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A Small Guide to Undoing Restoration

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Were one to write a volume entitled *Keywords of the Armenian Diaspora*—inspired, like so many recent keyword volumes, by Raymond Williams's foundational *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976)—words with the prefix "re-" would surely be featured. Such "re-" words litter Armenian diasporic discourse: "restoration," "recognition," "reparation," "redemption," "recovery," "return." Williams himself devotes an entry to a "re-" word crucial to his own Marxian tradition, "reform," and by chance a keyword of the Armenian diaspora features in that entry: as he writes,

> it is very difficult to distinguish between two latent senses [of the word 'reform']: (i) to *restore* to its original form; (ii) to make into a new form… [I]n many contexts the idea of changing something for the better was deeply bound up with the idea of restoring an earlier and less corrupted condition.[1]

Williams's entry reveals that the word "restoration," like numerous other keywords of the Armenian diaspora, typically falls on the side of (i) seeking an "original form," rather than on the side of (ii) making anew. Why, how, and to what interests and effects does "restoration," in Williams's sense of "an earlier and less corrupted condition," figure so prominently in the discourse of the Armenian diaspora, particularly in North America? What would it take to make "restoration" into a new form? In this chapter, I hope to show how *A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas* (2015), an artist's book of collages by the Greek-Armenian artist Aikaterini Gegisian, provokes just such questions and guides us toward their answers.[2]

Undoing Restoration

The prefix "re-" first made its way into English from Latin via French and Spanish in the thirteenth century, and its use expanded exponentially over subsequent centuries. The Latin re- originally meant "back" or "backwards," while the English "re-" today generally signifies "again." In the case of "restoration," the "re-" seems to promise a return to a prelapsarian state: literally, a state of bountiful stores. "Stores" are stocks or reserves: material or immaterial treasures ranging from livestock, foodstuffs, and money to esteem and, really, any sort of inestimable value.

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In North American English since the eighteenth century, of course, a "store" has also meant a place where such stocks are held and from which they are sometimes sold.

Perhaps more significantly, from its earliest uses in the fourteenth century, "to store" meant to appropriate or take possession of assets from others for one's own future use, such that a "store" was an accumulation of valuable things taken from others. The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites numerous examples of that usage, such as this passage from the medieval poet John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (c.1390), decrying the vice of "supplantation," or the appropriation of the fruits of another person's labor, particularly in love, Gower writes: "For it is other mannes riht,/ Which he hath taken dai and niht/To kepe for his oghne Stor/Toward himself for everemor,/And is his propre be the law,/Which thing that axeth no felawe,/If love holde his covenant."[3] Gower's contemporary Geoffrey Chaucer gives us an even more violent example of this kind of "store" with his version of the ancient legend of Philomela in *The Legend of Good Women* (c. 1386). Explaining how King Tereus imprisoned Philomela, raped her, and cut out her tongue, Chaucer writes: "…in a castel made her for to be/Ful privily in prison evermore,/And kepte her to his usage and his store,/So that she mighte him nevermore asterte."[4] So a "store" can be a stolen value, one whose very valuation is created by the particular power of the theft itself—in these examples, a patriarchal power for which women are treated as objects to be taken, punished, and held for future use by men.

If "to store" has long carried this sense of appropriation, then "*re*storation" does not necessarily name the felicitous return of a store to its proper, prelapsarian place or people. Rather, "restoration" just as well names repeated storation: the repetition of a prior appropriation, or the return of a store to a place or a people who themselves previously appropriated or took possession of it from somewhere or someone else. That is, if a store is something appropriated from others or elsewhere, then "restoration" is an ongoing process of unjust appropriations. "Re-storations" in this sense are not so much returns of lost or stolen goods to their true places or owners, as they are *re*appropriations of *im*proprieties to prior appropriators. This appropriative and anti-foundationalist sense of restoration has, however, mostly been forgotten in modern usage, where "restoration" more commonly signifies returning something to its proper place or original state. The common use of "restoration," since the seventeenth century, to mean the return of a ruler to their position of power further highlights this double meaning: the return of a powerful person to their proper place *and* their return to an improperly powerful place, or a place whose power is somehow unjust. As a concept, then, "restoration" functions as a secret myth machine. It generates idyllic tales of prior glory or possession—stores of lost wealth and greatness—and promises their return. As *Confessio Amantis* and *The Legend of Good Women* remind us, however, the seemingly simple action of the "re-" obscures the unjust appropriations that secured those possessions in the first place. "Restoration" could thus be said to seek the most melancholic of hopes: the return of appropriations whose improprieties have been forgotten, remembered only as tragically lost or stolen proprieties.

The ubiquitous reiteration of the "re-" in Armenian diasporic discourse instantiates this melancholic structure. To those who dream of healing the Catastrophe or

laying it to rest by returning to a homeland or securing recognition of the Genocide from this or that state apparatus, for instance, a realized "re-" promises such prelapsarian well-being. For the rest of us who do not dream of such restorations, who do not mourn in this melancholic way, the "re-" has become a relentlessly reiterated nightmare, a discursive practice that all too often perpetuates homogeneous, patriarchal, and homophobic visions of a lost nation, lost culture, lost land. But what if what was lost was never homogeneous in the ways diasporic nationalists insist? What if what was lost was itself, in some distant past, appropriated from others, or at least so intimately inhabited with the other (the Turk, the Kurd, the Muslim) that the idiom of restoration could never do justice to or for the subsequent loss? Could we learn to mourn loss without seeking the return of what Williams calls "an original form." Could we mourn that which had no original form at all, or whose original form is no longer restorable to us, and is certainly not what we dream it to have been? Could we mourn storation, without seeking re-storation? How would such mourning act, and what might it make of us?

Philomela points the way. According to the fullest, ancient version of her story, in Ovid's Metamorphoses (8 CE), King Tereus of Thrace was sent by his wife Procne to bring her sister, Philomela, from Athens to Thrace. Tereus became obsessed with Philomela on the voyage, and upon arriving in Thrace he stored her in "some ramshackle building" in "the deep woods," and raped her. She immediately challenged him, threatening to expose his violations to the world:

> 'Now that I have no shame,/I will proclaim it. Given the chance, I will go where people are,/Tell everybody; if you shut me here,/I will move the very woods and rocks to pity./The air of Heaven will hear, and any god,/If there is any god in Heaven, will hear me.'[5]

Frightened and furious, Tereus then cut out Philomela's tongue, raped her again, walled her up in the building in the woods, and tried to cover up his crimes by telling his wife Procne that her sister had died on the voyage: "Tereus, with a groan,/Lamented, wept, and told some kind of story,/Saying that she was dead, oh, most convincing/With all his show of sorrow."[6] So Tereus's false story of loss—ancient gaslighting at its worst—covered over his violent effort to store Philomela, and, in turn, led Procne to mistakenly mourn her sister:

> Therefore Procne/Tore from her shoulders the robe with golden border,/Put on plain black, and built a tomb to honor/The spirit of her sister, and brought gifts/As funeral offerings to the fictive ghost,/Mourning a fate that should have been resented/Rather than mourned for.[7]

Soon, however, stored Philomela figured out how to tell her own story and turn that telling against Tereus. Unable to speak, she wove a tapestry that explained what Tereus had done, and sent it to her sister:

And what of Philomela? Guarded against flight,
Stone blocks around her cottage, no power of speech
To help her tell her wrongs, her grief has taught her
Sharpness of wit, and cunning comes in trouble.
She had a loom to work with, and with purple
On a white background, wove her story in,
Her story in and out, and when it was finished,
Gave it to one old woman, with signs and gestures
To take it to the queen, so it was taken,
Unrolled and understood. Procne said nothing—
What could she say? —grief choked her utterance,
Passion her sense of outrage. There was no room
For tears, but for confusion only, and vengeance,
But something must be done, and in a hurry.[8]

Moved to action, Procne slipped from Tereus's side during a wild festival for Bacchus and found her sister. The two sisters then organized their vengeance:

…And Procne,
Burning, could not restrain her wrath; she scolded
Her sister's weeping. "This is no time," she told her,
"For tears, but for the sword, for something stronger
Than Sword, if you have any such weapon on you.
I am prepared for any crime, my sister,
To Burn the palace, and into the flaming ruin
Hurl Tereus, the author of our evils.
I would cut out his tongue, his eyes, cut off
The parts which brought you shame, inflict a thousand
Wounds on his guilty soul. I am prepared for some great act of
boldness, but what it is
I do not know, I wish I did."[9]

Procne soon decided on her "act of boldness:" she killed her son by Tereus, Itys, and with Philomela served his body to Tereus as a meal. Once Tereus learned what they had done, Procne and Philomela fled to escape his fury and were turned into birds: "They went flying from him/As if they were on wings. They were on wings!/ One flew to the woods, the other to the roof-top,/And even so the red marks of the murder/Stayed on their breasts; the feathers were blood-colored."[10] Tereus, too, was transformed into a bird: "He is the hoopoe,/The bird who looks like war."[11] Other versions of this legend explicitly declare that Philomela and Procne became a swallow and a nightingale, and that their songs echo among us even today.[12]

Philomela mourned storation without seeking re-storation. That is, she did not respond to Tereus's violence by somehow seeking restoration of her original form or return to her original home. Her tongue cut out, she spoke against injustice by radicalizing the art of weaving, telling her own story to her sister on a tapestry—"purple/

On a white background"—with the help of "one old woman" and some "signs and gestures." Those aesthetic and social actions and the sisters' subsequent alliance, in turn, allowed them to transform Philomela's wounded imprisonment, Tereus's false mourning, and Procne's mistaken grief over a "fictive ghost." This is *poiesis*, or imaginative remaking. That is, the sisters countered Tereus's efforts to store Philomela with a series of metamorphoses: of a secret rape and imprisonment into a public, artistic creation; of deceptive and deceived grief into a brutal sort of justice against sovereign, patriarchal power; of humans into birds. The very language Ovid uses vividly emphasizes this *poiesis: "corpora Cecropidum pennis pendere putares: pendebant pennis*." As the Humphries translation I have been using renders it: "They went flying from him/As if they were on wings. They were on wings!" A more literal translation might be: "You would imagine the bodies of the Cecropians were supported by wings;/they were supported by wings," or as the Loeb Classics translation has it, "As they fly from him you would think that the bodies of the two Athenians were poised on wings: they were poised on wings!"[13] The shift in Latin from "*pendere putares*" to "*pendebant pennis*"—from the "as if they were" to the "they were," or in the more literal versions from the "you would imagine"/"you would think" to the "were," which is to say from the second person singular imperfect subjunctive to the third person plural imperfect indicative—describes the literalization or realization of a merely imagined possibility. From figure to matter. Imaginative remaking. *Poiesis*.

Were we to abandon restoration as a way of repairing loss, and instead acknowledge that stores are always taken from someone or somewhere, that storation can be marked by violent appropriation and dispossession, then like Philomela we might respond to loss with *poiesis* and make ourselves anew. What would such *poiesis* look like in the Armenian diasporic context?

A Small Guide

Aikaterini Gegisian's *A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas* is a book of 65 collages that was presented at the Armenian pavilion of the 2015 Venice Biennale. The images in this layered work are repurposed from 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s photographic albums or national yearbooks of Soviet Armenia, Turkey, and Greece. This genre of national yearbook, which has roots in the mid-nineteenth century, was immensely popular during the post-WWII, Cold War period.[14] As Bi-yu Chang has written of Taiwanese yearbooks, this

> unique official archive…offers a clear historical account of the official line on the national narrative and the officially defined "national territory"…[I]n addition to the usual content of annual statistics, policies and development, [national yearbooks] addressed the contemporary concerns and reflected the political ideology at the time. Thus, these publications represent not only a carefully complied official record but also a formal document staking territorial claims for both an internal audience…and externally.[15]

As ideological artifices, then, national yearbooks claimed to present truths about their respective nations to their readers, as if those truths were merely

stored in the albums. Yet those truths did not exist independently of their packaged presentation. Rather, those truths were performative effects of the yearbooks, which were themselves part of powerfully fictive nationalist and developmentalist discursive practices. Such performatives were prophetic gambits in which the depiction of an ideal sought to make that ideal real. However, ripped from their proper places in the yearbooks and repurposed in Gegisian's *Small Guide*—with little explicit mention of their provenance beyond occasional page numbers or captions lingering on some of the images' edges—the images become catachreses or figures without adequate literal referents. Tearing the stores from texts that promised and performed their realization, the *Small Guide* composes a surrealist document from documents of sur-reality—documents in addition to, over, or above reality. It supplies us with imagined lands, ones we can never quite map or place, ones that slide ir-responsibly across three decades marked by national-developmentalist exuberance and the overheated aesthetics of the Cold War.

I want to suggest that in tearing these images from national yearbooks and composing them into collages meant to guide us through invisible seas, the *Small Guide* effectively tears the "re-" off the word "restoration," at once revealing the appropriative elements of storation and imaginatively remaking those elements. "Storation" might in this context mean something like the demythologized gathering of stocks or reserves, an assemblage of stores whose prior histories of appropriation are unadorned by idyllic narratives of putatively pure prior glory or propriety. That is, without the "re-," the potentially dispossessive origins of stored stores come into relief. This is not to say that the *Small Guide* suggests the theft of a store cannot be decried and challenged. Rather, it is to say that such a theft cannot be challenged on the basis of an unproblematic prior claim, in the naturalizing idiom of "restoration." To quote from Gower again, that which "he hath taken dai and niht/To kepe for his oghne Stor/Toward himself for everemor" might have previously been an "other mannes riht;" while that taking might be decried, that "other manne" might himself have previously "taken" what he then claimed as his own "riht," leading us to question whether and how anything can be possessed as a store without some kind of appropriative force. If that which was taken was a woman, as seems to be the case in Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and is certainly and brutally the case in Chaucer's legend of Philomela—in which King Tereus "kepte her to his usage and his store"—then the very condition of possibility for a store is shown to be violently appropriative and dispossessive.

What can we make of the *Small Guide's* specific stores, unencumbered by the fictive ghost of the "re-"? The book is divided into seven sections, echoing the ancient figure of the seven seas. This figure, dating to ancient times, has transformed many times. For the ancient Greeks, the seven seas were what we now call the Aegean, the Adriatic, the Mediterranean, the Black, the Red, the Caspian, and the Persian Gulf, while the Romans used the term to refer to the lagoons around Venice, and Arab sources from the ninth century considered them to be the seas one would encounter during a voyage to the far east: today's Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Strait of Malacca, Singapore Strait,

Gulf of Thailand, and South China Sea. In the *Small Guide*, however, the seas are "invisible," and so they can be said to supplement any historically specific "seven seas," paradoxically at once replacing and adding to those prior seas. Since the figure of the "seven seas" has no proper or original form or meaning, having itself changed so often since ancient times, then these supplementary seas flow apart from but also into the seas we already know.

The seven sections are described this way in the *Small Guide*:

One: The Sea of Echoes: Repetitions. Possibilities. The image. To see
Two: The Sea of Reflections: Mirrors. Crossings. Forces. To understand
Three: The Sea of Passions: Awakening. Eruption. Energy. To speak
Four: The Sea of Departures: Commingling. Movement. Performing the everyday. To feel
Five: The Sea of Actions: Carrying. Labouring. Nurturing. To act
Six: The Sea of Waves: Foundations. Water. Metamorphosis. To change
Seven: The Sea of Images: Extension. Expansion. The Idea. To know

To some extent, these titles—which are printed on separate, imageless white pages as if they were chapter headings—name the themes of the collages collected in their respective sections. For instance, the first image in the first section, "The Sea of Echoes," places a color photograph of Mount Ararat, with the rooftops of a city in the foreground, on top of a larger, black and white image of roughly the shame scene; and the section's second collage places a smaller, black and white image of a flock of sheep tended by a shepherd on top of a larger, black and white image of sheep grazing at the foot of a mountain range. The particular images within these collages might thus be said to echo each other, with subtle differences. The final collages of the third section, "The Sea of Passions," are composed of rich reds and oranges (demonstrators' flags, folk dancers' dresses, and fields of poppies)—common colors for passion. Yet not all of the collages are clearly indexed by the titles, and the titles are themselves plural enough to be inscrutable, or wanting in indexical power. To the extent that we are guided at all by this small guide, then, we are more nudged or stirred than we are directed or led. Its stores, in other words, are not self-evidently useful and certainly cannot be clearly traced to their referents or de-coded by their readers.

Take one of the more heavily populated pages, the sixth image in section six, "The Sea of Waves:" a color photograph of a man and a woman lounging on the edge of a pool next to a man in the pool holding onto the edge, placed on top of another photograph of men drinking in a tavern, all full of blues and yellows (Figure 11.1).

On their own, in the original contexts of their respective national yearbooks, the photographs communicate rote scripts of untroubled ease. The pool could promise leisure time for the traveling bourgeoisie, as the gently undulating waters, bare limbs, and bronzed white skin figure a time-outside-of-time, a racialized moment of perpetual pause that still organizes the logic of international tourism. The tavern, in turn, offers timeless folk charm, the men functioning like props every bit as

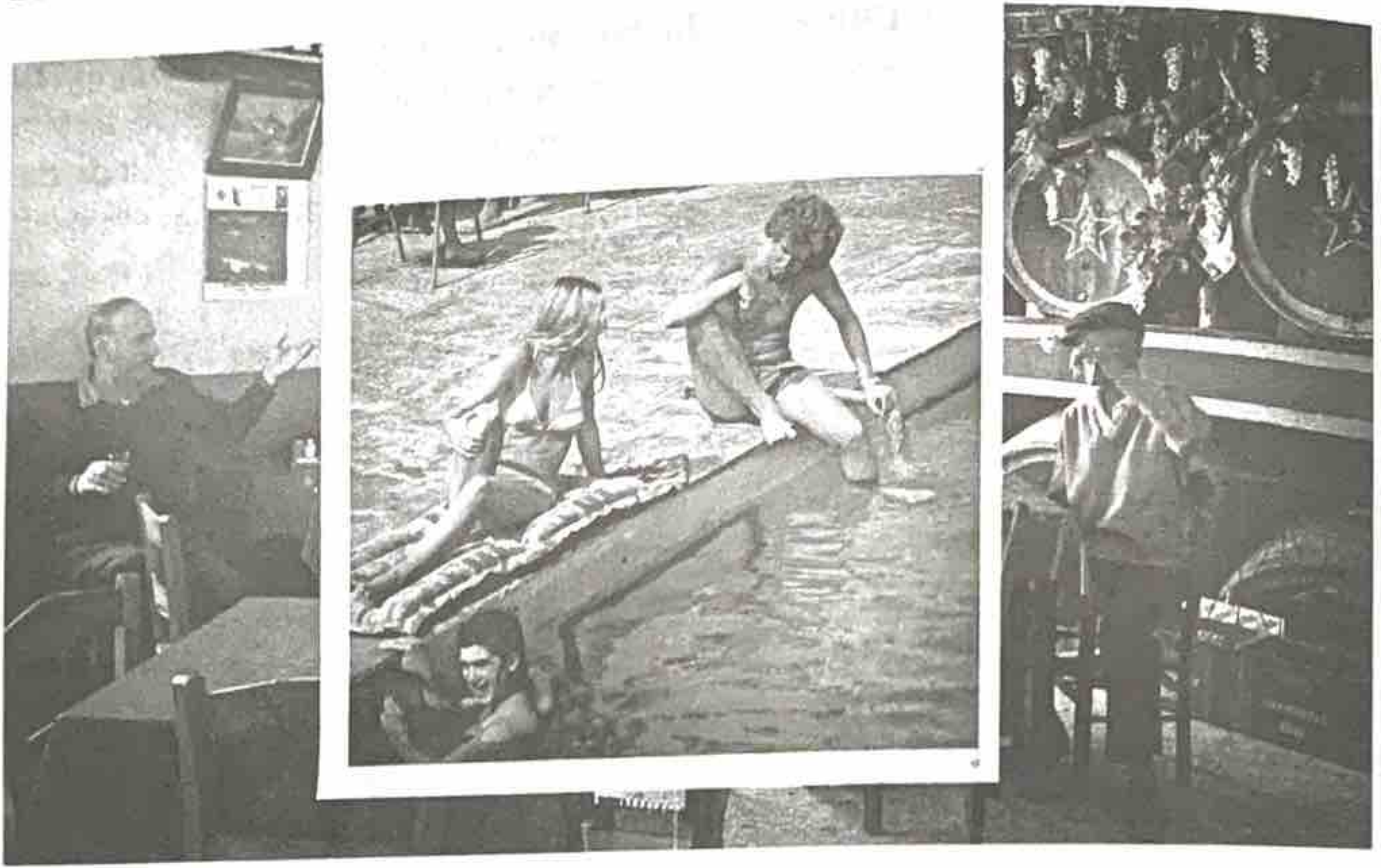

Figure 11.1 Aikaterini Gegisian A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas (The Sea of Waves, 6), collage on paper, 29 h × 46 w cm, 2015. Courtesy of the artist.

much as the background decor of plastic grapes on vines draped over wine barrel props stacked against a wall.

Such rote communication delivers what Roland Barthes called a photograph's *studium*, from the Latin for "a kind of general, enthusiastic commitment…without special acuity." According to Barthes, the *studium* organizes the affect of a photograph by "referring to a classical body of information." One can "take a kind of general interest" in the *studium*, an interest "that …requires the rational intermediary of an ethical and political culture." As he continues, "What I feel about [the *studium* of] these photographs derives from an *average* effect, almost from a certain training." In this instance, viewers of the photographs in their original, national yearbook contexts know how to recognize leisure at a poolside and folksy charm in an old-world tavern, with minimal effort. Ultimately, photographs dominated by their *studia* are "inert" under our gaze and "provoke only a general and, so to speak, *polite* interest."[16]

Yet Barthes insists that photographs sometimes contains a second element that strikes one more profoundly, an element he called the *punctum*, meaning a break, puncture, sting, speck, cut, little hole, or even the cast of a dice. "It is not I who seek[s]…out [the *punctum*] (as I invest the field of the *studium* with my sovereign consciousness)," writes Barthes. Rather, the *punctum* "is this element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me" as well as the *studium* itself; "A photograph's *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)."[17]

In a sense, taking these images out of their original contexts and composing them into collages is itself a kind of logic of the *punctum*. But also, the photograph of the tavern contains its own *punctum*. It is perched over the head of the

man drinking on the left, who gesticulates in casual conversation: a wall calendar showing an image of a beach on a tranquil bay with a boat cruising by, hung below a generic watercolor painting of a house on a similarly tranquil bay surrounded by cliffs and mountains. This *punctum* is of the ironic sort: the "*average* effects" of the touristic calendar and naturalistic watercolor are replicated by the photograph of the tavern scene that contains them. Recalling that the photograph of the tavern is itself originally from a national yearbook, we can be pricked by the realization that the tavern scene's putative authenticity appears as a mere repetition of prior performances of authenticity, the wall calendar and the watercolor. The grapes hanging on the tavern wall over the other man on the right side of the photograph suddenly seem all the more plastic and the barrels over which they are draped ever more empty, like props on a stage seen from a de-mystified vantage point backstage rather than from the audience's side of the fourth wall. The punctum of the watercolor and the calendar thus punctures the authenticity of the photograph of the tavern.

Gegisian's collage of the tavern and poolside photographs in *A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas* brings this punctum to the fore, insisting that we attend to what Barthes might call its bruising poignancy. The poolside photograph bears traces of its original, national yearbook context in two numbers—70 and 43—tucked into the corners, presumably page numbers or other reference numbers, which have been torn from their indexical purpose. Once discretely confined to the corners of the yearbook page, in the *Small Guide* these numbers are located near the center of the page, making the act of tearing the photograph out of its prior context an explicit part of the collage. The poolside photograph in the middle of the collage bisects the tavern photograph, interrupting the two men, as it were, but it is also framed by them as well as by the watercolor and calendar, on the one side, and the plastic grapes and empty barrels, on the other. This new framing of the pool photograph asks us to see the poolside from the perspective of the tavern photograph's punctum, and thus to understand touristic leisure as no merely natural or idyllic pleasure. Collage here is the formal, artistic device of storation. Like Philomela's tapestry, collage tears appropriated stores out of their fictive, restorative contexts, dispensing with the secretive myth-making of the "re-," the kind of "story…most convincing" that Tereus told. The violence of the tear even echoes the violence-with-a-different with which Philomela and Procne responded to Tereus's brutalities.

Consider another page in the *Small Guide*, to which I briefly referred above: the first collage in section one, "The Sea of Echoes," with a black and white photograph of the Armenian nationalist icon *par excellence*, Mount Ararat, foregrounded by a cityscape, overlaid by a smaller color photograph of roughly the same perspective (Figure 11.2).

While the two images initially seem "the same," apart from their colors, the more one looks the more differences emerge. In color image, the buildings are more modern, small, and hastily constructed with flat roofs, while the black and white image shows larger and more monumental buildings. Combined with the black and white/color difference, this architectural difference suggests that the background image is older. The cityscape seems to have refused to remain the same beneath Ararat, despite the apparent consistency of the snowy

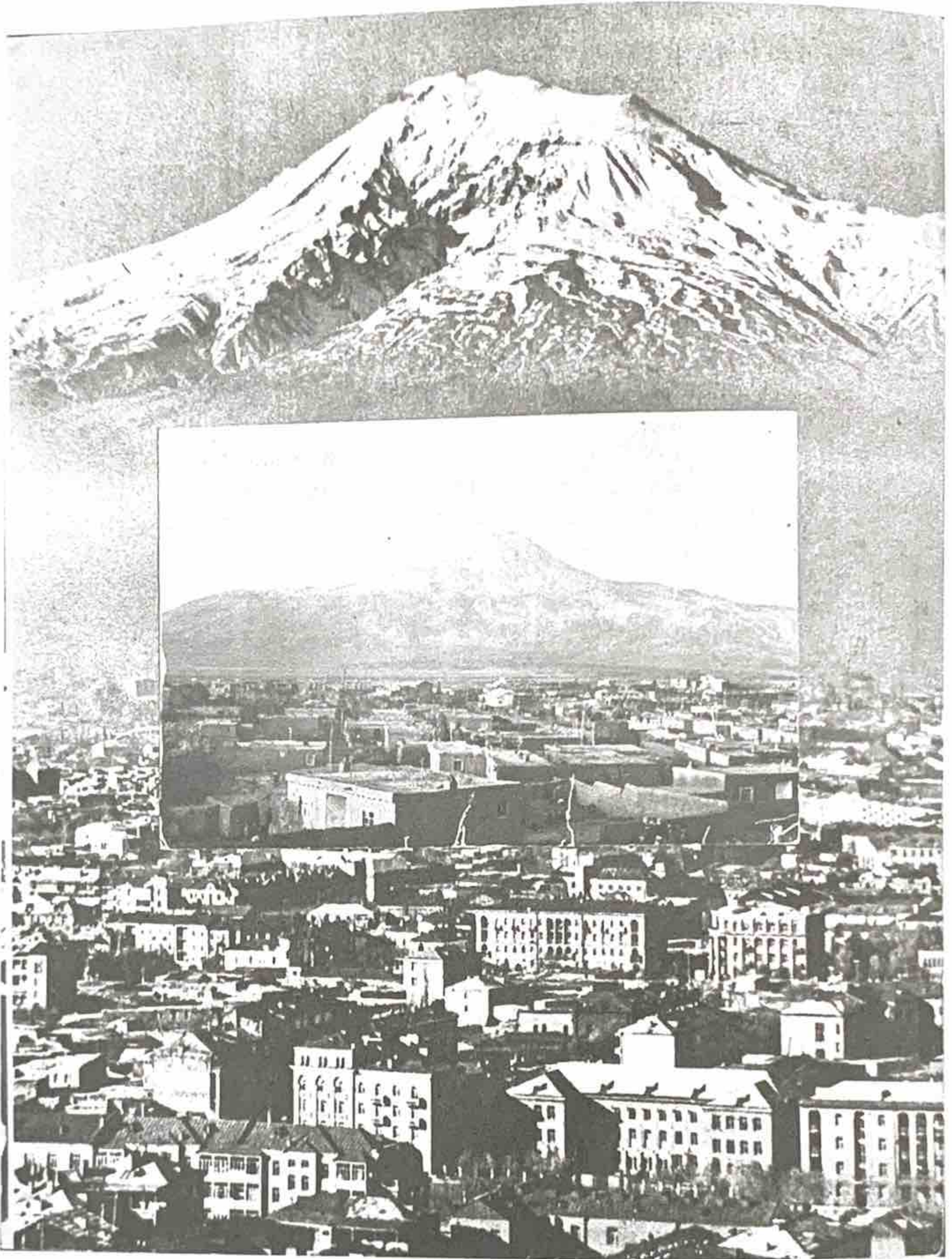

Figure 11.2 Aikaterini Gegisian, A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas (The Sea of Echoes, 1), collage on paper, 28.4 h × 22 w cm, 2015. Courtesy of the artist.

peak. Formally, too, the color image looks more personal, like a snapshot from a common camera whose edges have been creased and slightly worn, while the black and white image in the background looks more professional and thus more impersonal, with a wider lens and more detail. Who took the snapshot, we wonder, and how did it get so worn? Perhaps most strikingly if subtly, however, the orientation of the mountain is, in fact, the opposite in each image, such that the collage

produces a mirror effect between the two images. Are we viewing Ararat from "both sides" as it were, one image from the Turkish side and the other from the Armenian side, such that the cityscapes are of differently national cities altogether? Or is one of the images simply reversed due to some photographic or reproductive technology?

The *studium* here is, of course, the iconic Ararat, with all its overwrought and hackneyed nationalist significance: identity embodied, infinitely reproduced, sameness as such, "The Sea of Echoes." Generations of Armenians know this "*average* effect, almost from a certain training," as Barthes might say. But the differences between the images and the questions they provoke pierce this effect, as *puncta*, inflicting a poignant bruise on the self-same knowledge of the nationalist subject.

Ovid speaks to us again, here, via Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who has trained our attention on the figure of Echo in "The Story of Echo and Narcissus," from the *Metamorphoses*.[18] Narcissus, of course, has long held not only his own attention on himself, but also countless readers' attention on him: the beautiful boy who was prophesied to "live to a ripe old age…if he never knows himself," but who would love no one until he saw an image of himself in a pool of water, "fell in love/With that unbodied hope," and starved to death, "Charmed by himself, spell-bound, and no more moving /Than any marble statue."[19] But Spivak suggests that the nymph Echo, long neglected, can teach us something quite different if she is read as more than a repetitive prop.

As Ovid wrote: Narcissus

> was out hunting one day, driving deer/Into nets, when a nymph named Echo saw him,/A nymph whose way of talking was peculiar/In that she could not start a conversation/Nor fail to answer other people talking…She liked to chatter,/But had no power of speech except the power/To answer in the words she last had heard.[20]

For Spivak, Echo "marks the withheld possibility of a truth outside intention," not only because so many critics systematically write her out entirely or write over her role in the tale.[21] But also because, when Echo echoes, her words do not always exactly repeat what she heard and thus are at least partially detached both from her intention and from the interpretation of anyone who hears her. For instance, when Narcissus cries "Keep your hands off…and do not touch me!/I would die before I give you a chance at me," Echo replies "I give you a chance at me," before retreating in shame at Narcissus's rejection of her.[22] Thus, as Spivak argues, "Her desire and performance are dispersed into absolute chance rather than an obstinate choice, as in the case of Narcissus," such that her echo "points to the risk of response… It has no identity proper to itself. It is obliged to be imperfectly and interceptively responsive to another's desire, if only for the self-separation of speech. It is the catachresis of response as such."[23] A catachrestical response detaches meaning from both intention and reception, in that meaning cannot be traced to any literal referent either on the side of the speaker or the listener, the writer or the reader. Even further, and crucially for Spivak, at one moment in *Metamorphoses* Ovid fails to

produces a mirror effect between the two images. Are we viewing Ararat from "both sides" as it were, one image from the Turkish side and the other from the Armenian side, such that the cityscapes are of differently national cities altogether? Or is one of the images simply reversed due to some photographic or reproductive technology?

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As Ovid wrote: Narcissus

> was out hunting one day, driving deer/Into nets, when a nymph named Echo saw him,/A nymph whose way of talking was peculiar/In that she could not start a conversation/Nor fail to answer other people talking…She liked to chatter,/But had no power of speech except the power/To answer in the words she last had heard.[20]

For Spivak, Echo "marks the withheld possibility of a truth outside intention," not only because so many critics systematically write her out entirely or write over her role in the tale.[21] But also because, when Echo echoes, her words do not always exactly repeat what she heard and thus are at least partially detached both from her intention and from the interpretation of anyone who hears her. For instance, when Narcissus cries "Keep your hands off…and do not touch me!/I would die before I give you a chance at me," Echo replies "I give you a chance at me," before retreating in shame at Narcissus's rejection of her.[22] Thus, as Spivak argues, "Her desire and performance are dispersed into absolute chance rather than an obstinate choice, as in the case of Narcissus," such that her echo "points to the risk of response… It has no identity proper to itself. It is obliged to be imperfectly and interceptively responsive to another's desire, if only for the self-separation of speech. It is the catachresis of response as such."[23] A catachrestical response detaches meaning from both intention and reception, in that meaning cannot be traced to any literal referent either on the side of the speaker or the listener, the writer or the reader. Even further, and crucially for Spivak, at one moment in *Metamorphoses* Ovid fails to

record Echo's response by quoting her directly: when Narcissus says, "'Why do you run from me?'" ["*'quid' inquit 'me fugis?'* "], Ovid does not record Echo's response in a direct quote as he does everywhere else, such as "'run from me,'" but instead writes in a third person narrative voice from Narcissus's perspective: "and heard his question/Repeated in the woods" ["*et totidem, quot dixit, verba recepit*"]. But did Narcissus hear "*quid me fugis*"/"why do you flee from me," or "*me fugis*"/"I fly," or "*fugis*"/"(you) flee"? Ovid does not let us know.[24] This, for Spivak, is at once Ovid's subordination of Echo to Narcissus's narrative voice, and an opening to the indeterminate possibility of and for Echo's unrecorded voice.

This is the sense in which the collage of Ararat—in section one, "The Sea of Echoes," of *The Small Guide*—can be said to echo. The two images are torn from their original stores, their referents are unlocatable. Echoing each other, their slight and inscrutable differences detach Ararat from its uniform nationalist intention and reception, pluralizing it into the possibility of as yet unknown Ararats.

In this way, each page of *A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas* brings together analogous photographs, or photographs with similar *studia*, by layering or splicing them together; and yet each collage as a whole foregrounds the *puncta* that pierce the *studia*, delinking the images from their stores, opening up their meanings. In each collage, the original yearbooks' promise of reiterable authenticity is displaced by iteration with a difference and (a) chance (at new) meaning. That is, the differences among the analogous photographs layered upon each other displace the rote, reiterative *studia* in which the yearbooks seek to train its readers. The *Small Guide* thus appropriates and weaves those yearbooks' stores into an as yet undefined imaginary, one emptied of ideological purpose, one whose new purpose is at once potent and unsettled. As such, the entire *Small Guide* could be said to function as a poetic *punctum*: it pierces the average effects of the original, nationalistic, and developmentalist yearbooks from which its images are torn, poignantly unsettling the physical and social spaces to which they refer.

Indeed, I would suggest that the *Small Guide* exceeds Barthes's distinction between *studium* and *punctum*, exemplifying what feminist film theorist Kaja Silverman has urged us to understand as the analogical dimension of photography. Silverman's notion of analogy is counterintuitive:

> When I say "analogy," I do not mean sameness, symbolic equivalence, logical adequation, or even a rhetorical relationship—like metaphor or a simile—in which one term functions as the provisional placeholder for another. I am talking about the authorless and untranscendable similarities that structure Being, or what I will be calling "the world," and that give everything the same ontological weight.
>
> These similarities are authorless and untranscendable because there is no metaphysical agency to which they could be imputed, and no other domain to which we might retreat, in order to be alone…Most of us are willing to acknowledge some of these similarities, but extremely reluctant to acknowledge others, particularly those that call our autonomy, agency, unity, and primacy into question. Photography is the vehicle through which

> these profoundly enabling but unwelcome relationships are revealed to us, and through which we learn to think analogically…Every analogy contains both similarity and difference. Similarity is the connector, what holds two things together, and difference is what prevents them from being collapsed into one…One of the most miraculous features of an analogy is its ability to operate in the face of these imbalances: to maintain the "two-in-one" principle even when there is only a narrow margin of difference, or a sliver of similarity.[25]

Rather than enforcing sameness, for Silverman analogy insists upon unsettling connections without repressing disconnections; it reveals surprising similarities that do not preclude ongoing difference. And it brings our being-in-the-world into an intimate embrace with otherness, thereby undermining the principles of autonomy, agency, and homogeneity upon which all species of nationalism, including Armenian diasporic nationalism, rely.

The pages of *A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas* usher us into this realm of analogy. As a result, they depart entirely from the logic of the "re-" with which I began this essay. Which is to say, the *Small Guide* does not restore anything to or for us. It does not guide us toward possessions we claim were or are originally our own. It does not provide evidence of organic national belonging, national development, or national progress. Rather, all its stores are torn from their putatively restorative contexts and provisionally assembled without recourse to the kind of training Barthes sees as so essential to the effect of the *studium*—in this case, ideological training in Armenian diasporic nationalism. Gegisian stores these images for us in her work, according to a principle of analogy that operates in the face of the imbalances between similarities and differences—as if guiding us toward a future when we might collectively draw on these stores, a future that does not long for a presumptively prior glory, a future in a world to which we do not yet belong, a world where we might live without exclusive belonging. If we too can tear storation from the "re-," then we will have arrived with Gegisian at the verge of restoration's undoing.

Notes

1. Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Revised Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 262–263. Italics mine.
2. An earlier version of this article appeared as a catalogue entry for the Armenian Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale: David Kazanjian, "*re storation*: Aikaterini Gegisian's *A Small Guide to the Invisible Seas*," in *Armenity* (Milan: Skira Editore, 2015), 60–63.
3. John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. 2, ed. Russell A. Peck, trans. Andrew Galloway (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2013), lines 2362–2368; https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/peck-gower-confessio-amantis-volume-2. Accessed June 2, 2020. See also G. C. Macaulay, *The English Works of John Gower*, vol. 1 (London: Early English Text Society; Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1900), xlv–xlvi.
4. "Store." *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 3017.
5. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 147 (Book Six, Lines 545–550).

6 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 147 (Book Six, Lines 563–566).
7 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 147–148 (Book Six, Lines 566–572).
8 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 148 (Book Six, Lines 573–586).
9 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 149 (Book Six, Lines 611–623).
10 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 151 (Book Six, Lines 669–673).
11 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 151 (Book Six, Lines 677–678).
12 See, for instance, Virgil's *Aetna*, Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*, Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," or Coleridge's "The Nightingale."
13 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Loeb Classical Library, trans. Frank Justus Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 334–335 (Lines 667–668). The more literal translation borrows from Ovid, *Metamorphosis: Translated into English Prose with Latin Text and Order of Construction on the Same Page, and Critical, historical, Geographical Notes in English* (London: G. and W.B. Whittaker, 1822). For the Latin I also consulted "Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," trans. Anthony S. Kline (A.S. Cline, 2000), https://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Ovhome.htm (Accessed 6.2.2020).
14 See Bi-yu Chang, *Place, Identity, and National Imagination in Postwar Taiwan* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 24–66; Naum Jasny, "The Soviet Statistical Yearbooks for 1955 through 1960," *Slavic Review* 21.1 (March, 1962): 121–156; Jan Stepan and Frank C. Chapman, "National and Regional Yearbooks of International Law and Relations: A Brief Survey," *International Journal of Law Libraries* 8.1 (1980): 19–26.
15 Chang, *Place*, 25–26.
16 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 25–27.
17 Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 26–27.
18 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Echo," *New Literary History* 24.1 (Winter, 1993): 17–43.
19 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 68 (Book Three, Lines 348–349), 70 (Book Three, Lines 420–424).
20 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 68 (Book Three, Lines 357–365).
21 Spivak, "Echo," 25.
22 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 69 (Book Three, Lines 388–390).
23 Spivak, "Echo," 27.
24 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 69 (Book Three, Lines 383–384); Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Loeb Classical Library, 150 (Lines 383–384).
25 Kaja Silverman, *The Miracle of Analogy, or The History of Photography, Part 1* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 11–12.