoration of the *kouba* emphasizes continuity with the past over change: most of the actors involved are the direct successors of the officials who built the site (the mayor of

Nogent-sur-Marne, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Veterans' Affairs) and, in two cases, the direct descendants of builders (E.L. Martin, a local marbier) or of individuals who attempted to restore the site a generation earlier (Dalil Boubakeur, rector of the Great Mosque of Paris). It is significant not only that these descendants assumed responsibility for the restoration, but also that this literal continuity was emphasized in the inaugural ceremony. At the *kouba*, history is represented as a gradual evolution, in which contemporary citizens fulfill the same roles as their early twentieth-century predecessors. Emphasizing a link with the past affirms the place of the *kouba* in the French national memory of World War I. Yet paradoxically, this backward-looking approach also distinguishes the site from a French tradition of nationalism that emphasizes its rupture with the past. Further, by rooting itself in the past, the *kouba*—like the centennial commemorations at the national level—evades the memory wars that have characterized the national memory of World War I. In this way, both the *kouba* and the national centennial commemorations depart from French traditions of national memory.

A second trait of mourning consists of the veneration of dead soldiers. Mourning instills, reiterates, and disseminates a militaristic national memory. The narratives that are foregrounded are those of soldiers, whose sacrifice for the nation is beyond repute. By extension, desecrating conventional sites and symbols of mourning—vandalizing monuments or tombs, burning poppies, and disrupting the somber silence of ceremonies—is equivalent to desecrating the soldiers themselves and the nation they embody. Thus, in conventional mourning, for Muslim and non-Muslim soldiers alike, the nation is united in its enactment of reverence for the fallen. In Nogent-sur-Marne, the

architecture and spatial separation of Muslim tombs distinguishes them from those of the metropolitan French and Indochinese soldiers buried in other sections of the cemetery. Yet the logic for restoring the site appeals to the nation's responsibility to remember those who "sacrificed their lives" for the Republic and its values.

This introduces a third trait of mourning: according to this narrative, there is no distinction between the motivations of metropolitan World War I soldiers and their Muslim colonial counterparts. By extension, there is no distinction between metropolis and empire; both are read as integral components of the nation, and (as the presence of metropolitan soldiers and the preponderance of tricolor flags at the inauguration attested) both are *morts pour la France*. Implicit, but never stated overtly, in the restoration of the site is the injustice of having forgotten Muslim soldiers in the past. Thus, Daniel Lefeuvre and Michel Renard (2007), lobbying for funding, emphasize their dignity as soldiers, as well as the importance of the site as evidence of Muslims' longstanding contributions to the French nation:

It is this surplus of significance that built a symbol of mutual recognition that has every reason to be remembered today . . . [Reconstructing the *kouba*] would demonstrate that the Republic, across time, assumes its responsibility to remember all those who lost their lives to defend her ideals.

Lefeuvre and Renard's appeal to the military valor of Muslim colonial subjects links them to their metropolitan, non-Muslim counterparts.

The *kouba*'s backward-looking perspective, its militaristic character, and its depiction of Muslim soldiers as equivalent in history and memory to their non-Muslim comrades, all ground this site of memory in its connection to the past. Yet for Renard and

Lefeuvre, the site is also significant for the national present. Thus, they conclude their fundraising letter by pointing out, “[The *kouba*] would constitute, a short distance from the *Cité national de l’histoire de l’immigration*, an excellent site of memory and history.” This final sentence links Muslim soldiers to subsequent immigrants and French citizens. With this statement, the line between past and present blurs: for the actors involved in the restoration, contemporary French Muslims are the heirs of Muslim World War I soldiers. Thus, in a letter to the rector of the Great Mosque of Paris, Dalil Boubakeur, Renard and Lefeuvre (2007) state that the *kouba* “represents an affirmation of the historic character of the Muslim presence in our country, in which French Islam . . . can also reclaim its memory.” Elsewhere, Renard (2011) bemoans the left’s hypocrisy for purporting to support the interests of immigrants while neglecting an important site of memory. According to this narrative, Muslim colonial soldiers, contemporary Parisian Muslims, and Muslim immigrants are conflated into a single group with a common history and a common role to play in the contemporary French nation. The *kouba* was intended, in 1919, to send a message to Muslim colonial subjects in Africa that a grateful French nation would protect and uphold Islam. In 2011, the restoration of the same site was to convey and “reclaim” a “gesture of brotherhood” to French Muslims. In 1919, as in 2011, the *kouba* constructed a narrative of a French Republic inclusive of all who would embrace its values and sacrifice their lives for its cause.

Re-Memory

The line between past and present is blurred further through the narrative of re-memory. Re-memory shares traits with mourning: both serve to create a unifying national

identity by rallying citizens around a shared understanding of the past. Both are constructed and enacted discursively, such that many individual stories inform, interpret, and challenge the dominant narrative. Consequently, both change over time, such that the remembered past always differs somewhat from the historical past. Yet it is useful to distinguish re-memory from mourning in terms of the purpose it serves and the logic it employs. Mourning, which follows the experience of loss, looks backwards to the lost person, object, or idea. At the completion of the mourning period, the subject accepts the loss, and is free to forget the past. Re-memory may take on similar forms to mourning, but it need not respond to any loss. Rather, re-memory follows a change in the subject's identity—whether that entails a gain, loss, or some qualitative shift. Thus, re-memory looks toward the present rather than the past. In order to make sense of what has already changed, the subject rewrites history in a way that grounds her new identity in the past. The subject need not claim that the re-remembered past is more “authentic” than earlier narratives; re-memory serves the present rather than the past, and the subject may celebrate changes to the narrative.

During the World War I centenary, the line between mourning and re-memory blurred at the national level in France and Britain alike: backward-looking rituals of mourning included references to contemporary society; tour groups imposed contemporary meanings on military cemeteries; and new museum exhibitions and lecture series joined older monuments as key sites of memory. Further, at any given site where re-memory predominated, actors also articulated counternarratives of mourning and melancholia. Yet with regard to local sites that foreground Muslim colonial subjects, the

distinction between mourning and re-memory is starker. Five sites—the Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19, the monument to Muslim soldiers at the Great Mosque of Paris, the British Army’s outreach program to Birmingham Muslims, the Curzon Institute’s panels on the “Commonwealth contribution” to the war, and (in some ways) the Woking Peace Garden—present a narrative of re-memory. In both Britain and France, these sites celebrate national narratives of cohesive multiculturalism by constructing memories of previously neglected aspects of the past. Below, I elaborate on two key aspects of these sites: militarism and multiculturalism.

Re-Memory and Militarism

Sites of re-memory presented Muslims as loyal heroes and the embodiment of militaristic values. Militarism was also a component of representations of Muslims in narratives of mourning; however, in the latter case, Muslims were not distinguished from non-Muslim soldiers. Re-memory foregrounds militancy in order to make the case that Muslims have the right to belong to the nation in the present.

One aspect of this narrative was directed at non-Muslims, as local sites sought to debunk stereotypes about contemporary Muslims and appealed for support in the face of widespread anti-Muslim rhetoric. The rector of the Great Mosque of Paris, Dalil Boubakeur (2014), makes this point emphatically:

This responsibility to remember, Mr. President of the Republic, is a necessity in this memorial site that links Muslims to France so strongly. A site of loyalty and hope. Hope that the citizenship of Muslims, bought by the blood that was spilled, will permit them to live a peaceful life, protected from all the factors that threaten to bring contempt, hatred, and discrimination. All of our hopes and our recognition are directed at you, Mr. President of the Republic, who, with your

gesture, confirm the national character of French Islam and its historical compatibility with the values of the Republic.

Implicit in Boubakeur's statement is the link between militancy and citizenship, such that soldiers who died for France are beyond reproach. By extension, their descendants have earned the right to be French. This lesson is directed not at French Muslims, but from Muslims to non-Muslims who violently deny the right of Muslims to belong to the nation. In order to challenge anti-Muslim racism in the present, Boubakeur constructs a French nation grounded in the conventional values of militancy, loyalty, and sacrifice, and frames those who deny these traits in French Muslims as anti-French. Hollande (2014) makes a similar point in his speech at the same event:

After World War I, a strong link was established between Islam and the Republic, for the defense of the sovereignty and liberty of our country. This is why this homage to the dead is also directed at the living. It is a call to respect: respect for the dead of yesterday, those who fought for us; respect for the dead of today, through our obligation to provide confessional sections of our cemeteries. But it is also a call to respect for the living, which requires us to fight ferociously against discrimination, inequality, and even worse, racism, and to be intractable regarding anti-Muslim words and acts, and the profaning of places of worship.

In both speeches, leaders use the language of loyal heroism to call upon non-Muslims to reject overt discrimination against Muslims.

The Curzon Institute, which hosted fifty-two panels at schools, churches, mosques, and community centers, sought to commemorate the "Commonwealth contribution" to the war. As it does so, Curzon entreats non-Muslims to remember the Muslim soldiers of World War I. In his lectures, Major Hugo Clarke, director of this initiative, highlights the nation's obligation to remember, and its failure to do so, by describing the denial of military decorations to individual colonial subjects. He elaborates

on the injustice of forgetting in an interview: “The most feedback I’ve had has been, ‘We never knew this before.’ One of the lines that we keep hearing back has been ‘lesser-known facts about the war,’ which I find appalling because it sounds so minute.” For Clarke, remembering the Commonwealth would alter the overall understanding of the war and, by extension, the nation: the inclusion of colonial subjects in the dominant memory of the war fundamentally is a call for inclusion of religious and ethnic minorities in contemporary Britain. He explains, when asked why remembering the Commonwealth role in the war was important: “We like our history. We like to have that connection. If you look at the television here, for example, *Who Do You Think You Are*, and that kind of program, people feel very connected to that. And it has to do with identity, particularly cultural identity and belonging.” Thus, remembering the heroism of colonial subjects in the war would compel white, non-Muslim Britons to include their descendants in their conceptualization of the nation. Some respondents expressed frustration with the need to appeal to militarism in order to convince non-Muslims that Muslims had the right to belong. Zoubir Salhi, caretaker of the Great Mosque of Paris, stated that the monument to Muslim soldiers was directed primarily at a non-Muslim audience—even though it was located inside the grounds of a mosque. Non-Muslims, he argued, were the constituency that needed to be educated about the heroism of Muslims.

Militaristic narratives are not always directed at non-Muslim audiences; *Forgotten Heroes 14-19* frequently speaks directly to young British Muslims by hosting panel events at mosques and Muslim schools and by framing the significance of its work with particular regard to Muslims. As one tweet on December 20, 2016 reads: “Our project is

all about giving youth an education on #WW1 history, a voice and a chance to not take the wrong road.” Elsewhere, the leaders of Forgotten Heroes elaborate on the “wrong road”: fascination with militant Islamism and, in the most extreme cases, allegiance to ISIS. For Luc Ferrier and Hayyan Ayaz Bhabha, many young (implicitly male) British Muslim youth idolized militarism; valorizing Muslim World War I soldiers would direct the attention of this audience towards positive role models rather than Islamist militants. The juxtaposition of these two groups was even more explicit in the aftermath of a wave of attacks in London in spring 2017: in a June 2017 tweet, the group wrote, “These #WW1 Muslim soldiers would despise terrorists AND their (silent) sympathizers who slaughter defenceless people #LondonAttacks”. Alongside Islamist militants, Forgotten Heroes condemned far-right militants as violently divisive and ignorant of history. Thus, the group tweeted in January 2017: “Their untold stories will help us living our lives in a climate of fear which only helps those who seek to divide us. #WW1” Such a narrative appeals to Muslim and non-Muslim funders as it praises the militancy, loyalty, and courage of Muslim World War I soldiers.

The Birmingham Western Front tours are even more explicitly directed at young, British Muslim audiences. Muslims, according to Captain Naveed Muhammad’s narrative, have participated fully in the military in the past, and there should be no barrier to their participation in the present. Further, because of their historical role in the military, Muslims could claim both an abstract connection to and an intimate stake in the national past. Yet Muhammad emphasizes that Muslims are not exceptional in this regard, claiming: “I think that anyone, whatever their background may be—be it white

English, or Hindu, or Sikh, or whatever—I would challenge anyone from any sector of society to go there and not be moved by the . . . horrors of war. And that’s what it is. You know, let’s not beat around the bush. It was a horrible, horrible war.” This statement, when coupled with Muhammad’s goal of improving the relationship between Birmingham Muslims and the British Armed Forces, initially seems puzzling. Yet his initiative’s forward-looking emphasis permits a different reading: by encouraging a sense of empathy for Muslim World War I soldiers, Muhammad enables his audience, young British Muslims, to see themselves as potential soldiers in the contemporary British Army. Additionally, by participating in rituals that honor the Muslim dead of World War I, they may begin to see contemporary soldiers—including Muslim soldiers—as loyal heroes whose commitment to the multicultural nation is beyond reproach.

Re-Memory and Multiculturalism

Local sites of re-memory construct cohesive narratives of a multicultural, unifying national identity in the present. While these sites foreground the memory of Muslim World War I soldiers, the purpose of remembering the soldiers is to make sense of the present. Thus, sites of re-memory are sites of envisioning and constructing the multicultural nation. Yet the variations between the sites are telling: while some proclaim the nation’s longstanding inclusiveness and place the onus on contemporary Muslims to assimilate into its dominant institutions (including, most prominently, the military), other sites seek to construct the nation anew, implicating Muslims and non-Muslims alike in the process.

The Curzon Institute, which celebrates the compatibility of Muslimness and military service, sits at one end of the spectrum. Asad Jamil recalls the format of the Curzon panel at the Shah Jahan Mosque:

We had a Commonwealth overarching lecture, we had an India lecture which talked about Muslim soldiers specifically, but also talked about the Hindu and the Sikh contribution—and our guests were from a wide background anyway—and we had the final, uh, you know, the role of faith within the army, and how important it is within the army. So, yes. We think, hopefully, we covered all the bases there, and we gave it respect. We . . . didn't want to make it specifically a Muslim commemorative event. It was a cross-faith commemorative event.

For Jamil, the broad scope of the event fulfilled two purposes: first, it presented Muslim soldiers as entirely capable of serving in the British Army. By extension, Islam was assimilable into the nation's dominant institutions. Second, it resisted a narrative of Islamic exceptionalism by presenting Islam as one of many religions represented in the military, and the Commonwealth as a diverse array of religious and ethnic groups. The resulting, overarching narrative of the event was the story of a multicultural Britain enriched by the contributions of a religiously and ethnically diverse Commonwealth. Drawing attention to the nation's longstanding diversity, according to Major Hugo Clarke, would challenge the dominant understanding of the nation by broadening its categories of membership across time. Yet this broader understanding does not unsettle the nation itself; on the contrary, it shores up the nation and deflects criticism of its institutions. The overarching goal of the Curzon lectures was to convince members of religious and ethnic minorities that they belonged to the contemporary, multicultural nation. By virtue of their belonging, they were encouraged to participate in the nation's dominant institutions—foremost of which was the military.

The Birmingham Western Front tours, an initiative funded by the Ministry of Defence and led by Captain Naveed Muhammad, also foregrounded the military in its understanding of the multicultural nation. Identifying a personal connection to World War I enabled Muhammad's participants to stake a claim to membership in the contemporary nation. Muhammad acknowledges that this sense of belonging might not have a tangible link to the military: he points out that his participants, most of whom had been reluctant to wear poppies for Remembrance Day, probably would not begin wearing them when they returned home from the tour. Yet this, he argued, was not his goal; rather, he hoped that his participants would feel less of a conflict between their identities as Muslims and as Britons. Muhammad emphasizes that the reconciliation of these identities is a long process:

I don't just walk up to people cold and say, 'I'm planning this trip in April. Yeah, I know about the Afghanistan war. Don't worry about it. It's nothing connected to that.' It doesn't work that way. These are relationships that have been built up over years. It's about introducing people, building relationships, to—you get people to feel comfortable in your presence, and you, likewise, are comfortable in their presence. It's mutually beneficial.

Further, Muhammad uses his understanding of multiculturalism to decenter the metropolis. In that sense, the memory of Muslim soldiers challenges the dominant spatial understanding of the nation. Recalling his own childhood in Kenya, he makes sense of his own Britishness, stating:

If you go to Nairobi, and you have a look at the train station in Nairobi, and you come back here and look at some of the stations here, it's almost the same architecture. . . . And I think, the fact that we have those links to the Commonwealth, even if somebody tried, I don't think we'd ever be able to get rid of those connections here, in the UK. And I think . . . that's how we're able to be such a diverse society.

Similarly, he encourages his participants to identify a connection to Britain and its military by considering their own Pakistani background: virtually all of the participants had been born in Britain, and many had never visited Pakistan before, but the realization that people with familiar names and faces had fought for the undivided Indian Army in World War I would give them an intimate connection to mainstream, multicultural British national memory.

The discourse surrounding the monument to Muslim soldiers at the Great Mosque of Paris unsettles the dominant narrative of national memory further: speakers point out that the “sacrifices” of Muslim soldiers have been forgotten for too long, that Muslims have been excluded from the nation on the basis of false claims about their lack of “contribution”, and that the nation at large must make amends to its Muslim citizens. Yet even as they unsettle the nation, these claims are rooted in appeals to a multicultural national identity. As Minister of Defense Hervé Morin proclaimed at the monument’s inauguration in 2010,

May [the soldiers we remember] also encourage us to pursue understanding of our conception of *laïcité*. . . My *laïcité*, like yours, is a principle, not a religion. My *laïcité* is liberty, openness to religions, tolerance, and dialogue. Because in the end, did we have to wait for so many young seminarians to fall in the trenches in order to understand that they were not enemies of the Republic? . . . Yes, Mr. Rector, I would like for these plaques that we unveil today to be about memory, but also about the future. May they be an homage, but also a hope.

The installation of the memorial plaques in the Great Mosque exemplifies a particular form of subversion through re-memory: a national narrative that appeals to shared values in opposition to an overtly exclusionary national narrative. Thus, it is unsurprising that

far-right actors loudly rejected the memorial, deeming it divisive and anti-French. Marine Le Pen, leader of the National Front, remarked that it made her “want to vomit” (qtd in “Mémorial du Soldat Musulman” 2014). Citizens, she claimed, belonged to the nation by virtue of their adherence to republican values; religion should not divide them in either life or death. Sites of memory should commemorate all members of the nation equally, regardless of their religion. Like Morin, Le Pen claimed that the nation itself was at stake in the way it commemorated its past. Yet for Le Pen, the Great Mosque’s depiction of French Islam as compatible with and constitutive of the nation directly threatened her notion of a secular France in which religion was relegated to the private sphere—and in which religious minorities, crucially, were made invisible.

Proclaiming a cohesive, multicultural nation that is rooted in the past provides a powerful rebuttal to national narratives that deny the existence of French Muslims. Yet the same multicultural narrative is limited by its cohesiveness: proclaiming a single national narrative requires erasing memories and rejecting values that do not align with the dominant narrative. Thus, asserting that Muslims had earned their right to belong through blood sacrifice negated the lives of dissidents and deserters, as well as the French government’s policies of populating its colonial armies through conscription and coercion. In this way, the monument at the Great Mosque encapsulates the promises and pitfalls of re-memory.

A final site of re-memory, the Woking Peace Garden, provides the most direct challenge to the contemporary nation. A former Muslim military cemetery that had fallen into ruin, it has been re-membered as an inclusive site, combining its restored walls with

a new memorial stone, aesthetic elements of an Islamic garden, and a large, open space within the walls. Like the other sites of re-memory, it uses the memory of Muslim soldiers to historicize the multicultural nation. Yet in Woking, the multicultural nation has yet to be constructed. The garden functions as a site for imagining and creating the nation. Thus, its form is deliberately ambivalent, with a large, open space suitable for meditation or organized meetings. The site's key advocates, Horsell Common trustee Elizabeth Cuttle and Woking Borough Councilor Zafar Iqbal, hope that the practice of bringing school groups and Army recruits to the site—a practice initiated during the construction process—will continue now that restoration work has been completed. They envision the garden as a site for history class trips, a host for secular South Asian cultural festivals, and a welcoming spot for casual passersby. Rather than recreating the site's original form, and far from claiming to revive its original purpose, the key actors in Woking have created a new site of re-memory. Through the peace garden, they present Muslim soldiers as heroes and call on visitors to remember them, even as they use the space to construct a new narrative of contemporary British Muslims and their relationship to the nation—encapsulated most clearly in a September 2016 garden party and discussion with the theme, “A Very English Islam”.

The Woking Peace Garden is exemplary of re-memory: by commemorating Muslim World War I soldiers, it calls upon contemporary Britons of all religions to construct an inclusive, multicultural nation. Yet with its altered physical form, the site embraces its changing significance over time, and refrains from claiming that the entirety of its meaning lies in the present. Indeed, the key stakeholders in Woking express their

wariness of appropriating the original meaning of the site. One stakeholder points out that “The danger is that you put today’s values on the past, which is so wrong. The context is—unless you’ve got written documents that can explain things, you don’t know how they were seeing things, how they were feeling.” Beyond the possibility of altering the originally intended meaning of the site, Iqbal points to the significance of the intervening years, stating, “Before, there was a sense of melancholy when you walked through the common, and I hope we haven’t lost that.” Iqbal’s statement underlines the peculiarity of Woking as a site of memory: its meaning lies not only in the contemporary peace garden, nor in the original burial ground, but in the entire trajectory of commemorating, desecrating, forgetting, and re-memorating. The contemporary peace garden revives the memory of the site’s original purpose while acknowledging the differing perspectives of past and present. Yet in the site’s current form, histories of passive neglect and violent erasure—significant components of national memory over the past century—are no longer visible.

The fate of the Curzon Institute provides a similar lesson, albeit by a very different means. On March 21, 2015, a year after the conclusion of Curzon’s lecture series, the *Daily Mail* published video footage of Afzal Amin, by then a Conservative Parliamentary candidate in a tightly fought race, dining with Tommy Robinson, former leader of the openly anti-Muslim, far-right English Defence League (EDL). In the video, Amin proposed that the EDL organize a march against the development of a new mosque in his constituency. Amin would then meet publicly with EDL leaders, who would agree to call off the march and give credit to Amin. In return for supporting his plan, Amin

promised that he would give voice to the EDL's agenda once he was elected to Parliament. Following the publication of the video footage, Amin resigned from the Conservative Party and withdrew his bid for election (Craven and Ellory 2015; Chorley 2015).

How should the downfall of Afzal Amin change our reading of the Curzon lecture series? Amin took pains to distance his individual actions from the Curzon Institute, and the latter was never implicated in his collusions with the EDL. Yet it also never escaped from Amin's shadow, and Clarke's planned follow-up projects—most notably a second lecture series focusing specifically on Muslims in the war, which he had intended to present in various Commonwealth countries—never materialized. Two lessons can be drawn from Amin's fate: first, re-membering the past by assimilating a marginalized minority into the nation's dominant institutions is unlikely to appeal to groups who categorically reject either those institutions or the presence of marginalized minorities generally. Second, and by extension, a narrative of re-memory risks overwriting the complexity, contradictions, and violent conflict of past and present.

Melancholia

A third narrative, melancholia, disrupts the cohesion of French and British national memory. Instead, it draws attention to the discursive process of constructing national memory, and to the counternarratives that are erased in the process. Unlike mourning and re-memory, melancholia frequently does not take material form in sites of memory. Rather, it may consist of a generalized sense of unease surrounding national memory; a violent clash between narratives that reveals the contingency of both; or a

ruined site that proclaims multiple narratives within a single space. I term this narrative latent melancholia. Cultivated melancholia, in contrast, is the deliberate, localized disruption of national memory, unaccompanied by any narrative to repair that which it fractures. Like its latent counterpart, cultivated melancholia draws attention to longstanding practices of privileging and suppressing narratives of memory. Yet while latent melancholia is guilt-ridden and paralyzing, cultivated melancholia is deliberately imbued in sites of memory in order to remind the nation of what it has lost. It prods the nation to grapple with its past and present without prescribing any tidy solution. Further, it demonstrates that any attempt to construct a cohesive national narrative is an act of erasure.

Both latent and cultivated melancholia hold the entirety of difficult histories, looking both backwards and forwards, and revealing the contradictions of competing narratives across time. Substantively, the history that they highlight—marked by racialized violence—unsettles narratives of Muslim World War I soldiers as equal comrades or loyal heroes. In the postimperial nation, melancholia reveals the process by which the metropolis has constructed a national Self through the exclusion of the colonized Other, and the metropolis' struggle to make sense of itself in the absence of that frame. Below, I elaborate on each of these traits with regard to three instances of latent melancholia: the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden, the Muslim necropolis in La Mulatière (prior to 2007), and the vandalism of various war memorials during the centenary. I also examine three cultivated sites of memory: the BBC documentary, *The*

World's War; the France 3 documentary, *Frères d'armes*; and the British Muslim Heritage Centre's exhibition, *Stories of Sacrifice*.

Disrupting Memory

A first theme of melancholia is the relationship between past and present. Whereas mourning is rooted in the past, and re-memory is rooted in the present, melancholia embraces the totality of past and present, with all of its contradictions and omissions. In the process, it draws attention to the deliberate, selective construction of memory, alongside the processes of neglect and erasure that have characterized much of the past century. By highlighting changes to memory across time, sites of melancholia challenge the narrative that predominates at any particular moment.

Imperial ruins are the amalgamation of constructing, deconstructing, and neglecting the past (Stoler 2013). At these sites, no single narrative of past or present is hegemonic. The former colonial garden, housed in the Bois de Vincennes in the town of Nogent-sur-Marne, is illustrative: established as a colonial school of tropical medicine in 1899, it became the site of the International Colonial Exhibition in 1906. There, the city of Paris erected pavilions, each named for a particular colony, in the Orientalist imaginary of that colony's architectural style. Colonial subjects were transported to the site, where they lived in human zoos for six months for the entertainment of metropolitan visitors. When war broke out in 1914, the buildings were repurposed as a hospital for Muslim soldiers, and the first purpose-built mosque in the metropolis was built nearby. Those who died were buried in the Nogent-sur-Marne municipal cemetery (where, as detailed above, arched tombstones and a *kouba* marked their graves). After the war,

soldiers were repatriated, and the mosque was demolished, to be replaced by the Great Mosque of Paris in the city center. Yet new structures were built in the colonial garden: memorials to the glory of colonial soldiers, each commemorating a particular colony. The imprint of the colonial garden as a site of encounter remained in the public consciousness. In 1931, France again hosted a colonial exhibition at the site—which, again, included human zoos. In the 1950s and '60s, the pavilions gradually fell into disrepair, and over the following decades, many succumbed to rot or arson. Yet the garden remains a living site: the school of tropical agronomy continues to attract students, veterans' associations hold annual commemorations, and a small library and archive dedicated to the colonial garden is staffed by a caretaker, Serge Volper. The paths linking the ruins of the pavilions are well maintained and marked with brightly colored informational plaques.

The history of the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden highlights the presence of multiple, contradictory memories within a single, latent melancholic site. The garden is an ambivalent space, in which the visitor encounters a century of colonial history—metropolis and empire, glorious and shameful history, remembering and forgetting. Encapsulating the entirety of this history in a narrative of mourning or re-memory would be impossible. Other ruins, such as the Muslim necropolis in La Mulatière and the Horsell Common Muslim Burial Ground (now the Woking Peace Garden) before their restoration, also hold the entirety of their histories: ruination reveals both the construction of sites of memory and the process of forgetting.

Sites of cultivated melancholia, too, hold the entirety of a contested past and present in tension. Further, by drawing attention to a history of erasure, they counter the claim of re-memory that the nation is, and has always been, multicultural and inclusive. While re-memory points to forgetting as a warning that the memories of colonial subjects must be recovered, and their deeds honored, melancholia emphasizes forgetting itself. Viewers are left with a sense of loss rather than a triumphant sense of memories recovered by a grateful nation.

With *Frères d'armes*, the format of the documentary—fifty brief profiles of individual soldiers—allows the viewer to glimpse the breadth and depth of that which has been neglected. *The World's War* highlights forgetting more explicitly. In his opening monologue, presenter David Olusoga states:

We think we know the First World War: the trenches, the barbed wire, the shells, the machine guns, the gas, the high explosives. The mud and the blood of Flanders fields. But the first shot fired by a soldier of the British Army was fired by an African, here in Africa, three days after war was declared. That soldier's name was Alhaji Grunshi. He'd been born in the British colony of the Gold Coast, modern day Ghana, and in 1914, he was a regimental Sergeant Major in the British West African Frontier Force. In 1914, they were attacking the Germans in their colony of Togoland. Now, from the moment Grunshi fired that first shot, the Great War became the world's war.

As Olusoga speaks, a period photograph of the devastated landscape of Flanders fills the screen, and machine gun fire sounds in the background. Then the image gives way to a contemporary red dirt road against a mountainous, green, West African landscape, and the machine gun fire is revealed to be the sputtering engine of a passing motorcycle. This opening sequence of contrasting images and narratives destabilizes the viewer's preconceptions about World War I: the war that Olusoga is beginning to invoke was far

more global than the war that dominates national memory. In this opening scene, Olusoga links past and present in unexpected ways through images and sound, destabilizing the viewer's expectations. By juxtaposing the dominant narrative of Flanders fields with the story of Alhaji Grunshi, he also leads the viewer to consider how much of the past has been forgotten in the present.

Olusoga returns to the theme of forgetting repeatedly throughout both episodes, ending each with a call to action. In the final scene of "Martial Races", Olusoga reminds viewers of their annual Remembrance Day promise to remember the dead. "Living up to that promise", he states, "seems even more necessary when so much, and so many, have been forgotten." At the end of the second episode, "Foreign Legions", he stands in a field in Zambia, where General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck and an army of Asgaris laid down their arms, three days after the Armistice in Europe, and concludes, "Now, a century later, we are just beginning, perhaps, to write them back into the history of the First World War."

Olusoga's emphasis on forgetting culminates in a call to remember, without any prescription of a particular way to remember. Indeed, Olusoga repeatedly points out the limitations of conventional war memorials, juxtaposing familiar sites such as the Menin Gate with lesser known monuments in Tanzania and Ghana, a prisoner of war camp in Germany, a ruined shed in a cow pasture in Belgium, and the colonial garden in Nogent-sur-Marne. The neglect of these sites mirrors the omission of colonial subjects from national memory. Conversely, the enduring traces of colonial subjects in Arabic

inscriptions, faded postcards, and crackling sound recordings reveal that suppressed narratives remain engrained in the landscape of the nation.

This fragmented approach is not limited to documentaries; in the Stories of Sacrifice exhibition, excerpts from letters, and personal anecdotes, take the place of generalized statements about the experiences of Muslim soldiers. Together, they reveal the scale of the war, and the extent to which the stories of Muslim soldiers have been forgotten. Some exhibition panels—Prayer, Conversion—address religious aspects of war that pertained specifically to Muslims. These describe how Muslims fasted and celebrated religious holidays, the provisions that were made for them on the Western Front and in hospitals, and their varying responses to these provisions. By emphasizing the changing approaches to Muslim religious practice and the various actors involved, they unsettle the notion that there is a single way to practice Islam and, by extension, the notion that Muslim soldiers compose a monolithic group. These panels also emphasize the manipulation of Islam by Britain and Germany alike, as, for example, in the distribution of postcards encouraging Muslims to convert to Christianity, which (the text speculates) were distributed to Indian soldiers covertly by German soldiers, with the intention of spreading the notion that Britain was attempting to convert Muslim soldiers. A second set of panels—Animals, Sport—concerns universal, largely apolitical aspects of the war that may lead contemporary visitors to empathize with the soldiers. These emphasize the multifaceted, individualized experiences of soldiers, which are not easily reduced to loyal heroism.

Stories of Sacrifice has received significant attention in the national media for Issa's archival work. His research revealed that twice as many Muslims had fought in the war as had been widely believed—430,000 Indian Muslims, alongside an additional 400,000 soldiers primarily from the Arab world. In interviews, Issa repeatedly emphasizes the importance of remembering that the experiences of Muslim soldiers should take precedence over the recitation of statistics in commemorations: “The numbers may be huge, but the exhibition isn't just about that. In fact, a key aim of the exhibition is to remind us that these numbers are made up of one individual after another, so there's a real emphasis on individual, personal stories throughout” (“British Muslim Contribution” 2016). In the exhibition, the emphasis on individual narratives has created an eclectic set of depictions of experiences across time and space: while the experiences of Indian Muslim soldiers predominate, the exhibition also presents (among others) the stories of an Arab sheikh, a white British adventurer, and a London fashion student. Yet the fragmentation of grand narratives highlights the extent to which imperial power restricted the agency of individuals and forced them into totalizing categories. It also reveals the violence with which the complexity of reality has been erased from the dominant, Eurocentric narrative of the war.

Foregrounding Violence

A second, related theme of melancholia is its emphasis on the racialized violence that marked the experiences of Muslim soldiers during the war and erased the memory of them thereafter. In Nogent-sur-Marne, the second half of the twentieth century witnessed a significant shift in French racial ideologies alongside the decolonization of its overseas

Empire. As French colonies asserted their right to autonomy, and then to full independence, the metropolis adjusted its perception of those societies accordingly. Because the empire had always been the mirror of the metropolis, the metropolis also adjusted its self-conception, presenting the nation as inclusive and tolerant. I detail this process in Chapter Three. The colonial garden, which had facilitated this shifting sense of self over the past half-century, suddenly became incompatible with the French national self-conception. At the colonial garden, the abstract, racialized character of imperialism had been concretized and localized. There, the dehumanization and objectification of colonial subjects had been so explicit, and so well documented, that interpreting or repurposing the site seemed impossible. Thus, the garden fell into neglect. In its current form, it displays the nation's violent past alongside the difficulty of assimilating that past into a cohesive narrative of national memory.

Other latent melancholic sites foreground violence through the clash between dueling narratives of national memory. Thus, in La Mulatière, where veterans' associations abandoned the Muslim necropolis in favor of the metropolitan obelisk, melancholia took the form of the conflict between two visions of the national past and present—imperial and hexagonal, unified and fragmented, triumphant and humiliated. Yet resolving the conflict through the suppression of one narrative was incomplete: the material traces of the forgotten past remained. Elsewhere, the clash between narratives of past and present is more explicit. A recent case of vandalism provides one stark example: in March 2016, a local war memorial in Rive-de-Gier, southwest of Lyon, was doused in black drain oil, obscuring rows of names dating from the two world wars and the

Algerian War. Above the covered names, the vandals had painted one word in oil: Daesh. In La Mulatière and Rive-de-Gier alike, militaristic memories of World War I clash with more recent memories of anti-colonial wars, global Islamism, and the racialization of Muslims. The attempt of one narrative to erase the other highlights the contingency of both.

Latent melancholia is the palimpsestic layering of memories—many of which contradict one another—within a single site. Unlike re-memory, melancholia does not privilege or erase any narrative. Yet in its unsettled state, it reveals the violence that has been dealt to marginal narratives, which have been omitted from national mourning and re-memory. These memories are difficult to assimilate into narratives of heroism or multiculturalism. Attempting to suppress or transform latent melancholia is an act of violence. Yet latent melancholia is also an act of violence: the failure of the nation to engage with difficult memories, made manifest in overgrown gardens, neglected burial sites, and vandalized monuments, means that those memories are not actively taken up to challenge the nation’s dominant narrative. A narrative which draws attention to that which has been forgotten, and which compels the nation to remember the entirety of the violent past, must be constructed and disseminated actively. For this, I turn to cultivated melancholia.

Frères d’armes couples its descriptions of colonial subjects at war with the details of their postwar lives. These personal experiences—whether expulsion from the metropolis and involvement in the anti-colonial struggle, or erasure of their colonial origins and veneration as “mort pour la France”—provide a glimpse into why the stories

of these soldiers have been forgotten. Their individual narratives are bound up with larger histories of war, colonialism, and racism. In the project's traveling exhibition, macro-level narratives complement the individual stories of the documentary. A panel on the interwar period emphasizes ambivalence: state-supported expressions of gratitude to North African Muslims—the Great Mosque of Paris, widespread propaganda postcards—were erected alongside the racialized denigration of North African soldiers among the Parisian public. A second exhibition panel, on decolonizations and commemorations from 1945 to 1975, places the ambivalence of memory in a context of marginalization of Algerian harkis and pieds-noirs, and a clash of narratives of memory within the space of the metropolis. Two final panels, on memory and commemoration today, discuss the construction of new monuments, the politics of pensions, and the contemporary demographics of the French military. Both resist a linear narrative of gradually reclaiming the past; instead, they contrast the erection of new monuments with the contemporaneous surge in anti-Muslim political rhetoric, and the presence of soldiers of North African descent in the French military with the co-ethnic assailant who killed three soldiers in Toulouse in 2013. In the exhibition, forgetting coexists uneasily with remembering, and every attempt to revive the past is met with support alongside violent suppression.

Stories of Sacrifice, likewise, highlights the racialized character of Muslim soldiers' experiences alongside the clash of narratives that has characterized postwar memory. Regarding the former, one series of panels—on Letters, Newspapers, At Sea, Women, Hospital, Burial, Living On—highlights elements of these categories that

distinguished Muslim soldiers from their non-Muslim, metropolitan counterparts. Frequently, these allude to the colonial nature of the war: letters, for example, were subject to the Orientalist gaze of a censor, who reported to the War Office on the morale of Muslim soldiers. The panel on newspapers describes the availability of the news in Urdu, alongside a general interest of the British press in Muslim soldiers as racialized colonial subjects. This set of panels serves a dual purpose: it humanizes and individualizes Muslim World War I soldiers by presenting experiences with which contemporary viewers can empathize, while revealing the hand of the imperial state in treating those soldiers as colonial subjects and potential enemies. A second group of panels—on Recruitment, Propaganda, Desertion, Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Arab Revolt, the Arab World—overtly addresses the World War I as an imperial conflict, Muslim soldiers as racialized colonial subjects, and the legacies of the war as far-reaching and frequently oppressive. While still profiling individual soldiers, these panels place them within the context of a global imperial conflict. Thus, stories of desertion do not address soldiers as agents deciding to change sides; rather, they describe the role of religion in convincing some soldiers not to fight against their Ottoman co-religionists and, even more explicitly, the fear of British Army officials that a mass Muslim uprising might take place.

Melancholic sites draw attention to the individuality of Muslim soldiers, as well as the violent, racialized character of their experiences. This makes it difficult to assimilate Muslim soldiers into militaristic or multicultural narratives of French and British national memory. Further, sites of melancholia compel the visitor to consider why

these narratives have been forgotten. To answer this question, I turn to the historical relationship between nationalism and empire.

Conclusion

In both Britain and France, national commemorations of the World War I centenary upset expectations about the particularities of each national narrative. At the local level, the co-presence of mourning, re-memory, and melancholia in both countries dissolves the difference between the two nationalisms dissolves further. These findings demonstrate that nationalism is constructed and challenged from below: at the local level, representations of the past are not bound by national borders. Further, by remembering marginalized minorities, national and local actors actively negotiate the borders of the contemporary nation. Narratives of mourning, re-memory, and melancholia all challenge exclusionary memories of World War I. Yet while mourning and re-memory may be assimilated into national memory, melancholia destabilizes the very idea of the nation. To analyze how, I turn to the historical relationship between nationalism and empire.

CHAPTER THREE: TRANSGRESSING NATIONAL MEMORY, UNSETTLING THE NATION

Introduction

Commemorations of the World War I centenary disrupt the dominant narrative of national memory in both Britain and France. In particular, melancholic sites reveal that the nation's past cannot be reduced to a single geographic area, a single collective experience, or, by extension, a single national memory. Thus, by disrupting national memory, melancholic sites also destabilize the nation itself.

This chapter shifts the focus from national memory to the nation writ large. I ask how the nation came to conceive of itself as a cohesive, geographically bounded entity, composed of citizens who share a common understanding of the past and a commitment to live together in the present. The answer lies in the construction of a metropolitan Self in opposition to racialized colonial Others. Yet decolonization threw this binary—and, by extension, the national Self—into question. This, in turn, gave rise to a generalized sense of unease alongside the opportunity to construct new imaginings of the nation.

Below, I trace the consolidation of Britain and France as cohesive nations that were distinct from one another and, more fundamentally, from their racialized Others. I then consider how decolonization unsettled the nation's sense of Self, and how a generalized sense of postcolonial melancholia was spatialized. Returning to the World War I centenary, I examine how national and local sites responded to the postcolonial challenge of constructing the nation in the absence of a clearly racialized, spatialized binary. I find that sites of mourning and re-memory sought to include Muslim soldiers

within the nation by proclaiming the soldiers' adherence to militaristic values. Yet this served to reinforce the divide between Self and Other by substantiating the conditions under which members of marginalized groups may be included or excluded from the nation. Sites of melancholia, however, unsettle the divide by revealing the interdependence of Self and Other for their own existence. I conclude the chapter by considering how the disruption of Self and Other reimagines the postcolonial nation.

Empire and Nationalism

Nationalism is predicated on opposition: the nation is constructed as a cohesive entity that is normatively and geographically distinct from other nations. Likewise, nationalism creates a clear distinction between citizens and non-citizens. The section below analyzes the power-laden processes of creating the national Self and Other through the British and French practice of conquering and ruling overseas empires. I emphasize the changing form of the Muslim Other alongside the persistence of anti-Semitism and anti-black racism.

Imperialism and the National Self

British and French nationalisms, as detailed in Chapter Two, are described in the literature as two ideal types, each constructed in opposition to the other. In both Britain and France, the pervasive sense of each nation's difference from the other fostered an internal sense of solidarity across historically salient ethnic and linguistic lines (Bell 2003; Bryant 1967; Colley 1994; Wilson 2003). The internal deracialization of British and French national identity in the nineteenth century enabled each to consolidate its identity as a discrete nation-state. In Arendt's (1951) assessment, in-group sameness is a

precondition for the rise of totalitarianism, based on the belief that binding together with people like oneself offers the best protection from the menace of the Other. Thus, the rise of internal British and French solidarity was crucial to the racialization and subjugation of a more distant Other: the colonial subject (Lorimer 1978; Mamdani 1996; Mandler 2006).

In postcolonial theory, the construction of a collective Self and Other is a well-established theme. This gives a social, racialized dimension to Hegel's (1977[1807]) master-slave dialectic, a struggle between two actors in which the identity of each is predicated upon the recognition of the Other. Fanon (1952) points out the racialized power imbalances of Othering, in that the construction of white subjectivity is accomplished through the objectification of people who are deemed black. Self and Other thus do not interact as equals, even though their identities are mutually constructed. Rather, the white Self denies the very humanity of the black Other. Said (1978) and Hall (1997) extend Fanon's depiction of interpersonal interactions to entire societies: the Occident is constructed as the mirror of an imagined Oriental Other, whose backwardness, darkness, stagnation, and femininity emphasizes the Occident's modernity, whiteness, enlightenment, and masculinity. Yet despite the dependence of the metropolitan Self on the colonial Other for its own identity, bifurcating the world renders most of it invisible. The experiences of those deemed white and metropolitan are universalized, while the experiences of those deemed black and colonized are either ignored or pathologized (Chernilo 2006; Go 2014; Wallerstein 2001). In this way,

Western nations conceive of themselves as bounded and autonomous, even as they do not exist as discrete entities apart from their Others.

The division of the world into Orient and Occident, Self and Other, took material form through slavery and colonialism, by which entire societies were dehumanized and exterminated or appropriated in the service of Western advancement. Beginning in the Middle Ages, Muslims were Orientalized: the first recorded use of the term “European” was in reference to Charles Martel’s victory over Muslim forces at Tours (Hall 1992). That is, European identity first took on a cohesive meaning in opposition to Muslim identity. By extension, Muslimness took on a cohesive meaning as the external Other of Europeanness. As European nations conquered colonial empires in the Western hemisphere, religious Otherness became increasingly racialized: Grosfoguel and Mielants (2006) point out that 1492, the year Columbus landed in Dominica, was also the year that Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain; thus, the creation of a monolithically Christian Europe and the conquest of non-Christian lands were part of a single process of racializing Christian Europe’s religious Others.

In 1550, the Valladolid debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and Ginés de Sepúlveda sought to answer the political and philosophical question of the time: Do indigenous people have souls? The crux of the debate was the question of whether indigenous people were capable of assimilating into the norms and institutions of Christian Europe. Their ability to do so would encourage religious conversion to Christianity; their inability to do so would permit their racialization and extermination. In the wake of Valladolid, a distinction was established between groups who were deemed

“godless” and, perhaps, soulless (indigenous people and enslaved Africans), and groups who adhered to the “wrong” religion (Jews and Muslims). Both groups were deemed biologically inferior to “pure-blood” Christians. Yet while the “godless” were dehumanized, those with the “wrong” religion were deemed capable of converting to Christianity (Rana 2011; Selod and Embrick 2013).

With the mass enslavement of Africans and the entrenchment of phenotype as the most salient determinant of racial categories, blackness emerged as the primary Other against which white Europeanness was constructed. British industrialization, for example, was made possible by profits from the slave trade (Williams 1944). The economic dominance of Western nations was dependent upon the exploitation of non-Western societies; however, the growing economic gulf between Western and non-Western societies contributed to Western nations’ belief in their own innate superiority. As scientific racism and social Darwinism grew in prominence, French racialists theorized that blacks were the “missing link” between human and ape (Reynaud-Paligot 2006). This signaled the triumph of naturalist racism (which held that the moral and intellectual traits of a group were unchangeable) over cultural and historicist racism (which held that the cultural and developmental traits of any racial group may change over time) (Goldberg 2002). Yet the violence and visibility of anti-black racism does not imply that other forms of racism are less salient; rather, following Fleming (2017), racial temporality emphasizes the connections between various forms of racism, and their connection to the global project of white supremacy. Thus, the brightening of borders

between whiteness and blackness created the conditions for the re-emergence of anti-Muslim racism in the nineteenth century.

The French case is illustrative: Reynaud-Paligot (2006) traces republican ideology to Enlightenment thought, which was predicated on human equality and perfectibility. Consequently, mid-nineteenth century French racialists supported universal education and meritocracy, rejecting anti-Semitism on the basis of equality between European races. Under the Third Republic, the centralization of the state and the introduction of national education coincided with a revival of local cultures and regional identities (Kowalsky 2012). Thus, France established a distinction between a centralized, civic national identity and local cultural identities, such that French citizens were united by their allegiance to the state and adherence to republican values. In this way, French national identity was apparently color-blind—a claim that persists in the contemporary stigmatization of discussions of race and racism (Fleming 2017). Establishing a national identity that transcended internal divisions, however, entailed the consolidation of (white) French identity to the exclusion of external Others. Whereas Judaism previously had been an ascribed status, it became an individual choice. Yet the same was not true for Islam (Davidson 2012).

By invoking both cultural and naturalist racism, French leaders created a comprehensive logic for the colonial *mission civilisatrice* alongside an acknowledgment that because of their ascribed race, colonial subjects would never attain the same status as their white colonizers. Further, as Saada (2006) indicates, racism created a distinction in the French Empire between nationality and citizenship—two statuses that were

synonymous in the metropolis. Their bifurcation in the empire revealed the racialized character of both (Todorov 1989). French colonial subjects were racialized in various ways: West Africans, across religious lines, were racialized first and foremost as black (Davidson 2012). North Africans were racialized as Muslim: religion became a master status that made sense of the moral and cultural traits of individuals. Thus, while Algerian Jews were granted French citizenship, from 1881 to 1946 Algerian Muslims were subject to the *indigenat*, a code of laws that essentialized their religious identities and made them civically inferior to French settlers. French citizenship—which had been racialized as non-Muslim—was only accessible to those who renounced Islamic law. Just as North Africans were racialized as Muslim, Islam was racialized as North African: Moroccan Islam, in particular, was reified as the “purest” form of the religion.

According to Kumar (2012), the Empire offered the most important shared source of nineteenth-century British identity: Britons knew who they were based on their civic sameness with fellow Britons, their economic might, their unparalleled success as an imperial power, and their racial distinction from colonial subjects. As in France, British national identity entailed the consolidation of historically salient Saxon and Celtic ethnic identities in opposition to a racialized external Other (Young 2007). Further, in their overseas empires, British and French metropolitan identities were forged, and their racialized and gendered character was affirmed (McClintock 1995; Stoler 2002). Yet colonial subjects, unlike British or French citizens, were not afforded the right to construct their own national identities in opposition to other, equal nations; instead, their land was the *terra nullius* against which European national identities were forged.

De Sousa Santos (2007), drawing from Said, emphasizes the absolutism of this binary: an abyssal line separates regions of the world governed by laws and the recognition of humanity from those marked by lawlessness. Grosfoguel (2010), drawing from Fanon, characterizes the two sides of the abyssal line as the zones of being and non-being. The two sides are governed by different rules. On one side—in the zone of being—non-violence reigns; episodes of violence are intermittent and treated as abnormal. Conflicts are managed through the mechanisms of regulation and emancipation; that is, whenever a comparatively marginalized group within the zone of being demands greater inclusion, their relationship with the dominant group is negotiated through legal codes and civility. In the zone of non-being, the opposite holds: violence reigns, and episodes of non-violence are anomalous. Demands by people in the zone of non-being for inclusion in the zone of being (that is, attempts to cross the abyssal line, whether spatially or symbolically) are met with overt rejection, which serves to accentuate the division between the two zones (de Sousa Santos 2006; Grosfoguel 2010).

The violence of the encounter between the zones of being and non-being initially seems to undermine the self-proclaimed character of the metropolitan nations that perpetrate that violence. Yet, in line with Said's (1978) *Orientalism*, the zone of non-being serves to construct the zone of being. Metropolitan citizenship and humanity are distinctive because of the gulf between these categories and colonial subjecthood and subhumanity. Thus, European nations create constituencies of equal citizens in opposition to excluded non-citizens, and ideals of law and order in opposition to the violence they inflict elsewhere. The "civilizing mission" that made sense of colonialism to

metropolitans is, in reality, the decivilizing of overseas empire in order to civilize the metropolis (Césaire 1955).

Metropolitan Britain, as detailed in Chapter Two, is described in the nationalism literature as individualistic-libertarian, fragmented, and evolutionary in its approach to history. France, conversely, is characterized as collectivistic-civic, universalizing, and revolutionary. Each nation appealed to these values even as it launched military conquests into Africa and Asia, established separate legal codes for metropolitan citizens and colonial subjects, and, during World War I, commanded racially and religiously segregated colonial armies. Yet for the eighteenth-century thinkers who had conceptualized French and British nationalism, these practices were entirely compatible, and even necessary: Rousseau juxtaposed humanitarianism and patriotism, arguing that it was impossible to pursue the good of one's country without elevating fellow citizens over foreigners (Todorov 1989). Burke, likewise, argued that slavery was justifiable because Africans had been stateless subjects, not citizens with rights, prior to their enslavement (Nahaboo 2012). Thus, the idea of Britain and France as discrete nations, composed of citizens who were existentially different from non-citizens, was constructed and institutionalized through the exclusion of racialized colonial Others.

Postcoloniality and the National Self

The decolonization of the British and French Empires in the second half of the twentieth century threatened the integrity of the abyssal line. Each nation lost major trade routes, access to raw materials that had powered its industrial economy, colonial armies, and a source of prestige in the international arena. Yet during World War II and,

particularly, in the postwar years, both nations still depended upon colonial subjects to shore up their own decimated workforces and ailing economies. Thus, following metropolitan recruiting campaigns in the Caribbean, the 1950s and 1960s witnessed large-scale postcolonial migration to Britain and France (Butcher and Ogden 1984; Glass 1960; Peach 1968). These migrants joined others who fled colonial and postcolonial conflicts in North (e.g. Algerian *harkis*) and East Africa (e.g. Ugandan Asians), seeking in France and Britain the fatherland that colonial education had promised (Bristow et al 2010; Lejman 2014). Other postcolonial migrants were more skeptical of the metropolis' claims of inclusion: the Algerian Revolution upended the fundamental social norms of race, class, and gender (Fanon 1959), and West African soldiers in the French military refused to accept the second-class status they were afforded after the war (Fakoly 1983; Senghor 1964). Alongside nationalists in former colonies, these migrants challenged the nation's racial, religious, and cultural order (Davidson 2012; Gafaiti 2003; Hansen 2000).

As the metropolitan nation found its colonial Others within its geographic borders, neither Britain nor France could now base its collective identity on a clear, spatialized, racialized line between insiders and outsiders. The concept of the unhomely helps to make sense of this encounter: the unexpected presence of the Other is perceived as terrifying, because it threatens the integrity and purity of the Self. Freud (1919) describes the unhomely (*Unheimlich*) as a personal experience, through which an individual begins to realize that the intimate is not safe, predictable, or within her own control. Bhabha (1992) broadens and politicizes Freud's unhomely, describing the "creeping recognition" that an intimate space is not one's own; rather, the line between

public and private, between the home and the world, is blurred. The public invades the private through “holes”—the unspoken, the uneasy, and the unknown in the midst of the familiar. Yet the private also invades the public; the two are revealed as ambivalent and blurred rather than separate entities. By extension, the process of dividing and constructing the two as separate becomes clear. Thus, upon encountering the colonial Other within the metropolis, the white, metropolitan Self began to question the integrity of the nation.

The importance of space is made more explicit with the concept of displacement, or dislocation (Ashcroft et al 1989; Bhabha 1994; Giroux 1992). When an individual is at home, her surroundings are familiar; by extension, her Self and surroundings are in harmony. The colonial encounter disrupts this relationship: metropolitan citizens and postcolonial migrants alike become conscious of their own distance from the familiar, and are uncertain of how to engage with their new surroundings. Their own bodies seem out of place. Whereas the line between Self and surroundings previously was blurred, or appeared irrelevant, in their new surroundings they become acutely Self-conscious. How they respond to this experience depends on their own power and positionality.

Faced with threats to the integrity of their racialized national identity, metropolitans responded with the same violence with which they had shored up the abyssal line in the empire. Consequently, racialization became an increasingly important tool for policing the boundaries of the nation. In Britain, the 1960s and ‘70s witnessed white race riots and overt discrimination against black and Asian Britons in housing and employment, alongside tightening immigration laws and the emergence of a political far

right. Writing in the French context, Fanon (1952) analyzes the effects of this division for racialized bodies: former colonial subjects who traveled to the metropolis, expecting to be treated as fellow citizens and human beings, realized upon experiencing racist violence that the abyssal line had traveled with them. Postcolonial migrants found their bodies surveilled and policed by metropolitans, who attempted to eradicate the unhomely experience of encountering the unfamiliar amidst the familiar. Thus, the 1950s and 1960s saw the explosion of white race riots and the creation of far-right political parties that overtly proclaimed the whiteness of the nation (Aissaoui 2009; Hansen 2000; Thomas 2013; Walker 1977). While Muslims never disappeared as a racialized Other, they reemerged in 1989, with the first “headscarf affair” in France and the reaction against Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* in Britain (Bowen 2010; Modood 1990).

The racialized violence of the postcolonial metropolis was a direct response to the loss of the empire and, by extension, to the loss of the national Self. Yet despite the overt violence of the metropolitan response, this loss was largely unnamed. Gilroy (2005) describes this generalized crisis of national identity as postcolonial melancholia. The nation is aware that it has experienced loss, and it is aware that the empire has been lost. However, it does not realize that its own identity was made in and through the empire; to acknowledge its own dependence on the empire would have required it to forego its own Self-conception as autonomous from, and innately superior to, its Others. Because it does not comprehend the extent of its loss, the nation cannot initiate the process of mourning the loss of empire, but instead endlessly remembers (Craps 2013; Lyotard 1990).

Postcolonial melancholia is thus a pervasive, unspoken condition of the postcolonial society, made visible only when it takes material form and erupts into violence.

Conventional depictions of metropolitan nationalism do not account for postcolonial melancholia; rather, the imagining of a clear divide between metropolis and empire pervades academic thought (Bhabra 2014). Go (2016) characterizes the academic process of dividing the world into clear binaries as analytic bifurcation: the colonized world is made invisible as the metropolis proclaims its own universality. Theories of nationalism thus conceptualize Britain and France as ideal types against which other nations may be measured, without acknowledging the ways in which both Britain and France have been constructed by their overseas empires. In the postcolonial era, the empire has come home to the metropolis, bringing memories of violence and dehumanization in the service of metropolitan citizenship. This sets the stage for overt conflict between memories of the national past and, by extension, imaginings of the national present. Thus, analyzing eruptions of melancholic violence—riots, rhetoric, and, I argue, transgressive sites of memory—provides an opportunity to make sense of a postcolonial nation that is actively negotiating its collective identity.

National Memory and Empire

National memory, as detailed in Chapter Two, unifies members of the nation on the basis of a shared understanding of the past. This takes material form through sites of memory, which legitimize particular narratives of the past and give rise to formal and informal rituals. Yet sites of memory sometimes commemorate events with no shared meaning, whether the events are forgotten or openly contested. This may include events

that are the source of embarrassment or regret for some stakeholders (Alexander et al 2004; Fine 1996; Olick 2007; Schudson 1992). Others remain highly contentious, with powerful stakeholders proclaiming contradictory narratives (Cohen 2001; Zolberg 1998). Under such circumstances, these sites must construct the moral unity of the population by creating a cohesive narrative from contradictory fragments. By extension, they restore the contemporary nation's dominant idea of itself (Rivera 2008).

Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz (1991) use the example of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial (VVM) to discuss the construction of deliberately ambivalent sites of memory, which encapsulate memories that remain contested. Further, the erection of the VVM did not affirm the power of the state (which, for Durkheim, is the purpose of sites of memory); rather, it revealed the limitations of state power to control national memory. Yet by localizing the ambivalence of memory in a physical site with multiple meanings and no meaning, the VVM also restores unity. Visitors to the VVM—military officers, family members, pacifists, tourists—find the locus of their memories at the same site, which compels them to contemplate the scale of war and death.

Subsequent scholars, drawing from Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz, have identified additional ways of engaging with difficult sites of memory. Vinitzky-Seroussi (2002), writing about the Yitzhak Rabin memorial, argues that difficult sites of memory may take two forms: multivocal commemorations are singular material sites that carry multiple interpretations, while fragmented commemorations consist of multiple sites and multiple constituencies. Steidl (2013), analyzing the memorialization of the 1970 shootings at Kent State University, frames commemoration as a dynamic field, which

may appear at any given time as multivocal, fragmented, or integrated—the last of which consists of multiple commemorative sites, which, together, construct moral unity.

Difficult sites of memory reveal both the implications and the limitations of Durkheim's (1912) claim that commemorations foster moral unity. In the case of the VVM, erecting a memorial to remember a problematic war was a means of assimilating that war into national memory, though the national memory that it constructs is deliberately silent on the justification, conduct, and outcome of that war. The VVM, the Yitzhak Rabin memorial, and the Kent State memorials all commemorate individuals and events that were widely known, caused social discord, and held high stakes for the nation that remembered them. Thus, the restoration of national memory was an urgent preoccupation for the state and private actors alike. Yet forgotten events, too, can hold high stakes for national memory. In these cases, sites of memory reveal fractures in what had appeared to be a national consensus. The methodological difficulty of approaching this problem, however, has led to a lack of case studies on forgetting (Folson 2015).

In the postcolonial context, the politics of forgetting is power-laden: in order to maintain the division between the zones of being and non-being, the metropolis proclaims that it exists independently of its former colonies. This creates an incentive to erase the memory of the colonial past (Hay et al 2004). Stoler (2011) terms the active blockage of the memory of empire “colonial aphasia”, in which difficult memories are neither remembered nor forgotten, but relegated to a space just beyond the reach of memory. There, the colonial past festers, unacknowledged, even as it attacks the nation's idea of itself (Stora 1998). Those in power refuse to engage with the memory of empire

in any way that challenges the dominant narrative of the metropolitan nation. In practice, this may entail ignoring the imperial past or presenting a non-threatening, sanitized, or nostalgic narrative (Fletcher 2012; Rosaldo 1989). Individual stories of colonial abuses, or contemporary stories of poverty and violence in former colonies, are kept analytically separate from one another, and from the metropolis' idea of itself in the present (Ross 1995). Under such conditions, the question arises of how postcolonial sites of memory can function to unsettle the nation—and, by extension, the abyssal line.

Commemorations of Muslims in the World War I centenary drew attention to a group that lay in the zone of non-being: racialized colonial subjects. Over the course of colonial history, Muslims in North and West Africa and South Asia had been imagined as a social, cultural, and racial Other against which the metropolitan Self was constructed. The clear, abyssal line that distinguished metropolitan and colonial subjects had rendered their co-construction invisible. By extension, the exclusion of Muslim colonial subjects from the metropolitan nation had rendered them invisible in national memory. Rewriting Muslim soldiers into the memory of World War I was an acknowledgment that metropolis and empire were not, in fact, clearly distinguishable categories. Thus, the very act of commemorating Muslims created an experience of dislocation: it disrupted the idea that the nation was a cohesive, geographically bounded space that had developed autonomously and that, until recently, had been racially homogeneous. Faced with this difficult history, the World War I centenary appealed to different narratives in order to entrench or breach the abyssal line.

Mourning

Sites of mourning, as detailed in Chapter Two, looked backward towards the war; venerated dead soldiers; and depicted Muslim colonial subjects as the equal comrades of their non-Muslim, metropolitan counterparts. Conventional sites of mourning for metropolitan soldiers reified the state and legitimize the power of its leaders, unifying citizens in familiar, somber rituals that extolled the militaristic virtues of courage and sacrifice in the service of the nation. By including Muslims in these familiar sites and rituals, sites of mourning rectified the unhomely moment, restoring familiar binaries of private and public, familiar and unfamiliar, insider and outsider. The integrity of the nation was entrenched, and the abyssal line was maintained. Yet in the process, Muslim soldiers were assimilated into the national narrative. Thus, at the inauguration of the *kouba* in Nogent-sur-Marne, the arched tombstones with their Qur'anic calligraphy were festooned with tricolor flags. Uniformed soldiers joined the mayor and other dignitaries to observe the event. For one month following the inauguration, Nogentais citizens were invited to visit an exhibition on the history of the site on display at city hall—a reminder that this history belonged to them.

It is noteworthy that at the national level, the wave of World War I commemorations in France immediately preceding and including the centenary defied many of the nationalist conventions of mourning. As detailed in Chapter Two, the new and innovative museums of the Western Front in Meaux and Péronne adopted transnational, intergenerational narratives that simultaneously engaged with the complex causes and ramifications of the war and individualized the experience of war for soldiers

and civilians. Further, during the centenary, the decentralized approach of the Mission Centenaire placed the emphasis on local and familial narratives, refraining from reviving the memory wars that had marked French national memory in the late twentieth century. Within this national context of fragmentation, the nationalist veneration of Muslim soldiers in the Nogent-sur-Marne cemetery appears strikingly conventional. Yet for metropolitan soldiers and Muslim colonial subjects, the trajectories of national memory had differed: metropolitans were the objects of veneration and debate, conforming to the norms of law, order, and respect for humanity that reign within the zone of being. Conversely, Muslim soldiers, relegated to the zone of non-being, had been erased from national memory. Proclaiming their membership in the zone of being required holding Muslim soldiers to a higher standard than their metropolitan counterparts; the failure to do so risked the entrenchment of their Otherness. This double standard, which permits non-Muslim metropolitans to be remembered as individuals while confining Muslim colonial subjects to “good” and “bad” tropes, is developed further in sites of re-memory.

Re-Memory

Sites of re-memory were more conscious than sites of mourning of threats to the integrity of the nation. Re-memory, unlike mourning, need not follow any experience of loss; rather, it follows the nation’s experience of substantive change. In order to legitimize its new self-identification in the present, the nation alters its understanding of the past. This restores the integrity of the nation across time. With regard to Muslim colonial subjects, sites of re-memory constructed narratives of Muslim soldiers as loyal heroes in the past, who had proven their willingness and capacity to belong to the nation

in the present. This served as a rebuttal to far-right populists who placed all Muslims in the zone of non-being, as well as to militant Islamists who, during the centenary, appeared to compete with the nation for the loyalties of French and British Muslims. Additionally, sites of re-memory constructed a narrative of a cohesive, multicultural nation that drew legitimacy from its memory of a multinational “community of brothers” that had united in support of a common cause. Like mourning, re-memory entrenched the abyssal line, with Muslim soldiers newly included in the zone of being. Unlike mourning, however, re-memory rectified the unhomely moment by changing the meaning of the homely. The nation was no longer racialized as white, nor was it geographically confined to the metropolis. Rather, re-memory created a nation of citizens who were unified by their commitment to live together as a multicultural society, their shared values of loyalty and courage, and their common memory of waging war against a common enemy.

The re-memory of Muslim soldiers seems to offer a greater capacity than mourning for individuals to cross from the zone of non-being into the zone of being. Yet attempting to blur a binary without first valorizing that which has been denigrated serves to reinforce the binary by softening the critique (Lazarus 1993; Parry 2004). In the case of Muslim colonial subjects, re-memory establishes a distinction between “good Muslims” and “bad Muslims” (Mamdani 2004)—a binary which, as illustrated above, does not apply to non-Muslim metropolitans. The requirement that Muslims prove their capacity to belong to the nation was apparent in political discourse during the centenary, which overwhelmingly articulated a narrative of re-memory. An analysis of thirty-five speeches by twelve mainstream and far-right political leaders revealed that non-Muslim

metropolitans were depicted as individuals (n.b. Cameron 2012; Vallaud-Belkacem 2015), while Muslim colonial subjects were conflated into a single category (n.b. Cameron 2014; Warsi 2013). Second, metropolitans were invoked in intimate familial narratives (n.b. Todeschini 2015; Cameron 2012), while descriptions of Muslim colonial subjects emphasized their foreignness (n.b. Warsi 2014). Third, metropolitans had agency to fight or to refuse to fight (n.b. Gove 2014), while Muslims were passive, even in their heroism (n.b. Warsi 2014). Fourth, metropolitans were acknowledged to have experienced fear and uncertainty (n.b. Cameron 2012; Vallaud-Bekacem 2015), while Muslims were depicted as monolithically courageous and heroic (n.b. Cameron 2014).

An awareness of, and response to, “good” and “bad Muslim” tropes pervaded local sites of re-memory. As detailed in Chapter Two, stakeholders associated with the Curzon Institute, the Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19, the Birmingham Western Front tours, and the Woking Peace Garden all sought, in various ways, to represent military service as a viable option for contemporary British Muslims, and to refute critics who claimed that British Muslims were unwilling or incapable of assimilating into the nation’s dominant institutions. At the Great Mosque of Paris, references to Muslim military valor were historical rather than contemporary, since in this case, there was no need to proclaim the compatibility of military service and Muslimness; the overrepresentation of Muslims in the French military had given a different substance to French representations of “good” and “bad Muslims”. This national distinction reveals the ability of tropes to mutate while retaining their anti-Muslim salience. Yet in Britain and France alike,

military valor (whether past or present) provided the logic for the inclusion of Muslims in the contemporary, multicultural nation.

The monolithically courageous “good Muslim” demonstrates that Muslims are capable of assimilating into society’s dominant institutions, and of embodying military virtue. It serves as a rebuke both to those who claim that Muslimness is incompatible with Britishness or Frenchness, and to those who advocate multiculturalism without a common set of values. Further, it places the onus on Muslims, individually and collectively, to prove their commitment to the nation. The “good Muslim” trope gains salience in light of the “bad Muslim” that increasingly dominated mainstream media representations of Muslims in 2014 and 2015 (Brown and Richards 2016; Ahmed and Matthes 2016; Yaqin et al 2017). The “bad Muslim” refrains from military service, refuses to observe commemorations of the national past, and vocally criticizes the nation’s foreign policy. The co-existence of these categories demonstrates that Muslims are not monolithically confined either to the zone of being or the zone of non-being. Some individual agency is acknowledged. Taken together, however, these “good” and “bad Muslim” tropes reinforce the abyssal line by giving substance to the multicultural nation in the zone of being. Within this nation, there is only one way for Muslims to belong, and deviations from the dominant articulation of Britishness or Frenchness are read as threats to the integrity of the nation—threats that must be contained within the zone of non-being.

Melancholia

While sites of mourning and re-memory alter the placement of the abyssal line, they affirm its salience in the twenty-first century. Sites of melancholia, however, destabilize the abyssal line and, by extension, the nation. Melancholia, as detailed above, is the unhomely blurring of the clear-cut lines between empire and metropolis, belonging and unbelonging, Self and Other, revealing the mutual construction of each. Latent melancholia pervades the postcolonial society at large, occasionally becoming visible when it erupts into violence. Because it is so pervasive, latent melancholia frequently takes the form of silence or absence. Neglected sites of memory do not recount a comprehensive history of Muslim soldiers; however, they reveal fragments of that which has been forgotten. Thus, the ruins of Nogent-sur-Marne and (prior to their re-memory) the former Horsell Common Muslim Burial Ground, alongside the overgrown and forgotten monument to Muslim soldiers in La Mulatière, testify of a nation unwilling to acknowledge the centrality of empire to its own identity.

Elsewhere, latent melancholia erupts into violent conflict between individuals or narratives on either side of the abyssal line. The act of violence reveals the fundamental opposition of the zones of being and non-being. Yet the clash between the two within a single space also serves to destabilize both. Such was the case in Rive-de-Gier, when the town war memorial was doused with black drain oil and the word “Daesh”. The mayor, Jean-Claude Charvin, attributed the act to local youth who were known to the police. Yet his widely shared Facebook post proclaimed that the act had amounted to significantly more than petty crime:

How can anyone be so disrespectful to the women and men of our commune who gave their lives for FRANCE, for our NATION? It's quite simply unacceptable. Let us denounce these words that support terrorism, written with hatred; but let us also honor our FOREFATHERS (Charvin 2016).

Both the mayor's words and the comments on his post from private citizens are telling: while many called the attack shameful and expressed their general support for the mayor, others overtly linked the event to their larger understanding of the nation. Thus, one commenter wrote: "In this blatant case, everything suggests that those responsible for this harmful blow point to the truly guilty: the MUSLIMS are only the henchmen/followers of the identity group! I hope the investigators will get their hands on them!!!" Another wrote: "Mr. Mayor, being a fourth-generation veteran, I support you, though I'm not from your city, I support your action the blood spilled by our veterans from all wars until today deserves respect and honor in the name of God long live the colonial". For Charvin and these commenters alike, this was not an isolated event, nor even a pattern of behavior limited to a small group of individuals. Instead, the incident was an attack against the French nation, its military, and its memory. As Charvin stated elsewhere, "They targeted a symbol of the Republic" (Granier 2016).

Sites of mourning, which construct, proclaim, and transmit a cohesive, militaristic narrative of the nation, are upheld as sacred symbols of the nation. Thus, attacks on sites of mourning are read as attacks on the nation—and, by extension, on the zone of being. Those who attack sites of mourning are abstracted as Others whose presence brings an experience of the unhomely. Faced with the threat of its own destruction, the nation doubles down on its dominant narrative of mourning and militancy, reinforcing the abyssal line. Yet the melancholic act of vandalism reveals the precariousness of the

nation, the deliberately constructed character of its narratives of mourning and memory, the presence and power of counternarratives, and the violence with which those counternarratives are suppressed.

Alongside latent eruptions of melancholia, sites of cultivated melancholia destabilize the spatial dimensions of the nation and, with it, the zone of being. The narratives they construct are simultaneously global and fragmented. *Frères d'armes* provides an illustration: the experiences of the individuals profiled vary tremendously, on the basis of race and nationality, the nature of their military service, and their experiences after the war. Yet the shared experience of being transformed by the war gives the memory of the war its global character. This, in turn, both globalizes and fragments the project's depictions of the nation. As the press kit accompanying the documentary states:

Black Africa, the Maghreb, Southeast Asia, or the Caribbean are the most represented territories here, and this encompasses more than twenty million French people who have an ancestor from one of these geographic regions. So we encounter the Republic and its diversities, and one part of its history has now been written, as much in 1870 with the arrival of the Turcos and the Zouaves, as in 1914 (awakening of the Nation), or in 1944 (liberation of the Nation). To honor Jaurès, the pacifist, to honor Moulin, the resister, while forgetting Addi Bâ or Camille Mortenol, would be a mistake. The textbooks of the future must pass these names on to children in France. (p. 14)

The French nation invoked in this description is not exclusively European or hexagonal, nor is it limited to the area within its contemporary borders. Rather, the French nation is inseparable from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, and it is constituted through its imperial past, by its colonial subjects. Conversely, it is also constructed in the present and future, through the transmission of a complex, global history to younger generations. This description of the nation seems to re-member it as a multicultural, inclusive entity across

time. Yet such a statement about the French nation can be generalized to encompass the world at large. Additionally, when taken in conjunction with the seventeen portraits of individuals of varying, fluid nationalities and experiences, the French nation can be understood as constituted in and through its empire and other nations. The specificity of the French nation, and of the zone of being, disappears with this reading.

A second site of cultivated melancholia, *The World's War*, decenters Europe in the memory of World War I by depicting a global, imperial conflict. Additionally, the documentary evades any semblance of a grand narrative: World War I was a conflict in which Asian and African soldiers were heroes, deserters, and victims; in which racism was both entrenched and defied; and in which European powers employed violence and coercion in the name of liberty and civilization. These insights are impossible to assimilate into categories of “good” and “bad” colonial subjects. By extension, the idea of a nation defined by a commitment to a shared set of values dissolves, as do the normative traits separating the zones of being and non-being.

By linking the individual experiences of soldiers to the racism of the imperial system, Olusoga raises the question of why colonial subjects were erased from national memory. At the end of the second episode, he provides an answer: total war had necessitated the upending of imperial practices by both Britain and France. Soldiers had mingled with a myriad of nationalities in the trenches; white French women had developed intimate relationships with Indian and African men; and African soldiers had fought against, and often defeated, white soldiers. In the immediate aftermath of war, the European empires feared that the imperial system could not withstand the transformative

experience of war. As a result, they sought to expunge the metropolis of colonial subjects, to whitewash the collective memory of the war, and to restore the abyssal line.

Reimagining the Postcolonial Nation

Melancholia destabilizes the abyssal line between the zones of being and non-being. This process threatens the integrity of a metropolitan nation that perceives itself as cohesive and autonomous. Yet sites of cultivated melancholia were well received in both Britain and France during the World War I centenary. In Chapter Four, I analyze why these sites were able to take hold under particular circumstances. Below, I consider the implications of sites of melancholia for the postcolonial nation.

Unsettling the National Narrative

Sites of cultivated melancholia demonstrate that transgressive narratives can receive state support, take material form, and be received and integrated into the lived cultures of citizens. Yet the three sites of memory in which cultivated melancholia was the dominant narrative—*The World's War*, *Frères d'armes*, and *Stories of Sacrifice*—remain marginal to British and French national memory. This raises the question of whether, and how, cultivated melancholia might become the dominant narrative of national memory in either country. Is there historical precedent for the dominance of cultivated melancholia? How might cultivated melancholia on a large scale affect national identity? How, finally, would the dominance of cultivated melancholia at the national level alter the categories of Self and Other and, by extension, the existence of the abyssal line?

In the past, both Britain and France have articulated fragmented narratives at the national level. Britain, as detailed in Chapter Two, has constructed its national memory as evolutionary and continuous (Kumar 2006), and its national identity as a daily social compact between citizens (Burke 2007[1790]). This vision has enabled Britain, in theory, to embrace multiple narratives of the nation and multiple ways of belonging. Yet venerating this tradition as a model for cultivated melancholia at the national level presents three problems. First, the tradition of British fragmentation muted or marginalized perspectives from the empire. The belief that Britain was willing and capable of incorporating difference into its national Self neglected a long history of constructing Britishness in opposition to Others—whether European Others, who were depicted as authoritarian and exclusionary; or to racialized colonial Others, the mirrors against whom notions of British social life, culture, race, and gender were constructed (McClintock 1995; Stoler 1995). Thus, British national identity, like its French counterpart, has been predicated throughout its history on the construction and maintenance of an abyssal line. With regard to national memory, Britain has remembered its Empire with a combination of nostalgia, amnesia, and aphasia. This approach has enabled the British nation to remember the stories of individual colonial subjects without linking these to the systemic violence of imperialism. With violence omitted from the narrative, the Empire was referred to as the Commonwealth (a term not officially in use until 1949) in national commemorations throughout the World War I centenary. Framed as a diverse, transnational community bound by loyalty to the Crown and opposition to European authoritarianism, the Empire was re-membered as the precedent for

multiculturalism—as a community bound together across racial, religious, and geographic lines, in pursuit of a common cause. As indicated above, this narrative of re-memory enabled colonial soldiers who embodied these virtues to enter the zone of being. However, by giving salience to the zones of being and non-being, re-memory strengthened the abyssal line.

A second reason that fragmentation does not constitute a British national narrative of cultivated melancholia is its ambivalent relationship to the state. While the fragmentation of Britishness has been the dominant narrative amongst citizens in the latter half of the twentieth century, it has not been supported uniformly by the state. Margaret Thatcher's 1987 claim that "there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families" was accompanied by racialized immigration restrictions and securitization. Gordon Brown's 2007 attempt to qualify Britishness responded to a growing fear that fragmentation and multiculturalism were insufficient guarantors of "social cohesion" (Ministry of Justice 2007); yet his proposed alternative of naming "British values", writing a pledge of allegiance, and introducing a patriotic national holiday (Goldsmith 2008) was criticized as empty and ahistorical. David Cameron's 2010 election pledge to build a "big society" appealed to an emerging belief that Britons no longer felt a sense of affinity with, or responsibility towards, one another—a societal shift that many white Britons attributed to multiculturalism. The strategic use, or rejection, of fragmentation by prime ministers reveals the source of their anxiety: all three responded to the fear among white Britons that the integrity of the nation was at stake. The appeal to "social cohesion" was a call for the brightening of the

nation's blurred borders—and, by extension, for the policing of membership in the zone of being. These messages from prime ministers highlight the ambivalence of state support for a fragmented narrative, and the ease with which appeals to solidarity become racialized.

Third, and by extension, the appeal to Britishness as fragmentation which predominated in the late twentieth century has given way to overtly racialized nationalism in the twenty-first. With the 1989 Rushdie affair, a growing number of non-Muslim Britons began to question whether Muslimness was compatible with Britishness, or whether this religious identity was a master status that would always trump nationality. The 7/7 attacks on the London transport system, carried out by four British Muslims, seemed to confirm these fears. Muslims were accused collectively of refusing to assimilate, segregating into communities, and being willfully blind to radicalization. Racial profiling and anti-Muslim attacks became increasingly commonplace as the Otherness of British Muslims was entrenched. The emergence of the British National Party (BNP), the English Defence League (EDL), and the UK Independence Party (Ukip) cemented the relationship between whiteness and Britishness, and linked anti-European politics to anti-Muslim hatred through a promise to restore Britain's "sovereignty" and curtail immigration. During the centenary, national commemorations of World War I took on an anti-European character, valorizing the British cause as a bulwark against European tyranny. In the current, post-Brexit political moment, Britishness as multiculturalism seems unlikely to return to dominance in national memory. As Gilroy (2005) argues, melancholia pervades the postcolonial society, and only becomes visible

when it erupts into violence. Within the past thirty years, these eruptions have happened with greater frequency, and with more significant direct consequences. Yet this does not indicate that British society is becoming more racist than it was in the past; rather, the logic that constructed the abyssal line in the empire, and has shaped metropolitan identity ever since, has given rise to new expressions of racism. The abyssal line endures, as do the zones of being and non-being.

In France, the dominant national narrative overtly proclaims its values: *liberté*, *égalité*, *fraternité*, and, increasingly, *laïcité*. The French tradition of national memory as a revolutionary break with the past and a violent conflict with the past, as detailed in Chapter Two, stands in sharp contrast to the British national narrative of fragmentation, and seems to create little space for cultivated melancholia in national memory. Yet recent events—the failure of a state-led attempt to give material form to national memory, and the decision to evade grand narratives during the World War I centenary—demonstrate that French national memory, too, is fragmented.

In 2008, then-President Nicolas Sarkozy began formalizing plans to fulfill his election promise of creating a national museum of French history—the Maison de l’Histoire de France. His initial plans were roundly critiqued by historians for their emphasis on military history—which seemed to suggest a patriotic, propagandizing depiction of the nation—as well as their presumption that it was possible to depict the entirety of French history under one roof. The project, and its critique, took on a new salience in January 2009, when Sarkozy formally launched the Maison in a speech in Nîmes. His rhetoric affirmed skeptics’ fears: Sarkozy proclaimed his goal to “reinforce

that identity which is ours, our cultural identity”. To critics, “cultural” seemed to invoke a Frenchness that was inherited from ancestors and therefore inaccessible to immigrants. Further, “identity” seemed inherent and ascribed, contrary to the republican values ostensibly accessible to all through assimilation. Thus, the Maison de l’Histoire de France ignited a nationwide debate surrounding national identity—a debate which led historian Alain-Gérard Slama (2010) to write, “This is, once again, a revealing symptom of the hypochondria that grips French society every time she has the impression that her unity is threatened. If we were less hypochondriac, maybe we would be less sick.”

In response to Sarkozy’s depiction of French history, opponents of the Maison presented their own vision. The territory presently known as France, they argued, had come into being through a series of encounters, wars, and migrations. Historians also pointed out that any inclusive understanding of France must extend to former colonies and current overseas departments, as well as every nation that had contributed to French identity through interaction (Kimmelman 2011). This raises the related question of who can be considered French, and whose history should be emphasized in the Maison. While the project was framed as a way to unite the French based on a shared national history, detractors seized on the choice of the Hôtel de Soubise as evidence that the Maison would “define French identity from above [with] terrible implications for the most vulnerable and dishonored” (Backouche et al 2010) in the words of an op-ed in *Le Monde* signed by eleven historians.

Framed this way, critics of the Maison appeared to dispute the very existence of the nation’s geographic and symbolic borders—and, by extension, of the categories of

insider and outsider, Self and Other. Yet the same critics appealed to other determinants of belonging and unbelonging in the form of republican values. In the process, they aligned themselves in opposition to Sarkozy's essentialist notion of France as well as the perceived essentialism of French Muslims. Thus, writing in *Le Monde*, the eleven historians continued: "In France, the notion of identity . . . rejects all ethnic and religious criteria . . . A number of communities, in particular Muslims, that have taken root in French soil believed that they could use these criteria to affirm their own identity, and they have used these to demand specific rights in the public sphere in the name of 'diversity'." In these critics' assessment, Sarkozy's embrace of French cultural identity was dangerous not only because it excluded the French masses, but also because it could be taken up by Muslims to assert their rights as a community. Read this way, critics of the Maison opposed Sarkozy's criteria of belonging and unbelonging because they would enable Muslims collectively to cross from the zone of non-being to the zone of being. Thus, their critique of essentialism paradoxically sought to reinforce the abyssal line.

Following the highly publicized resistance to the museum from historians, and a months-long strike by staff of the National Archives, Sarkozy's successor, François Hollande, abandoned the project in August 2012, citing "budgetary concerns" (Evin 2012). This episode demonstrates the limits of grand narratives, and the inability of the state to impose a particular narrative of national memory without resistance. Taken in a context of waning memory wars and a growing consensus among historians to embrace a fragmented narrative of the past, it also helps to explain the absence of a grand narrative at the national level in France during the World War I centenary. Instead, the state

fostered unity by encompassing fragmented narratives of the war—an approach that provoked backlash from the far right, which called for a celebratory, singular national narrative of the war. Yet this fragmentation at the national level did not, in itself, constitute cultivated melancholia; invocations of empire and migration as constitutive of France, which formed much of the criticism of the museum project, were marginal to the World War I centenary. These peripheral references, absent a recognition of metropolis and empire as a mutually constitutive Self and Other, were consistent with Ross' (1995) analysis of postcolonial memory as a series of disconnected snapshots. While evading grand narratives, the national commemorations also evaded attention to the scope and violence of empire.

In both Britain and France, the state's attempt to impose grand narratives can be read as a symptom of postcolonial melancholia: with the fall of empire and the loss of its sense of self, the nation grasps for new narratives of national identity. Yet public resistance to those new grand narratives is equally a symptom of melancholia: it reveals the impossibility of encapsulating the nation for any narrative that either proclaims the exceptionalism of the national Self without identifying an Other, or ignores the historical importance of empire in constructing the nation. A third manifestation of melancholia lies in the tension between the two understandings of national memory: neither a grand narrative nor the embrace of fragmentation is hegemonic in the postcolonial society. There is no agreement on what the nation's relationship with its past is or should be, yet all sides acknowledge that remembering the past in a particular way holds implications for national identity. Latent melancholia—expressed through the proclamation, rejection,

and contestation of grand narratives—is a constant, underlying, unsettling condition of the post-imperial society that is made visible through localized sites of contestation. Yet it remains to be seen whether cultivated melancholia is similarly conceivable at the national level.

Decolonizing the Nation

A national narrative of cultivated melancholia, like its latent melancholic equivalent, would disturb any notion that the nation's past could be encapsulated by an overarching, dominant narrative. In that sense, it would embrace fragmentation, contradiction, and multivocality. However, a national narrative of cultivated melancholia would also be attentive to structure, power, and violence, revealing the patterned ways in which some narratives have been constructed and disseminated by erasing others. By extension, cultivated melancholia would reveal the racialized structures that shaped individual experiences during the war, and the centrality of the empire to the construction of the metropolitan nation.

Cultivated melancholia disrupts the idea that the nation exists as a bounded, cohesive entity. This raises the question of how a national narrative of cultivated melancholia would alter the nation's image of itself: How might melancholia breach the abyssal line rather than simply shifting its location? To answer this question, I consider the impact of melancholia on three conceptions of the nation: a nation is a geographically bounded space, a shared memory, and a social compact between members. Cultivated melancholia, I argue, disrupts the spatial and temporal aspects of nationhood, but expands the social. Spatially, the nation is commonly described as a bounded geographic area.

Those who were born, or who live, or who trace their ancestry to the area within the borders may make a claim to citizenship, and argue that they share fundamental traits with others who lay claim to the nation—embodied experiences or romanticization of the nation’s physical landscape, as in Rupert Brooke’s (1914) invocation of “A body of England’s, breathing English air,/Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.” Invasion of a nation’s physical space by another nation’s military is considered justification for armed resistance; certainly, in the case of World War I, the memory of Germany’s invasion of French territory frames the dominant memory of that war as a just war of resistance. In the British case, that nation’s declaration of war against Germany is framed as a defense of Belgium’s territorial sovereignty. Beyond armed invasion, fears that the spatial integrity of the nation is threatened by clandestine migration (with its racialized associations with crime, drugs, and refusal to assimilate into the dominant culture) are invoked to justify border walls and stricter migration controls.

A cultivated melancholic narrative of the nation calls this framing into question: the nation is revealed as an inherently global process of creating a collective Self in opposition to an external Other. That is, the nation’s borders only exist because of the perception that one geographically bounded group of the people, land, and resources are inherently different from another—an idea that is racialized and imposed by force in the colonial context. This process of giving substantive character to the metropolis seems to justify distinguishing it spatially from the empire that constructed it, and—after the fall of the British and French Empires—restricting entry to the metropolis for former colonial subjects. By drawing attention to the patterned, racialized role of colonial subjects in a

nation's history, cultivated melancholia blurs the nation's geographic borders. As historian Nicolas Offenstadt stated in opposition to the Maison de l'Histoire de France, any museum of national history must also be a museum of world history; the nation exists only because the world has created it (Kimmelman 2011).

A national narrative of cultivated melancholia would disrupt the nation in a second way: it would shatter the nation's shared understanding of its own past. National memory has been discussed in detail in Chapter Two as a means of constructing moral unity through a shared understanding of the past. In the absence of a unifying heroic narrative, as described above, the discursive and material ambivalence of sites of memory serves to restore moral unity. During the World War I centenary, discursive ambivalence at the national level in France was an effective means of evading grand narratives and their accompanying divisive debates. Yet cultivated melancholia fragments grand narratives in a way that does not simply individualize the past, nor unify citizens in their experience of individual memories. Rather, cultivated melancholia reveals the structured and deliberate construction of national memory in a way that has privileged the experiences of the elite and legitimized their hold on power. Melancholia draws attention to narratives that have been erased, as well as to the process of their erasure. This problematizes national memory itself: it is not naturally or evenly shared, but violently constructed and forcefully imposed. Further, the experiences of individuals, while shaped by the structures of empire, are not determined by these structures; individuals exert agency, and exhibit varying motives, decisions, and consequences, within a context of violence and inequality. Thus, the story of the Victoria Cross recipient Mir Dast is as

valid and significant as the story of his brother, the deserter Mir Mast. Any grand narrative of national memory that privileges one over the other commits an act of erasure. As a consequence, no grand narrative can simultaneously encapsulate cultivated melancholia and proclaim the nation.

If the nation is constructed spatially or temporally, a national narrative of cultivated melancholia disrupts it. As a social compact, however, the nation is broadened and deepened by cultivated melancholia. According to R enan (1986[1882]), the nation is “a daily plebiscite” between members who need to share only their desire to live together. For Burke, the concept of a social compact distinguished Britain from France; for subsequent nationalism theorists, too, the classifications of individualistic libertarianism (Greenfeld 1992) or civic nationalism (Kohn 1944; Brubaker 1992) have taken on meaning in opposition to collectivistic authoritarianism or ethnic nationalism. This construction of the social compact, as a Self made significant through opposition to an Other, cannot survive cultivated melancholia; the revelation that Self and Other are mutually constructed destroys the integrity of the Self. In another way, however, the social compact still holds: if the spatial and temporal determinants of the nation are destroyed, hierarchies of power are challenged, and individual stories are foregrounded, then the social compact is opened to all who choose to adhere to it—regardless of their formal citizenship, relationship to power, or memories of the past. Group membership in such a context would be constructed exclusively on the will to live together. Yet in the absence of a geographic space or a grand narrative of past and present, it becomes

difficult to conceive of such a social compact as a nation. It is at this point that we must turn to the global as a source of solidarity.

Planetary humanism (Gilroy 2000) demands the renunciation of forms of collective identity that have been used as tools of oppression—most potently, nationalism and race. In return, individuals are called to acknowledge the diversity of human experience absent any ascribed status. For Gilroy, this call extends to the oppressed; in particular, his is a critique of black nationalism. This argument risks negating the important work of strategic essentialism, through which hierarchies must be inverted before they can be overthrown (Fanon 1952). A similar Fanonian critique must extend to the oppressor: nations that constructed themselves as colonizers, and acquired political, economic, and cultural power on that basis, must recognize that their collective identities were forged through violence (Baldwin 1984; Fanon 1959). The presence of former colonizers and colonized within a single space is a direct result of colonization. Sivanandan's (2008) dictum is apt: "We are here because you were there." Further, the dominant group's association of the Other with an experience of the unhomely, or of displacement, is the direct consequence of racialized national identities that were forged in the empire. Thus, a commitment to planetary humanism must not simply disavow the violence of racism, colonialism, and nationalism, but reckon with the ways in which these phenomena have created the world as we know it, and actively invert colonial hierarchies. In the present political moment, with far-right populists attaining mainstream political status, politicians and journalists in both Britain and France have proclaimed the inclusiveness of the nation with a newfound urgency. Yet so long as they do so from the

vantage point of the nation, they reaffirm the Self/Other binary. In order to upend that binary, the nation itself must be abandoned. Only then can the social compact be globalized.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXPLAINING THE EMERGENCE OF MELANCHOLIC SITES

Introduction

This chapter explains why melancholic narratives emerged at some field sites, but not at others. By extension, it identifies the conditions under which melancholic narratives may be cultivated. I argue, first, that these sites were constructed by key individuals who intended to produce melancholic narratives. Individual intentions explain the emergence not only of melancholic sites, but also of sites of re-memory and mourning that foregrounded militarism. Yet intentions fail to account for the obstacles encountered by individuals at other sites. Thus, I examine the role of the state as a source of legitimacy and of funding. The absence of state funding helps to explain the changing form of the Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19; a developing relationship to the state over time also explains the eventual re-memory of sites in Woking and La Mulatière. In pursuit of the exceptionalism of the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden, I delve into the role of physical space.

Below, I frame my approach using theories of cultural production and non-human agency. These situate the non-linear process of changing meanings over time, and the role of human and non-human actants in creating those meanings. I then use these theories to analyze the role of individual intentions, relationship to the state, and physical space in the emergence of melancholic sites of memory.

Cultural Production

I employ theories of cultural production to identify the actors and processes involved in constructing sites of memory as cultural objects. Theories of cultural production, alongside the cultural circulation framework, also make sense of counternarratives and obstacles to the emergence of transgressive narratives.

Beginning in the 1950s, a growing number of studies drew new attention to material cultural forms, to their symbolism, and to the processes of creating them (Mills 1967[1959]; White and White 1965). In the 1970s, studies of cultural production solidified around the processes by which artistic and literary forms were produced (Peterson 1976; Coser 1978). These foregrounded meso-level units of analysis, recognizing that cultural expressions were continually being constructed, negotiated, and rearticulated in ways that were not uniform across an entire society. Subsequent work on cultural production has analyzed the conditions under which cultural products vary; these may entail technological, legal, industrial, organizational, occupational, and market contexts (Peterson and Anand 2004).

Bourdieu's (1994) treatment of cultural production has been particularly influential within sociology. For Bourdieu, a cultural field is a "field of forces" as well as a "field of struggles" (p. 30). These struggles center on the symbolism of a cultural object, which only carries meaning if it is recognized socially. Consequently, it is necessary to study both the material form of an object and its symbolic meaning in order to make sense of the object sociologically. Additionally, because the social forces that create and contest an object's meaning are larger and more diffuse than the object itself,

an object becomes a “manifestation of the field as a whole” (p. 37)—that is, all of the tensions governing the field are localized in the struggle over a material object and its symbolic meaning. These tensions concern the boundaries of the field—some fields, Bourdieu notes, are more internally cohesive, and have higher barriers to entry, than others—and the ease with which actors within a field can introduce change (p. 42). To study a material object is thus to study the field that governs its meaning.

Hall (1980), Johnson (1986/87) and other members of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (DuGay et al 1997) developed a systematic method of studying cultural objects, or material objects imbued with cultural meanings in production, text, readings, and social relations. Through their cultural circulation framework, they trace the progression of the cultural life of an object: during the production stage, an object takes material form and is recognized socially. Production takes place within various social, political, economic, and ecological constraints, all of which affect both the ultimate form of the object and its social life. In the process, meanings are encoded in the object. The second step in the process concerns the object, or “text”, in its own right: a cultural object is transmitted to an audience through narratives, images, and other forms of representation located within the object itself. Third, the object is received, used, or consumed by audiences, which differ at the individual, subcultural, or institutional level. Finally, an object is reproduced through lived cultures: having received the cultural object, the audience carries its meaning into the larger social world, and creates subsequent cultural objects.

At each stage of the cultural circulation framework, power and exploitation shape the cultural object and its reception: ideas are valued and devalued, labor and creativity are exploited, and access to cultural objects is privileged and restricted. The power dynamics of cultural production are racialized (Bielby and Bielby 1996; Dowd and Blyler 2002), gendered (Tuchman 1989; Lang and Lang 1990; Bielby and Bielby 1996), and classed (Bielby and Bielby 1999; Halle 1993; Willis 1977). Further, cultural objects may reinforce configurations of power, unsettle them, or articulate counternarratives of power.

Drawing from theories of cultural production, I analyze sites of memory as cultural objects. Their process of cultural circulation begins with their inception and negotiation as ideas within the field of commemoration; takes on material form as text, whether as World War I battlefields or as documentaries commissioned a century later; conveys and receives new meanings in the minds of producers and the lived experiences of visitors; and is reproduced through lived cultures, which engage with other cultural objects and with national memory. At this point, the process of cultural circulation is not complete; rather, the circulation of cultural objects, as detailed in Chapter Three, alters national memory. Conversely, new understandings of the national present, driven by the racialized, power-laden interactions between human agents, yield new meanings for cultural objects and, by extension, new understandings of the past. Thus, sites of memory take on new forms that both reflect the societies that produce them and challenge national memory. Further, through the processes of articulation and reception, the narratives of cultural objects are parsed and contested. Thus, there is no single meaning of a cultural object; its significance varies across time and space, based on its particular social context.

Yet the object itself may also bear and project meaning that unsettles its audience. I draw from theories of non-human agency to make sense of this process.

Theories of Non-Human Agency

Actor network theory (ANT), developed in the 1980s by Bruno Latour (1987; 1988[1984]), John Law (1987; 1992), and Michel Callon (1986; 1987), originated in science and technology studies (STS) as a way to account for the impact of technology on the social world, and vice versa. ANT problematized the notion that society is a stable entity, arguing instead that it consists of a constantly changing web of associations. For Latour (2005), society—or, as he refers to it, the collective—is an assemblage of individual actants, each of which is also an assemblage of other actants. Yet the actants that compose these assemblages, which may appear cohesive at any given moment, are revealed through controversies and contestations. Latour affords agency to non-human actants, arguing that these may change the composition and behavior of assemblages. The latter occurs through the process of translation: focal actants define a problem, identify the human and non-human actants relevant to the solution, and place themselves at the center of this process (Cerullo 2009). After the focal actants' strategies are diffused among other actants, the entire network reaches a consensus on a new understanding of reality, and begins to enact that reality as a cohesive whole (Gomart and Hennion 1999).

Beyond its origins in STS, ANT has made sense of the relationship between human and non-human actants in museum exhibitions (Griswold et al 2013), music (Prior 2008), and national cultural repertoires (Lamont and Thévenot 2000). Griswold et al (2013) argue that the material traits of objects, and the physical position of viewers in

relation to them, influence the meanings that are produced from their encounter. Both artwork and viewer, in turn, compose assemblages—of raw materials, artist, spatial and temporal context, and display; and of race, class, gender, and nationality. All of these factors interact to produce a cohesive, yet transient, meaning.

ANT provides a useful explanation for non-human agency in social processes. Yet its radical equation of all human and non-human actants has been criticized as failing to conceptualize power in social relations (Collins and Yearly 1992, Fuller 2000, Star 1991, Sturman 2006). Latour (2005) responds that attending to the process of creating asymmetries provides a more useful explanation of power than simply taking asymmetries as given. Power is continually constructed, challenged, and reconstructed in new ways; essentializing power in a particular configuration precludes attention to its nuances and to the many actants involved in its articulation.

Material culture raises an additional question about the applicability of ANT to this field: how does the process of translation operate for contested sites? That is, if human and non-human actants do not reach a consensus on a particular understanding of reality, but are still understood on the basis of their physical placement to compose a single site, how does this alter the way they function as an assemblage? Melancholic sites of memory, as detailed in Chapter Three, serve to destabilize moral unity. The focal actants of these sites vary based on their material form and their relationship to history. Other actants also shape the meaning of a site: for example, formal and informal rules governing the conduct of visitors to sites of memory vary on the basis of a site's material form. Visitors to military cemeteries expect to encounter the signs and symbols of

militarism, and to take on the role of mourner and indebted citizen in relation to the dead. Visitors to museum exhibitions, in contrast, take on the role of spectator and consumer of knowledge, encountering and internalizing new information about a particular topic.

The power of physical space, of history, and of the expectations of visitors constrains those who construct and maintain sites of memory to varying degrees: while military cemeteries are governed by legal codes and by powerful, albeit informal, norms surrounding respect for the military dead, a new museum exhibition or—even more so—a visual media project affords greater freedom to the framers of commemorations. As Latour (2005: 38) emphasizes, no meaning is inherent to a particular site, human actant, or group; these actants are constantly being created and transformed through their interactions with one another, and with their own internal actants. Beyond the material sites, additional actants include the various interest groups invested in a particular meaning of the site: veterans' groups, political parties and advocacy groups, heads of state and local leaders, citizens, and marginalized minorities. These serve as mediators: though they purport to transmit the authentic or historic meaning of the material site, they also distort and transform the meaning in the process (Latour 2005: 39). Faced with such conflicting and overlapping narratives, actants struggle to agree upon a cohesive understanding of reality. This may mean that the process of translation is ongoing, or—for melancholic sites—it may mean that actants construct an ambivalent meaning of the site.

While actor network theory considers the role of material objects in social interaction, time perspective theory extends such a role to intangible ideals, beliefs, and

memories. Drawing from Lewin's (1951) concept of a "life space" that consists of an individual's physical environment and the environment's subjective and imagined meanings, sociologists have incorporated memories of the past, imaginings of the future, and fantasies of the present into their understanding of individual agency (Benjamin 2017). Most notably, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) conceptualize agency as the product of past habits and imagined future outcomes, interacting through contingent actions in the present. In that sense, past, present, and future are all simultaneously engaged at any given moment. Further, this notion of agency affords intangible, non-human objects—memories and imaginaries—the power to shape human action. For time perspective theorists, non-human agency is not simply the projection of human agency; rather, it exerts its own, ambivalent agency upon humans, and the interaction between human and non-human produces an action.

The sections below detail three categories of human and non-human actants: individuals, the state, and space. I consider how these actants, in conjunction with intentions, relationships, time, and memory, produce transgressive sites of memory.

Key Individuals

During the centenary, key individuals advocated for funding and public attention to each of the eleven field sites. I identified twenty-five individuals who played a visible role conducting research into the sites' histories, liaising between local and national bodies to solicit funding, and proposing and implementing particular narratives of memory at the sites. Of these twenty-five, I conducted semi-structured interviews with seventeen individuals regarding the process of constructing and commemorating each

site, their own relationship to the site, and their positioning of the site in relation to contemporary British or French Muslims and to national memory at large. For the remaining eight individuals, I analyzed their public statements and interviews with the press in pursuit of the same questions. I conducted interviews with an additional four actors who were disconnected from any particular site, but who served as external advisors and advocates for the memory of Muslim World War I soldiers at large.

These twenty-nine respondents did not constitute an exhaustive list of the individuals involved in commemorating Muslim soldiers during the centenary. They did, however, present a broad spectrum of identities, orientations to the nation, and relationships to other individuals and institutions. Yet these demographic differences, as detailed below, fail to account for a site's articulation of mourning, re-memory, or melancholia. Rather, analyzing the intentions of these individuals helps to explain why transgressive narratives emerged during the centenary.

Demographics of Key Individuals

Key individuals were overwhelmingly male (twenty-five of the twenty-nine respondents), enjoyed interpersonal relationships with members of the military and local government, and were frequently retirees who could devote time and energy to the commemorations. Muslim actors were well represented among key individuals; however, the majority—sixteen of the twenty-nine—were non-Muslim. Most of the non-Muslim individuals belonged to the dominant culture: they were white non-immigrants with Christian or secular backgrounds. Four non-Muslim respondents—Luc Ferier, a Belgian national; Frédéric Couffin, born to French settlers in Algeria; David Olusoga, born in

Nigeria; and Santanu Das, born in India—had immigrant backgrounds that they referenced in interviews and public statements. Yet Ferrier and Couffin’s racial and cultural identities placed them within the dominant group, while Olusoga and Das aligned themselves with racialized colonial subjects. Among Muslim respondents, all were racialized as non-white, and most had either immigrated to Britain or France as children, or had been born to immigrants. The countries to which these individuals had familial ties reflect both the religious and ethnic demographics in Britain and France and the composition of Muslim soldiers in World War I: British respondents primarily had ties to India, Bangladesh, and (particularly) Pakistan; while French respondents primarily had ties to Tunisia, Morocco, and (particularly) Algeria. All identified themselves as Muslim in interviews; however, they expressed a wide range of affiliation or non-affiliation with Muslim religious organizations, and were associated with the commemorations by virtue of their preexisting leadership in religious (e.g. Kamal Kabtane), cultural (e.g. Ansar Ahmed Ullah), or political (e.g. Zafar Iqbal) organizations. As this overview demonstrates, religious identity among respondents, and its role in the commemorations, was not simply a matter of identifying as Muslim or non-Muslim. Rather, religious affiliation was at once highly individualized, linked to institutions, and bound up with global phenomena of colonialism, migration, race, and citizenship.

Muslimness was not a master status; respondents articulated their religious identities in combination with familial histories, immigration narratives, values, race, and culture. Yet all Muslim respondents described their awareness of being read as Muslim. This, in turn, shaped their personal relationship to the commemorations, and their reading

of the relationship between the memory of Muslim soldiers and contemporary British or French Muslims. Naveed Muhammad, for example, links his religious identity, the perceptions of his young Muslim audience, and national memory of the war:

I'd be standing in front of them, and I had my military uniform on, with my surname on it. My surname is Muhammad. And there were various names—some of the guys shared the same surname, some were Khan—whatever it may be. And at Neuve Chapelle, there are four thousand plus names. And some of the names were matching. My name is Muhammad, and it's on the wall.

Here, Muhammad's standpoint is significant because he embodies the compatibility of Muslimness and military service. Hayyan Ayaz Bhabha, Executive Director of *Forgotten Heroes* 14-19, invokes his religious identity as he explains why memory is important:

Born and raised in Britain, to a Pakistani mother, and an Indian father: I'm British; I'm European. I have multiple identities, and I'm not unique. I'm also Muslim . . . just Muslim. I want to know all the ways in which Muslims of all denominations have contributed to our world. All denominations. I emphasize this because members of the far-right don't care what sect I follow, or what my nationality is. To them, I am just a Muslim.

Bhabha's leadership of *Forgotten Heroes* is significant because of his Muslimness: by stating that he is personally interested in the history of how Muslims have "contributed to our world", he invites other Muslims of all backgrounds to express a similar interest. By extension, he lays claim to realms of memory from which Muslims heretofore have been excluded—including the national memory of World War I. Bhabha also acknowledges a far-right counternarrative that depicts Muslims as monolithic and bound by negative tropes. *Forgotten Heroes*, and Bhabha's leadership within it, are, to some extent, direct reactions against that narrative.

The importance of religious identity stood in contrast to the perspectives expressed by non-Muslims, who minimized their religion. Only one non-Muslim

respondent, Frédéric Couffin, described his own religious identity in detail; secularism, for Couffin, was articulated in combination with his national and cultural identity, familial history, and moral code. In this sense, his religious narrative was similar to those of Muslim respondents. Couffin, however, did not describe any conflict, real or perceived, between his religious and national identity. Rather, his Frenchness and secularism informed and strengthened one another. Other white, non-Muslim respondents foregrounded their national identities. They laid claim to Britishness or Frenchness unproblematically; while the substance of these categories may have been in dispute, their own membership was not. This becomes more apparent in light of the narratives presented by the two non-Muslim respondents who did not belong to the dominant culture. Santanu Das, who came to Britain from India as an adult, and—in particular—David Olusoga, born in Nigeria, reflected on their own familial links to colonized subjects and their status as racialized Others within Britain. In *The World's War*, Olusoga ruminates on the similarity between the names of his own family members and those on a Nigerian war memorial. In an interview, he emphasized his awareness of being read as a black man and a BBC presenter:

I think that says something as well, to have a British immigrant, born in Africa, as one of the guests talking about the First World War, I think that says something about . . . where the country was. And after I did [a centennial broadcast], I was coming out of Westminster, where we did it, and I was stopped on the street by three or four black people who were really—one woman was really emotional, emotional is the word, to have seen this moment, this very establishment moment in some senses, the fact that I'd been on, and Trevor Philips had been on, and people from the Commonwealth had been on. And there were complaints that Africa hadn't been represented properly. But it showed that things were different.

For white respondents, religion and race were made invisible, both to the framers of commemorations and to their audiences, because of their majority status. Yet marginalized identities, whether religious or racial and ethnic, were the object of the dominant culture's gaze.

Religious identification shaped the ways that key individuals made sense of their own relationship to commemorations, and of the relationship between commemorations and contemporary British or French Muslims. It did not, however, dictate the narrative that a particular site produced; rather, respondents of varying religious identifications constructed narratives of mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. Thus, demographics alone cannot explain the emergence of transgressive narratives; for that, it is helpful to delve into the intentions of the key individuals.

Intentions of Key Individuals

At all three sites where cultivated melancholia predominated—*The World's War*, *Frères d'armes*, and *Stories of Sacrifice*—the individuals who constructed the sites were committed to producing melancholic narratives. As detailed in Chapter Two, melancholic narratives foreground the racialized violence of empire and disrupt any cohesive arc of national memory. By extension, as Chapter Three demonstrates, they unsettle the metropolitan nation constructed in opposition to the empire.

Framers of the three melancholic sites depicted their subjects as individuals with particular, often contradictory, stories and histories. In so doing, they sought to restore the agency of the colonial subjects they commemorated—subjects who were depicted in national political discourse as monolithically loyal and courageous. Thus, for David

Olusoga, *The World's War* restored to colonial subjects the same individuality that was routinely afforded to white subjects:

My mindset for making programs about non-white peoples, about empire, about race, is to treat them exactly the same way as you'd treat any subject, and to be ruthlessly journalistic. So what this program absolutely wasn't ever going to be if I was going to be involved in it was what you would do if you were trying to be very politically correct, which is that you would think about which of the ethnic groups in Britain who matter, who have a voice, you'd want to think well of at the BBC, and how do we tell their stories? How do we dutifully go through all of those groups and say, "They were here, they were there"? That program would have been unbelievably boring. It would have failed as a narrative, it would have failed as a story, but it would have been a dutiful box-ticking exercise to say "This group was here, this group was there." And I don't want to make those programs, because they fail as historical narratives, and make programming about non-white people—it means that they're seen as marginal, that there's a self-marginalization. So that program did the opposite of that. It told the best stories. . . So that absolutely ruthless application of journalism to non-white history is, to me, the most important thing.

Olusoga's approach presented colonial subjects as individuals rather than as members of categories. He did not claim to present a comprehensive history of the war, nor even of its most important events. Rather, he highlighted stories that previously had been overlooked in the service of a particular, "box-ticking" multicultural narrative. This approach acknowledged the erasure of individual colonial subjects from national memory in the past, and their inclusion as stereotypical types in national centennial commemorations. Similarly, Islam Issa was wary of presenting Muslim colonial subjects unequivocally as either loyal heroes or victims of colonial oppression. Rather, he sought to represent the diversity and individuality of their experiences:

[The BMHC trustees] were really interested in this basic kind of integration narrative—um, that sacrifice does mean sacrifice, and forget about any sort of other issues. Get the public thinking about Muslims fighting for the British cause. . . So they were very keen to go down that route. And then you had the other side, which was very much, um, not so keen on making heroes of the people who

sacrificed, which also missed the point, and which was much more keen on this wider colonial impact of the war. I think I managed, hopefully, to embed both of these perspectives into the exhibition, by presenting the larger narrative that was kind of chronological, um, but also embedding these individual stories into it.

For Issa, rejecting all-encompassing tropes of Muslim soldiers was also a matter of re-examining the notion of sacrifice. The name of the exhibition preceded his involvement, and—Issa recalls—initially was intended to convey the conventional, militaristic idea of dying for one's country. By invoking this term in an exhibition dedicated to Muslim colonial subjects, the original framers of *Stories of Sacrifice* proclaimed the ability and willingness of Muslims to integrate into the contemporary British nation. Upon joining the project as curator, Issa rejected this understanding of sacrifice while retaining the exhibition's original name. His representations of sacrifice foregrounded individual experience:

It wasn't just a sacrifice in terms of the fighting or dangers. I think we all know those kinds of sacrifice. So while we kept the title, we challenged the narrative of sacrifice that we all think we know. This is why I try to pepper the larger narrative with individual stories of sacrifice. That's why we have that logo showing whenever there's an individual story. Um, that's how we tell stories of sacrifice, from people who sacrificed their lives to people who sacrificed some specific human element like, you know, um, being able to smoke hookah, or missing their nephew.

Issa's representation of sacrifice in the exhibition pertains specifically to Muslim World War I soldiers. Yet by unsettling the conventional, militaristic understanding of sacrifice for his subjects, he implicitly encourages visitors to reconsider the ways that sacrifice is invoked in other commemorations. By extension, he destabilizes militaristic narratives of the nation.

Pascal Blanchard and Rachid Bouchareb, the producers of *Frères d'armes*, likewise sought to challenge colonial tropes by foregrounding individual stories. Their decision to present their documentary as fifty two-minute individual profiles was intended to appeal to the public; as they stated in the press kit associated with the documentary, "Short films are the best way to touch and sensitize the general public to these soldiers, who came from all over the world to defend the values of the Republic and the ideals of liberty." While this statement emphasizes individuals, it initially seems to conflate them into a singular category of loyal heroes, which *The World's War* and *Stories of Sacrifice* challenge. Yet elsewhere, the producers take a much more subversive approach to the nation and its dominant values: in an interview with the France Ô talk show, *Toutes les France*, Blanchard and Bouchareb emphasize the universality of the idea of liberty.

Because the soldiers—colonial subjects, not citizens with constitutionally protected rights—believed in liberty and fought for it on global fronts, liberty does not belong to the metropolis alone. By extension, the soldiers' adherence to the purportedly French ideal of liberty was a way of laying claim to a nation that did not claim them. As Blanchard explains, "A century ago, some people came to France to proclaim that they were French." The Guadeloupian writer Daniel Maximin, sitting on the *Toutes les France* panel with Blanchard and Bouchareb, considers the contemporary implications of this historical claim: "First, that shows that the history of France isn't just made by French people from the hexagon, but by people on other continents who were colonized, and that these colonized people aren't just victims of colonization; they're also the actors of

liberation.” The dedication of colonial soldiers to liberty is made more poignant by their experiences after the war: many of the individuals in *Frères d’armes*, who had fought for liberty on the Western Front, were relegated to the status of colonial subject, and liberty was restricted to white metropolitans. For Blanchard and Bouchareb, colonial subjects thus created the French nation and its values by fighting for the ideal of liberty, and by applying it more universally than did metropolitan leaders.

Despite the challenge that they posed to the militaristic national memory of World War I, none of the key individuals who produced melancholic sites described their efforts as oppositional either to national memory or to contemporary representations of Muslims. Rather, their responsibility was to draw attention to the forgotten stories of colonial soldiers. As Olusoga recalled, when asked how *The World’s War* fit into the larger project of national centennial commemorations:

Um, I think I was so busy making it that I didn’t think of that much at all. I was just so glad that the voices of non-white and non-European combatants and auxiliaries was going to be part of this moment. And I’m really proud of the BBC. I know I work for the BBC, so I’m biased. But I’m really, really proud that at the moment of the centenary, in August, we made a series and broadcast a series about people who had been ignored.

For Olusoga, *The World’s War* is a stand-alone project rather than a component of the centenary; the fact of its inclusion in the BBC’s centennial programming is a testament to the national broadcaster’s inclusiveness rather than a rebuttal to exclusionary narratives.

Issa more explicitly rejects the idea of Stories of Sacrifice as a counternarrative:

I always say, I think of my exhibition as something which was proactive rather than reactive. In other words, I didn’t mention the words extremism, radicalization, terrorism, or integration once, in the process of creating the exhibition, or in—I tried not to mention them in the exhibition interviews that I did. Um, the reason for that is that I don’t think that being reactive is the answer

for the British Muslim community at the moment. Um, but I think reactive isn't just reactive to events. Reactive is also reactive to narratives. I think if you're reactive to a narrative, then you're appreciating its existence, and the fact that you have to respond to it, whereas I think that proactive is kind of me making use of an opportunity where I could create a narrative almost from scratch, adapting something that people thought that they already knew about.

Both Olusoga and Issa were aware that their projects were read as rebuttals to exclusionary narratives of the nation. Yet in neither case did this reading affect the content of the projects themselves. Blanchard and Bouchareb, similarly, rejected the idea of their commemorations as a rebuke to national memory; however, *Frères d'armes* was unlike the other two projects in that it was framed as a key component of the national commemorations. Thus, the project's starting question asked, "How can we valorize these incredible tales drawn from our diversity in the upcoming commemorations?" Blanchard and Bouchareb, like Olusoga, lauded the national broadcaster for its support of their project; unlike Olusoga, they situated their documentary explicitly within the larger project of constructing national memory. Thus, they proclaimed in the *Frères d'armes* press kit:

To call on recognized celebrities of today to speak about the heroes of yesterday, is to take part in a strong citizenship, is to create great French heroes, is to write the history of France . . . This is an exemplary citizens' initiative immediately welcomed by France Télévisions, France 3 and France Ô and the overseas network 1e, which have actively engaged in this project from the beginning.

Framed this way, *Frères d'armes* actively participates in the construction of the nation, its values, and its memory rather than opposing exclusionary narratives.

Of the individuals who produced melancholic sites, Issa most explicitly conceives of his project as an independent entity proclaiming its own narrative. Olusoga passively acknowledges his project's link to national memory through the national broadcaster,

while Blanchard and Bouchareb overtly proclaim their project's importance to national memory. Yet all of these actors acknowledge that the reception of their projects into national memory exceeded their intentions. The Stories of Sacrifice exhibition, for example, was displayed in the Greater Manchester Police headquarters shortly after the Manchester Arena bombing in May 2017, amidst a nationwide surge in anti-Muslim violence. *Frères d'armes* was favorably reviewed in the press, and an exhibition based on the documentary traveled to schools across the country in 2014 and 2015. *The World's War*, likewise, was published as a book in 2015, and Olusoga became a visible figure in national commemorations of the centenary.

For the key individuals, the favorable reception of their projects demonstrated the importance of the stories they were telling in the present. The projects took on a greater salience in light of their reading by contemporary audiences. Issa recalls that when Stories of Sacrifice was displayed at the Greater Manchester Police headquarters, "A uniformed soldier was in disbelief reading one of the panels, to the extent that they had to ask him if he was okay." The soldier responded that he'd had no idea that Britain had been so instrumental to the partition of the Middle East after World War I. Olusoga received letters and mementos in the mail from the descendants of colonial soldiers, who were newly conscious that the nation at large saw their ancestors' experiences as important and worth remembering. For these audiences, sites of cultivated melancholia altered their understanding of the nation at large. Yet for Olusoga, sites of cultivated melancholia were also the product of a nation that was beginning to globalize its own self-conception:

I think the documentary is more part of a zeitgeist shift that was happening anyway that I didn't realize. You don't notice a zeitgeist shift until you're made aware of it, when you notice a pattern. I think there was an absolute desire in the country to see the war at this centenary moment in a different way. I don't think it was just about ethnicity, I don't think it was just about gender. I think there was a desire that was part a rejection of the old way, and part a desire for new stories. I think the poets and poppies approach to the First World War had run out of steam. It's not that Wilfred Owen doesn't hold a special place in the British imaginary; it's still taught in schools. I just think people know that. I think there was a desire to get away from that old poets and poppies model. But I also think there was an idea to see the war in a different—I don't think people knew what the difference was, but part of it was, um, bigger, different.

Olusoga, Issa, Blanchard, and Bouchareb set out to draw attention to the previously obscured or flattened individual stories of colonial subjects in World War I. In so doing, they were mindful that their projects were addressing an absence in national memory at large. Yet all of the sites took on new meanings through their interactions with audience members and various narratives of national memory. This discursive production of meaning, in turn, encouraged audiences to reimagine the nation, its ideals, and their contradictions. The trajectory of cultivated melancholic sites of memory demonstrates the power and the limitations of individual intentions.

The intentions of key individuals also help to explain the construction of non-melancholic sites of memory dedicated to Muslim colonial subjects. In particular, individual intentions were crucial to the four sites with direct connections to the military: the Curzon Institute panels, the Birmingham Western Front tours, the Nogent-sur-Marne *kouba*, and the plaques in the Great Mosque of Paris. Stakeholders approached each site with the intention of improving the relationship between contemporary Muslims and the nation's dominant institutions. This was most explicit in Naveed Muhammad's approach to the Birmingham Western Front tours. When asked how the project originated, he

began by explaining the relationship between the British Army and Muslim youth in Birmingham, stating: “The Army is always driving to be more reflective of the country in its recruits. I found that it wasn’t easy to recruit from the Muslim community, along with other communities. We don’t have the appropriate representation. So we were looking at ways that we could improve links with the communities.” Upon visiting the Indian memorial in Neuve Chapelle for the first time, Muhammad was surprised to learn of the long history of Muslim soldiers fighting for Britain. From this experience, and with the intention of improving the relationship between the British Army and Muslim youth, Muhammad developed the Birmingham Western Front tours. He explains the message underlying the tours:

So it’s again that perception that “This is not for us.” And so we make a point of saying to them, “This is your Army, this is your Navy, this is your Air Force. You are citizens of this country. You’ll grow up to be taxpayers” –this is to the young guys. The adults are taxpayers—“Your tax pays my pay at the end of the month. You need to know what I do.” And, and so it’s all about getting that message across, that they can, um, they’re able to interact with the military because it’s, it’s their military.

Hugo Clarke, like Muhammad, links Muslimness to national institutions in his logic for commemorating Muslim World War I soldiers. However, rather than explicitly encouraging British Muslims to pursue military service, Clarke situates his own involvement with the Curzon Institute within the more abstract relationship between memory, integration, and national identity:

So my background in the military is very much built upon social awareness, social identity, social inclusion, and social understanding. And Afzal [Amin] approached me, when I left the Army, and said, “I’ve been thinking for a long time about Muslim integration within the country—not just things like the Muslims, but of many other groups of people in this country. And really building on the understanding of how that connection has been throughout our history, for a much

greater period than most people necessarily understand.” . . . Particularly at the time when the First World War commemorations started, it was thought as a great idea to actually use that as a kind of platform for developing the understanding and for pushing against fundamental, um, elements within this country who were anti-Muslim. And so therefore, building up the pilot project, we’re building up an understanding of one another, and therefore building a greater national identity.

Sebastien Eychenne, adjunct mayor of Nogent-sur-Marne, presents a similar narrative of memory as an opportunity for marginalized groups to assimilate into the nation at large. He recounts the story of a local teenager, whom he describes as Lebanese, and who volunteers every year to serve as a flag bearer in the annual commemoration at the *kouba*. Eychenne was impressed by the teenager’s persistence and dedication to the task, which, he speculates, enables the young man to feel more French. Indeed, even at this backward-looking site of mourning, the stakeholders were mindful of the relationship between Muslim World War I soldiers and contemporary French Muslims. While their intention was primarily to honor the former, they made the case for the importance of the *kouba* by linking the two groups across time to the nation. Thus, Michel Renard and Daniel Lefevre, appealing to Minister of Veterans’ Affairs Hamlaoui Mekachera in 2005, wrote that the *kouba* “represents an affirmation of the historic character of the Muslim presence in our country, in which French Islam . . . can also reclaim its memory.” Upon receiving funding from the center-right government three years later, Renard commented dryly, “The left totally ignored this affair; bravo, defenders of immigrants.” For Renard and Lefevre, a political commitment to (presumably Muslim) immigrants’ rights in the present should also manifest itself in the celebration of Muslim soldiers in the past.

At the Great Mosque of Paris, the caretaker and historian, Zoubir Salhi, seeks to venerate Muslim World War I soldiers in order to proclaim the Frenchness of

contemporary Muslims. Yet his narrative is distinctive because, rather than encouraging Muslims to assimilate into the nation's dominant institutions, he intends to educate the non-Muslim public. His logic is particularly noteworthy because of the location of the plaque that he was instrumental in erecting: it hangs on the grounds of a mosque that ostensibly was built for French Muslims, in gratitude for the military service of Muslim soldiers. Yet Salhi's awareness of the dominant culture's Othering gaze extends to the plaque: as detailed in Chapter Three, it is intended to answer the "bad Muslim" trope by venerating the "good Muslim" soldiers of World War I.

Consciousness of the "bad Muslim" trope, and eagerness to debunk it, is widespread among the framers of commemorations with links to the military. Asad Jamil, recalling the Curzon-sponsored panel discussion at the Shah Jahan Mosque, describes one presenter's awareness of this trope:

AJ: He is of the opinion, actually, that, you know what, Indians and Muslims have given their blood and have paid for the right to be here, to have a presence, to live as British people within this country. And he often says, um, that he's quite disgusted with having to placate or explain or make excuses for Muslims. There is no excuse to be made for Muslims at all. We have given blood. We have well and truly given blood. He's quite adamant about that.

MT: Did that come across in his lecture?

AJ: No, not at all. And it wouldn't, no. Right. I think, uh, his was more of a storytelling, from undivided India to the mosque, and how that relationship happened, where the soldiers came from India, and they got posted out.

This presenter, like Islam Issa, is acutely aware of the dominant culture's gaze. Yet while the latter refuses to engage with these tropes in an attempt to shift the discourse away from binaries, the former's non-binaristic narrative is intended to appeal to non-Muslim audiences who might recoil from more explicit proclamations of belonging.

The intention to demonstrate the compatibility of Muslimness and military service shaped depictions of Muslim colonial subjects and the substance of their narratives. Unlike the framers of melancholic narratives, who sought to individualize Muslim colonial subjects, the framers of militaristic sites of mourning and re-memory commemorated Muslim soldiers collectively and celebrated their impact on the contemporary nation. Clarke emphasizes the collective experience of war and, by extension, of memory:

The word hero was one way of looking at the war . . . Looking at individual identities. But what we've missed out on is the sense of community, of looking out from it, looking forward, looking beyond the commemorations, looking beyond the lens. Look at—what the country was when it was involved, and what is it now, what it could be in the future. Looking at the social change, looking at how we as a nation have changed fantastically. Um, not, in everybody's eyes, the best way, but that's where we are now. And we've got to build on that to move forward. Um, I suppose looking forward to the future is a key point in commemorations of the First World War. . . Um, and again, I use the First World War as a platform to educate, for people to learn, for people to want to learn, about our—how this country and other countries have changed significantly in our history, in a very short period of time. So with that gap, we've not only lost an important part of our history, but those parts that we've lost are key to developing our sense of a future together, to understanding our shared heritage that goes back beyond times we've recognized immediately, and perhaps are very important for us developing more social cohesion today.

The intention of these actors at the Curzon Institute, the Birmingham Western Front tours, and the Great Mosque of Paris to proclaim the compatibility of Muslimness and the contemporary nation was instrumental in their construction of forward-looking, militaristic, multicultural narratives of re-memory. A similar intention of implicitly constructing a multicultural present by foregrounding the historical role of Muslim soldiers was evident with regard to the *kouba*, a site of mourning. In all of these cases, stakeholders successfully translated their intentions into material sites of memory, which

were then imbued with new meanings by audiences. Intentions alone, however, fail to account for the experiences of individuals who struggled to transform their ideas into material sites of re-memory. Such was the case for the Woking Peace Garden, the Muslim monument in La Mulatière, the Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19, and the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden. To make sense of these sites and the narratives they produced, it is helpful to give closer attention to their access to resources and, in particular, to the state.

Relationship to the State

All three sites of cultivated melancholia received financial support from the state without any significant accompanying requirements governing their narrative. As indicated above, stakeholders associated with each site regarded the state as either an active supporter or passive partner. All three projects were initiated through negotiations between the key individuals and the state. David Olusoga, for example, describes a conversation with Martin Davidson, the BBC commissioner for history, who asked Olusoga what he would do if he were to produce a program on World War I. Olusoga adds that Davidson was familiar with his prior work on race, colonialism, and slavery, and wondered how the BBC should approach the imperial dimension of the war in its centennial programming. Olusoga continues:

I said it should be much, much broader. I said the key country was France, and that you learned more about Britain if you compared Britain and France. But it was actually even more global than that. The idea of globalism in the war has two facets: one is how global the Western Front is, and the other is how global the war is. So, um, from those conversations, I wrote a treatment for Martin, which then was commissioned. It came out of an initial conversation that came out of a relationship that I've had with Martin, and him knowing that I'd made programs in the past, and that I could deliver.

Once the project was commissioned, Olusoga enjoyed a productive, collaborative relationship with the BBC. Working alongside series producer Tim Kirby and historian Santanu Das, he was able to create a documentary that largely aligned with his initial vision.

Frères d'armes enjoyed a more active relationship with the state: the documentary project was commissioned by the Ministry of Veterans' Affairs, with Pascal Blanchard and Rachid Bouchareb as its producers. Both had produced films on race and empire for France Télévisions in the past; with this series, the national broadcaster provided them with a platform and a national audience, as well as a means of publicizing their project on news and talk shows. A host of other state agencies provided their official endorsement of the project, among them the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Ministry of the Francophone World, the Ministry of Overseas Territories, and the Institut Français. These partnerships facilitated the multimedia character of *Frères d'armes*, which included a traveling exhibition, a box set, and a book, all of which were distributed to French schools.

The relationship between the state and *Stories of Sacrifice* was less direct, but still a source of support rather than resistance. The trustees of the British Muslim Heritage Centre, which enjoyed an established relationship with the Army as a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, applied for funding for a museum exhibition from the Ministry of Defence fund for diversity initiatives. The BMHC received a grant of one hundred thousand pounds for the project, and it matched that grant from its own funds. At this

point, with a budget of two hundred thousand pounds, the CEO of the BMHC approached Islam Issa to request that he curate the exhibition. Once Issa agreed to lead the project, he altered the narrative, as detailed above. Yet the project retained the support of the state; its launch was attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, senior members of the Army, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Interim Lord Mayor of Manchester, Members of the European Parliament, Members of Parliament, local Councillors, and the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police. These officials spoke at the event and in a promotional video, appealing to tropes of courage and heroism even as they endorsed a melancholic exhibition.

The other, non-melancholic sites of memory detailed in the previous section—the *kouba*, the Birmingham Western Front tours, the Curzon Institute, and the Great Mosque of Paris—also received support from the state. In each case, the state provided funding, either through the military or through other national funding bodies. Senior politicians and military officers verbally endorsed each project with written statements or speeches at the project launch, appealing to “good Muslim” tropes that aligned with the militaristic narratives that these sites produced. Yet the willingness of these same institutions—and, in many cases, same individuals—to endorse and fund sites of cultivated melancholia demonstrates that a narrative of mourning or re-memory was not a condition of state support for these sites. Rather, the intentions of key individuals, as detailed in the previous section, explain the narratives that these sites produced. The role of the state does, however, help to explain why four sites—the Woking Peace Garden, the Muslim monument in La Mulatière, the Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19, and the Nogent-sur-

Marne colonial garden—faced obstacles as they sought to commemorate Muslim World War I soldiers.

Key individuals have advocated for national attention to, and restoration of, all four sites. The framing of their narratives resembles sites of re-memory: all make sense of the past by appealing to the militaristic, multicultural nation in the present. Yet all four faced obstacles as they sought to transform their intentions into material sites. The Working Peace Garden and Muslim monument in La Mulatière eventually surmounted those obstacles, while the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden and Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19 thus far have struggled to do so. Comparing the sites' relationship to state and non-state resources helps to explain their differing outcomes.

The Forgotten Heroes Foundation was established by a Belgian national, Luc Ferier, with no direct connection to the British state. Recognizing the omission of Muslim soldiers from national memory, Ferier embarked upon detailed archival research and sought to publicize his findings in a traveling museum exhibition. Thereafter, he initiated meetings with high-profile Muslim organizations across the political and religious spectrum, hoping to glean support for its museum project. Ferier gave lectures at mosques, and at Muslim schools and community organizations around the UK. A key advocate was Hayyan Ayaz Bhabha, a paralegal who worked for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Islamophobia. Through Bhabha, who would eventually become the foundation's executive director, Forgotten Heroes gained a link to the state and access to lawmakers. A host of endorsements followed—from Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, General Sir John Nicholas Reynolds Houghton (former Chief of the Defence

Staff), Stuart Andrew MP (Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Islamophobia), Imam Asim Hafiz OBE (Islamic Religious Advisor to the Chief of the Defence Staff and Service Chiefs), and Commander Mak Chishty (Hate Crime Lead of the Metropolitan Police Service). Bhabha was also interviewed on BBC Asian Network in December 2016 and February 2017 to discuss the significance of Muslim soldiers in the war and the importance of commemorating them. Yet this publicity, and these endorsements, did not translate into financial support for the project: as of December 2016, the foundation had not received any public or private donations for its work. The key individuals expressed their frustration with their audiences' general lack of knowledge about Muslims in World War I, and the determination of Forgotten Heroes to use its platform to educate the public.

In the spring of 2017, citing this widespread lack of knowledge, the organization changed course: it began to solicit funding to publish a compilation of its archives in the form of a coffee table book, *The Unknown Fallen*. It also continued its pedagogical work in the form of lectures at mosques and schools. The organization partnered with Anglia Tours to organize a two-day tour of the Western Front focusing on sites significant to Muslim soldiers. Individual donations began to trickle in from Britain, France, Belgium, and further afield: New Zealand, Canada, and the U.S. Ferier and Bhabha continued to emphasize that the memory of Muslim soldiers was at stake, and to direct their funding appeals to Muslims across the globe. In late August 2017, Forgotten Heroes announced that it had received sufficient funding to publish *The Unknown Fallen*. By then, the Foundation had presented its case on a variety of platforms to a transnational,

predominantly Muslim, audience. Its content, too, was deliberately transnational: with the expansion of its archival work, Forgotten Heroes encompassed all Muslim soldiers who had fought for the Allies during the war, including colonial subjects from undivided India and North and West Africa.

For the Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19, the absence of resources thwarted individual intentions: the original, planned museum project was abandoned after three years of unsuccessfully soliciting funding. Further, access to intangible resources had proven difficult: the key individuals cited a lack of awareness of Muslim soldiers among the public at large as a significant obstacle to their work. While it was not necessary that tangible and intangible resources come from the state, the success of sites of cultivated melancholia, and of militaristic sites of mourning and re-memory, demonstrates that state funding alongside autonomy frees key individuals to fulfill their intentions. In the absence of state funding, Ferier and Bhabha continually appealed to private sources of funding, insisting upon the importance of history to the national present. As the Foundation tweeted on December 16, 2016, “The far-right denies the contribution of #MuslimsinWW1. If you deny it, you do their work for them. #Donate today.” Subsequent statements appealed even more explicitly to a contemporary narrative of re-memory: consecutive tweets on December 20, 2016 proclaimed, “Our project is all about giving youth an education on #WW1 history, a voice and a chance to not take the wrong road” and “#WW1 archives contain the most positive message of hope for #Muslim youth & need to be saved. Do you care? #donate”. Ultimately, this message attracted

sufficient funding from private donors to publish *The Unknown Fallen* in 2017. Yet the process of attracting donors and raising funds constrained the project.

The importance of state support is made more explicit by contrasting the three remaining sites of memory, of which two were restored while the other fell into ruin. Their varying experiences illuminate the factors underlying the state's decision to fund particular sites. During the centenary, the colonial garden in Nogent-sur-Marne, like other longstanding local sites of memory that had fallen into ruin, hoped to benefit from state funding and attention. Given the Mission Centenaire's decentralized approach to funding, local sites of memory occupied a prominent place in French centennial commemorations. Further, the national government signaled its willingness to commemorate colonial sites of memory in February 2014, with President Hollande's inauguration of a new monument to Muslim soldiers at the Great Mosque of Paris. And as of spring 2014, it seemed likely that Nogent would partner with the Paris city government to stage a centennial exhibition at the colonial garden. Yet despite the promise of the centenary, Nogent failed to secure funding for its restoration.

Among those who have lobbied for greater attention to memory, bureaucracy is the most common explanation of why all large-scale efforts thus far have failed. The Bois de Vincennes is overseen by three ministries—the Ministries of Culture, Agriculture, and Veterans' Affairs—as well as the city governments of Paris and Nogent-sur-Marne. All five must agree upon any proposed restoration plan—an unlikely outcome, given the disparate interests and constituencies of these actors. They must also assume some responsibility for funding the restoration, which would introduce an additional set of

bureaucratic restrictions. This became apparent when the city government of Nogent-sur-Marne attempted to secure funding during the centenary: in September 2014, Nogent mayor Jacques Jean-Pierre Martin wrote an open letter to Prime Minister Manuel Valls, publishing a copy in the local magazine. In light of the centenary, he wrote, it was a travesty that the garden of tropical agronomy, an important historic site and one that helped multicultural France to understand the history and significance of its empire, was being neglected. Surely the state should allocate some of the funding during the centenary to restore the garden. In response, the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Sébastien Gros, wrote that he had passed the Mayor's request on to Kader Arif, Secretary of State for Veterans' Affairs. One month later, Serge Barcellini, the new General Director of the Armed Forces, wrote to the Mayor, explaining that centennial funds could not be used for the restoration of monuments. Further, he pointed out that the Parisian city government was the protector of the site, and that restoration of several of the buildings would be difficult because they were protected historic sites. Any initiative to restore the site would have to come from the Parisian city government—which, Barcellini noted, had not made any attempt to do so. Barcellini encouraged Martin to contact the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo. Yet attempts to enlist the support of the Parisian city government have also faltered. Members of the mayor's office had been in touch with Serge Volper in early 2014, hoping to organize an event the following November in commemoration of the centenary. The local elections of spring 2014, however, brought a new government, together with a new staff of bureaucrats. In the wake of this turnover, Volper lost contact with the relevant staff in Paris, and the planned commemoration never materialized.

Certainly, bureaucracy has played a part in obstructing restoration projects. Yet bureaucracy is not, in itself, a sufficient explanation for the failure of memory work at the local level. Indeed, local actors in Woking and La Mulatière reported similar experiences with bureaucracy prior to the eventual success of their projects. La Mulatière municipal cemetery and Horsell Common, like the Bois de Vincennes, have been controlled since their creation by multiple local and national state actors, each with its own interests, limitations, and funding apparatus. Like the garden of tropical agronomy, the necropolis and former Muslim burial ground were protected historic sites, such that any alteration to the area would require permission from the governing bodies. All three sites also found advocates in key individuals who worked or volunteered to maintain them, as well as members of local government. Yet in Woking and La Mulatière, the key individuals eventually surmounted bureaucracy by re-membering the sites in novel ways that addressed the state's specifications: in 2007, Frédéric Couffin had a new plaque to civilian workers engraved, using terminology approved by the state; and in 2015, Zafar Iqbal and Elizabeth Cuttle inaugurated the Woking Peace Garden within requirements governing the use of common land and the maintenance of a listed historic structure. Thus, the success of La Mulatière and Woking sheds doubt on bureaucracy as a sufficient explanation for the failure of restoration efforts in Nogent.

If bureaucracy alone cannot explain the failure of the state to provide funding for the colonial garden, other factors must have contributed to the site's ongoing latent melancholia. A second explanation provides a case study of the interconnectedness of national and local narratives: the role of the military. In Woking, Deepcut military

barracks, the Armed Forces Muslim Association, and the Armed Forces Community Covenant grant scheme provided funding, labor, and verbal support for the peace garden. Their work legitimized the restoration of the former Muslim burial ground and linked the Indian Muslim First World War soldiers once buried there to twenty-first-century, multicultural Britain. It also created a national constituency in the form of active and former military personnel, who otherwise may have considered the site irrelevant to their own understanding of the nation. This role, in turn, reflected a longstanding relationship between the military and the key individuals and institutions involved. The importance of the military is even more apparent when contrasted with unsuccessful attempts to restore sites of memory: in Woking, the military supported and enabled the construction of this site of memory; it used the site to recruit an underrepresented, yet highly visible, minority into its ranks; and, paradoxically, it remembered World War I in its own right rather than through the prism of more recent wars. In Nogent-sur-Marne, the military played an ambivalent role. In La Mulatière, the military produced a counternarrative, reading the site through the lens of the Algerian War. These varying relationships to the military shaped the narrative produced by each site.

The British military played a supportive, enabling role before and throughout the restoration project. Prior to securing funding for the peace garden, Woking already enjoyed an active relationship with the military. The nearby Army Training Centre in Pirbright, the Army Headquarters in Aldershot, and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst regularly required their new recruits to visit both the Shah Jahan Mosque and the former Muslim Burial Ground as part of its diversity training. As Asad Jamil,

secretary of the mosque, pointed out, many of the white British recruits had possessed very little knowledge of Islam, or contact with British Muslims, before entering the Army. By visiting the two sites in Woking, they learned that Islam was not a faraway religion practiced by Britain's enemies, but the religion of their compatriots. Further, they learned, there was a longstanding history of Muslims fighting alongside non-Muslim Britons, and this history was visible in the land itself. The former Muslim Burial Ground thus played a key role in the military's efforts to counter homegrown anti-Muslim racism. The proximity of the Army Training Centre also facilitated informal, quotidian interactions between the people of Woking and members of the military. Thus, Zafar Iqbal pointed to his personal relationships with soldiers and veterans as a source of collaboration and funding for the Muslim Burial Ground. Additionally, Woking developed a relationship with the Armed Forces Muslim Association, led by Captain Naveed Muhammad. Members of this organization assisted with shoveling, plowing, and planting at various stages. At the inauguration of the peace garden, Imam Asim Hafiz, Muslim chaplain to the Armed Forces, led the assembled guests in prayer.

There is no equivalent role of the French military in either Nogent-sur-Marne or La Mulatière. Rather, at both sites, veterans' groups—a category largely absent from Woking—play an active role in official memory: they lead annual commemorations, paying homage to the soldiers buried or remembered at each site. Their prominent and longstanding role gives them a voice in debates over the restoration of the sites. In turn, re-memories of the war are screened through these veterans' understandings of the First World War and the conflicts in which they fought—which are often highly politicized. In

Nogent, veterans officially were linked to the garden through the Ministry of Veterans' Affairs, which maintained partial control over it. Yet the Ministry was not involved in discussions of funding and restoration during the centenary. Rather, the more visible role of veterans was through two organizations that led annual commemorations there: the ANAI and the FNAOM.

At a site with a long, contested history linking military and civilians, metropolis and colonies, Volper and local government officials alike recognize the veterans' organizations as the legitimate bearers of military memory. This affords the ANAI and the FNAOM a powerful role in the construction of meaning at the garden. Armel Le Port, Secretary General of the FNAOM, emphasizes the consistency of his organization's commemorations: the FNAOM is composed of veterans of the Marines and overseas soldiers, who perceive their role as remembering their predecessors as well as educating the public. Yet the military commemorations are bound up with the post-First World War national past: the veterans who plan and visibly populate the commemorations served primarily in twentieth century wars—including colonial wars. Thus, the members of the ANAI are primarily veterans of the Indochinese War, which, in many ways, instigated the demise of the French Empire: the Viet Minh victory at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 signaled the weakness of the metropolis to other colonies and emboldened nationalists across southeast Asia and Africa.

In addition to the power of veterans' associations, a second factor of the military's role is the status and visibility of Muslims within each country's military. As of 2014, only 500 of nearly 100,000 British active duty military reported their religious affiliation

as Muslim (Ministry of Defence 2014). Among British Muslim civilians, distrust of the military stemmed from condemnation of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars—both wars were widely condemned among British citizens of all religious affiliations, but, amidst widespread racial profiling in the wake of the “war on terror”, opposition among Muslims was particularly strong. In response, the military has actively courted the support of British Muslims: the government hired Asim Hafiz as its first Muslim chaplain in 2005 and publicized its efforts to enable Muslim soldiers to observe religious law while on active duty. The Director of the AFMA, Captain Naveed Muhammad, conducted outreach efforts in Birmingham, arranging tours of the Western Front for local youth. And, on the Frequently Asked Questions page of its recruitment site, the Army answered the question, “Can you have Muslim soldiers?” emphatically in the affirmative (Ware 2012). Essentially, Muslims in the British military are highly visible, in part, because they are so highly underrepresented. And since 1915, Woking has been a key site for the construction of the British Muslim soldier.

In France, the reverse is true: while there is no data on the number of Muslim soldiers in the military (since collecting data on race and religion is prohibited by law), it is widely accepted that Muslims as a religious group are overrepresented in the French military, constituting ten to twenty percent of enlisted personnel (Purseigle 2012). This derives not from an ideological commitment to the military and its values, but from the socioeconomic status of French Muslims: working class soldiers in general are overrepresented, and since French Muslims are disproportionately working class, they are also overrepresented in the military. The secular character of the French state means that

overt appeals to religion are not present in the French military. Yet France, more than any other European country, creates space in its military for Muslim religious life. Of the 228 full-time chaplains in the French Armed Forces as of 2015, thirty-eight, or seventeen percent, were Muslim. These chaplains were recruited within the armed forces, without significant public debate regarding the compatibility of Islam, military service, and republican values (Michalowski 2015). Further, indirect references to the military's contact with Muslim societies are widespread: during the July fourteenth parade, the artillery was emblazoned with the names of colonial cities in North Africa.

Many of the military's most popular and most recognizable regiments originated in the Empire, and wear North African-influenced uniforms. The First World War centenary was replete with references to the global character of the conflict in general, and to the role of Muslims specifically. President Hollande drew explicit links between the historical contributions of Muslim First World War soldiers and the status of contemporary French Muslims—pointing out that the Muslim military cemetery had been vandalized repeatedly at Notre Dame de Lorette, and condemning far-right Islamophobia as un-French at the Great Mosque of Paris. Yet these references were to contemporary Muslim civilians; the role of current Muslim soldiers—or, indeed, of Muslim soldiers after World War I—was unspoken. The discursive absence of Muslim soldiers since World War I paradoxically reveals their importance to the contemporary nation. If Muslim soldiers have played a role in—and in relation to—the French military throughout the past century, the question arises of why they were erased from earlier history. The answer lies in the ongoing potency of the Algerian War in France.

In 2005, the French Parliament passed Article 4, which stipulated that the history curriculum for state schools emphasize “the positive role of the French presence overseas”. In response, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika commented that he had “never ceased waiting for an admission from France of all the acts committed during the colonial period and the war of liberation.” While Article 4 was revoked the following year, Algeria remains synonymous with violence, loss, and humiliation in the popular imagination. Thus, when President Hollande extended an invitation to the Algerian military to participate in the July fourteenth parade, he was met with opposition in both countries.

Many former French soldiers who fought during the Algerian War are now the leaders and active members of French veterans’ associations. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Former Combatants, they have a powerful voice in the President’s Cabinet. At the local level, they maintain veterans’ associations and lead annual commemorations at sites of memory. Consequently, as the visible representatives of the French military in conflicts recent and ancient, veterans play a significant role in the decision to forget or remember particular conflicts, or soldiers. Given the unsettled memory of the Algerian War, coupled with the involvement of those who waged that war in the construction of commemorations, the memory of Algeria shapes the more distant memory of the First World War. The FLN militants who waged guerilla war against imperial France are conflated with the Algerian conscripts who fought alongside the metropolis on the Western Front. This association becomes even more salient when the Muslim identity of Algerian World War I soldiers is emphasized—since Islam was indicated as a reason for

excluding Algerians from French citizenship, and subsequently as the defining and unifying characteristic of Algeria, which neatly distinguished its nationals from its occupiers.

Britain lacks any recent war comparable to Algeria. Its closest counterpart, the Iraq War, shares many traits that would seem likely to impact the memory of the First World War. Both Iraq and Algeria were long, violent, costly interventions in Muslim-majority countries, which afterwards were regarded as national humiliations. Yet unlike Algeria, the memory of Iraq does not hold implications for Britain's national identity—at least, not for non-Muslim Britons. For British Muslims, the memory of Iraq shapes the contemporary perception of the British military. Yet for most Britons, the Iraq war is regarded as America's war, in which Britain played a large role without any corresponding decision-making power or national interest. There is no equivalent group of ex-colonial *pieds-noirs* claiming ties to Iraq and asserting a revisionist narrative of the war; rather, fifteen years after the invasion of Iraq, the British public has reached a general consensus that the war was a mistake and a failure. The blame for this is shouldered by the Labour government at the time, and in particular by then-Prime Minister Tony Blair. Indeed, in 2016, after seven years of investigations, the Chilcot report concluded that the Iraq war was unnecessary and its legal basis “far from satisfactory”. The Chilcot report represents a form of closure that France has never had with regard to Algeria. A final factor is the Armed Forces Covenant, introduced in 2000. In return for their service and sacrifice, the Covenant reads, veterans have the right to the gratitude and support of their communities when they return from war (“The Armed

Forces Covenant” 2017). That is, regardless of the justice of a particular conflict, veterans should expect the respect and acknowledgement of their communities. The Armed Forces Covenant thus decouples the causes and consequences of a conflict from the status of soldiers in society. Consequently, veterans of the Iraq war, with a few notable exceptions (Harrison 2009; Morris and Butt 2010), were not held responsible for the unpopular Iraq war by the majority of the British public.

The different trajectories of the Woking Peace Garden, the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden, and the monument in La Mulatière are explained, in part, by the multifaceted role of the military at the national and local level. In Woking, representatives of the British military, and particularly of its Muslim soldiers, facilitated a narrative of re-memory. In La Mulatière, veterans’ associations drew from their memories of the Algerian War to produce a narrative of latent melancholia; other actors continually confronted this narrative as they attempted (successfully) to re-member the site. In Nogent-sur-Marne, veterans’ associations affirmed the colonial character of the garden while distancing it from the contested memory of the Algerian War by proclaiming a militaristic narrative of mourning. Yet this narrative failed to assimilate the garden’s longer history of racialized nationalism, which had been manifested in the colonial exhibitions. Thus, the role of the military cannot account fully for the latent melancholia of the Nogent-sur-Marne colonial garden. Rather, the explanation lies in its physical form.

Physical Space

The meaning of sites of memory, and their ability to produce transgressive narratives, is governed in part by their physical form. Sites that are bound to a particular, localized physical space are also bound to preexisting narratives of memory associated with that site. This is particularly true for cemeteries, which are governed by formal laws as well as informal codes of etiquette. Yet sites of cultivated melancholia are detached from any permanent, physical site, affording greater autonomy to individuals to construct transgressive sites of memory. A third category of physical site, associated with latent melancholia and, sometimes, with re-memory, couples its direct, physical link to World War I with an ongoing use in the present. This dual role complicates the memory produced there.

The three sites that convey narratives of cultivated melancholia are detached from spaces that carry the weight of the past. These are new sites of memory, for which physical location is either irrelevant or entirely absent. In such sites, space is conducive to creating new narratives of memory. All three were created for the centenary; as such, they are not restricted by traditions and rituals of commemoration binding existing sites of memory. Further, at their inception, none had any material form. *Stories of Sacrifice* was housed in a single, unadorned room in the headquarters of the BMHC, linking it spatially (as well as financially) to that organization. Yet the exhibition consisted primarily of informational panels, which were reproduced on the website and, in spring 2017, displayed at the headquarters of the Greater Manchester Police. The content of those panels, as detailed above, highlighted individual stories alongside themes of the war

that emphasized fragmentation rather than a single, grand narrative of sacrifice. The exhibit largely retained its fragmented meaning when detached from its spatial environment. Similarly, by taking the form of visual media, *The World's War* and *Frères d'armes* were not spatially bound, and their short running time served to emphasize the absent and unsaid. Consequently, all three sites prompted the viewer to reckon with the absence of conventional, material sites of memory depicting colonial subjects, and to struggle to place colonial subjects within existing rituals and scripts of memory.

To make sense of the role of space in sites of cultivated melancholia, it is useful to trace the process of cultural circulation: in the production stage, which foregrounds human action within social, political, economic, and ecological constraints, the producers of cultivated melancholia mirror the producers of mourning and re-memory. Yet the texts—documentaries and museum exhibitions—differ from sites of mourning and re-memory in both their material form and the narratives they disseminate. *The World's War* is a deliberate project of creating a fragmented vision of a global, imperial war. It was the vision of David Olusoga, Tim Kirby, and Santanu Das, all of whom sought to destabilize the dominant narrative of the war by drawing attention to the ambivalent role of colonial subjects. Yet, in many ways, there was nothing new about their project: Das had published two books (2011, 2013) on the poetry and material traces of colonial subjects, presenting a narrative of fragments buried and resurfaced. The form of this particular cultural object—a documentary produced and aired by the national broadcaster—created the conditions for the dissemination of the project on a much larger scale than Das' previous books (or Olusoga's book of the same name, published in 2014). Thus, in the

third and fourth stages of cultural circulation—reception and lived cultures—audiences both broadened their understanding of the war and unsettled their understanding of national memory. By depicting profiles of colonial subjects—decorated heroes, deserters, and victims caught up in an imperial war—*The World's War* presented the British public with a fleeting glimpse, in the midst of a torrent of BBC centennial coverage, of that which had been omitted from the dominant narrative.

The process of cultural production and circulation is not unidirectional, nor does it culminate in a cohesive, shared understanding about the meaning of a text. Rather, each shift in the material form and meaning of a site denotes a new cycle of cultural production. This new cycle, in turn, is made possible by the altered political, economic, and social conditions surrounding production, and the altered form of the text. Thus, Woking and La Mulatière, two sites where latent melancholia predominated throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, have since been re-membered; conversely, the colonial garden in Nogent-sur-Marne has fallen deeper into latent melancholia. The difference between them consists of the will of the state to remember, the availability of funding, and individual intentions concerning how to remember each site. All of these factors, in turn, reflect varying understandings of the nation and its past at the national and local level.

The particularity of new, spatially ambivalent sites is evident in contrast to sites with more deterministic relationships to space. Of these, the most formally constrained sites are military cemeteries. The physical form of military cemeteries was shaped by legal requirements developed in the wake of World War I, where the tremendous scale of

death, coupled with the social transformations that foregrounded the experiences of private soldiers during the war, had given rise to vast cemeteries with their characteristic rows of identical tombstones. In France, the Ministry of War set requirements for burial practices, tombstones, and the maintenance of graves, and allotted funds to municipal governments for this purpose. Immediately following the cessation of violence in World War I, the burial of the dead and care for enemy graves was among the earliest and most transformative rituals of memory (Morris 1997; Sherman 1996). In Britain, the newly created Imperial War Graves Commission fulfilled the same purpose. Each body also specified requirements for particular religious groups, such that Muslims, for example, would be buried in white shrouds in graves four feet deep, facing east, and marked with arched tombstones bearing Qur'anic inscriptions.

These national requirements for the maintenance of tombs were the object of negotiation between national and local actors, and this process continued for decades after the burial of the dead. In La Mulatière, the designation of who had “died for France”—and who, by extension, was entitled to a tomb maintained by the Ministry of War—narrowed as successive governments confronted budget crises and narrowed their definition of the nation. Further, local family members advocated for the maintenance of graves or, in case of neglect or vandalism, their exhumation and transfer to another site. These negotiations were racialized: colonial subjects were recruited as soldiers or “civilian workers” on the basis of martial races ideology, and the latter were frequently omitted from monuments or remembered en masse, with no names or individual tombstones. Because colonial troops were repatriated at the end of the war, typically

there were no family members in Britain or France to visit their tombs and advocate for their maintenance. The former Muslim Burial Ground in Woking is the exception that proves the rule: only one soldier buried there, Leading Aircraftman Youssif Ali, had any family members in Britain. It was his widow, Ethel Emma Wallace, who decried the ruination of the cemetery and successfully campaigned to move the graves to Brookwood Military Cemetery in 1969. With the postwar emergence of anti-colonial nationalist movements, survivors suppressed family histories of military service in imperial armies, and this prevented them from advocating for the maintenance of tombs.

Yet despite these negotiations, military cemeteries remained the most uniform and rigidly policed sites of memory. Formal laws regulating the appearance of graves were coupled with informal practices governing the behavior of visitors: cemeteries, alongside town or parish war memorials, became the primary physical sites for commemorating the war at the national level. In so doing, they became detached from the individuals buried there: Britons, in particular, could not visit the tombs of family members buried in Flanders regularly. Yet elected officials, schoolchildren, and memory tourists increasingly took on the role of mourners by proxy. Large monuments, chapels, and, later, visitors' centers helped mourners to frame their experiences, such that individuals with no prior connection to the site—such as the youth participating in the Birmingham Western Front tours—could claim a physical stake in national memory. Further from the battlefields, families who were unable to visit the tombs of their husbands, fathers, and sons could find proxies in the cenotaphs and tombs of unknown soldiers that represented the collective mourning of a national family. Given the rigidity of formal and informal

laws governing these spaces, military cemeteries were unlikely to produce transgressive narratives. The military cemeteries in Nogent-sur-Marne, La Mulatière, and Woking all were constructed as sites of mourning. Subsequently neglecting military graves, as in La Mulatière, or exhuming and moving them, as in Woking, created space for new narratives of memory to emerge, and new meanings to be constructed in re-membered cemeteries and former burial sites. Thus, the case of military cemeteries demonstrates that the material form of a site is significant to the narrative of memory that emerges there.

Less governed by legal requirements, but more constrained by the weight of history, are sites with direct historical ties to events during the war. Tracing the construction of sites of mourning, re-memory, and melancholia demonstrates that time and space do not function evenly or predictably; certain historical moments carry more weight than others, and contribute more meaning to the memory of particular physical sites. World War I, for example, has been more significant to the meaning of Flanders fields than the decades of relative peace that preceded it. Additionally, certain moments are more conducive than others to unsettling prior narratives or embracing ambivalence. Such was the case in Britain in the months leading up to the World War I centenary.

The history of the war weighed heavily upon the colonial garden in Nogent-sur-Marne, making it difficult to produce new narratives of memory. The site has taken on a variety of uses over the course of the past century, yet the war served as a particularly salient moment for the creation of meaning. This restricts the ability of individuals to construct new meanings. The history of the twentieth century is imprinted upon the physical site, and the dominant narrative of empire and war shapes the way that visitors

navigate that space. The buildings used to shelter Muslim soldiers during the war were used in the decades before and after to house the human specimens of France's imperial glory. Appealing to the site's origins, or grounding memory in republican values, is impossible in Nogent-sur-Marne. This became apparent in the response to Françoise Poulin-Jacob's 2015 documentary, *En Friche*.

At a screening and discussion of the film in Nogent-sur-Marne in September of that year, ninety-five people, many of them lifelong Nogentais, shared their individual experiences of the site, their familial histories, and their memories of the empire. Philippe David, a historian and president of the Images and Memories Association, objected to the use of the term "human zoos", since there were no physical cages at the colonial exhibitions. Rather, he claimed, the relationship between colonial subjects and metropolitan visitors was "almost fraternal". Linking family and nation, he also cautioned against labeling "our grandparents and great-grandparents" as racists. Other audience members who criticized Poulin-Jacob's film adopted a similar stance: they questioned the film's historical accuracy and shared stories of colonial subjects who had fought proudly for France. Absent from their criticism was any acknowledgment of the scope or violence of empire; the melancholia of the site, which the film invoked, went unchallenged. One anonymous viewer did link the site to the idea of the nation, and wrote in a letter to Poulin-Jacob a few days after the discussion:

Within the first few minutes, I understood that we would be viewing an hour of anti-French and anti-colonial propaganda . . . on one side the mean French whites, on the other the poor Negroes, the savages, who suffer the hardship of the French, these detestable colonialists, etc. . . Since 1907, you visibly have not evolved more than the Africans. Since 1907, you have not seen the place that we finally gave them . . . They have largely taken their revenge, they have reversed the roles,

but . . . they still only have a coconut in place of a brain. Not everyone who wants to be Gallic can be.

With their overtly racist language, the author of this letter reveals what the critics at the discussion obscured: the garden was bound up with empire, and could not be assimilated into republican narratives of mourning or re-memory. Just as the Algerian War proves incompatible with re-memories of loyal Muslim soldiers in World War I, so do human zoos clash with the re-memory of France as a benevolent and grateful metropolis. In Nogent-sur-Marne, these conflicting narratives were articulated within a single physical site. This complicated the site's relationship to the state and overruled the intentions of key individuals. Ultimately, in Nogent-sur-Marne, these factors made latent melancholia insurmountable.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Review

This dissertation examines representations of Muslims in British and French World War I commemorations. I begin by establishing the central puzzle of my project: I identify the significance of World War I to contemporary national identity in these two post-imperial, multicultural countries, alongside the dominant memory of that conflict as a European civil war waged in the trenches of Flanders. In this context, I present my research questions: first, how does memory change when the nation seeks to encompass members who previously had been excluded? Second, how do transgressive sites of memory unsettle the nation? Third, under what conditions are transgressive narratives of collective memory constructed? I situate these questions within three interconnected bodies of literature: building upon theories of nationalism, I identify the theoretical importance of marginal groups for constructing and contesting the nation's borders; I utilize the literature on collective memory to establish the link between commemorations of the past and a sense of shared identity in the present; and I draw from theories of race and racism to discuss the construction of the nation in opposition to Others. Muslims, I argue, are historically a racialized category in both Britain and France. In the twenty-first century, Muslims are an increasingly salient Other against which national identity is constructed in both countries. Yet the World War I centenary presents an opportunity to remember the complex historical relationship of Muslims to each nation. By extension, the memory of Muslim soldiers serves to blur the nation's borders.

I approach the question of how Muslims are represented in the centenary, first, by analyzing national commemorations. I review the literature on British and French nationalism and memory, which holds that Britishness is individualistic-libertarian, fragmented, and evolutionary in its orientation to history; while Frenchness is collectivistic-civic, universalizing, and revolutionary in its orientation to history. Yet during the World War I centenary, I find that the expectations for each country were inverted: British national commemorations sought to re-center Britain and its national cause in opposition to European tyranny, while French commemorations were decentralized and multivocal. In both cases, breaking with traditions of national memory paradoxically sought to restore national unity. At the local level, national differences dissolved in commemorations of Muslim colonial subjects. I identify three narratives of collective memory, all of which were present in both nations: mourning, re-memory, and melancholia. While mourning and re-memory restored national unity by integrating Muslim soldiers into the nation, melancholia disrupted the very idea of the nation. To explain how this happens, I turn to my second research question.

I trace the historical and theoretical construction of British and French national identity in and through their respective overseas empires. The dominant idea of the metropolis—as discrete, autonomous, and composed of citizens with racialized and gendered character traits—was constructed in opposition to colonized Others. Further, the idea of the postcolonial nation as a geographically bounded entity, composed of citizens who choose to live together and share a common understanding of past and present, should be understood as the successor to the idea of the imperial metropolis. Thus,

melancholic commemorations destabilize the nation in three ways: first, by highlighting the historical interdependence of metropolis and empire, they challenge the idea that the nation is a discrete entity. Second, by demonstrating the interconnectedness of those who belong, those who do not belong, and those whose status is contested, they challenge the idea of the nation as a social compact between citizens. Finally, by revealing the history of passive forgetting and deliberate erasure in the service of national memory, they challenge the common memory of the nation.

Turning to the conditions under which melancholic sites emerge, I use cultural production and actor network theory to explain the relationship between producers, sites, and audiences, and the ways in which meanings change through their interaction. Using this framework, I identify three factors that underlie the cultivation of melancholic sites. First, key individuals must advocate for melancholic narratives. This factor explains how some sites successfully produced melancholic narratives while others successfully produced narratives of mourning or re-memory. It does not, however, explain why individual intentions were insufficient in certain cases. A second factor, relationship to the state, does explain why certain sites failed to produce their intended narratives, or faced obstacles in doing so. Linked to this factor is the issue of autonomy: while the producers of cultivated melancholic sites were able to produce the narratives they intended, certain other producers altered their narratives in order to appeal to (private) funders. While these factors explain the eventual form of most sites of memory, one site—the colonial garden in Nogent-sur-Marne—emerges as an outlier. The explanation for its ruination, despite its link to the state and the efforts of key individuals to re-

member the site, lies in the garden's overdetermined physical form: the site's inextricability from the violence of twentieth-century empire has made it impossible to create a new or singular meaning without resistance.

Limitations

The implications of my findings are limited by my positionality, the subjects of the commemorations, the temporality of my fieldwork, and my cross-national case selection. First, my positionality as a scholar was that of an outsider with no direct experience of, or personal stake in, the commemorations prior to beginning my fieldwork. My positionality as a white, non-Muslim American studying commemorations of Muslims in Britain and France means that my understanding of the commemorations is partial, fragmented, and informed by my own experiences (Collins 2000; Harding 1991).

Second, the subjects of the commemorations represented only a small fraction of Muslim subjects of the British and French Empires who were affected by the war. Because the act of remembering is also an act of forgetting, it is important to note who was included in, and excluded from, the category of "Muslims in World War I." First, this category was almost exclusively male; while some effort was made to integrate metropolitan British and French women into national commemorations of the centenary (Meyze 2016; Robertson 2017), Muslim colonial subjects were largely excluded from commemorations of women in the war, due to a dearth of material traces and familial narratives. This meant that the particular experiences of Muslim colonial subjects who labored (often under coercion) for the war effort, dealt with food shortages, and led families in the absence of husbands and sons, have been omitted from most

commemorations of the war. Linked to this are the over- and underrepresentation of particular nationalities and ethnic groups based on their roles at war and the centrality of the war to group identity. Soldiers, for example, are more likely to be named and commemorated on conventional war memorials than are civilian workers, though the death rates for the two groups were similar. These roles, in turn, were shaped by the designation of ethnic groups as martial and non-martial races in the colonial context. A consequence of this designation is the relative importance of the memory of war to group identity: among Punjabis, for example, the “martial tradition” is far more central to group identity than it is among “non-martial” Bengalis.

A third limitation pertains to the timing and duration of my fieldwork. I was immersed in the field from January through August 2014—that is, prior to and during commemorations of the onset of the war. Additional interviews and follow-up site visits were conducted between August 2014 and December 2017. National commemorations, however, will continue through the centenary of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, in June 2019. Between the onset of the centenary and the time of writing, both Britain and France elected new governments and, by extension, placed the responsibility for national commemorations in the hands of new individuals. In both countries, far-right nationalists have made significant political gains since 2014, culminating in the Brexit vote in June 2016 and the advancement of Marine Le Pen to the second round of the Presidential election in April 2017. The reality of the far right’s incursions into mainstream politics is likely to shape the dominant narrative of national memory. These developments present an opportunity for additional research, but they lie outside the temporal window of this

dissertation. A final temporal limitation pertains to my local field sites: I visited and conducted interviews at each site at a particular moment in its history, yet many of these sites have histories spanning the past century. While I conducted archival research where appropriate and traced the histories of the sites in my interviews with local respondents, the representations of the past that I encountered were largely presented from the standpoint of the present, which represents only one moment in the ruination, restoration, or reimagination of these sites.

A fourth and final limitation of this project is the national case selection. As detailed in Chapter Two, I selected Britain and France because of their status as post-imperial European states, their similar experiences of World War I, and their contemporary debates over national identity, alongside their representation in the nationalism literature as two ideal types. I do not find significant national differences between local sites in Britain and France. Yet the restriction of my data collection to Britain and France limits the generalization of my findings to other nations. Further research is needed to determine the applicability of my findings to countries beyond Britain and France.

Implications for Future Research

The limitations of this dissertation present opportunities for future research. First, treating metropolis and empire as unified field means that commemorations of colonial subjects hold implications for the metropolis at large; the same is true for commemorations that take place in former colonies. Yet the war may be remembered differently in Britain and France than in North and West Africa and South Asia: previous

research on memorialization in West Africa, for example, has found that these monuments entrenched the racial Otherness of colonial subjects (Mann 2006). These monuments were erected by French colonizers; the centenary presents an opportunity to consider how postcolonial governments in West Africa remember the war. Indeed, the centenary has witnessed a growing interest in World War I in South Asia: recent work by Indian military historians, including Rana Chhina (2014) and Shrabani Basu (2015), has emphasized the individual stories of soldiers, and the ways in which the Indian military shaped the history of Europe. Elsewhere, a 2014 conference in Dhaka explored the experience of war for colonized people, including civilians. Analyzing commemorations of the war in the global South may reveal new ways in which the nation is being contested through collective memory.

Second, analyzing local sites of memory draws attention to erased and marginalized histories, and interviews reveal why local stakeholders consider these histories important to national memory. They do not, however, provide an indication of how audiences in general, and Muslim audiences in particular, perceive these marginalized sites. To that end, a particularly revealing moment came when I asked Ansar Ahmed Ullah—an East London community activist who had been recruited by the Imperial War Museum to research the history of Bengalis in the war—why the memory of World War I matters to contemporary British Bengalis. “Well,” he replied, “It probably doesn’t.” Indeed, many respondents, particularly in Britain, cited their perception of Muslim alienation from the military and its history as a reason to highlight Muslims in World War I commemorations. Whether a significant number of British and

French Muslims were swayed by the commemorations, whether Muslim audiences critiqued the sites, or whether Muslims largely declined to engage with commemorations of World War I, is beyond the scope of this dissertation. This question, however, provides an opportunity for future research, following Fleming (2017) and Wemyss (2009), to examine the meaning of silence and non-engagement with national memory.

As I write, centennial commemorations of the Armistice are eight months away, and the centenary of the Treaty of Versailles will take place in just over a year. In both Britain and France, the governments that will plan and preside over these commemorations at the national level are more inward-looking, more critical of migration and multiculturalism, and less mindful of the racialized violence of empire than were the governments that commemorated the onset of the war nearly four years ago. Nostalgia for empire, and memories of a mythical national past characterized by adherence to a common cause, prevail over critical engagement with past and present at the highest levels of power. Yet, as this dissertation demonstrates, local commemorations are more critical and multivocal than are national commemorations. Further, they create more space for marginalized minorities. As the centenary continues, it is local sites of memory, not national commemorations, that will give rise to more globalized, more individualized imaginaries of the nation.

APPENDIX: OVERVIEW OF FIELD SITES

Below is a brief overview of the eleven sites of memory that constituted my local field sites. This outline does not provide an exhaustive description of each site; rather, it is intended to help situate each site as it is presented in the body of the dissertation.

Birmingham Western Front Tours

- 2008: Captain Naveed Muhammad decided to organize memory tours for Muslims in Birmingham.
- Funded by Armed Forces Community Common Ground Scheme.
- Participants recruited through Mosaic charity, local schools, and Birmingham Central Mosque.
- First trip took teenage and adult fifty participants to Neuve-Chapelle and Menin Gate over twenty-four hours.
- Second trip was directed at Muslim youth, and included overnight stay at army camp, team-building exercises, and post-memory tour debrief.
- Third trip included Muslim and non-Muslim participants, and included a trip to Brookwood Military Cemetery, Brighton Pavilion, and the South Downs.

Curzon Institute

- November 2013: awarded £120,000 contract from Department of Communities and Local Government to launch panel series in schools, churches, and other public spaces on the Commonwealth contribution to World War I. Controversy surrounded Amin's acquaintance with Baroness Sayeeda Warsi.

- Organization directed by Captain Afzal Amin; initiative directed by Major Hugo Clarke.
- Opening event at Royal United Service Institute included statements by Baroness Warsi, Prime Minister David Cameron, and former Chief of the Defense Staff General Sir David Richards.
- 52 events held between November 2013 and March 2014: 38 in primary and secondary schools; others in churches, Royal Legions, and working men's clubs.
- Clarke was keynote speaker, accompanied by academics or active British Muslim soldiers. Content combined statistics with case studies.
- February 4, 2014: invitation-only event at Shah Jahan Mosque; attendees included Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, High Commissioner of Pakistan, local government officials, and military officials. Lecturers included Jahan Mahmood, Brigadier Mark Abraham, and Hugo Clarke.

Forgotten Heroes Foundation 14-19

- Founded by Belgian historian Luc Ferrier after discovering references to Muslim soldiers in his grandfather's World War I letters.
- Partnered with Vera Mathys and Hayyan Ayaz Bhabha to research and publicize the Muslim Allied role in World War I.
- Collected verbal endorsements from, among others, Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, General Sir John Nicholas Reynolds Houghton, Stuart Andrew MP, Imam Asim Hafiz OBE, and Commander Mak Chisty.
- Initially proposed a traveling museum project.

- Refocused funding appeals on the publication of a coffee table book, *The Unknown Fallen*.
- Hosted lectures in schools and mosques, and memory tours of the Western Front.

Frères d'armes

- 2013: Minister of Veterans' Affairs Kader Arif proposed a multimedia commemoration of colonial soldiers.
- Series commissioned by France 3 and France Ô, supported by the Ministries of Defense, Veterans' Affairs, National Education, Cities, Culture and Communications, the Francophone World, and Overseas Affairs, and the Institut Français.
- Produced and directed by Pascal Blanchard and Rachid Bouchareb.
- Fifty two-minute profiles of soldiers and civilians from the French Empire, including seventeen from World War I.
- Multimedia project including a traveling exhibition and pedagogical materials.

Great Mosque of Paris Plaques

- 1926: mosque inaugurated as a symbol of the state's gratitude to Muslim World War I soldiers. Modeled after a mosque in Fez, Morocco.
- Served as active site of constructing and negotiating French Islam throughout twentieth century.
- Current rector, Dalil Boubakeur, is former head of the CFCM.
- November 11, 2010: two plaques honoring Muslim soldiers in World Wars I and II unveiled by Sarkozy's Minister of Defense, Hervé Morin.

- February 18, 2014: plaques installed in the mosque's garden and unveiled again by President Hollande.

La Mulatière

- 1916: city council approved allocation of 72 plots in municipal cemetery for Muslim soldiers who died at nearby military hospital.
- 1917-1918: additional plots allocated as casualties mounted; 202 soldiers ultimately buried there.
- 1920s: state allocated five francs per tomb per year for upkeep; upheaval of the state interrupted provision of funds. Distinction established between 113 soldiers and 88 civilian workers.
- Negotiations between Mayor Paul Nas, King Ben Gabrith of Morocco, G7 council, and the French state for permission to build two necropolises.
- 1937: soldiers reinterred in necropolises, memorial plaque inaugurated.
- Post-1945: cessation of references to Muslim tombs in local records.
- 2007: Frédéric Couffin, with funding from the local government of La Mulatière, restored the monument to soldiers and constructed a monument for civilian workers.
- Since 2007, annual Armistice Day commemorations have been hosted at the Muslim monument.

Nogent-sur-Marne *Kouba*

- Small, symbolic mausoleum alongside fifty-six graves in the Muslim military section of the Nogent-sur-Marne municipal cemetery.

- 1918: project initiated by Émile Piat; funded by the Algerian section of Souvenir Français.
- July 16, 1919: site inaugurated by undersecretary of State at the Ministry of the Interior, in the presence of delegates from Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco.
- Fell into disrepair in the 1950s; some attempts to repair it in 1972; collapsed in 1982.
- 2004: rediscovered by historians Michel Renard and Daniel Lefevvre; supported by Dalil Boubakeur and the Great Mosque of Paris.
- Funded by the government of Nicolas Sarkozy.
- Reconstructed as a copy of its 1919 form; construction overseen by a descendant of the original marbier.
- April 28, 2011: *kouba* inaugurated. Speakers included Lefevvre, Nogent-sur-Marne mayor Jacques J.-P. Martin, and Ministry of Defense representative Col. Dodane.

Nogent-sur-Marne Colonial Garden

- 1899: school of tropical agronomy established in the Bois de Vincennes.
- 1907: garden hosts the International Colonial Exhibition.
- 1914: hospital opens for Muslim soldiers in the garden; 4,813 wounded soldiers pass through the hospital over the course of the war.
- 1915: first purpose-built mosque in metropolitan France is erected in the garden.
- 1919: hospital closes following the Armistice.
- 1920s: monuments erected to colonial soldiers; mosque demolished.

- 1931: garden hosts the Paris Colonial Exhibition.
- 1950s: garden begins to fall into ruin.
- 1970s: ANAI and FNAOM begin holding annual commemorative events.
- 2014: Mayor Jacques J.-P. Martin unsuccessfully lobbies the state for funding.
- 2015: Stéphanie Trouillard creates a website dedicated to the garden; Françoise Poulin-Jacob releases the documentary *En Friche*.

Stories of Sacrifice

- Initiated by the trustees of the BMHC. £100,000 funded by the Ministry of Defence; £100,000 matched by the BMHC.
- Trustees approached Islam Issa to lead the project as curator.
- January 15, 2016: exhibition inaugurated in the presence of, among others, the Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, the Interim Mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner, and the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police.
- Consists of a permanent exhibition, virtual library, and online pedagogical resources.
- Traveling exhibition hosted by Greater Manchester Police in July 2017.

Woking Peace Garden

- Burial site for Muslim soldiers initially discussed by the Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din of the Shah Jahan Mosque and the British War Office.
- May 1915: site designated. 100x120-foot plot on Horsell Common, surrounded by a wooden fence.

- Maulvi persuaded the India Office to erect more permanent structures on the site. Red brick walls with wide archway, white *chattri*, and copper finial designed in Indo-Saracenic style by T. Herbert Winney.
- Entombed 19 soldiers during World War I, and a further 8 during World War II.
- 1921: came under the domain of the IWGC.
- Fell into disrepair in the 1960s, and was targeted by far-right vandals.
- 1969: Ethel Emma Wallace, widow of Youssif Ali, successfully campaigned to move the graves to Brookwood Military Cemetery.
- Control of the site reverted to the Horsell Common Preservation Society.
- Walls fell further into disrepair in the absence of resources.
- 1992: musician Paul Weller pledged £32,000 for the site's restoration; the money never materialized.
- 2008: Rachel Hasted learned of the site through Said Adrus' exhibit, *Lost Pavilion*, and lobbied for funding.
- 2008: Zafar Iqbal partnered with Elizabeth Cuttle to seek funding for restoration; had difficulty identifying funding bodies and surmounting bureaucratic obstacles.
- 2012: English Heritage offered to fund 80% of restoration costs; Woking Borough Council agreed to fund the remaining 20%. Additional funds were provided by Shah Jahan Mosque; Sultanate of Oman; Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme; Department of Communities; and Armed Forces Muslim Association. Local schoolchildren and religious groups volunteered their labor.

- November 12, 2015: Islamic-inspired peace garden inaugurated by the Earl of Wessex.

The World's War

- Two-part, two-hour BBC documentary on the globality of soldiers and fronts in World War I.
- Commissioned as one component of 2,500 hours of BBC World War I centennial programming.
- Written, produced, and presented by David Olusoga, with series producer Tim Kirby and consultant Santanu Das.
- Released in August 2014; published as a book in the same year.

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