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Undercover and Hyper-Visible: Security Poetics and Pacification Prosaics in African American and Arab American Literature

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Undercover and Hyper-Visible: Security Poetics and Pacification Prosaics in African American and Arab American Literature

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature

by

Omar Zahzah

2020

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature

University of California, Los Angeles, 2020

Professor Richard Yarborough, Co-Chair

Professor Saree Makdisi, Co-Chair

My dissertation is a comparative analysis of Arab American and African American literature spanning from the Cold War era up to the present "War on 'Terror.'" I examine how paradigms of security are constructed and contested within the texts under analysis, and argue that the writers' recurrent trope of using socio-political struggle as a means of cohering transnational sentiments of solidarity constitutes a larger critique of the boundless scope of oppressive disciplinary paradigms. Furthermore, I show how the texts indicate—however

implicitly or fleetingly—possibilities for a more egalitarian, alternative social order in place of the current hegemonic status quo.

Chapter One, "'Relax! We not studying you guys:' Making State Scrutiny ~~(In)~~Visible Via Resistance Poetics," is dedicated to a comparative analysis of African American June Jordan's poetry (*Living Room*, 1985) and Palestinian American Suheir Hammad's verse in *Born Palestinian, Born Black* (1993). I effect a close reading of select pieces from each collection to demonstrate how both consciously engage the direct overlap between state surveillance and disciplinary repression and ostensibly removed projects of imperial and colonial subjugation.

Chapter Two, "The Global Reach of the Racial Gaze: Cosmopolitanism (or Exile?) in William Gardner Smith's *The Stone Face* and Sam Greenlee's *Baghdad Blues*" begins by establishing some of the key conceptual frames for my dissertation. Reading Smith's *The Stone Face* (1963) against Greenlee's *Baghdad Blues* (1976), I consider Denise Ferreria da Silva's contention of how an insufficient interrogation of the Enlightenment conception of "Man" allows for the instantiation of "the global" as an organizing apparatus for the perpetuation of worldly racial subjugation. Drawing from the writings of Edward Said, I close this chapter with a reappraisal of whether "cosmopolitanism" or "exile" constitutes the most appropriate framework for the extra-nationalist anti-racisms reflected in either text.

Chapter Three, "'you stare at the cops for as long as they stare at you:' Law and Disorder in the Novels of John A. Williams," is dedicated to a consideration of Williams' novels *The Man Who Cried I Am* (1967) and *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light* (1969). Specifically, I consider how both novels evidence an urgent form of what I am calling "security poetics" through their categorization of the ultimate (often implicit) task of state and federal police as the perpetuation

of racial inequality and liquidation of anti-hierarchical political visions, regardless of borders or boundaries.

The concluding chapter of my dissertation, **"**'New World Disorder:' Disfiguring a Perpetual Present," takes up another assault of the post 9/11 climate that remains less-theorized: the assault upon time and history. Simply put, the War on Terror initiates an apparent arresting of temporal and historical progression vis-à-vis a perpetual present of interminable paranoia, protracted imperialism/colonization, and an ever-prefigured, preemptive necessity for racial punishment via global policing and incarceration. By way of a phenomenon I am currently terming "securitization's disciplinary tautology," the objectified subject of a charge of "terrorism" is deprived of any symbolic or rhetorical recourse towards exculpation. For these reasons, the writers under investigation in my final chapter (playwright Ismail Khalidi and novelist Mohja Kahf, respectively) engage in literary efforts that I classify as disfiguring, challenging the hegemonic and exceptionalist conceptions of "Terrorism" of the "War on 'Terror's'" perpetual present with the excavated histories of joint struggle, overlapping persecutions and common religious and cultural heritage.

The dissertation of Omar Zahzah is approved.

Ali Behdad

Robin D.G. Kelley

Amira Jarmakani

Richard Yarborough, Committee Co-Chair

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University of California, Los Angeles

2020

DEDICATION

To everyone who knows all too well the feeling of being watched.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Omar Zahzah

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Panels Organized

"Truth to Power and Power's Untruth: Palestine Organizing in the Wake of the Executive Order" American Studies Association (ASA) Conference, November 12-15, 2020. Co-chaired with Keith Feldman.

"Circuits of Resistance in the Palestinian Transnational Experience" – American Studies Association (ASA) Conference, 2017.

INTRODUCTION: "SICK ARABS" AND "OTHER SPACES"

"At least from the viewpoint of the people creating these works, America is itself a prison, and the main lines of American literature can be traced from the plantation to the penitentiary."

-H. Bruce Franklin, *Prison Literature in America: The Victim as Criminal and Artist*

"Security is not just hegemonic, it *is* hegemony."

-George Rigakos, "'To Extend the Scope of Productive Labor': Pacification as a Police Project"

Prior to the commencement of the narrative proper, Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* begins with a NOTICE[1] to the reader:

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[1] While academic convention often prefers the use of endnotes, I have resisted this urge for reasons paramount to the scope of my project. In neatly consolidating the references and intellectual associations of the "primary" material into the subterranean sphere of the research paper, endnotes feasibly allow for the immediate overlooking of the author's connections in favor of a deferred, belated engagement. More conceptually, endnotes as a form work to police the eruption of the influences, asides, reflections, connections, and more that have led the academic text to its present conclusion(s). It is my contention that what is referenced is in no way "marginal" to the scope of my project, and needs to be engaged in the "real-time" of the reading experience in order to better demonstrate the semantic network of forces at play in guiding these questions and concerns. These gestures take on an even greater relevance within the context of a project that seeks to expose the (hi)stories, experiences and struggles that have been "covered up" by a dominant (though by no means static) hegemonic order in the interests of "security." It is important, then to trouble the distinctions between the "marginal" and the "primary," with the latter at times assuming the exceptional character of the "dominant," by whatever means possible, however innocent or trivial of a form such practices might ostensibly assume. Foregrounding my sources in this manner also constitutes a riposte to that more aseptic form of "dominant" erasure vis-à-vis disciplinary convention in the academic sense that constructs sources as "more" or "less" worthy of citing based on a cultural economy prioritizing academic affiliations and presses above all else.

The admittedly overwhelming length of many of these footnotes also plays an important function: simply put, this is a project about writers from populations the state has the power to render "hyper-visible," or to force to go "undercover" to avoid panvasive technologies (discursive, technical, not to mention both) of surveillance, policing, and/or incarceration. But the work of the writes in question also operates to "uncover," or "make visible" the larger connections, contexts and logics driving these hierarchical regimes. To that end, what is exposed *must* by necessity be staggering, fulsome, unsettling, and even overwhelming on multiple fronts in order to actualize the challenges of the texts and project in question.

The intentionality behind notes is inspired by two sources in particular: Ward Churchill, who writes that in *A Little Matter of Genocide* (1997) he

> Went out of [his] way to provide what Noam Chomsky has called "rich footnotes." The reasons for this are several, and devolve not merely upon the usual scholarly fetish with indicating familiarity with "the literature." I *do* believe that when making many of the points I've sought to make, and with the bluntness which typically marks my work, one is well-advised to be thorough in revealing the basis upon which they rest. I also believe it is a matter not just of

"PERSONS attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot."

The notice is signed: *BY ORDER OF THE AUTHOR/PER G.G., CHIEF OF ORDINANCE.*

Later on, Chapter 14 of the novel begins with a scene in which Huck and the duke disguise Jim in order to facilitate his escape, dressing him "up in King Leer's outfit" and painting Jim a "dead dull solid blue, like a man that has been drowned nine days" (171). The duke completes the disguise by making the following sign, which he then attaches to a lath that is placed "four or five foot" in front of the wigwam where Jim is hiding:

"Sick Arab—but harmless when not out of his head."

> courtesy, but of ethics, to make proper attribution to those upon whose ideas and resources one relies. Most importantly, I want those who read this book to be able to interrogate what I've said, to challenge it and consequently build on it. The most expeditious means to this end is the provision of copious annotation, citing sources both pro and con. (10)

I am also drawing from Therí Pickens's justification for the unique character of epigraphs and footnotes in her introduction to *Black Madness::Mad Blackness* (2019):

> Footnotes and epigraphs operate here with my particular kind of scholarly quirk. I use them in this writing similarly to how I have used them before in that I expect them to do a substantive amount of work in pushing the conversation beyond the four walls of this text. Often, as critics, we are disciplined to read and write such that we bury the labor of research and conversation in the footnotes and privilege our own voices in the prose.
>
> While this strategy is useful for presenting a more traditional argument, my wayward project here requires that the footnotes and epigraphs differently participate in and shape the conversation of which they are a part. I chose my epigraphs from Black women's poetry since they push the debates in new directions, hint at possibilities, when and where I enter. The footnotes are not
>
> solely explanations of sources and methodologies, but they also signify, joke, pun, turn a phrase, explore. Both the footnotes and epigraphs are asides, witticisms, and musings. They expose how certain voices and ideas move through my work here and could, later, move through another scholar's. I invite you to theorize from above and below. (xi)

(I thank Amira Jarmakani for bringing this second quotation to my attention).

The co-presence of a disciplinary injunction concerning the reading of the novel as well as a moment in which an Orientalized caricature provides a refuge for a fugitive slave is intriguing. It is this relationship—a procedural linkage between disciplinary convention and the racialization of Arab/Black subjects, as well as the resistance efforts of all implicated by this relationship—that will form the basis of this project. Specifically, by way of an analytical frame that will be clarified as this chapter progresses, I posit that the narrational proscription concerning literary interpretation constitutes a form of what I am currently terming "pacification prosaics:" a disciplinary prohibition upon the disturbance of hegemonic logics and processes informing hierarchical stratification and subjugation. And it is against and in reaction to these state-sanctioned or fortifying prosaics that variously dissident, resistant and fugitive subjects nurture imaginary expressions and strategies gesturing towards an alternative social and worldly order, a counter-hegemonic constellation of creative expression I refer to as "security poetics." While prioritizing acts and expressions of creative resistance, this dissertation seeks to interrogate the forms and dialectical interrelation of security poetics and pacification prosaics as evidenced in select works of literature.

"Undercover" and "Hyper-Visible"

The adjectives that twin this project's title emerge from two sources with which I am drawing a thematic linkage: "undercover" comes from Sam Greenlee's novel *Baghdad Blues,* in which the African American protagonist, Dave Burrell, tells one of his white colleagues at the imperialist/propagandist US Information Bureau based in Iraq just prior to the 1958 revolution: "We're the only people in the States who, right from the git-go, been undercover. All black people need a 'cover' in order to survive."

"Hyper-visible" refers to the heightened government monitoring and repression of Arab Americans that emerged in the wake of 9/11 (despite such racially particularized surveillance and detention having a historical precedence well before this flashpoint). As Layla Al Maleh writes, following 9/11, "Arabs at last became visible; a pity that this visibility was filtered through 'terror,' rather than through the catharsis of Aristotelian 'pity and fear'" (*Arab Voices in Diaspora* 2). While it is not my intention to suggest that pairing these designations side by side will reveal a totalized understanding of the ever-contingent and evolving patterns of state-sanctioned racial and political repression, viewing them in tandem through an analysis of the relevant literature can help offset some of the unfortunate exceptionalism that can at times characterize the attempt to counter discrete community struggles for self-determination by exposing certain key overlaps in some of the wider procedural and discursive logics informing African American and Arab American persecution presently and historically. Additionally, it suggests the *overlap* between two distinct forms of racialization, particularly when we bear in mind Ruha Benjamin's insightful observation that "Racist structures not only marginalize but forcefully center and surveil racialized groups that are caught between 'regimes of invisibility and hypervisibility,'" a point that Benjamin connects to Simone Brown's investigation of how surveillance is not a contemporary outgrowth of new technologies, but a regime of practices that can be dated back to American slavery (*Race After Technology* 125). Thus, the title is intended to capture a dialectic of individualization *and* convergence in processes of racialized repression.

The title's pairing can also, I argue, illuminate two key modalities of various forms of repression *and* resistance that have been and remain intertwined. As Raymond Williams argues, part of the "work" of literature lies in its ability to anticipate emergent social formations that variously complicate, undermine or reveal perspectives outside of the arrangements instituted

through social hegemony. Itself a site of social material production, literature does not passively reflect society, but interacts with it dynamically.[2]

However, in addition to this, I argue that the texts converge in featuring examples of what I call "security poetics." As I envision it, "security poetics" operates dialectically, indicating the various technologies of racialized repression and surveillance as well as the imaginative labor—the cultural technologies—of all who resist hierarchical processes of repression, surveillance, and incapacitation. "Security poetics" is formed under the influence of several sources: the work of William Maxwell, who in *F.B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostwriters Framed African American Literature* (2015) explores the ways in which African American authors facing heavy surveillance and repression by the FBI managed to incorporate a consciousness of being watched into their works, as well as Waleed Hazbun's writing on "security politics." A Lebanese scholar, Hazbun challenges the dominant association between security and centralized state authority by mapping out the vast potential for "hybrid sovereignty" frameworks (rhizomatical in the Deleuzian sense, rather than top-down) to serve as a more beneficial means of understanding the authentic character of the political landscape of various states within the SWANA region.[3] I am also greatly inspired by Simone Brown's concept of "security theater" advanced in *Dark Matters* (2015), a work that similarly situates contemporary surveillance praxis within the longer history and legacy of slavery and state-sanctioned racism; for Brown, "security theater" emerges when victims of racialized surveillance and screening programs engage in performative metacommentary upon the racialized underpinnings of these ostensibly "objective" processes

[2] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (1977). Here again, though, I return to Raskin, who writes that "culture has a crucial role to play in dismantling the American Empire" (*Mythology of Imperialism* 41).

[3] See: Waleed Hazbun, "Assembling Security in a 'weak state:' the contentious politics of plural governance in Lebanon since 2005." *Third World Quarterly,* 2016 VOL. 37, NO. 6, 1053□1070http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.111001.

(131). Finally, Robin Kelley's "freedom dreams" is a primary influence upon this project, particularly Kelley's emphasis on the necessarily allusive character of the dream-work of the black radical imagination that buoys up revolutionary undertakings.[4] "Security poetics" enfolds all of these, entailing a consciousness of being watched and targeted (physically and symbolically) by repressive forces, an empathic engagement with other oppressed populations, and suggesting (however implicitly) the need for and possibility of an alternative, non-repressive or coercive social paradigm of relationality and self-determination.

I use the philosopher Ivan Illich's *Tools for Conviviality* (1973) as a referent for the final item.[5] By "conviviality," Illich refers to a state of being and belonging in which the individual welfare of others and other societies is not encroached upon by excesses of consumption, extraction and profit and "modern technologies serve politically interrelated individuals rather than managers" (6). Illich's use of the term convivial is inspired by its "Spanish [language] cognate" (ibid), and consciously applied to *tools* as opposed to people because this new juxtaposition more readily allows for an ethical configuration of society guided by the term's

[4] "Unfortunately," Kelley writes in the Preface, "too often our standards for evaluating social movements pivot around whether or not they 'succeeded' in realizing their visions rather than on the merits or the power of the visions themselves" (ix). In the introduction, "'When History Sleeps:' A Beginning,'" Kelley writes about "traditional leftists who have traded in their dreams for orthodoxy and sectarianism" (7) as well as how social movements can ironically become the most critical agents of the "ecstatic" (10). As I understand it, Kelley's point is to distinguish the "dreams" that shape revolutions from the blueprints, roadmaps and point programs they may generate along the way. Certainly the two interact, but to stipulate interchangeability means substituting optimism for pragmatism, or even cynicism, and runs the risk of obviating some of the very impulses that catalyze refusal, resistance and uprising in the first place. Kelley's exploration of the historical relevance of Zionism to the black freedom struggle will also be a crucial touchstone.

[5] There is not a small degree of pained irony in the fact that this work envisioning a more egalitarian social order was issued on the very year that the socialist president Salvador Allende was overthrown in a coup jointly orchestrated by the Chilean military and right-wing "Chicago boys" trained at the University of Chicago and eager to help Milton Friedman turn Chile into a torture-ridden laboratory for the development of regional neoliberal policies (*The Shock Doctrine* 77-118). I thank Janin Guzman-Morales and the rest of the Center for Interdisciplinary Environmental Justice (CIEJ) for bringing this work to my attention.

initial emphasis on necessary limits of interrelation. Rather than people, it is tools *used* by people that can help determine a more harmonious social order.

It is the emphasis on limitation that draws me to Illich's formulations. I argue that the convivial limits Illich called for can offer a timely ethical framework for the necessity of scaling back rampant surveillance and policing technologies and products that have and continue to endanger the livelihoods and lives of countless marginalized communities the world over. The "tool" as an entry-point into questions of co-habitation is also intriguing to consider in light of its polar opposition to Heidegger's individualist conceptions of the "thatness and whatness, reality, the being at hand of things" (*Being and Time* 47), which explore how objects, as derivative aspects of Dasein's existence, help Dasein make sense of said existence through availability and failure. As Terry Eagleton notes, for Heideggerian thought, "A broken hammer is more of a hammer than an unbroken one" (*What is Literature?* 56). That is, while the tool for Illich is an instrument for coming together, for Heidegger it is primarily a means by which the individual sense of being is fortified through exploration. The implications of this arrangement are perhaps not so innocent as they might seem upon first glance. To return to Eagleton:

> The exaltation of the peasant, the downgrading of reason for spontaneous, 'pre-understanding,' the celebration of wise passivity—all of these, combined with Heidegger's belief in an 'authentic' existence-towards-death superior to the life of the faceless masses, led him in 1933 into explicit support of Hitler. The support was short-lived; but it was implicit for all of that in elements of the philosophy. (55)

The contraposition of Illich to Heidegger offers a glimpse of my current avoidance of more avowedly "utopianist"/utopianist-leaning philosophies and speculations, despite my interest in imaginative texts. For instance, while "utopia" and "world-making" (at times discussed together) have come to assume a newfound currency in academic writings of liberal to

radical persuasion, I am not entirely convinced that such conceptions do not have Heideggerian philosophy at their root, given how

> Sciences and disciplines are ways of being of Dasein in which Dasein relates also to beings that it need not itself be. But *being in a world* belongs essentially to Dasein. Thus the understanding of Being that belongs to Dasein just as originally implies the understanding of something like "world" and the understanding of the Being of beings accessible within the world… In accordance with the manner of being belonging to it, Dasein tends to understand its own Being in terms of that being to which it is essentially, continually, and most closely related—the "world." …the way the world is understood is ontologically reflected back upon the interpretation of Dasein. (*Being and Time* 55, 58, emphasis in original)

Dasein's "worlding" is one philosophical means by which its individual consciousness achieves more authentic clarity.

To cite one relevant example of the conflation between "Utopia" and "world-making" in contemporary scholarship: Ronak K. Kapadia's *Insurgent Aesthetics* (2019), for example, traces the "blueprints for utopian future imaginings" in the work of "racialized and dispossessed peoples… [who] have created alternative world-making knowledge projects" (21). Kapadia is heavily indebted to José Esteban Muñoz, who constructs queerness as an imminent (as opposed to realized) state of being which, when channeled via various aesthetic projects, offers "blueprints and schemata of a forward-dawning futurity" (*Cruising Utopia* 1). Despite his interest in "historically situated struggles" (3), however, Muñoz's interest in the "map of the utopia that is queerness" (1) seems to be within utopia's inchoate rather than elaborate manifestations. However, I opt for an analysis rooted in negative philosophical orientation towards: utopia (this introduction), lines of movement (see chapter 2) and time (see chapter 4) as elaborated by particular thinkers in postcolonial studies, Indigenous studies and critical race/African American studies because my interest lies in the shadow potentialities engendered by the restrictions of oppressive discourses, settings and structures. Such a sentiment is perhaps best captured by Fred Moten: "To be committed to the anti- and ante-categorical predication of

blackness… is to subordinate, by a measure so small that it constitutes measure's eclipse, the critical analysis of anti-blackness to the celebration of blackness" (*black and blur* viii).

It is perhaps worth noting that Muñoz begins *Cruising Utopia* with an epigraph from the English-Irish novelist, poet, and playwright, Oscar Wilde: "A map of the world that does not contain Utopia is not worth glancing at." But the full text of this quotation is taken from Wilde's "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891), an essay in which Wilde argues for a complete socialist reconstitution of society. The quote in its original context is as follows:

> There will be great storages of force for every city, and for every house if required, and this force man will convert into heat, light, or motion, according to his needs. Is this Utopian? A map of the world that does not contain Utopia is not even worth glancing at, *for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias.* (141, emphasis mine).

What is transpiring in the excerpt, and Wilde's larger argument within the essay, seems a bit more dialectical than a general defense of the concept of Utopia(s). In fact, to claim that "progress is the realization of Utopias," and to pluralize the idealized setting, is to negate a deferred aspiration for more immediate realization in the *here* and *now.* Indeed, Wilde's piece includes critiques of models laid out by socialist Utopianists Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and Edward Bellamy (1850-89) for being, in Wilde's view, insufficiently attentive to the particulars of human individuality and creative fulfillment (131 and 331^{n10}). Wilde's reflections upon the creative dimensions of the political (and vice versa) also include observations about how culture can work not only for human liberation, but as an instrument of coercive authority: he bemoans "the uncritical admiration of the Bible and Shakespeare in England" which makes it so that "the classics [are degraded] into authorities… bludgeons for preventing the free expression of Beauty in new forms" (144). I find this relevant in that it opens up an avenue for comprehending how what we might term aesthetic (and more broadly, cultural) *canonization* becomes a mode of

pacification used to police the cultural terrain. By being retrospectively incorporated into a (culturally, nationally, racially, etc.) hegemonic canon, cultural creations, which in their immediate contexts were variously provocative and controversial, become perversely recycled into accoutrements of power for systems in a related vein to those against which they were initially reacting. As "bludgeons," they defend a reactionary view of culture as artifice that anxiously fends off novel advancements (pun intended), akin to what John Berger would describe as "mystification" in *Ways of Seeing*: a work's socio-historical context is elided so that its meaning "no longer lies in what it uniquely says, but what it uniquely is."[6]

My reservations about utopia stem from the potential of the concept to reinforce essentialisms, as Gayatri Spivak suggests early on in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In this essay, Spivak reinterrogates the vital passage from Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* that opens Said's *Orientalism* ("they cannot represent themselves, they must be represented"). Spivak's intentions here are to write against "an essentialist utopian politics" (71) that oversimplifies Marxist thought through the presumption of a shared 'class instinct' (ibid). In fact, Spivak's close reading of Marx's passage importantly reminds us that class formation is an *isolated* and *isolating* process. To the extent that they reject the *"artificial"* process of class formation and stratification, the differentially exploited "cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (emphasis in original) with the verb for "representation" in the original German assuming the character of *persuasion* rather than imagistic and/or epistemic caricature (though it cannot be stressed enough that Spivak, in keen dialectical fashion, wants to re-introduce a grasp of the two operating *simultaneously* in global politics and historical progression) (71-4). Spivak's

[6] https://www.ways-of-seeing.com/ch1

formulation here is on par with a similar observation made by the famed Marxist historian E.P. Thompson:

> There is today an ever-present temptation to suppose that class is a thing. This was not Marx's meaning, in his own historical writing, yet the error vitiates much latter-day "Marxist" writing. "It," the working class, is assumed to have a real existence, which can be defined almost mathematically—so many men who stand in a certain relation to the means of production. Once this is assumed it becomes possible to deduce the class-consciousness which "it" ought to have (but seldom does have) if "it" was properly aware of its own position and real interests. There is a cultural superstructure, through which this recognition dawns in inefficient ways. These cultural "lags" and distortions are a nuisance, so that it is easy to pass from this to some theory of substitution: the party, sect, or theorist, who discloses class-consciousness, not as it is, but as it ought to be. (*The making of the English working class* 10)

The dangers of the simplification of class as a political analytic becoming inscribed into otherwise commendable projections or imaginaries of self-determination and liberation amount to a preemptive hobbling of the prospects for comprehensive amelioration. Projects and blueprints premised around such unwittingly selective designs thus run the risk of preemptively diffusing some of their own radical energies, rendering the "utopias" or "revolutions" of their prospective aims ultimately achievable in name only.

More concretely, utopias, perhaps in the fashion of Ursula K. Le Guin's "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas," retain the potential to be underwritten by subjugation.[7] This is made

[7] In this famous story, the people of a fictional city—Omelas, "bright-towered by the sea"—enjoy unsurpassed splendor, with one catch: their success is directly predicated on the continued imprisonment of a small child, who is kept in chains in a locked, subterranean room with no window, starved, and not even so much as permitted to wipe the feces from its body. As the narrative explains,

> Some of them understand why, and some do not, but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, the tenderness of their friendships, the health of their children, the wisdom of their scholars, the skill of their makers, even the abundance of their harvest and the kindly weather of their skies, depend wholly on this child's abominable misery. (Le Guin 3)

Cruel subordination is not an accidental outgrowth of the utopia of Omelas; it is its driving engine, its life-granting force-field. In the sense that the child's suffering completely powers Omelas's flourishing, it may even be read as a *structural* rather than individual instance of

historically evident by Zionist socialist nationalism that posits the kibbutzim (or communes) as socialist utopias—even as they are realized via the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.[8] I thus counter utopia with "conviviality," given the latter term's emphasis ethical limits grounded in respect for the autonomy of others.

Given the degree of abstraction that has already begun to enter into this analysis, it is important to clarify some key concepts. First, we must consider the difference between *tool* and *technology.* Illich speaks of various "tools" for conviviality, tools that are utilized by individuals for the larger goal of bringing about a form of co-existence defined by respectful *limits* in the use of resources and within relationships. According to my analysis, a "tool" denotes a single instrument, whereas a "technology" is an *apparatus of tools*. For instance, "the world" according to Heideggerian philosophy is not merely a "tool" for achieving clarity in individual(ist) self-consciousness of being; in providing Dasein with a whole series of tools (hammers, disciplines, other beings), it is more accurately considered a *technology* of self-discovery. Illich's use of "tool" by my reading seems not to hinge so much on "instruments" as on the symbolic notion of *instrumentation;* a tool is distinguished by being something instrumentalized by an individual, but given that Illich writes of practices as diverse as science, medicine and the law being potential "tools for conviviality," the distinction between network and (individual) instrument seems not to be as heavily emphasized.

While I borrow the notion of "conviviality" from Illich's philosophy as a means of describing the striven-for outcome of the radical imaginings of the writers under analysis, I

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oppression. Le Guin's story is a philosophical cautionary tale concerning utopia's facility to rely upon rather than eradicate the suffering of the most marginalized subjects.

[8] For an analysis of how kibbutzim were maintained by the dispossession and "boycott" of Palestinians, see Joseph Massad's "Israel and the Politics of Boycott," *Al Jazeera,* 19 March 2013. https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/03/201331884943284526.html

maintain a more literal distinction between tool and technology, even as I follow Jarmakani and Shalhoub-Kevorkian in exploring some of technology's discursive manifestations. Distinguishing between tool and technology within security poetics and pacification prosaics hinges upon the distinction (admittedly more evident in certain moments than others) between a *particular* rhetorical device and an *organizing rubric* of rhetorical devices and strategies. So, for instance, *auxesis* is a *technology* of security poetics, whereas hyperbole, being *one form* of auxesis, is a *tool.*

The "poetics" aspect of security poetics coinage is also crucial, as it is by no means incidental that the individuals under analysis resort to creative means to contest societal iniquity.[9] Drawing from the work of Raymond Williams, I argue that all of these works in some way anticipate "emergent" forms of coeval belonging unbounded by the racist structures and impingements linking racialized fear and violence to projects of containment, exploitation and extraction. It is on imaginative terrain that the repressive state can be ontologically undone and displaced with a new, egalitarian vision, however inchoate or implicit.

Furthermore, I believe that the writers' "security poetics" may be considered in opposition to the state's "pacification *prosaics*," a related, but distinct assemblage of rhetorical and instrumental technologies meant to render myriad patterns of disciplinary race-making (including un- and re-making) corporeal and/or classed stratifications more broadly, not to

[9] In using the term "prosaics" and opposing it to "poetics," I borrow from Gary Saul Morson's notion of "Prosaics" as an alternative approach to conceptualizing the literary work performed by novels in relation to lived experience; however, the overlap essentially stops there, as I don't share Morson's desire to return to a shared, non-disputable consensus of the "everyday" or position the novel (through its use of *prose*) as the champion form for such an endeavor. It must be stated that I also dispute the very advisability of such an undertaking, given its terrible potential to simply (re-)invisiblize the horrific violence of state disciplinary regimes by positioning them outside of the realm of so-called "common experience" cohered through the consensus of an imagined "collective" (because, it should go without saying, the "collective," through its formalization vis-á-vis experiential and existential overlap, would necessarily preclude access to, or awareness of such variously mutilating forms of exception). See: Morson, Gary Saul. *Prosaics and Other Provocations: Empathy, Open Time, and the Novel*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1zxshvj.

mention reactive forms of military/police-power *prosaic,* or "normal." Rather than imaginative works, pacification prosaics are most readily gleamed through so-called *factual* works instantiating the evidently exceptional workings of state terror as "business as usual." Pacification prosaics' master form, therefore, is not the novel—though it may reside there by way of artistic channelings of hegemonic logics, as well as subversive sampling—but the text of official euphemism, of indecipherable legislation whose very tedium acts as a soporific enabler of racialized violence and deprivation. Appendix A, Image 1 of the dissertation provides a visual rendition of the mutually enabling friction that binds security poetics and pacification prosaics.

"Poetics" versus "prosaics" is a binaristic schema, but I believe it is appropriate and warranted given that the defense of state power is often *inherently* reactionary to the creativity of resistance.[10] More conceptually, "poetics" and "prosaics" as I use them here should *not* be taken to indicate linguistic genres so much as modes of signification. As Todorov reminds us, the object of the study of "poetics" is not so much the gnomic kernel of meaning inherent to one work versus another so much as the larger field of *signification* in which the work partakes and that it reinforces (33). Thus, by not using "pacification poetics," for example, or "security prosaics," I do not mean to suggest that pacification cannot approximate poetic means of substantiation, or that artistic works of resistance are in themselves inherently *poetic*. Rather, I am attempting to theorize categories borrowed from structuralist modes of analysis that can productively index the nuanced relationship between creative resistance and hegemonic means of pacification. "Poetics" indicates not poetry *per se* so much as a field of creative signification.

[10] See, for example, Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump*. Oxford University Press, 2018 (4, 25, and passim) and Singh, Nikhil Pal. *Black Is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*. Harvard University Press, 2005 (10).

"Prosaics" is not limited to "prose" as such, but to reactionary rationales of and for the purposes of pacification.

The conceptualization of a "poetics" of resistance acting in dialectical push-and-pull with hegemonic "prosaics" is inspired by Tzvetan Todorov's "Introduction to Verisimilitude" and Ranjit Guha's "Prose of Counter-Insurgency." The choice of Todorov might seem counterintuitive given his documented refusal to acknowledge the political significance of the US Black struggle. Reid Miller discusses how this refusal compromises Todorov's ethics of criticism in works such as *Hope and Memory: Lessons from the Twentieth Century,* in which the formalist critiques the African American community for "inability to overcome traumas of past history" and dismisses present-day invocations of anti-black racism as the casting of a "sympathy card" (qtd. in Miller 727). Also noteworthy in this regard is Todorov's rejection of 2005 uprisings in the *banlieues* as the nihilistic pageantry of youth who were emulating "rappers from Los Angeles" (ibid). This critical myopia is all the more puzzling given Todorov's generally sophisticated attention to how systems of meaning interface with various forms of political marginalization and oppression (cf, *The Conquest of America*).

Nevertheless, I believe Todorov's insights, along with Guha's, retain important relevance to the Black Freedom Struggle that transcends these critical limitations. I also believe that formalist discourse can provide key analytics to considering the dynamics of racism. While scholars such as Falguni A. Sheth and Beth Coleman have written of race as a "technology," I argue it might be more apt to consider race as a *form,* one that constricts the movement of language and colonizes epistemologies. I further contend that such a substitution would not invalidate the potentially beneficial aspects of the "race-as-technology" paradigm that Coleman offers—if anything, viewing race as a form has, to my mind, the advantage of reducing the

potential mystification that constructs such as "technology" can lend to the category of race, however inadvertently. Race-as-form also has the added advantage of bringing some analytical clarity to the at times reactionary dismissal of conversations of racism that disqualify race as a "fiction" when even the most casual reading of history or passive perusal of news headlines reveals that, to accept this argument, we would have to change our definition of "fiction" to something that can fire bullets or drop bombs. By contrast, thinking of race as a form allows for the understanding of race as a fictive *technique* that continues to guide procedural narratives of regulation even when not explicitly pronounced.

In his essay, Todorov draws a distinction between the "truth" and "verisimilitude," with the latter constituting "an impression" of truth (80). In contrast to an instrumental view of language as merely a symbolic mirror of the "real" world, discourses (such as the discourse of law, Todorov's first example) do *not* passively reflect society or the world, but act according to their own internal regulations.[11] This is why, as Todorov explains, when it comes to legal proceedings "To win the trial, it is more important to speak well than to have behaved well" (ibid). Todorov then cites Plato's lament that in the courtroom it is not truth that is valued so much as persuasion, "'and persuasion depends upon verisimilitude'" (Plato qtd. in ibid). Due to the chasm separating truth and verisimilitude,

> …discourse, narrative, ceases to be, in the speaker's consciousness, a docile reflection of events and acquires an independent value. Thus words are not simply the transparent names of things, they form an autonomous entity governed by its own laws and susceptible of being judged for itself. The importance of words exceeds that of the things they were supposed to reflect…Studying verisimilitude is equivalent to showing that discourses are not governed by a correspondence with their referent but by their own laws, and to denouncing the phraseology which, within these discourses, would make us believe the contrary. We must disengage language from its illusory transparence, learn to perceive it, and at the same time study its techniques of disappearing… before our eyes. (80-1)

[11] This is a sentiment relayed with poignant economy in an objection by the fictional professor William Stoner: "Sure, everything you say is a fact, but none of it is true. Not the *way* you say it." *Stoner,* John Williams. New York: *New York Review Books.* 1965. 175, emphasis mine.

Even in a historical moment overdetermined by so many "post-" periodizations (postmodern, postcolonial, etc.) it might seem strange to consider language as operating in accordance with its own internal codes. After all, wouldn't the assumption that the relays between language and reality are far more artificial than common sense would seem to suggest mitigate the ability to identify the agents of repression that weaponize language for the purposes of hierarchical dispossession? In fact, it is my contention that a disconnect between language and truth à la Todorov's schematization can help demonstrate how the notion of a perfect correspondence between language and social reality is one of the primary conceits that allows pacification prosaics to continue substantiating claims for the necessity of various forms of regular and regulatory violence to continue *ad infinitum.* Narratives instantiating racial-imperial interpellations of "Others" and/or "Other-spaces" are socially baseless *and* continuous with the discursive web of sedimented hegemonic nationalist ethos.

Furthermore, Todorov's notion of "poetics" will also be of great utility for my project:

> what [poetics] studies is not poetry or literature but "poeticity" or "literariness." The individual work is not an ultimate goal for poetics; if it pauses over one work rather than another, it is because such a work reveals more distinctly the properties of literary discourse. ("Poetics and Criticism" 33)

"Poetics," by Todorov's definition, is the analysis of discursive properties, meaning that works are scrutinized for the extent to which they constitute an emblematic constellation of rhetorical tendencies and conventions rather than for the sake of a simple exercise in critical possibility. And while "poetics" *can* comprise poetry, it is not limited to it, for poetics refers to a type of analysis rather than particular forms—i.e., "Poetics will have to study not the already existing literary forms but, starting from them, a sum of possible forms: what literature *can* be

rather than what it *is*" (ibid). In the end, "The literary work does not have a form and a content but a structure of significations whose relations must be apprehended" (41).

I supplement Todorov's notion of "poetics" and "verisimilitude" with Ranjit Guha's delineation of a "prose of counter-insurgency," a rhetorical matrix of common registers and assumptions that dehumanized the insurgent peasantry of the Indian Raj by denying them the role of agents of their own destinies, instead reducing them to reactionary caricatures guided by unprocessed impulse.[12] The "code of counter-insurgency" (70), as Guha terms it, is exemplified in three types of sources: primary, secondary, and tertiary, each distinguished by their proximity to the moment of uprisings and policy discourse. "Secondary discourse" that is written in the immediate aftermath of uprisings constitutes a form of "*colonialist knowledge*" (ibid) when it functions as essentially an extension of colonial policy: "Historiography too adapted itself to the relations of power under the Raj and was harnessed more and more to the service of the state" (ibid). But even later historiography that is ostensibly liberal to leftist and sympathetic to insurgents can redeploy the "code of counter-insurgency," particularly when it exhibits "the same disdain for the political consciousness of the peasant masses when it is mediated by religiosity" (79). Colonialists, liberals and leftists, policy makers and historiographers alike are all capable of participating in and validating a larger semantic network of pacification that elides the possibility of an autonomous insurgent consciousness. I have mentioned earlier that it *is* possible for creative works to exhibit pacification prosaics. Indeed, such a possibility is necessary to understanding the symbiotic relationship between hegemonically acquiescent cultural productions and disciplinary and carceral institutions. But in accordance to what Guha describes in this instance, it is also paramount to understand how a work can exhibit pacification prosaics *irrespective of an artist's intentions*.

[12] I thank David Lloyd for suggesting this pairing.

Pacification prosaics must be subjected by the resistant practice of "reading" in Todorov's sense: "A reading's object is the singular text; its goal, to dismantle the system of that text. It strives, with the help of language, to grasp the work as pure difference" (237). While Todorov concedes that it is "impossible" to realize such a goal, a critical "reading" of pacification prosaics must operate in tandem with the constant refinement of security poetics, of new possibilities of belonging and resistance that seek an alternative to contemporary hegemonic paradigms. To reject the set of values which hegemony has conditioned us to believe is the most familiar and relatable as "pure difference," as a sign-system that is in fact "alien" to social reality may be impossible, especially conceptually, but the achievement of such symbolic emancipation is vital for the realization of material liberation. This entails, in the end, a total *Aufhebung,* or sublation, a transcendence of the dialectic that frames security poetics and pacification prosaics. The literal feasibility of such a development cannot interfere with the insurgent optimism that realizes it must be so. Here, it might also be useful to recall Édouard Glissant's description of poetics as *"a theory that tries to conclude, a presence that concludes (presumes) nothing. Never one without the other"* (*Poetics of Relation:* GENERALIZATION).

Caught in an unending push-and-pull relationship with the efforts and energies of its hegemonic doppelgänger, security poetics continues to try and outflank pacification prosaics, an effort through which it is defined even as it is also negated. Transcendence remains an energizing catalyst for its creativity even as, or precisely because, its realization would mark an impossible end in every sense of the term.

Discipline and Racialize

References to the "disciplinary" certainly evoke the writings of Michel Foucault, specifically *Discipline and Punish* (1975). And while I draw from Foucault's qualifications of

the quotidian[13] methods and technologies of punishment, surveillance and incarceration, these will not be my exclusive reference points for the aforementioned topics given several issues: the first is the general absence of racism as a category of analysis within Foucault's schematization of the prison system. Given my focus on the US, this is a serious omission. As importantly addressed by Angela Y. Davis in "Racialized Punishment and Prison Abolition,"

> As interesting as it may be, however, to examine the influences of the earlier European models on the emergent US prison system, what may help us to understand the way in which this system would eventually incorporate, sustain and transform structures and ideologies of racism is an examination of the impact of the institution of slavery on US systems of punishment. Beyond slavery… a more expansive analysis of US historical specificities might serve as the basis for a genealogy of imprisonment that would differ significantly from Foucault's. Such a genealogy would accentuate the links between confinement, punishment and race. At least four great systems of incarceration could be identified: the reservation system, slavery, the mission system, and the internment camps of WWII. Within the US incarceration has thus played a pivotal role in the histories of Native Americans and people of African, Mexican, and Asian descent. In all of these cases, people were involuntarily confined and punished for no reason other than their race or ethnicity. (360-361).

Second is the large-scale silence (even, especially, from Foucault himself) around how Foucault's evolution into the theorist of "power" who would produce texts such as *Discipline and Punish* was clearly influenced by the Black Panther Party. According to Brady Thomas Heiner:

> Much more so than his return to the texts of Nietzsche, Marx, or Clausewitz… Foucault's shift from archaeological inquiry to genealogical critique is motivated more fundamentally by his encounter with American-style racism and class struggle, and by his engagement with the political philosophies and documented struggles of the Black Panther Party. The standard story given by 'monumentalist' accounts is that Foucault arrived at the genealogical method through his reading of Nietzsche, which he is purported to have discovered through his reading of Heidegger. Such a story is at worst distorted, at best one-

[13] D.A. Miller provides a wonderful overview of Foucault's schematization of how discipline emerges as a unique "technology" of regulation that is irreducible to the spectacular violence of state institutional power. Instead, discipline is a "softer" means of control implemented within virtually all social spheres that encompasses even the most minute activity. Even individual (bourgeois) subjectivity becomes conditioned, so that psychic apprehension is in a sense continuous with the state's proscriptions. Such a state of affairs, according to Foucault, reflects the "reformation" of state regulation away from a focus on wounding the body in favor of cultivating social normativity (saving the "soul"). See: D.A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police.* Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press. 1988. (18).

> sided. If Nietzsche features prominently in Foucault's genealogical turn, it is, I argue, because the philosophies and struggles of the Black Panthers led Foucault both to Nietzsche and to genealogy as a method of historico-political critique. The urban insurrection of US black liberationists and black liberationist knowledges during the 1960s and early 1970s preceded and predelineated Foucault's project of 'desubjugating historical knowledges.' ("Foucault and the Black Panthers" 314).

The point here is not to somehow invalidate Foucault through a kind of intellectual sleight of hand, but rather to demonstrate why this project aims to supplement his writings on "disciplinary regimes" and "power" with the insights of coeval thinkers, writers and political figures and formations, at times even privileging their insights as sufficiently theoretical in and of themselves. Where words and struggles pertaining to political and racialized disciplinarity have been covered up, admitted entry only through appropriately mediated (Heiner might say "monumentalist") forms of intellectual output, it is the aim of this project to challenge these dilutions and provide, as much as possible, direct engagement with the source material.

Returning to Twain's novel, there are several key logics to the manner in which Jim is put "undercover" as a means of concealing his "hyper-visible" status as a fugitive slave that are worth commenting upon. The "dead dull solid blue, [suggesting] a man that has been drowned nine days" (ibid) in which Jim is painted connotes an ominous foreshadowing of the potential hazards ahead, including possibilities of a watery death (even assuming Jim and Huck manage to elude all who seek Jim's recapture). Yet the plausibility of such a disguise (blue paint, anachronistic vestments, not to mention the wigwam, a synecdotal evocation of romanticized Indigeneity) constituting an "authentic" representation of Arab racial verisimilitude[14] (however

[14] While this description does not address gender outright, the discourse of "Othering" that Said refers to as Orientalism is in fact gendered in key ways, including not only the erotic passivity and helplessness of the ideal "Oriental" female, but also the necessarily "feminine" nature of the men who constitute the obverse of empire's virile actors. Chizuko Ueno writes that the association of "the Orient" with 'femininity" was historically and politically contingent, only ascending to semantic coherence

suspended we may assume the incredulity of the antagonists of Twain's novel are by virtue of its satirical register) is also a contingent meta-commentary upon the curious, if ever-evolving racial character with which "the Arab" is positioned in the American imagination.[15] For the novel's generic grounding in the *bildungsroman* vein—and here we would do well to recall Toni Morrison's assertion that Huck's coming of age is directly predicted upon Jim's slave status—[16]this scene's discursive[17] echoes are surely to be found in the work of Edgar Allan Poe, for

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> from the time of the rise of European imperialism. The medieval Muslim world, which once surpassed Europe in terms of advanced science and technology and whose military power also threatened it, could never be referred to by feminized metaphors. (4)

Ueno argues that the inherent feminization of "the Orient" in hegemonic Western discourse inevitably means that "Oriental men have been femininized," though the corollary of this assertion is that "Oriental women have been doubly feminized" (ibid). I mention this because the gendered implications of Orientalist discourse leave room to suggest that the "disguise" foisted upon Jim distances him from potential legibility within the rubrics of white, male hegemonic American masculinity even as it also hints at extra-national provenance and racial peculiarity. See: Chizuko Ueno, "In the Feminine Guise: A Trap of Reverse Orientalism." *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal. English Supplement*
No. 13 (1997), pp. 3-25 (23 pages)

[15] I use "America/American" in place of "U.S." for the reasons outlined by Steven Salaita in *Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine:*

> All nations, states, and territories are ideas and mythologies in addition to physical spaces, but the idea and myth of "America" resonate in distinctive ways as both a colonial archetype and a geography that traverse languages and borders. Although "America"—and any other identifier not belonging to a Native language—is a colonial locution, it is inclusive of North and South America as well as the Caribbean, regions whose decolonization (and colonization) is ongoing. (*Inter/Nationalism* xi).

[16] Morrison writes that

> there is no way, given the confines of [Twain's] novel, for Huck to mature into a moral human being *in America* without Jim. To let Jim go free, to let him enter the mouth of the Ohio River and pass into free territory, would be to abandon the whole premise of the book. Neither Huck nor Mark Twain can tolerate, in imaginative terms, Jim freed. That would blast the predilection from its mooring… freedom has no meaning to Huck or to the text without the specter of enslavement, the anodyne to individualism; the yeardstick of absolute power over the life of another; the signed, marked, informing, and mutating presence of a black slave. (*Playing in the Dark* 56, emphasis in original)

whom the merest approximation of "Oriental" identity and temperament suggests an extra-temporality of not only transnational and trans-historical character (with the latter often achieved by way of metempsychosis) but even *otherworldly* dimensions—with all of the occult, unsettling powers[18] such an origin may suggest to the nervous American imagination. Just what *could* Twain's patchwork Arab do when *"out of his head?"* Morrison writes of the novel's reliance on the "mutating presence of a black slave" (*Playing in the Dark* 56). While she most likely intended "mutation" to encompass the political and existential vagaries of Jim's perpetually liminal status as an enslaved character, Morrison's term also evokes the fugitive potentialities of alterity that the political grammar of Twain's novel fashions into a kind of *deux ex machina*. Thinking through how a racially re-configured, "sick," or *mad* disguise can conceivably facilitate escape recalls Therí Pickens' observations on the fraught, contentious and at times contradictory relationship Blackness and madness frequently occupy within American literature.[19] As Pickens rightfully observes, and as evident here, this relationship is often most evident "within the fissures, breaks, and gaps in critical and literary texts" (*Black Madness::Mad Blackness* 3).

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[17] Said contends that Orientalism constitutes a larger discourse in the Foucauldian sense, for only by such a framing can we understand how "European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient" in myriad ways, including "imaginatively" (*Orientalism* 3). Understanding the ideological underpinnings of Orientalist texts (both intellectual and artistic) that acted in tandem with, resulted from and reinforced Western colonial expeditions within the East as part of a wider discourse is also essential to laying bare how colonial ontologies could inflect the imaginative production of regions without a direct imperial tie to the East.

[18] I am indebted to the work of Mallini Johar Schueller, whose *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation and Gender, 1790—1890* (1998) productively expands Said's original notion of Orientalism to include the unique character of nascent American empire as well as the pluralistic nature of the multiple "Orients" to be found within early American literature (whose variations, as Schueller rightly notes, are also attributable to the particular character of American white supremacy and patriarchy).

[19] Pickens writes,

> Black madness and mad Blackness are not interchangeable or reciprocal. Rather, they foreground the multiple and, at times, *conflicting* epistemological and ontological positions at stake when reading the two alongside each other. (*Black Madness::Mad Blackness* 3, emphasis mine)

Furthermore, Jim's forced Orientalist "mutation" prefigures the fluctuating and unstable natures and relationships of American racial formations, eventually encompassing the precarious if provisional ties between Arabness and whiteness (which could be achieved through contrast with Blackness in early Arab immigrant history), and suggests the contingent capaciousness of the category of "Arab" in the early nationalist imaginary.[20] And yet, Twain's prefatory textual threats imbue the gleaning of such insights with grave risks: anyone who comes too close to addressing the "moral" character of American racism may very well be "banished" from the epistemological borderlands of national coherence. And anyone who dares piece together the "plot" of the story of America's consecration through the subjugation of various subaltern populations "will be shot." The resonance of these limitations are not restricted to the realm of American aesthetics.

Never wholly distinct from the literary-cultural sphere,[21] American disciplinary paradigms over the centuries would come to evolve in response not only to particular patterns of race-making and repression, but also the subsequent slippages and ambivalences within the fictional coherence of the legal and socio-political indexes of race—underscoring such concerns with the utmost urgency.

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[20] In *American Arabesques,* Jacob Rama Berman describes how "Arab" was used at various points to refer to Native Americans and African Americans as well as immigrant peddlers from Southwest Asia and North African (SWANA).

[21] For an in-depth look at the importance of early popular detective fiction in fortifying and inspiring the character and allure of the FBI, the Bureau's extensive spying upon African American writers and production of faux African American literature, as well as the subsequent porousness between the elite world of "New Criticism" and the CIA and the FBI, see William Maxwell's *F.B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature* (2015). For an exploration of how fictional texts reinforce covert governmental operations as well as public fascination with them, see Timothy Melley's *The Covert Sphere: Secrecy, Fiction, and the National Security State* (2012). For a discussion of increasingly direct government involvement in the film and television industries (usually as a means of proclaiming the inherent necessity of lax regulations upon torture, detention, military aggression and even perpetual warfare as a means of ensuring American existential sanctity) from the Bush era onwards, see Mustafa Bayoumi's *This Muslim American Life: Dispatches from the War on Terror* (2015) (217-239).

Twain's writing is, of course, an intriguing entrance into these matters given the peculiar if inconsistent nature of the racial politics operative in his texts, not to mention his fascination with Palestine or, "The Holy Land." Hilton Obenzinger treats the relationship between both facets of Twain's output in *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*, importantly emphasizing how it was Twain's mock-travel text, *Innocents Abroad* that launched Clemens' literary celebrity vis a vis his immensely successful public debut as "Mark Twain" (Obenzinger 165). Twain, as "one of the boys" (ibid) vicariously guided scores of American readers on a uniquely irreverent pilgrimage to the "Holy Land." Traversing "exotic" geographies with a sacred association (whose Western iteration was in fact enabled through conscious interference as well as imperial exacerbation of sectarian strife under the *millet* system) and seeing its local "Others" thus becomes a mechanism for the epistemological shoring-up of a national identity actively consecrated through enslavement and settler-colonial genocide. "Others"/"Other-spaces"[22] become useful for the white, male Western gaze as a negative foil for the integrity of an ultimately unstable and anxious vision of "America" whose "exceptionalism" was often to be procured through symbolic contrast and physical subjugation.[23]

[22] "Other-spaces" as a neologism intersects in intriguing ways with Foucault's pronouncements in "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias." In this essay, Foucault distinguishes between Utopias and what he terms "Heterotopias," which are places simultaneously inside, or at least connected to society, and yet at epistemological odds with its quotidian status quo by various measures. Like Foucault, I am less interested in "Utopia" than in the divergent symbolic configurations of space that emerge from social stratification. Additionally, I am also interested in how the Othering of a space that is both within and without hegemonic society can result in alternate conceptions of time (which Foucault terms "heterochronies"), and my wider thematic range encompasses colonized Indigenous lands (which Foucault defines as a "heterotopia of compensation") and the prison ("heterotopia of deviation"). But unlike Foucault, my interest is more broadly in how the "Othering" of a contingently subaltern/subjugated figure can be extrapolated by hegemonic convention into the "space" within which said figure is interpellated. I therefore consider "Other-spaces" to be significantly, even if incompletely distinct from "heterotopia." See: Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16 (Spring 1986), 22-27.

[23] The critical act in this instance becomes its own form of going "undercover" to excavate, or make "visible" what has been buried within a sedimented, hegemonic unconscious—though even this dominant act of "covering up" is never complete; there will always be ripples, echoes, and intrusions, however partial, of the (hi)stories, struggles,

And yet, as Twain's examples demonstrate, the borders of this vision were far from stable. "Others" can be internal as well as external, the unsettled frontier/the plantation as much an "Other-space" as any foreign nation. While the material realities characterizing the projects of American settlement, enslavement, colonialism and imperialism would evolve and accelerate over the centuries, the symbolic system fashioning American identity through identitarian contrast and negation was already well in place (Obenzinger 166). Twain's travelogue, rife with slippery (and slipping) associations between the "savage" Arabs of the Holy Land and the Native Americans of the American frontier (221), as well as a pointed ambivalence regarding the mass relocation of African Americans from US soil as an appropriate response to slavery (225), evidences an early distillation of the cultural mechanisms by which an ever-fraught notion of "American" identity would be advanced, fortified, and defended.

The "literary" is thus quite proximate to the institutional/political logic that would continuously manufacture and conflate "Others" and "Other-spaces" over the years as a means of ensuring the "protection" of an inherently "American" way of life, from the early years of settlement, the institution of slavery and, later, Jim Crow, to the colonization of the Philippines

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and linkages that American disciplinary convention would prefer remained buried. But the graves are shallow, the spirits often far closer to flesh and blood than we would be led to believe.

In making these observations I am indebted to Frederic Jameson's notion of the "political unconscious," which describes the attempt to

seek a latent meaning behind a manifest one, to rewrite the surface categories of a text in the stronger language of a more fundamental interpretive code. This is perhaps the place to answer the objection of the ordinary reader, when confronted with elaborate and ingenious interpretations, that the text means just what it says… If everything were transparent, then no ideology would be possible, and no domination, either. (*Political Unconscious* 60-61)

But I am compelled also to note an unfortunately far-less credited, though no less fundamental source, Jonah Raskin, whose conception of the "mythology" of imperialism also plays a profound role in my own work. In the introduction to the 2009 re-issue of his 1971 text, Raskin writes that by using "mythology," he "meant to suggest a structure of feelings and attitudes that permeated works of literature, and which often unconsciously informed the author's outlook" (*Mythology of Imperialism* 20).

and Puerto Rico,[24] Japanese internment, post WWII imperial projects, and the rhetoric of various "internal" wars: on crime, on drugs and, most recently, on "Terror,"[25] all of which consciously blurred the boundaries between the menacingly "exotic" locale and subject and internal "threats" to "stability," "our 'values,'" "law and order," and so forth.

But if the imaginative porousness between race, space and place[26] would assume an ominous character in the hegemonic American cultural imaginary, it would also eventually be

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[24] I follow Obenzinger in drawing a direct line from the early years of American settler-colonialism and slavery to the present; my analysis is thus similarly weighed with "long memories of settlement and annexation" that render

> expropriation of land and destruction or expulsion of indigenous cultures—along with solutions to settler "labor problems" through chattel slavery or other forms of forced labor, the importation of "free labor" through immigration, individual settlement, and other manifestations of expansion—at the core of American cultural experience. (*American Palestine* 9).

I am also influenced by Obenzinger's incisive schematization of America as a hybrid admixture of different forms of colonization (drawn from D.K. Fieldhouse and George M. Fredrickson), including settler-colonization and plantation colonization, to the later "occupation" colonies that would characterize overseas projects of domination and exploitation (ibid). Rather than situating America as a "post"-colonial nation whose colonial character is of little consequence outside of offshore conquest (with its global imperial powers particularly established following WWII), Obenzinger's framework allows for a more nuanced means of conceptualizing the nation as a pluralistic, even, at various points, *fractional* assemblage of colonialisms (Obenzinger describes the internal schisms of the Civil War around the plantation economy as a "sectional division" (11) within a greater colonial structure). Thus, however uniquely, unevenly or divergently it seems to meet this designation, America is a *colonial* nation historically *and* presently.

[25] I will always render "terror" and "terrorism"/"terrorist" in quotation marks as a matter of procedure. The purpose of this rendition is to offset the state logic seeking to turn a historically contingent racial construct of deviance into an ontological paradigm of racialization with transhistorical currency.

[26] This is, of course, an illusion instrumental to the ascension and preservation of capitalist hegemony. As Neil Smith writes,

> …early human societies did not differentiate between place and society. In immediate experience all places are imbued with social meaning. There is no abstract space beyond place and no place beyond society. Place and society are fused as a unity. Such societies inhabit natural space, meaning quite literally the space created out of natural processes, activities, and forms, social or otherwise. Place is treated in terms of social relations which themselves have not developed beyond the natural state.
>
> With the development of social economies based on commodity exchange, a second nature emerges and with it a crack in the unity of place and nature. This… marked the origin of the increasingly abstract conception of space employed in physical science… This conception of space is not tied to immediate place but implies the possibility of abstracting from immediate place, and of the conceiving of spatial extension beyond immediate experience. As a

inflected with a radical charge, appropriated and redeployed against oppressive forces, processes and institutions by writers mounting alternative visions of affinity, affiliation, solidarity, and resistance that limned the distance of imperial/colonial cartographies and national subjugation—what Alex Lubin has termed "geographies of liberation."[27] In distinguishing space from place, I do not intend to impose a rigid boundary between the two categories so much as to evoke the (often implicitly) assumed distinction between settled social "place" and ambiguous, external "space." Yet the fictive status of "space" as a category is crucial to my analysis. I argue that the writers under investigation in this dissertation both challenged the racial, colonial and imperial category of an ominous "space" lurking beyond the "place" of the state comfortably compartmentalized along the differential axes of race, gender and class by rendering seemingly foreign areas into "places" whose familiarity is cohered through a sense of overlaps in struggles for freedom and self-determination, of visions of a global "place" free from the killing, incarcerating and surveilling powers of hierarchical security apparatuses and institutions. The blurring of "race" and "space," and this duality's seeming opposition from hegemonic social

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> result the conceptual fusion of space and society is broken, and space begins to develop an independent conceptual existence. (*Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space* 108).

[27] Lubin writes:

> geographies of liberation are dialectical spaces produced in the collision between nationalism and colonialism, on the one hand, and subaltern decolonial and liberation politics, on the other. This collision produces a transgressive geography in which Afro-Arab intellectuals have articulated political imaginaries beyond nationalism and colonialism. The geographies of liberation are thus spaces of dissonance produced when the exile compares the world as it is with a restructured world he or she would like to create. More specifically [and more to my purposes] geographies of liberation are constituted by moments when black intellectuals—in the U.S., in the Caribbean, in Egypt, in Palestine, in Israel, and *of* multiple places and juridical formations—developed radical political understandings of liberation that emerged through a comparative and spatial politics between the United States and Palestine and, later, Israel. (*Geographies of Liberation* 7)

"place," was thus a symbolic technology of power, but also a repurposed means of challenging said power through the imaginative labor of fiction. A disciplinary racial order combines its "Others" with "Other Spaces," but the subjugated resist this deadly fiction through the reverse-invocation of "common *places*."

It is this latter development on which this project is founded: I focus on the writings of African Americans and Arab Americans that engages racialized policing and surveillance in some capacity over a sizeable stretch of decades spanning the Cold War to the War on Terror and beyond. While the chronology seems extensive, I contend that a protracted examination of how the authors in question engaged and even attempted to "write back" against repressive and discriminatory disciplinary paradigms can help lend contemporary discussions surrounding policing and surveillance a greater sense of historicity as well as expanding the conceptions of "technology" often at play in such conversations.

It might seem strange to focus on textual representations of racialized policing and surveillance from decades prior, especially when the emergency of contemporary communications technologies, information sharing and Big Data have ushered in a seemingly novel paradigm of racialized monitoring and repression. Andrew Guthrie Ferguson defines "big data policing" as a form of policing at the center of whose future is "data:"

> crime data, personal data, gang data, associational data, locational data, environmental data, and a growing web of sensor and surveillance sources. This big data arises from the expanded ability to collect, store, sort, and analyze digital clues about crime. Crime statistics are mined for patterns, and victims of violence are mapped in social networks. While video cameras watch our movements, private consumer data brokers map our interests and sell that information to law enforcement. Phone numbers, emails, and finances can all be studied for suspicious links. Government agencies collect health, education and criminal records. Detectives monitor public Facebook, Youtube and Twitter feeds. Aggregating data centers sort and study the accumulated information in local and federally funded fusion centers. This is the big data world of law enforcement—still largely in its infancy but offering vastly more incriminating bits of data to use and study. (*The Rise of Big Data Policing* 2-3)

Yet while useful in helping to elucidate contemporary patters of policing and surveillance, Ferguson's study does not interrogate the racial epistemologies underpinning contemporary notions of "crime." This oversight can lead to a truncated understanding of the historical and ontological dimensions driving contemporary projects of policing and surveillance, thereby contributing to a largely cosmetic (as opposed to a paradigmatic) criticism. By contrast, the activists of the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition (SLAPDS) write of the need to center a racial-historical understanding of policing and surveillance. In their report on police surveillance that offers a timeline of the invasive and generalizing processes of interpellation that take place "before the bullet hits the body," SLAPDS writes

> The story of surveillance in these United States needs to begin with the unpacking and debunking of the construction of the "New World" narrative. A world where everything "old" has to be demonized, criminalized, contained, invisibilized. Surveillance is integral to building systems of knowledge and structures of power that serve to preserve and sustain white supremacy and white privilege. Narratives centering the "invasion of privacy" and "violation of civil liberties" undermine a clear analysis that the police state is an ever-expanding endeavor that is fundamentally flawed by design, intended and organized to repress and control Black, Brown and poor communities, causing irreparable physical and emotional harm. ("Before the Bullet Hits the Body" 4)

The language of SLAPDS's report converges with a growing trend in Critical Ethnic Studies to reconsider the so-called "New World" encounter as foundational to modern epistemologies of race and subsequent projects of order, discipline and defense. Tiffany Lethabo King's groundbreaking monograph *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (2019) intervenes in contemporary race analyses by arguing that "New World" enslavement and conquest need to be re-centered as a grounding paradigm for the development of modern racism as well as disrupting overly facile compartmentalizations of Black and Indigenous struggle. King uses the "shoal" as a conceptual lynchpin, given that the shoal is where land and water converge and historically shoals posed a disruptive danger to maritime vessels engaged in voyages of conquest (1-4). The shoal is also a figuration that allows for the

uncoupling of the reductive associations of Blackness with water (the ship) and Indigeneity with land. If both land and water meet at the shoal, Black and Indigenous peoples are linked via the historical and ongoing manifestation of what King calls "conquistador humanism" (16), the exclusionary Eurocentric (and latently Christian) conception of Rational Man defined in contradistinction to Black and Indigenous peoples (16-18). In line with King and SLAPDS's arguments, I propose a reading of policing and surveillance that remains attentive to the ongoing legacies of racial and colonial projects of dispossession upon contemporary configurations of tactics.

To speak of histories and legacies of different forms of racial oppression informing present-day realities should not be taken to imply an unaltered continuity. I follow in the footsteps of scholars of race/ism such as Michelle Alexander, Simone Brown, and Ruha Benjamin in considering the ideological overlaps between ostensibly past paradigms of racism and their contemporary offshoots in modern technological functioning and surveillance praxis. I further build off of the work of scholars such as Therí Pickens, Keith Feldman and Michael Fischbach in thinking through how evolving patterns of antiblack racism interface with overlapping forms of evolving patterns of oppression and monitoring of racialized immigrant populations such as Arabs in the US. At times, these two discrepant experiences of racialization realize convergences—including in moments and forms of solidary resistance. Ultimately, however, I believe it is useful to look to frameworks such as historian Gerald Horne's conception of "white supremacy" as a uniquely American constellation of racial capitalism predicated upon African enslavement and Indigenous genocide as well as (racialized) bourgeois individualism. Such a framework can help explain how America in its full racial and colonial character *can* accommodate political individualization vis-à-vis capitalist accumulation while nevertheless

retaining an active (if simultaneously evolving) racial underbelly of dispossession. This, in tandem with Nikhil Pal Singh's reformulation of the "long civil rights" movement to evoke a sense of an unfinished project of emancipation that realized grave political mutations following important modulations in national patterns of capitalism as well as a confrontation with the resurgence of the American Right that often utilized a race-neutral language for race-specific (i.e., exclusionary and discriminatory) purposes, can help explain the simultaneously evolving and yet incompletely expelled trace of racial subjugation.[28] My study is also greatly indebted to *Race and the Arab Americans Before and After 9/11,* one of the first texts dedicated to moving the academic engagement with "Arab American" identity to a race studies (as opposed to multicultural/US ethnic) framework. In their introduction, the authors periodize the shifting discourses and attendant institutional outgrowths of how Arab immigrants to the US are configured racially. In contrast to other academic historicizations of the shifting racial status of Arabs in the US, such as Sarah Gualtieri's *Between Arab and White,* Jamal and Naber situate "race-based" naturalization, which early Arab Christian ("Syrian") immigrants were generally successful at clearing, within a genealogy of colonial/white supremacist/racist technologies of disciplining and exclusion.[29] Paradoxically, present-day Arab American incorporation into whiteness serves to *obscure* the particular forms of state-sanctioned surveillance and demonization to which Arabs remain subjected in the US. These racialized processes escalated following 9/11, even as they preceded it. Finally, the forced conscription of Arabs into a

[28] See: Gerald Horne, *The Apocalypse of Settler Colonialism: the Roots of Slavery, White Supremacy, and Capitalism in Seventeenth-Century North America and the Caribbean*. Monthly Review Press, 2018 and Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*. Harvard University Press., 2004.

[29] The authors situate race-based naturalization within a wider matrix that includes slavery, Jim Crow, the "one-drop" protocol for racial determinants of Blackness, and "blood quota" measures for determining Native American heritage in furtherance of settler-colonial dispossession and extraction (12).

hegemonic "white" category ignores the discrepancy in material access and mobility that various Arab communities in the US face by precluding access to state resources for relief and restitution.[30]

"Technology" in its most literal sense is often taken to imply a physical assemblage, usually a machine or device, in part or whole. But what I am arguing is that the "technologies" of racial and political repression *as well as* the "technologies" of resistance need to be conceived of in critical terms that accommodate discursive *and* physical dimensions of operation. My schematization of disciplinary discursive strategies as "technologies" in their own right is greatly influenced by Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian and Amira Jarmakani. In *Security Theology, Surveillance and the Politics of Fear,* Shalhoub-Kevorkian documents both the far-reaching, invasive strategies of the colonial Israeli state that variously interrupt and intercept Palestinian lives as well as writing about how "words and images"—the instruments of culture—can themselves "become technologies" for justifying preemptive and constant surveillance and securitization of the racialized and colonized (Palestinian) "Other" (25). In *An Imperialist Love Story: Desert Romances and the War on Terror,* Jarmakani argues that discussions of the protracted and extensive status of the "War on Terror" need to factor in the covert means of imperialism that nudge ongoing projects of dispossession and extraction forward by inculcating a "desire" for their perpetuation on the part of the oppressed. Jarmakani identifies "three broad technologies" that operate in this regard: "security, freedom, and liberal multiculturalism" (24). Most importantly, Jarmakani defends the use of "technology" as a means of encapsulating these tropes because

[30] See: Sarah Parvini and Ellis Simani . "Are Arabs and Iranians White? Census Says Yes, but Many Disagree." *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 28 Mar. 2019, www.latimes.com/projects/la-me-census-middle-east-north-africa-race/.

> the term clearly signals that no direct, unidirectional form of power emanates from a clear intent. Moreover, the technology serves something that is larger than itself, and the subjects (or targets) are bound up in it. As we are intricately bound up in the discourses of security, freedom, and liberal multiculturalism, we can end up contributing to the power of these concepts, even if we do so unwittingly or unwillingly. (24)

My reading of the symbolic and artistic creative praxis of those subjugated by the disciplinary imperatives of American empire (however nascent, however internal and/or external) constituting their own, counter-hegemonic "technologies" is inspired by Chela Sandoval, who in *The Methodology of the Oppressed* puts forth a new means for revolutionary thinking in the present day organized under the "apparatus" of "'love,' understood as a technology for social transformation" (1-2).

The issue of rethinking the discursive dimensions of technological formations also broaches the more philosophical question of to what extent the application of updated research expertise to various mechanisms of communication and monitoring necessarily indicates a new *paradigm* of functionality, as Simone Browne poignantly expresses in *Dark Matters:*

> …rather than seeing surveillance as something inaugurated by new technologies, such as automated facial recognition or unmanned autonomous vehicles (or drones), to see it as ongoing is to insist that we factor in how racism and antiblackness undergird and sustain the intersecting surveillances of our present order… by "intersecting surveillances," I am referring to the interdependent and interlocking ways that practices, performances, and polices regarding surveillance operate. (8-9)

To limit "technology" to being solely physical runs the risk of "covering up" multiple strata of repression and resistance as well as mystifying the nature of surveillance and police-work with an overly "neat," delineable character (precisely the image that cultural disciplinary technologies are intended to foster).

I choose African American and Arab American literatures as subjects for my study for several reasons. First, in line with King's methodologies, I believe that comparison can help offset reductive individualization of particular experiences of racialization and illuminate new

avenues of wider convergence. Here I am also in agreement with Therí Pickens, one of the first scholars to mount a comparative analysis of African American and Arab American literatures, that putting both literatures side-by-side allows for an understanding of how both African Americans and Arab Americans strategically used literature as a vehicle for critiquing Orientalism and racism (*New Body Politics* 6).

Secondly, as historical and contemporary subjects of racialized stigmatization, surveillance and criminalization, I argue that a joint analysis of the oppression of African Americans and Arab Americans can illuminate overlaps within material and discursive patterns of racialization that might otherwise remain hidden, or be kept "undercover." As Pickens writes, "Subscribing to the belief that [African Americans and Arab Americans] exist along a hierarchy of whiteness erases the way racialization of Arabs and Blacks operates along the same volatile fault lines within US political discourse" (7). Importantly, Pickens substantiates this claim by observing how Daniel Patrick Moynihan had both "authored the infamous 'Moynihan report' that pathologized Black families" in addition to having "lobbied the United Nations General Assembly to rescind resolution 3379, which linked Zionism with South African apartheid" (ibid). For Pickens, this conjuncture "highlights the commonalities between anti-Black and anti-Arab racism" (ibid). Keith Feldman argues that Moynihan's seemingly discrepant activities are undergirded by a "broader racial liberal common sense… conjoining anxious investments in Black integration domestically to the projection of U.S. power internationally" (*A Shadow Over Palestine* 44). While I do not argue that what my project defines as security poetics and pacification prosaics are *exclusive* to African American and Arab American literatures, I believe that trying to discern them within both literary traditions can offer fresh insights into the nature of how patterns of racialization such as policing and surveillance begin and continue to operate.

And finally, both African Americans and Arab Americans have directly engaged literature as a means of resistance to the foundational iniquities structuring American hegemony. To name one important example, the Black Arts Movement of the 60's, though short-lived, acted as the "cultural" side of Black Power and sought to create a new form of Black writing that agitated against acquiescence to an oppressive status quo in seeking to instill and express a veritable revolutionary consciousness. Though the movement was short lived, poetry and drama (rather than fiction) were its preferred forms. While not boasting explicit literary movements in quite the same way, Arab American writing became increasingly critical after major historical flashpoints made Arab identity increasingly embattled and precarious: 1967, and 9/11. Carol Fadda-Conrey notes that post 9/11 Arab American writing is significant for demonstrating the porousness between domestic racialization and international imperial and colonial endeavors, resulting in "larger structures of belonging, citizenship, and national membership that exceed and thus transform the limits of the nation-state" (*Contemporary Arab American Literature* 7). Poetry is similarly a preferred medium for these critical expressions within Arab American literature, though the novel is also a popular form. Critical Arab American drama (explored in my final chapter) is a smaller yet emergent genre.

Policing Appeal: The Superhero, The Detective, and The Superhero-Detective

Micol Seigel notes that "police regularly cross whatever lines we think separate civilian from military spheres, doggedly protect private interests or work for market employment, travel abroad, and operate at all levels of government up to the federal scale" (*Violence Work* 13). Blurred boundaries define—and have *always* defined—the institutions of policing and surveillance. The racialized and ambiguous character of policing and surveillance is not a break from, but rather in keeping with the foundational characters of either endeavor. Emerging from,

and informed by colonization and enslavement, policing[31] and surveillance were from the outset repressive and unevenly applied, disproportionately levied against variously subaltern and underprivileged populations.

For instance, despite its polemical title, Kristian Williams' *Our Enemies in Blue: Policing and Power in America* (2015) is a measured and exhaustive study of the genealogies of oppression that shaped the modern institution of policing. Williams painstakingly details how the first attempt to systemize a policing apparatus drew heavily from "lessons" gleamed from the English colonization of Ireland.[32] In the US, this early history was funneled in new directions through the emergence of the Slave Patrols that would lay much of the formative groundwork for the nature and character of American police forces to follow. The police's messy entanglement in the political machines of the early 20th century as well as their protection of business interests in labor disputes would further particularize the nature of police work toward the protection of systems of hierarchical power first and foremost. Williams' ultimate contention is that policing is not devoted to treating *individual* acts of "crime" so much as the *collective* control of "people who stand at the bottom of the social hierarchy… the police act to defend the standing of those with power" (48). It is the interests of "those with power" that determine the norms and "exceptions" permissible to the character of policing.

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[31] I also draw heavily from the collection *The Global Making of Policing: Postcolonial Perspectives,* in putting this history in conversation with an ostensibly novel present. Alfred McCoy's entry, "Capillaries of Empire" lays bare how the paradigm for the surveillance projects that would characterize the modern security state were directly informed by the US colonization of the Philippines. The utilization of telegraphs, dossiers and more geared toward identifying Filipino radicals for the purposes of preemptive incapacitation would eventually be replicated to suppress American labor uprisings. Similarly, John Collins' *Global Palestine* explores in-depth how contemporary American surveillance practices are acquired, honed and refined through imitation of Israel's colonial military occupation of Palestine.

[32] David Lloyd has argued that Irish colonization led to the development of techniques of repression that served as the paradigm for patterns of incarceration and torture that would become increasingly normalized and globalized via the "war on 'terror.'" See: *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity: 1800-2000,* Cambridge University Press, 2011. 13-15.

And these "blurred boundaries" of empire and subjugation naturally translate to the cultural terrain, as reflected in the discursive logics concerning the indeterminacy of the figure of the private detective (e.g., Poe's "tales of ratiocination" starring the private detective C. Auguste Dupin,[33] or Conan Doyle's Sherlock Homes stories) on the literary and pop culture landscapes. Of course, this relationship is by no means one-way: "fact" feeds "fiction" (and vice versa), and American disciplinary institutions maintain an intriguing relationship with the narratives of popular media and narrative. At times this relationship is characterized by interference, and at others, imitation. For example, in *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide,* Richard Gid Powers explains how Warner Brothers' *G-Men* (1935, Dir. William Keighley) "redefined the FBI agent as the latest incarnation of a century-old stereotype in popular entertainment, the action detective hero" (273). But beyond bolstering agents' image, the film also had implications for actual FBI procedure—for instance, the FBI use of a "Public Enemies List" was adopted by the Bureau *after* the film (the practice had started with the press). Also important to note is how the film and the conventions it helped establish were a direct result of pressure put on Hollywood to produce positive representations of police (272). Finally, beyond performing the broader cultural work of inspiring positive popular conceptions of police and various other law enforcement agents, such media often makes the case for reduced restrictions on policing

[33] Poe's work also brings us back to the question of race. Concerning the value system within early American literature that found expression for its ideals of life, freedom and character through contrast with Blackness and slavery, Toni Morrision writes that "No early American writer. . . is more important" (32). Later on in the study, Morrison observes that the formation of the "quintessential American identity," including its aspirations for "authority and absolute power" and standards of reason and order are unthinkable without—indeed, were formed through direct contrast with—enslaved Africans (44-5). White male American subjectivity is thus inscribed as universally (or at least, allegorically, in the sense of serving as a synecdoche for an aspiring settler-nation) "human" through African Othering. These early American discursive ethos—particularly Morrison's elucidation of how various standards of freedom, custom, order and stability are directly facilitated by—indeed, symbiotically bolstered by—the *denial* of freedom to the enslaved form an important node in the larger genealogy of this project.

privileges as well as the necessity of curbing *individual* civil liberties for the defense of *collective* well-being—"law and order," if you will.

In *Prison Literature in America: The Victim as Criminal and Artist* (1989), H. Bruce Franklin provides a concise genealogy of the centrality of the detective trope in fiction to the security of class stratification. Franklin writes:

> …the principal literary form of the capitalist epoch, the novel, emerged in the form of extended prose narratives of the lives of criminals, and… literature about crime and criminals is central to bourgeois culture. Prior to the American and French Revolutions, this literature was concerned almost exclusively with the criminal, and was often told in a picaresque mode, from his or her own point of view. The narrative of the detective appears only after the consolidation of bourgeois power. The bourgeoisie, having emerged from its origin as an illegitimate, even outlaw, class, now begins to view the question of crime and criminals from the point of view of the establishment, of law and order. The key figure here of course is François-Eugène Vidcoq, the ex-convict who founded both the first official detective bureau, the *police de sûreté,* in 1809, and the first private detective agency, in 1832. The narratives attributed to him (probably falsely)—*Mémoires de Vidcoq* (4 vols., 1828-9), *Les Voleurs* (1837), *Les Vrais Mystères de Paris* (1844)—are the fountainhead of modern detective literature. The word "detective" appears first in the English language in 1843 (*Oxford English Dictionary.*) In the 1840s Edgar Allan Poe created the archetypal detective story in which a lone man of genius, relying on his intellect, deftly solves mysteries which puzzle the populace and confuse the authorities. These "tales of ratiocination," like the later adventures of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, represent the era when the bourgeoisie, together with its cultural values, is in unchallenged supremacy. Threats to the bourgeois world order appeared with World War I, the Russian revolution, the developing economic crisis of the 1920s, the worldwide capitalist crash that followed, the emergence of fascism, World War II, and the global era of revolution and national liberation movements that has been developing ever since, especially among nonwhite peoples. In these decades of disintegration for the capitalist world hegemony, a new type of detective fiction has emerged, in which the purported upholder of law and order fights crime less and less through rational intelligence, more and more through fists, brass knuckles, guns, electronic eavesdropping, bombs, broken bottles, or any other available means of proving that occasionally crime doesn't pay. This is the age of Mickey Spillane, *Death Wish, French Connection,* Dirty Harry, and the detective fiction, as well as the life, of E. Howard Hunt. (222-3)

The more the foundations of American hegemony wobble, the more its enforcers, whether institutionally sanctioned or acting as disciplinary "supplements" à la D.A. Miller (20), are granted (and assume) recourse to blatant physical coercion and invasive surveillance. The fact that Franklin makes this observation in a chapter partially dedicated to Chester Himes'

Harlem Detective fiction does not vitiate its strength, given that one possible interpretation for the behavior of Himes' detectives, Grave Digger Jones and Coffin Ed Johnson, is that it may be said to provide a larger commentary upon the inherent violence of policing and police-work.[34] This is less incidental than it may seem at first glance when we weigh it in relation to some of the larger arguments within Franklin's study, which is an extended exploration of how coercive systems and institutions engender unique literary practices that have defined American culture from its very inception, no matter how classed and racial attempts at normative erasure have worked to invisiblize them at various points.

Franklin discusses how the influence of the slave narrative, "truly American… the first genre the United States contributed to the written literature of the world" (5), despite widespread social import and contemporaneous popularity, was eventually expunged from the registers of a more "official" attitude and practice of American letters that went hand-in-hand with the rise of New Criticism, which argued for a leisurely (as opposed to quotidian) understanding of poetic praxis and reception as "an amenity of refined life, the accomplishment of individual *men* of genius whose minds have been enriched by books, leisure, travel, and the philosophical pursuit of ideal truth and beauty" (78, emphasis mine). The establishment of a literary canon, of a "national" semblance of literary "maturity," was thus predicated upon the exclusion of some of the most oppressed voices in national history, from the enslaved to the imprisoned. Literary

[34] Franklin writes,

> Himes' Black killer-detectives protect the people of Harlem by enforcing upon them the law and order of white capitalist America, doing this with a brutal and often literally blind violence their white colleagues can no longer employ with impunity, often committing more crimes than they solve. They embody what they represent, the ultimate stage of social disorder masquerading as order. For in their blindness and rage, they are always in the process of discovering that the real criminals are the masters of American society, and that the people Coffin Ed and Graver Digger are attacking are their own brothers and sisters and sons. (224)

"refinement" in this instance refers to the cultivation of a veritable apartheid mentality of cultural elevation and elitism. But the erasure was never complete, and these literatures continued to exercise pressure upon the "ganglia" of mainstream culture, "pinch by precision pinch,"[35] for all of their would-be academic ghettoization.

If the writings of the variously "outlaw" and "criminal" classes were suppressed by the literary establishment even as they continued to exert some relevance upon the broader mainstream, then the question of cultural "order" becomes continuous with such suppression. This, in turn, grants the fictional trope of the detective which, as previously discussed, emerges in historical and existential interrelation to the integrity of bourgeois modernity, even more relevance to these broader issues. Relatedly, the superhero's origins are often attributed to Baroness Von-Orczy's Scarlett Pimpernel character from 1901. According to Sally Dugan, "As the mild-mannered man who shows one face to the world, but is secretly a man of action, the Scarlet Pimpernel has spawned a race of hidden heroes."[36] This origin is especially telling in that it perfectly captures collective liberal anxieties of radical and/or militant tendencies being channeled into an imperative for vigilante action.[37] (The Pimpernel was an aristocratic dandy by

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[35] Pynchon, Thomas. *The Crying of Lot 49.* New York: Perennial Classics, 1999. (101)

[36] See: *Baroness Orczy's The Scarlet Pimpernel: A Publishing History.* Routledge, 2014.

[37] Political radicalism and militancy as cause for anxiety warranting various degrees of containment, incapacitation and even liquidation has long been a hallmark of American legal and fictional discourses. Vlatka Velcic writes of the

> well-known staple of American official and popular imagination, the connection between the 'terrorist' and the 'leftist.' Since World War Two, and despite the current focus on Muslim fundamentalists, many American narratives about terror and terrorism continue to fashion American leftists always as potential 'terrorists' while most imagined 'terrorists' turn out to be if not members of a leftist group then definitely proponents of leftist ideology. (406)

Crucially, Velcic describes the fluidity of the process whereby political and identitarian Otherness inform one another: "Political 'Others' just like other others marked by gender, class, ethnicity or sexual preference, inevitably carry marks on their bodies" (413). See: "Reshaping Ideologies:

day, and by night a masked vigilante who rescued aristocrats sentenced to execution during the "Reign of Terror").[38] Such origins prefigure and were to guide the dynamics that would shape superhero and detective (at times, superhero-detective) narratives and representations to come. And the boundaries between fact and fiction are less neat than common sense would suggest, when we recall the intense surveillance and police harassment to which various American leftist/radical organizations were subjected.

Huey P. Newton's *War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America,* which began as Newton's doctoral dissertation for the History of Consciousness program at UC Santa Cruz (1980), is an invaluable reference-point regarding such political crackdowns. Because Newton's persona (as well as that of the Black Panther Party, collectively) at times tends to overshadow his actual analytical proclamations (something to which Newton himself alludes in the introductory pages of his study), it might be worth spending some time with Newton's

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Leftists as Terrorists/Terrorists as Leftists in DeLillo's Novels." *Studies in the Novel,* Vol. 36, No. 3. The John Hopkins University Press. Pp. 405-418. Fall 2004.

[38] In *Culture and the State* (1998), David Lloyd and Paul Thomas explore how cultural works and precepts (primarily aesthetic and philosophical) instantiate a particular notion of the state as the ultimate extension of the collective will of the populace. This is often achieved through the latently "disciplinary" idealizations of speculative "distance," often intended to preemptively delegitimize participation in the political tumult of contemporary affairs as intellectually suspect, betraying the exalted necessity of quotidian nonchalance for the easy gains of "immediate" participation. The French Revolution plays an important role in both authors' politico-aesthetic genealogy:

> In the wake of the failure of the French Revolution to make good on its promise to emancipate Man by way of politics—and of its devolution into Terror—whatever ideals of transparency informed the revolutionary sensibility were displaced by a number of concepts that we can summarize as designating modes of identification. Identification of the individual subject with the state is to be achieved through the intervention of culture, which acts as supplement to a state perceived to be not yet equal to its ethical idea. Two conditions make possible this identification: first, that culture… represent what it claims to be the fundamentally common identity of all humans; and second, that the state be conceived ideally as the disinterested and ethical representative of this common identity. (47)

The covert inculcation for the various disciplinary institutions of the state via pop culture (including police procedurals/dramas and hero/super-hero/detective narratives) can be seen as a somewhat cruder example of the disciplinary functions of culture identified by Lloyd and Thomas.

dissertation, given that it is not merely an index of different instances of government repression, but rather an attempt to frame such instances within a larger critical framework.

Newton begins by arguing that political governmental repression in the US is the direct outgrowth of two never fully resolved issues within the organizational structure of American government, "class and racial cleavages" and the American ruling class's "inherent and longstanding distrust of any institutionalized democracy involving the mass population" (5). Both of these inaugural fissures had set in motion a "debilitating dialectic" that continues to wreak havoc up to the very present (ibid). The first issue was justified by the Founding Fathers under the pretense of a "'limited' representative or republican form of democracy," but

> this intent… was mocked by the peculiar contradiction that the populace to be served by the new government included sizable sectors which were not to be regarded as beneficiaries of even the most "limited" promise of democracy. African Americans, Native Americans, and, to a lesser extent, women were never presumed to be within the pale of either hopes or guarantees related to the practice of democracy. This marked exclusion in the idealism of America's founders might well be regarded as the original wellspring of dissent in America, for what is all too apparent is the fact that democracy is a dynamic and infections idea. It is an idea which inspires the hope of universal inclusion. Thus, it may subsequently have been predicted that the arbitrary, capricious, and sinister exclusion of large sectors of the American population from the hopes inspired by the rhetoric of a fledgling democracy would give rise to the most determined forms of human struggle imaginable, including those which resort to force of arms, and resolve to face death before capitulation. The deliberately designed and nurtured class and racial cleavages of American society, present from its beginning, have fostered such extreme antagonisms during every period in the development of American society. (6)

The symbolic allure of the notion of American "democracy," universal in proscription yet viciously parochial in implementation, acted as the very engine enticing righteous (popular) dissent and reactionary (institutional) repression. Newton furthermore describes a kind of ideological "glue" that imperfectly holds the sharply striated shards of the political "structure" in place, a

> deeply ingrained belief that society [is] by nature divided into superior and inferior classes and races of people. This division of the "natural order" of society, rationalized by those who have a vested interest in its maintenance, has kept Americans of different classes and races either directly engaged in social

> warfare, or forever poised in a position of battle. There has been, in other words, from the very beginning of the American republic as we know it, a systematically cultivated polarization, which has predisposed the population to varying but continuous levels of warfare. This sinister and carefully maintained die of social antagonism has been recast with the changing mold of each different epoch of American society.
>
> Always, the rulers of an order, consistent with their own interests and solely of their own design, have employed what to them seemed to be the most optimal and efficient means of maintaining unquestioned social and economic advantage. Clear-cut superiority in things social and economic—by whatever means—has been a scruples-free premise of American ruling class authority from the society's inception to the present. The initial socioeconomic advantage, begotten by chattel slavery, was enforced by undaunted violence and the constant threat of more violence. In other times, there has been political repression, peonage (debt slavery), wage slavery, chicanery, and the like, but always accompanied by the actual or threatened force of violence. (6-7)

In a conceptual move that brings his arguments in close intellectual proximity to those of Michel Foucault, Newton describes how the American political establishment evolved by and large in such a fashion as to utilize violence in more discrete and specialized contexts:

> The import of the combined forces of industrialization and urbanization [has] been [a] principal contributor in the twentieth century to the need of the American ruling class to develop newer, less obvious, and more effective means of retaining its control of and domination over the mass of Americans. Direct and unconcealed brute force and violence—although clearly persisting in many quarters of society—are today less acceptable to an increasingly sophisticated public, a public significantly more remote from the methods of social and economic control common to early America. This is not a statement, however, that there is such increased civility that Americans can no longer tolerate social control of the country's under classes by force of violence; rather, it is an observation that Americans today appear to be more inclined to issue endorsement to agents and agencies of control which carry out the task, while permitting the benefactors of such control to retain a semidignified, clean-hands image of themselves. (7-8)

The police patrols were undoubtedly the most controversial of the BPP's social services, but they were not formed in a vacuum, having been started by Newton and Bobby Seale to confront "the issue of police brutality, which was a major concern, nationally and in Oakland, California" (30). The patrols followed a specific protocol:

> Several Party members equipped with a shortwave radio in a car intercepted [police] calls [of arrest], rushed to the scene of the arrest, and, armed with a law book, informed the person being arrested of his constitutional rights. Party members also carried loaded weapons, publicly displayed but not pointed towards anyone, and dressed in leather jackets and berets. The patrol

> participants were careful to stand no closer than ten feet from the arrest, to stay within the assumption that they were not interfering with the arrest. These initial contacts between Panther patrols and Oakland police resulted in the arrests of Party members and [in] considerable publicity. Media portrayals of these confrontations gave the impression that the Panthers were primarily an armed insurrectionary group. (31)

Newton cites Erik Erikson to break down this "distorted image" (ibid) of the BPP:

> You have all seen the now traditional picture of young Huey Newton like a latter day American revolutionary with a gun in his hands, but safely pointing upward. To a man my age, it was, not too long ago, almost impossible to imagine black men carrying guns openly—black vigilantes, black nightriders in automobiles, keeping an eye on (of all things) the law. Most readers of the news, of course, did not and do not know that according to California law, every citizen then had the right to carry a gun, one gun for self-defense and joint defense. But those who created that law certainly did not envisage anybody but white men doing so, nor did they envisage anybody but potential lawbreakers as the ones to be patrolled vigilant citizens in an ill-defined and frontier country.
>
> …[What the BPP did] was to show how the black man's territory has never outlived the frontier state and is still the land of undefined laws; and that arbitrary violence in this territory often comes not from roving outlaws but from those charged with the enforcement of the law. Inclined to disregard the rights of black citizens, they break the law under the guise of defending it. [The BPP] made of the police, then, the symbol of uniformed and armed lawlessness. But [it] did so by ingeniously turning the white man's own imagery (especially dear to the American West and the Western) around against the white world itself. And in arming [themselves] and [their] brothers against that world, [the BPP] emphasized a disciplined adherence to existing law. In fact, [the BPP] patrol member traveled equipped not only with a gun but also a law book. The book and the fire—it cannot escape us—what an elemental pair of symbols this has been in revolts as far removed from each other as that of the Germans in Luther's day and that of the Zionists in our own. (31-2)

Erikson's quote is relevant for its thematic fixations on familiarity and inversion—how the Party were perceived as such a threat precisely because they were able to take the symbols associated with a racially underpinned notion of liberty and redeploy it against the very oppressors who took such a truncated vision of liberty for granted.[39] Beyond this, they were able

[39] The reference to "Zionism" toward the very end of Erikson's reflection makes more sense in relation to Erikson's reputation as a psychotherapist interested in identity formation and crisis, interests that he seems to have been bringing to bear on national issues in this context. Thus, Erikson's intention here is probably to capture how Zionist militancy provoked a challenge to German national identity by making national responsibility for the Holocaust unavoidable, to the point that reparations are necessitated.

But even as the point was in a quote of Erikson's, it is not irrelevant to mediate briefly upon the question of the Party, Palestine and Zionism/Israel. After all, inclusion of a quote in an unqualified fashion suggests, even if it does not always necessarily entail, consensus. The question of the Black Panther Party's, and Huey Newton's in particular, views on Palestine will be taken up briefly in chapter 4.

to *publicly* instantiate a cultural perception of the police as institutionally sanctioned enforcers of social *disorder* via the disproportionate dispensation of violence against African Americans. And, as Newton's and Erikson's gloss suggests, the panic inspired by the Panthers' socio-political spectacles was so great that lawmakers were, in a sense, forced to concede the partial (or "limited," to return to Newton's earlier frame) character of the original spirit of an open-carry legal guarantee by repealing it once it became too closely associated with empowered Black political formations dedicated to community uplift. This is a sentiment that would be expressed even more pointedly several years later by Assata Shakur:

> What made me maddest was the media treatment of the BPP, which gave the impression that the Party was racist and violent. And it worked. The pigs would burst into a Panther office, shoot first, and ask questions later. The press always reported that the police had "uncovered" a large arsenal of weapons. Later, when the "arsenal" turned out to be a few legally registered rifles and shotguns, the press never printed a word. The same thing goes on today. Nobody gets upset about white people having guns, but let a Black person have a gun and something criminal is going on. (*Assata* 222)

By negative example, such accounts reveal the ideological underpinnings of hegemonic American notions of varying forms of vigilantism and autonomy. These notions, I argue, can be effectively gleaned through the logics of the detective and superhero genres (not to mention hybrids). Though in a sense acting "outside" of the disciplinary regimes of the state, the superhero/detective is simultaneously their ideal(ized) enforcer. *The figure of the superhero, the detective, and/or the superhero-detective is the perfect cop when the institution of policing experiences a crisis of capability.* Outside of the very system they serve to regenerate, the superhero/detective is a liminal archetype whose function is catalyzed precisely through this very liminality. Here I have in mind D.A. Miller's definition of the disciplinary "supplement" to the police as paradoxically reinforcing police power in the world of the novel: "the 'disavowal' of

the police by its disciplinary supplement allows the latter to exorcise policing power at other, less visible levels and in other, more effective modes" (*The Novel and the Police* 20). And it is perhaps for this very reason that superhero/detective narratives can be as divergent from as they are co-constitutive of police narratives. The cop is a hero. The hero is a cop. And anyone—at least, any member of the class of citizen currently afforded full humanity[40]—can be a hero. The dynamic interchange between dominant national (imperial, racial, gendered, and/or classed) anxieties of unrest and dissent and the broader terrain of culture poses a veritable constriction to be upended for the imaginative labor of resistant writers to realize its aims and ambitions. One direct example of this is the emphasis many of the texts under analysis place on preemptively short-circuiting potential associations of ethics, professionalism and respectability with police and governmental characters. In place of finely-tuned institutional apparatuses whose individual operations run as smoothly as "clockwork," the texts present various state and government

[40] I have in mind here Sylvia Wynter's conceptions of the racialized underside of allegedly "universal" conceptions of the human:

> The human, in Wynter's writings, is representatively linked to the figure of Man1 (invented by the Renaissance's *studia humanitatis* as *homo politicus* and therefore differentiated but not wholly separate from the *homo religiousus* conception of human) that was tethered to the theological order of knowledge of pre-Renaissance Latin-Christian medieval Europe; this figure opened up a slot for Man2, a figure based on the Western bourgeoisie's model of being human that has been articulated as, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, liberal monohumanism's *homo oeconomicus.* These figures, both Man1 and Man2, are also inflected by powerful knowledge systems and origin stories that explain who/what we are. These systems and stories produce the lived and racialized categories of the rational and irrational, the selected and the dysselected, the haves and the have-nots as asymmetrical naturalized racial-sexual human groupings that are specific to time, place, and personhood yet signal the processes through which the empirical and experiential lives of *all* humans are increasingly subordinated to a figure that thrives on accumulation. (*Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis* 10).

However, cultural hegemony also ensures that the marginalized (and/or their causes) can at times be given prominent representation within various discursive paeans to state and federal disciplinary regimes, thereby obfuscating these very regimes' roles in perpetuating said groups' marginalization. See, for instance, Jared Sexton's *Black Masculinity and the Cinema of Policing* (2017).

officials as cruelly violent, prejudiced, conniving, and generally incompetent. This is not merely a curious overlap: challenging the cultural legitimacy of those entrusted by society to judiciously dispense "necessary" violence, surveillance and various forms of incapacitation was a clear political strategy levied by political formations such as the Black Panther Party.

Security vs. Pacification

Why contrapose "security" against "pacification?" Why not simply (as an earlier version of this project in fact did) group "poetics" and "prosaics" under the organizing umbrella of "security?" In addition to the aforementioned scholarly sources, my thinking regarding the dialectics of state repression and resistance efforts of the variously marginalized has been guided by contemporary trends in security studies, specifically the work of Mark Neocleous and affiliated colleagues. In *Anti-Security* (2011), Neocleous and other contributors insist upon the need to seriously re-examine the notion of "security" that informs contemporary state projects. Even scholars who are critical of projects undertaken in its name tend to take "security" as a conceptual given, for "SECURITY [sic] IS AN ILLUSION THAT HAS FORGOTTEN IT IS AN ILLUSION" (15). In fact, security is not just an illusion, but a "DANGEROUS ILLUSION" (ibid). It is a euphemism that elides the essential foundations of its operations:

> [SECURITY] HAS COME TO ACT AS A BLOCKAGE ON POLITICS. THE MORE WE SUCCUMB TO THE DISCOURSE OF SECURITY, THE LESS WE CAN SAY ABOUT EXPLOITATION AND ALIENATION; THE MORE WE TALK ABOUT SECURITY, THE LESS WE TALK ABOUT THE MATERIAL FOUNDATIONS OF EMANCIPATION; THE MORE WE COME TO SHARE IN THE FETISH OF SECURITY, THE MORE WE BECOME ALIENATED FROM ONE ANOTHER AND THE MORE WE BECOME COMPLICIT IN THE EXERCISE OF POLICE POWERS. (Ibid)

Part of countering security's powers of elision thus becomes the development of a new critical-lexical field of association that insists upon the stark realities of repression engendered under various projects and paradigms of security. To this end, Neocleous and George S. Rigakos

suggest "pacification" as a modifier for organizing repressive state surveillance and police-work. Both scholars offer different interventions signaling the priority that pacification holds in these conversations: for Neocleous, the framework is materialist at its base: capitalism is the economic system whereby the bourgeoisie are "constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production" (Marx and Engels qtd. in Neocleous 24). This means that

> at some fundamental level the order of capital is an order of social *insecurity.* Yet this permanent insecurity gives rise to a *politics of security,* turning security into the fundamental concept of bourgeois society. It is through this politics of security that the constant revolutionizing of production and uninterrupted disturbance of capitalist order is fabricated, structured, and administered. This, I suggest, is the process of pacification. (Neocleous 24)

Because it came to be used as a euphemism for counter-insurgency during the Vietnam War, pacification tends to be overlooked in contemporary security studies, reductively constructed as merely an out-of-date military codeword (25). In fact, pacification continues to yield contemporary relevance, for

> To see security as a constitutive power or a technique deployed and mobilized in the exercise of power is to read it as a *police* mechanism: a mechanism for the fabrication of a social order organized around a constant revolutionizing of the instruments and relations of production and thus containing the everlasting uncertainty and agitation of all social relations that Marx and Engels define as key to capitalism… for tactical purposes critical theory really needs to re-appropriate the term 'pacification' to help grasp the nature of security politics. (26)

Ultimately, the usage of pacification as a broader analytic for indexing larger paradigms of exploitation, oppression and dispossession can reveal patterns where "security" seeks to instantiate exception as a characterizing feature. Examples of these patterns-cum-exception are rife following the ascension of American empire post WWII, during which "security" often entailed military strategy that both liquidated resistance and sought to erect alternative economic systems more friendly to Western imperialist designs (27), but they are also to be found well before this period.

Crucial for my study is Neocleous' mining of settler-colonial history to expose the first in-depth political treatment of the concept of "pacification." While Vietnam was certainly a flashpoint for contemporary understandings of pacification, it was far from the first significant instance of the exploration of the concept in relation to projects of empire. In fact, the US's strategy in Vietnam drew on a documented tactical assemblage of European military-colonial strategy centering pacification. For

> the US went in to Vietnam on the back of French failure in the same region… France had been there for a century as part of its contribution to the European colonial spree of the nineteenth century. (27)

The French colonial strategy in Vietnam was adopted in part based on recommendations made by Lieutenant Colonel Lyautey in the article "Du role colonial de l'Armée" (1900), which was in turn inspired by quotes issued by General Galliéni, governor of Madagascar and a "leading strategist of French colonial warfare" (27-8). Galliéni's recommendations for "'achieving pacification'" in the colonies is by "'combined application of force and politics,'" which Neocleous re-terms "destruction and reconstruction" (ibid). That is, it is not merely the initial show of force which is crucial to projects of pacification, but also the subsequent reordering of socio-economic structures and individual sensibilities away from investment in previous ideologies more conducive to resistance and collective well-being (29). The soldier thus comes to approximate the police officer and even the colonial therapist more readily in the transition from force to politics, as the war of weapons gives way to an administrative war of socio-economics (ibid). Lyautey and Galliéni's ideas would be revived for French colonial escapades in the 20th century, with an increasing belief that "soldiers should perform civic duties," a strategy that resulted in

> the creation of the Specialized Administrative Sections (SAS) in Algeria, tasked with supervising work, food distribution, medical aid, reconstruction and resettlement, and the establishment of a Centre for Instruction and Preparation in Counterinsurgency-Guerilla Warfare (CIPCG), through which approximately

> 10,000 officers were educated in ideological warfare, psychological manipulation and police action. The lessons learnt were the same as those learnt by the British in their pacification of Malaysia, Cyprus and Kenya. Thus by the time the Americans were ready to rethink their war in Vietnam as a war of *pacification,* they had to hand a long history of thinking about this process as a principle of social reconstruction and as the conjunction of military and police functions. (30)

Here we see another key feature of what I am terming pacification prosaics—the attempted erasure via official discourse and protocol of demarcations between the officer, the soldier and the civilian. One more contemporary instance of this is how state propaganda renders the official function of the soldier and the cop as dispensers of legitimized, regulating violence and enforcement of rigid social hierarchies invisible by "personalizing the profession"—the cop as "community servant," the soldier as "brave patriot." But blurring the lines between military and civic functions, not to mention domestic and imperial fronts via projects of pacification spans even further back. Neocleous situates the first historical appearance of such conjunctures in Captain Bernardo de Vargas Machuca's *Milica Indiana,* "the world's first manual of counter-revolutionary warfare" (36). "The Spaniards," Neocleous writes,

> like all major powers of the sixteenth century, were indeed immersed in a world of large scale military engagement; yet, also like the other major powers, they were simultaneously immersed in the colonization of other lands. This colonization required a very different kind of political violence. It is in this light that Machuca writes his manual of Indian military encounters… Machuca's concern was not that of one militarily organized national unit facing another, but of an Empire confronting recalcitrant and rebellious indigenous populations. To fight these populations Machuca advocated adopting their fighting methods, learned by him "after twenty eight years… employed in pacifications in the Indies." The manual thus describes a world of skirmishing and ambushing, of fighting on the move, of a 24-hour "hunt" against enemy "hunters." This is the war of militias as part of an expanding global empire. It is a war for the pacification of those peoples which empire would necessarily have to destroy or control. (36-7)

Imitation and cooptation thus form an important technique in empire's projects of pacification, a dynamic that helps illustrate what I am positioning as the inherently dialectical relationship between security poetics and pacification prosaics. As insurgent imaginations began

to confront and subsequently demystify social arrangements euphemistically instantiated under the exceptionalizing moniker of "security," the state will in turn parasitically mine, coopt, and redeploy these epistemological acts of resistance as part of its own project of "pacification." So-called "Blue Lives Matter" legislation or the Trump administration's Executive Order that seeks to stifle any support for Palestinian freedom by classifying it as a violation of the "Civil Rights" of Jews, whose identity the order falsely recasts as a nationality in line with Israeli colonial policy, are but two examples of how pacification prosaics feature cooptation and strategic imitation as key techniques for diffusing dissent.

Both are products of a hegemonic discourse loosely constellated around an ambiguous and yet nonetheless actionable state-sanctioned analytics of "hate" and "extremism" that elide subject position and protecte the interests of power—for instance, the FBI's investigation of the Klan had perversely "provided a template for domesticating labels of subversion" that it put most prominently into practice by targeting Black Power organizations, whom the Bureau cast as purveyors of "Black Hate" (Maxwell 110). Following the assassination of Bobby Kennedy in 1968 by Palestinian American Sirhan Sirhan, Pamela E. Pennock writes that, under the Nixon White House, Arab and Arab American students in the US were sweepingly targeted because COINTELPRO included "'potential Arab saboteurs,'" a category that gave the FBI license to surveil and interrogate "Essentially… all ethnic Arabs in the United States" (145-7). Zionist organizations such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) as well as politicians such as Gerald Ford cast Arab organizations on college campuses such as the Organization of Arab Students (OAS) as extremists by association for their connections to Leftist organizations such as the Black Panther Party and the Socialist Workers Party and called for a political crackdown (145). Arab American activists and

sympathizers suspected that US Zionist organizations were working with Israeli intelligence (the Mossad), the FBI and the CIA to surveil them for their ethnic backgrounds and political activities; a 1975 article in the *Chicago Tribune* that featured a former Israeli intelligence officer and an ADL spokesman as sources confirmed that exchange between the two governments and three organizations regarding suspected Arab "subversives" regarding in the US did in fact take place (154). The dangerously redundant logic that today constructs police as protected classes "endangered" by Black activists (dangerously redundant, because police are already among the most legally protected state employees) and that the FBI uses to urge caution about "Black Identity Extremists" all issue from the same tributary of repression (Lennard "Call Congress's 'Blue Lives Matter' Bills What They Are: Another Attack on Black Lives"), and it does not take such a profound leap of the imagination to see how these logics relatedly interpellate individuals who engage in organizing and activism for Palestine as "hateful" and "extremist."

Another crucial aspect of pacification emphasized by Neocleous' genealogy is its reliance upon euphemism. In 1573, realizing that "the violence being meted out in the conquest of the colonies was causing a certain discontent among his own people," Philip II decided "all further extensions of empire be termed 'pacifications' rather than conquests'" (Neocleous 39). The text of Philip II's edict declares that "Without displaying any greed for the possessions of the Indians," conquerors are "to establish friendship and cooperation with the lords and nobles who seem most likely to be of assistance in the pacification of the land" (ibid). Neocleous thus discerns a "thread connecting the US project in Vietnam to nineteenth century European colonialism and beyond, all the way back to the European colonization of America in the sixteenth century: the thread of pacification" (43).

George S. Rigakos builds upon Neocleous' assertions in a subsequent article that uses a genealogical reading of the Thames River police of 1800 and the Broken Windows policing model in the 1990's to situate its claims. Rigakos seems to select these two test-cases because both demonstrate the ways in which policing projects were effected through extending the reach of police-work *even as* it was rendered ever-more invisible: "The more security seems post-political, post-social, or even postmodern the more it escapes analytical scrutiny. The more security attaches itself to innumerable social relationships the more it becomes the very glue that binds social reality" (59). This is precisely why it becomes crucial to devise a "counter-hegemonic language" (60) of criticism that will replace the nebulous concept of security with pacification and can "excite our critical imagination in new ways" (61). As Rigakos explains,

> While security is ubiquitous and can attach itself to almost any category of investigation, pacification simply cannot. For this reason alone it is a more worthwhile tool for critical inquiry… Pacification forces us to ask: *who* is being pacified? *Why* are they being pacified and why are they resisting? *What* are the real objectives of this pacification project? … Security hegemony casts a deep fog over police projects. A fog through which we may more effectively navigate by understanding pacification. (63)

My project seeks to supplement these interventions in analyses of asymmetrical securitization, policing and surveillance by considering their potential applicability for literary and cultural studies. To accomplish this, I consider the dialogic porousness between quotidian and cultural sites, with the latter viewed as socio-material in their own right in place of being merely parasitic upon the former. This includes being able to recognize the normalization of state security rhetoric as part of what Roland Barthes terms " codes [that], by a swivel characteristic of bourgeois ideology, which turns culture into nature, appear to establish reality, 'Life'" (*S/Z* 206). In addition to Barthes, as referenced earlier, I am clearly inspired by Raymond Williams' rejection of the orthodox Marxist subordination of culture as being merely a two-dimensional reflection of class inequality. But I also have in mind J. Moufawad-Paul's synthesis of Maoist

thought regarding the symbiotic relationship between socio-political hegemony and the economic base:

> Mao… argued that the ideological/political superstructure, though in the "final instance" a result of the economic base, always served to obstruct and partially determine the substructure. Ideologies that spring up in one period, generated by material necessity, do not simply disappear, annihilated by some ontological break in the mode of production; they linger, influencing and rearranging the base itself… Althusser often argued that *the final instance never arrives.* Inspired by the insights of Mao… he meant that, while we can understand the meaning of these other sites of oppression according to the "final instance" of the economic base, there is never an instance of a purely abstract class struggle that is stripped from its ideological trappings. (*Continuity and Rupture* 148, emphasis in original)

That is, cultural hegemony is not a mere *outgrowth* of differential exploitation, but *helps to determine it.* And if creative expressions can index hegemonic conditions *in addition* to offering glimpses of radical alternatives via "emergent" forms, as Williams argues, then linking these two strands of thought together opens up the possibility of alternative cultural praxis posing *material* implications. If what the state terms security is in fact pacification, then this phenomenon will be readily evident to critical scrutiny in *all* impacted spheres, and an extended investigation of how insurgent security poetics come up against hegemonic pacification prosaics will yield added dimensions of relevance to conversations about new possibilities for imagining a sufficiently critical understanding of securitization and disciplinarity.

Technologies of Security Poetics

The preceding analysis of the relationship between security and pacification helps elucidate some strategies that are central to security poetics as I currently envision it. While the enumeration that follows is by no means exhaustive, I hope that its introduction via an exercise in contrast against some of the master registers endemic to pacification prosaics will at the very least illustrate the nature and guiding logics of the techniques informing security poetics.

First, if we understand *euphemism* and *exceptionalization* as two key cultural technologies of pacification prosaics, then it should become evident enough why security poetics would need to mount contesting ripostes that are sufficiently calibrated and symbolically supple enough to chip away at the ideological bulwark shoring up projects of pacification, for "only an ostentation of style and argument can provide the 'flash' of increased visibility needed to render modern discipline a problem in its own right far more fundamental than any it invents to attach its subjects."[41] To that end, as euphemism is one of pacification's most distinctive symbolic covers, security poetics often needs to rely on some strand of *auxesis* to rend the curtain asunder. This can be as simple as lexical hyperbole, using provocative terms in place of the more mundane understatement preferred within pacification rhetoric.

Indeed, replacement of ostensibly common-place terms and concepts with more urgently provocative rhetoric as a strategy for expediting re-assessment of, and earnest engagement with harrowing social injustices has been an important tactic within social struggles against structural oppression historically. The insistence upon anti-Black racism as a form of "colonialism" mounted within the Black Power framework thus converges with efforts such as the Civil Rights Congress' attempts to categorize the pervasive dispossession of Jim Crow in relation to the ongoing impacts of slavery as a form of "genocide" in *We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People* (1951). "It is politically infantile," writes William Patterson (the petition's primary author) in a 1970 Preface to a reissuing of the text, "that another appeal to [the UN] can or will force the United States to become an adherent to the aims, principles and purposes of that international body. Such an appeal can, however, mobilize worldwide action" (*We Charge Genocide* XX). Vine Deloria, Jr.s designation of the American government's official policy of Native American "termination" (using exceptional means to

[41] D.A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police,* University of California Press, Berkeley. 1988, Print. ix.

dispossess tribes of land claims and minimize reparative compensation) as a "war," the less physical but by no means less lethal extension of early American garrison settlement in *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto,* is another important example of this (See: *Custer Died for Your Sins,* specifically "The Disastrous Policy of Termination" 54).

This also connects to the strategy of *expanding* the dominant definitions of categories of harm. Frantz Fanon's meticulous description of the colonial world as structured, animated and maintained by violence (as opposed to violence simply designating an individualized interaction/exchange) is one of the most familiar instances of such an act of redefinition. But also relevant is the sociologist Alphonso Pinkney's observations on the occluded dimensions of (racist) American violence. Pinkney initiates his account with an off-putting exchange with a *Time* magazine reporter before segueing into his larger reflections:

> When I suggested that, on the contrary, young black men were more the victims of violence than its initiators, that the real purveyors of violence in Newark were the police, National Guardsmen and state troopers who were slaughtering black people, [the reporter] seemed bewildered. Like most Americans, this reporter regarded attacks on property such as arson and looting to be at least as grave violations of human rights as the destruction of human beings. Hence for blacks to destroy or damage property valued at $15 million was in many ways a more serious offense than the killing of 26 persons and the injuring of another 1,100 by those summoned to restore order. One of the features of a materialist society is a concomitant depreciation of human beings; in the United States, private property tends actually to be esteemed over human life.
>
> …Violence, as a concept, is broad. It may be overt or subtle, individual or institutional. Overt acts of violence involve the destruction of human beings through the use of physical force. *Subtle forms of violence, which are in many ways equally destructive of persons, cover a much broader range of human activity. They may be seen in such phenomena as hunger and malnutrition, inadequate medical care, substandard housing, unemployment and underemployment, inadequate and inferior education, and similar destructive conditions imposed upon human beings.* (*The American Way of Violence* xi-xii, emphasis mine).

Security poetics' auxesis can also include forms of counter-hegemonic caricature divesting officials charged with dispensing various forms of state-sanctioned violence and discriminatory surveillance of the hagiographic or liberal-humanist character more common to

hegemonic representations of all tasked with pacification. For instance, in *Revolutionary Suicide,* Huey P. Newton writes of how the conscious strategy to refer to police officers as "pigs" was born of his readings of the work of the philosopher Friedrich Nietschze:

> Nietzsche believed that beyond good and evil is the will to power. In other words, good and evil are labels for phenomena, or value judgments. Behind these value judgments is the will to power, which causes man to view phenomena as good or evil. It is really the will to power that controls our understanding of something and not an inherent quality of good or evil. Man attempts to define phenomena in such a way that they reflect the interests of his own class or group. He gives titles or values to phenomena according to what he sees as beneficial; if it is to his advantage, something is called good, and if it is not beneficial, then it is defined as evil.
>
> …In the early days of the Black Panthers we tried to find ways to make this theory work in the best interests of Black people. Words could be used not only to make Blacks more proud but to make whites question and even reject concepts they had always unthinkingly accepted. One of our prime needs was a new definition for "policeman." A good descriptive word, one the community would accept and use, would not only advance Black consciousness, but in effect control the police by making them see themselves in a new light.
>
> …We began to show policemen as pigs in our cartoons, and from time to time used the word. "Pig" caught on; it entered the language.
>
> This was a form of psychological warfare: it raised the consciousness of the people and also inflicted a new consciousness on the ruling circle. If whites and police became caught up in this new awareness, they would soon defect from their own ranks and join us to avoid feelings of guilt and shame. (*Revolutionary Suicide* 174-5)

These representational strategies also worked toward the necessary de-mystification of intelligence agencies that Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher describe as vital to political activism:

> …it is our view that the FBI needs to be understood differently than it has been up to now. In this two popular tendencies stand out. One dismisses the Bureau as paranoid, over-reactive, and largely ineffective. The other too often mystifies the Bureau's power, ascribing too much agency to "COINTELPRO" and other covert undertakings—suggesting its hand in all outrages and unexplained events…
>
> …the actual situation is not so cut and dried. (*Heavy Radicals* 249).

If the representations of pacification workers in this dissertation seem to err too much on the side of the second "popular tendency" identified by the authors, it is important to bear in mind that the cultural and political mythologies surrounding state and federal agencies frequently over-saturates their reputations (often by design). Exaggeration, hyperbole and various other

forms of auxesis thus emerge as important registers in the attempt to unsettle dominant narratives of "professional" etiquette and obligation that security poetics undertake.

Secondly, if exceptionalization, whether of state excess or the struggles of the variously marginalized is a common feature of pacification prosaics, then security poetics needs to effect various forms of ethnical comparison rooted in a good-faith dedication to joint struggle and solidarity. Racial formations are contingent and mutable. Multiple experiences can be accommodated without mistaking overlap for interchangeability. Here I am inspired by Michael Rothberg's *Multidirectional Memory.* Rothberg's project "takes dissimilarity for granted, since no two events are ever alike, and then focuses its intellectual energy on investigating what it means to invoke connections nonetheless" (18), for

> Comparison, like memory, should be thought of as productive—as producing new objects and new lines of sight—and not simply as reproducing already given entities that either are or are not "like" other already given-entities. (18-9)

Connection and comparison are not instruments for equivocation. They are a means for engaging the depths of experiential particularity through dynamic and relational exchange. And they are, as Rothberg observes, "productive," not just in the general sense, but through catalyzing new visions and understandings of struggle. To name but one important example, the framework of understanding American anti-black oppression as a form of "colonialism" offered in Kwame Turé (formerly Stokey Carmichael) and Charles V. Hamilton's *Black Power* was intended to provide a more robust vocabulary and expanded value system[42] for categorizing African

[42] Comparison here emerges as a means of recalibrating understandings of scale concerning the magnitude of anti-black oppression and attempting to give a familiar, nameable character to its components. While it might seem strange to cite James Baldwin in this instance, given his well-documented criticisms of figures and organizations varyingly sympathetic to the colonial analogy, I can't help but be reminded of his insistence in the "Autobiographical Notes" portion of *Notes of a Native Son* that it is impossible to consider such oppression,

> without bearing in mind its context; its context being the history, traditions, customs, the moral assumptions and preoccupations of the country; in short, the

American struggles against white supremacy: "It is far better to speak forcefully and truthfully," both authors write (xviii). "Only when one's true self—white or black—is exposed, can this society proceed to deal with the problems from a position of clarity" (ibid). Connection and comparison emerge here not as a derivative and debilitating exercise in 1 to 1 substitution, but as an enabling gesture expanding the symbolic and political armature of resistance.[43]

Security poetics' scope of comparison can also expand to accommodate entire sites of struggle in addition to individuals. That is, "place" can also become an entry-point for accessing and comparing overlaps of oppression and dissent as all in resistance reject the colonial/imperial designation of ominous "spaces" requiring pacification. Amiri Baraka once famously wrote "black *is* a country" (102, emphasis in original). Racialization becomes spatialized and

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> general social fabric. Appearances to the contrary, no one in America escapes its effects and everyone in America bears some responsibility for it. (8)

As with Black Power's colonial analogy, the point here is to invigorate critique through reconsiderations of scope and scale. Furthermore, though its project is to argue (what it constructs to be) the inherent incomparability of anti-blackness to any other forms, systems and experiences of oppression, as I understand it, Afro-pessimism's focus on "ontology" is similarly intended to trouble insufficiently fulsome conceptualizations of anti-blackness—"ontology" being a category that intentionally exceeds post-colonial, Indigenous/land-based and materialist analyses of subjugation. My intention in connecting these obviously divergent sources is not to argue for a larger conceptual or political harmony, but simply to sketch out the different ways in which "scale" has been a persistent factor in discussions of anti-black oppression—at times, interestingly, through rather divergent means: Black Power's colonial analogy, Baldwin's insistence on "the social fabric," and Afro-pessimism's "ruse of analogy." All hinge upon the question of scale in unique ways.

[43] This reading is also inspired by Keith Feldman's observations on the issue:

> Read against the grain, Carmichael and Hamilton's colonial analogy builds on the many relational constructions at work in the post World War II conjuncture, operating as a geographic figure to reveal the contradictions of racial liberalism's exceptionalist discourse. It provided Black freedom movement scholars, artists and activists a relational analytic to perform a contestatory remapping. The internal colonial framework illuminated both the failure of civil rights legislation to ameliorate material inequalities and the increasing permeation of state and state-sanctioned violence. (*A Shadow Over Palestine* 70).

In a footnote, Feldman would also relate the common criticism shared by scholars of the internal colonization model à la Robert Blauner being "politically and not analytically grounded" (Omi and Winant, qtd in Feldman 254). Feldman's discussions of the invigorating connections made possible through the internal colonial framework suggest that such criticisms ignore the colonial analogy's creative productivity as well as its ability to illuminate gaps in squarely nationalist discourses of racial uplift.

nationalized through the mechanisms of subjugation structuring Black American life under white supremacy. And if anti-Black oppression is so comprehensive that spatial metaphors are required to make sense of it, then the plight of imperialized and colonized nations across the world is rendered familiar *in its totality,* for "The Negro's struggle in America is only a microcosm of the struggle of the new countries all over the world" (ibid). This dissertation features texts from several decades that make connections between national struggles across borders, as commonalities in struggle come to blur the physical distances punctuating separation.

Here, however, it is crucial to reiterate that the relationship between security poetics and pacification prosaics is *dialectical* rather than antagonistic. This means that both *share* certain tendencies in addition to being distinguished through them. For instance, while security poetics effects comparison as a means of disrupting the operative logics of pacification, we would do well to recall that pacification prosaics *also* utilize comparison—heavily policed and surveilled domestic spaces, for instance, are frequently compared to colonies, and pacification tactics are applied accordingly, as preceding discussions have already demonstrated. The functions and powers of police and military grow to such a point that both positions begin to compete with one another in terms of likeness.

Yet both security poetics and pacification prosaics exercise a sequential dynamism in relation to one another that helps determine the character of strategies deployed at a particular instance. For example, security poetics will emphasize "place" following the geographical exceptionalism pacification projects utilize to designate a strategic site as an ominous, threatening "space"—an "Other-Space." And pacification prosaics may encompass exceptionalizing refutations of proclamations of solidarity and joint struggle among variously oppressed individuals and populations, a phenomenon I am currently terming "dissimulative

disjunction." Dissuasions of comparison among the oppressed can isolate and fragment, allowing the work of pacification to proceed with greater ease.

Familiarity with the operative logics of pacification is an important component of resistance. But even as pacification is studied and understood, pacification workers will in turn continue to scrutinize patterns of resistance. The gaze is two-way, and much like an ouroboros, pacification prosaics and security poetics engage in a cyclical clash of oppositions that at times approximate one another's qualities.

The analyses to follow will therefore simultaneously seek to elucidate the nature of the pacification prosaics and security poetics at work in select texts as well as to demonstrate, whenever possible, the alternating and sequential character of their mutual dynamics—to retrace the steps of the chase and the escape, and peel back the disguises of disciplinary officials and "sick Arabs" in "Other-Spaces."

Chapter One: "Relax! We not studying you guys:" Making State Scrutiny ~~(In)~~Visible Via Resistance Poetics

"Don' you worry about a thing
Mr. President and you too
Mr. Secretary of the State: Relax!
We not studying you guys:
NO NO NO NO NO!"
-June Jordan, "Easter Comes to the East Coast: 1981"

"an eye for an eye
and when our eyes
long since bombed out
are swallowed as olive pits
the whole world is blind"
-Suheir Hammad, "blood stitched time"

By now it has become something of a commonplace to dedicate an entire chapter of studies concerned with the overlap between African American and Palestinian (American) struggles to the linked poetry collections of June Jordan and Suheir Hammad. As is by now relatively well-rehearsed among critics, Hammad was so inspired by the final few lines of Jordan's "Moving Towards Home," which closed her 1985 collection *Living Room,* that she titled her own collection *Born Palestinian, Born Black* at her publisher's suggestion (*Born Palestinian Born Black* 10). "I was born a Black woman," Jordan's conclusion begins, "and now/I am become a Palestinian/against the relentless laughter of evil" (134). Intriguingly, while Jordan uses the motif of *becoming* a Palestinian, Hammad's title instead straddles the existential plurality of simultaneous affiliation. "Becoming" emphasizes transformation. In the case of Jordan's collection, it could very well be a transformation born of the ethical quest for "home" and "living room" thematized by the interconnected works. On the other hand, Hammad's rhetoric suggests a multifarious conscription, perhaps even an "indictment" linked with a "special type of sleeplessness," as E.M. Ciaron would have it (*The Trouble with Being Born* 3).

Why terms such as “conscription” and “indictment” to describe what is ostensibly a natural phenomenon? Because pacification prosaics—perhaps one way of translating what is meant by Jordan’s “relentless laughter of evil”—render both Palestinians and African Americans Others from “Other-spaces.” And this reading of Hammad brings us back, recursively, to the significance of Jordan’s proclamation, for it was clearly a familiar resonance to their anti-colonial struggle that led her to write she had “become a Palestinian” (134). Both collections speak to each other, back and forth across boundaries of time and space.

While my critical concern is generally not in maintaining an analytical antinomy between poetry and prose, it is worth remarking that the work of both poets, for all of its stylistic distinction, is related in its attempted upending of the conventional separation between poetic and prosaic style. What I mean by this is that both poets’ collections feature scores of poems that attempt to approximate conventionally non-poetic quotidian lexical forms such as the rhythms of spoken slang, headlines, advertisements, and broadcasts. And yet, even as both poets attempt to erase the distinction between the spoken and the written, they will just as easily utilize paginated conventions that cannot be recreated within the context of a reading or performance. This is perhaps most evident in Hammad’s poetry, which utilizes an idiosyncratic capitalization system and line and word breaks to create a visual effect that only a *reader* of the poems can appreciate, evidencing a “break” from poetic convention that is captured by Michelle Hartman’s concept of “breaking language” to describe the efforts of poets such as Hammad, a language of poems that “break up language, break into language, break from language, break free from language” (*Breaking Broken English* 54). According to Hartman, “Breaking” language is not the same as “broken” language, for the latter implies passivity and condescension, while the former is a dynamic characterization that calls attention to how strategic deviations from linguistic protocol

open up new possible networks of meanings and connections (53). A good example of this is Hammad's poem "mariposa" which, as its Spanish-language title suggests, recreates the image of a butterfly through the arrangement of words on a page. This is both anti-poetic and classically poetic, particularly if one recalls the sonnets of e.e. cummings unrecognizably rearranged into cheeky pictograms, not to mention Apollinaire's use of lines in imitation of familiar architectural landmarks. Both poets thus simultaneously undermine and preserve the unique distinction of poetic form through their innovations.

The pacification prosaics that both figures attempt to challenge with their poetic craft are frequently tied to foreign policy that a hegemonic political order would seek to keep hidden. Jordan's premier lines in "Easter Comes to the East Coast: 1981," dedicated to Ronald Reagan, subversively stage and undermine this failed attempt at concealment through the assurance to powerful political figures (the president, the secretary of state) that "we not studying you guys." The use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a recurrent feature of June Jordan's literary writings and public advocacy for the recognition of the literary value of AAVE. But it can also be an important device in distinguishing the speaker from the audience. Scott MacPhail argues that Jordan can be seen as an intermediary figure between the Black Arts Movement that gave rise to Amiri Baraka and the more contemporary moment of public intellectuals such as Cornell West. Crucially, MaccPhail points out that while Jordan and Baraka both use AAVE, their addressees can differ, with Jordan's calls for solidarity and coalitional resistance resulting in appeals to audiences who may not share the identity of the speaker but who are being called upon to participate in the formation of a more just social order nevertheless ("June Jordan and the New Black Intellectuals" 63). "Easter Comes to the East Coast: 1981" opts for a subversive variation of this dynamic, with the speaker ironically promising the government an absence of

critical scrutiny on the part of racialized subjects. Jordan's poem thus undermines the hierarchy of power by which it is usually the American government that issues statements assuring the public as to their safety from political scrutiny. The poem is thus a compelling testament to and inversion of what Timothy Melley has referred to as "the covert sphere," the phenomenon by which the government both initiates and exposes its own secret machinations, creating a discursive web of intrigue that keeps the civilian public's interest even as it will never be fully accountable to it.[44] The poem's dedication to Reagan is also important to consider in light of the time-frame in which Jordan's collection was issued. Indeed, the texts examined in this dissertation are generally significant for their sequential chronology, tracing as they do the shift from the Jim Crow/Cold War eras all the way to the present, seemingly interminable "War on 'Terror.'" The Reagan years are crucial flashpoint for the instantiation of the War on Drugs/Crime paradigm (though this terminology originated with Nixon's presidency) that would herald the dynamics of mass incarceration and racialized police violence which would eventually bleed into the present "War on 'Terror'" with converging logics and machinations that flattened the distinction between the "terrorist" and "the criminal," as Keith Feldman notes in *A Shadow Over Palestine.* These "categories—terrorist, dictator, and criminal—garnered new meanings, even as their explicit relation to historical categories of race were muted but nevertheless functioned as legitimating frames for the violence of racism" (Feldman 11). The political-temporal metaphor of "bleeding" referenced above is further exemplified by Amira Jarmakani's description of "Reagan's war on drugs and terrorism" being "extended into the contemporary… wars on drugs, *terror,* and immigration… The idea of constant and pervasive threat is cultivated, cementing security as a critical technology of imperialism" ("An Imperialist Love Story" 25,

[44] Melley, Timothy. *The Covert Sphere: Secrecy, Fiction, and the National Security State,* Cornell University Press, 2015. Print.

emphasis mine). The shift from "terrorism," an individual act (however problematically defined by state rhetoric) to "terror," a nebulous noun of intangibly ominous import, stages the ontological distension of a chronology of war-making from a neat sequence with finite prospects to a paranoiac pattern of endless repetition.

Alex Lubin notes that Jordan and Hammad's dialogic collections emerge at a crucial juncture as regards the onset of neoliberalization (*Geographies of Liberation* 143) with its attendant privatization and scaling back of resources and the subsequent convergence of private/for-profit drives and various "security" endeavors (think mercenaries, private police, etc.). While Lubin doesn't quite make this explicit, his analysis suggests that the altered forms of solidarity both collections proffer to one another's cause is in some ways a necessary outcome of the Oslo Accords paradigm, which effaced the possibility for a more directly liberationist and nationalist register within which to frame the Palestinian anti-colonial struggle. That is to say, "solidarity" becomes a matter of individual choice and orientation rather than a collectively driven and honed project; here we can surmise the ways in which neoliberalization acts upon the individual psyche and imagination. (It should go without saying that this is not a statement about the artistic "merit" of either collection. Yet the horizon of possibility that frames artistic praxis and its intersection with ethical-political imagination is never immune to the modulations of global capitalism).

The issue of chronology also involves an important question of what categorical rubric(s) to consider for each poet's collection. The timing of Jordan's poems in particular, especially those dedicated to the Nicaraguan liberation struggle, put Jordan's work squarely in line with the timing and political context explored by Barbara Harlow in *Resistance Literature.* Harlow's notion of "resistance literature," which she admittedly borrows and adopts from a coinage by the

Palestinian novelist and literary critic Ghassan Kanafani,[45] encompasses a form of literature seen as the cultural extension of armed liberation struggles—literally "a role for literature and poets within the struggle alongside the gun, the pamphlet, and the diplomatic delegation" (Harlow xvii). Literature thus becomes one more weapon in the arena of struggle against an oppressive status quo and in pursuance of veritable self-determination and sovereignty. In advancing this concept, Harlow consciously rejects some of the analytical proscriptions that followed in the wake of structuralism and post-structuralism: the critic now has an ethical obligation not to treat literary works as "universal" aesthetic objects with a boundless and trans-historical resonance, or languidly admire them for their linguistic peculiarity, but rather to read them *in* and *through* their socio-political particularities. In fact, as Harlow explains, the texts themselves also insist on their specificity, for such an insistence is part of resistance's literature's characterizing features. Such

[45] Harlow writes:

> The term "resistance" *(muqāwamah)* was first applied in a description of Palestinian literature in 1966 by the Palestinian writer and critic Ghassan Kanafani in his study *Literature of Resistance in Occupied Palestine: 1948-1966.* Kanafani's critical essay was, significantly, written in 1966, before the June War of 1967 whose culmination in the defeat of the Egyptian and Jordanian armies by the Israeli forces resulted in the Israeli occupation of the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza Strip and the opening of the border between these territories, now referred to as the "Occupied Territories," and Israel. As such, it presupposes an important distinction between literature which has been written "under occupation" *(taht-al-ihtilal)* and "exile" *(manfa)* literature. Such a distinction presupposes a people's collective relationship to a common land, a common identity, or a common cause on the basis of which it becomes possible to articulate the difference between the two modes of historical an political existence, between, that is, "occupation" and "exile." The distinction presupposes furthermore an "occupying power" which has either exiled or subjugated, in this case both exiled and subjugated, a given population and has in addition significantly intervened in the literary and cultural development of the people it has dispossessed and whose land it has occupied. Literature, in other words, is presented by the critic as an arena of *struggle.* (*Resistance Literature* 2)

a framework is surely discontinuous with structuralist and post-structuralist maxims of reading, perhaps most famously extolled in Roland Barthes' concept of the "Death of the Author."[46]

Or is it?

As I see it, Barthes' intervention need not suggest a rigid embargo upon considering the author in critical analysis[47] so much as the possibility for texts to mean *something other* than what they were intended to. The language of a text can exist independently of the author insofar as combinations of words, phrases and rhetorical tropes assume meanings in excess of the context of original deployment. But this excess of meaning need not foreclose access to the initial circumstances or intentions underlying the act of writing. Therefore, an analytical approach born of a cautious harmony between "resistance literature" and the "death of the author" would take both the immediate socio-political context for the text into account as well as accepting that even texts that clearly qualify as forms of "resistance literature" contain alternative significations.

Are Jordan's and Hammad's collections examples of "resistance literature?" Several factors bode positively for such an assertion. The first is, as previously mentioned, Jordan's work coinciding with and directly referencing various global liberation struggles, including the Nicaraguan and Palestinian causes for self-determination and freedom. Secondly, while Harlow's eponymous collection concerns itself more with resistance literatures outside of the US, her other writings on prison literature, including American prison literature, make it easily possible for US

[46] "We now know," Barthes declares, "that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (146).

[47] Northrop Frye would express this in more autocratic and even audacious terms, proclaiming early on in *The Anatomy of Criticism* that " the Dante who writes a commentary on the first canto of the *Paradiso* is merely one more of Dante's critics" (5).

writings to factor into this formulation. But one of the factors that initially made this association appropriate also poses a complication: time, especially as regards Suheir Hammad's work.

In *In the Wake of the Poetic: Palestinian Arts After Darwish,* Najat Rahman argues for a new classification of Palestinian poetry following the Oslo Accords of the early '90s. This new Palestinian poetry is often exilic[48] and multilingual, authored by Palestinians from all over the world who, even as they claim the celebrated national poet Mahmoud Darwish as their exemplar, complicate and extend Palestinian poetic identity in new directions not easily assimilable into the earlier formation of poetry in the service of a homeland liberated from colonialism in quite the same way that Darwish's work had attempted. Indeed, Rahman notes that the exigencies of exile often force this new Palestinian poetry to redefine prior notions of "home" and "belonging" following the Palestinian political establishment's capitulation to tête-â-tête diplomacy with Israeli colonizers *before any concessions had been made* regarding surrender of Palestinian lands or the granting of full autonomy, as well as the newly formed Palestinian Authority's abdication of any responsibility towards exiled populations under the Oslo Accords.

Pacification prosaics regarding the current formation of Palestinian oppression thus take on the form of bureaucratic statecraft. But this is also a situation exacerbated by Western nations

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[48] While Rahman uses the framework of "diaspora" and many Palestinian poets and artists self-identify with this term, I consistently use "exile/exilic." The reasons for this are political: "diaspora" suggests a casting out that is more protracted than actually relates to the relatively recent start of the mass expulsion of Palestinians of 1948, and as such its usage can inadvertently undermine the political claim to a right of return that is, at least in part, predicated on the relative recency of forced Palestinian itinerancy following the establishment of a settler-colonial state on Palestinian land. In refusing this descriptor, I am inspired by Miriam Abu Samra, who writes in a footnote to her article "The Road to Oslo and its Reverse" that

> the use of the term Diaspora [sic] with reference to the Palestinian case is inadequate. The definition of Diaspora does not address their legal status, and further, "accepts a situation of dispersion […] which implies the abstraction of the right of return. To qualify the Palestinians as Diaspora, is to eliminate the language necessary to change their situation", Kudmani, quoted in TareqArrar, "Palestinians exiled in Europe" in *Al Majdal* (Spring 2006) pp. 41-45 p. 42.

See: "The Road to Oslo and its Reverse," Mariam Abu Samra, *allegralaboratory.net,* 29 October, 2015. Accessed: 10 January, 2019.

seeking to "game" the outcome of an anti-colonial struggle towards a resolution optimal to the logics of global neoliberalization. As Toufic Haddad writes,

> Western development practitioners should be added to the mix of constitutive players shaping the reality that emerged in the [Occupied Palestinian Territories] since 1993. Despite their frequent depiction as tangential actors observing an ancient irrational power play they are helpless to stem despite their noble efforts, the Western donor community has payed an important role in devising a series of self-described "peacebuilding" and "statebuilding" policies which are heavily implicated in the reality to have emerged as a consequence of the [Declaration of Principles, also known as the Oslo Accords]'s signing, in all its unseemly manifestations. Their interventions have also been justified upon a wider set of ideological and epistemological understandings that reflect an evolving yet normative consensus around what constitutes "development," how peacebuilding can be activated, and what statebuilding should entail, all within a conflict resolution framework. These policies ultimately rest on theoretical and ideological understandings that intellectually irrigate the development/peacebuilding/statebuilding tactics and strategies adopted. Despite variations in particular tactics, priorities and agendas, these policies can broadly be described as "neoliberal" in orientation in so far as they reflect the mind-set and increasing pervasiveness of a neoliberal worldview amongst these actors vis-à-vis domestic and international development agendas overall. (*Palestine Ltd.* 2)

Palestinian colonization continues, but in more invisibilized and euphemized forms, greatly abated by neoliberal ideologies and structures.[49]

It is due to this betrayal of the earlier national struggle that these poets who follow "in the wake" of the Accords, according to Rahman, can be said to enact an "art of death, since the art itself evokes the death of politics" (*In the Wake of the Poetic* 12). When "the death of the author" is followed by "the death of politics," new pathways and possibilities for creative resistance and solidarity are necessitated, for the loss of the earlier anti-colonial framework for the Palestinian struggle (which saw it converging with the larger wave of decolonization that followed the close of WWII) now means that "one cannot continue to consider [Palestinian art] simply as an oppositional art, or an art of resistance" (11). The political chronology of both works, then, offers yet another opportunity for understanding their dialectical interrelation: even as Jordan's is

[49] See also: Omar Zahzah, "Divide, Fragment, Exceptionalize," *PROTOCOLS,* January 2020. https://prtcls.com/uncategorized/omar-zahzah-divide-fragment-exceptionalize/.

closer to the original conception of "resistance literature" and Hammad's to a redefinition of this concept in line with the seismic political shifts within the terrain of the Palestinian struggle, in speaking to one another across the boundaries of time and space, both nevertheless converge in proffering a more comprehensively constellated patchwork of creative resistance in dynamically shifting forms.

Jordan's collection is cathected around the trope of "home," a home which is not a given but needs to be created through a truly ethical attention to the various struggles that punctuate global iniquity. Hammad's collection is also concerned with an ethics of relation, but the voices of either poet differ greatly. What some have described as a "defensive" element in Hammad's work stems from the presence of poems in which the poetic voice/the speaker seems to castigate American audiences for only thinking of domestic atrocities and remaining ignorant of the racialized violence to which Palestinians are subjected. Competition seems to be the register of some of Hammad's pieces, as she writes of refugee camps that make one "long for the projects" and colonial-military violence that is read as domestic police violence on steroids. And yet, while Hammad's tone might seem to lend itself to competition, another possible reading, in line with Lubin's analysis, is that Hammad's conflation of both struggles suggests the *converging of* processes of ghettoization and military/police violence. It might be true that relative ignorance of Palestinian suffering is another indignity foisted upon the Palestinian people that Hammad's work seeks to redress, but perhaps it is what the poet feels to be the inherent *relatedness* of patterns of suffering and oppression that cinches the urgency of the elocution, rather than mere indignation at the hyper-visibility of domestic anti-racist struggles (especially when we bear in mind that hyper-visibility does not automatically entail a *cessation* of oppression). Hartman writes, "Hammad's poetry is clearly influenced by and reflects not only the rhymes and rhythms

but also the break beats of hip-hop" and that Hammad forged connections with the Black Arts Movement as well as "the poets of the hip-hop generation, or as some have called them the BreakBeat poets" (57). Building off of these literary influences and solidarities, the groundbreaking work that Hammad began with *Born Palestinian, Born Black* and continued throughout her subsequent collections was to essentially create Palestinian hip-hop aesthetics through the use of hip-hop, an American genre defined in and through domestic anti-racist struggle, to accommodate expressions of Palestinian, Palestinian American and, at times, Arab American struggle. The returns of Hammad's creative dialogism continue to be felt, as Palestinian- and Arab American spoken word artists continue to mount performances in this vein, and Palestinian hip-hop groups such as DAM and Ramallah Underground enjoy increasing visibility and fame (*In the Wake of the Poetic* 4).[50]

Jordan's poem inverts the process of government scrutiny by making the poetic voice/speaker the one doing the watching, even as the voice ironically assures politicians that this is *not* the case. Hammad's poetry seeks to illustrate how domestic racialization and incarceration are commensurate with imperial/colonial aggression, though a careful reading of her poetry will reveal that her conclusions are not always easy or confident. The poem "fly away," framed as a back-and-forth conversation between the speaker and an unnamed man of color who seeks to enlist in the military, is a case in point. While the speaker minces no words in

[50] But the rise of such groups cannot be limited to authorial influence alone. Indeed, it is crucial to recall the earlier point about the converging logics, mechanisms and structures of ghettoization and militarized policing. According to a conversation with colleagues who spoke directly to Tamer Nafar, one of the founding members of DAM, the group's formation was equally born of a direct resonance members felt with the struggles of American hip-hop and rap artists and the American and Israeli Black Panther parties, whom they listened to and whose works they read while navigating their own lives fractured by Israeli colonization and hyper-policing. According to these colleagues, Tamer took them on a tour of Lydt, Israel (where he and his brother Suhell, also a member of the group) grew up and showed them "places where the Israelis would stop us to see if we were selling drugs" and Israeli-made ghettoes segregating Palestinians and Israeli Jews of color. Jennifer Mogannam and Loubna Qutami, interview with the author, 6 January, 2019.

letting the other individual know just what type of suffering will be inflicted upon international communities of color in part through his efforts, the poem tellingly gives this man the final word. At least, he reasons, up there there is an escape button—"aint nothin like that down here" (47). Hammad's conclusion resists easy categorization; the speaker shares the reality of what military service will entail, but also seems aware of the relative difficulty in castigating the individual for his choice too harshly, given the desperation of his circumstances.[51]

In their own unique ways, then, both poets seek to illuminate the interrelation between the domestic and global spheres, the very connection that the powers that be would have remain hidden. By making visible what hegemonic forces would seek to keep "undercover," Jordan and Hammad demonstrate the potential for resistance inherent within the poetic medium. Theirs is a "security poetics" in the most literal sense of the term.

[51] Here it seems fitting to observe that when discussing this poem during a summer class, several of my students poignantly shifted the conversation to discuss the ways in which the military-industrial apparatus strategically targets low-income communities of color through aggressive campaigning on high school campuses, among other institutions.

Chapter Two: The Global Reach of the Racial Gaze: Cosmopolitanism (or Exile?) in William Gardner Smith's *The Stone Face* and Sam Greenlee's *Baghdad Blues*[52]

"He did not move. From the corner of his eye, he saw that there were two policemen in the car. The white couple looked at him apprehensively, as though he were a dangerous criminal wanted by the police. One of the cops cursed and got out of the automobile and strode over to him."

-William Gardner Smith, *The Stone Face*

"We're the only people in the States who, right from the git-go, been undercover. All black people need a 'cover' in order to survive."

–Sam Greenlee, *Baghdad Blues*

Introduction: Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been

Though this study seems to mark the first occasion upon which it was attempted, a comparison between William Gardner Smith's *The Stone Face* and Sam Greenlee's *Baghdad Blues* seems so natural given the striking overlaps between both works. In the first instance, both texts center around African American protagonists whose attempts to escape the depredations and deprivations inherent to Jim Crow America ironically result in an inability to scape racism *as such*; instead, they come up against racism in a(n only) slightly altered form: anti-Arab racism. I use this term cognizant of Steven Salaita's insightful demarcation between anti-Arab racism as it manifests within an American context versus Orientalism and Islamophobia, which are rather the result of imperial American foreign policy. However, Greenlee's novel (written, interestingly enough, several years before the publication of Said's *Orientalism*) productively complicates

[52] Portions of this chapter and analysis (not to mention the very title) were inspired by the wonderful insights within Aamir Mufti's "Cosmopolitanism and Exile" course at UCLA in Winter quarter of 2013, as well as Fatima Burney's poignant questions posed to a panelist at the UCLA Comparative Literature Graduate Student Conference themed around *Inhumanities* in 2012.

Salaita's schematization by having imperialist American officials relocate to Baghdad on the cusp of the '58 revolution. Thus, the text stages both the impacts of (white) American anti-Arab racism *in tandem with* Orientalism. My parenthetical aside about Greenlee's novel preceding Said's landmark study also raises the fascinating topic of Greenlee's prescient awareness of anti-colonial struggle. For instance, in an interview, Greenlee responded to the question about whether he had read Fanon by confirming that he had not, but that he had "spent more time in a wider variety of Third World countries than Fanon did. I didn't need him to tell me about what was going on out there" ("'Duality is a Survival Tool. It's not a disease:' INTERVIEW WITH SAM GREENLEE" 30). Rather than a detached and even distracting pursuit, travel here emerges as a crucial pedagogical technology with the potential to fortify anti-colonial insights. But even more striking is Greenlee's clear stance on the direct relationship between the plight of African Americans and the resistant, colonized and imperialized populations of Third World nations. During the same interview, Greenlee is asked what his most important takeaways were from his time in the Foreign Service, to which he responds

> the parallel history and correspondences of Third World people to African Americans—first as slaves and later as a target for manipulation and oppression. The same tactics were used, the same kind of propaganda, the same methods of hiring flunkies to control people. And I came to realize that the South Side of Chicago was a Third World Country. (31)

Immediately after this, the interviewer asks, point blank: *Do you mean that the colonial experience of peoples in the Third World was similar to African Americans in the United States?* To which Greenlee responds that it was

> almost identical in every way. I saw the same things going on that I had observed at home. And I saw the same forms of resistance that we as a people had developed over the years. So, I felt quite at home with Arabs and Asians. They accepted me like a brother. (ibid)

Of course, Greenlee's embrace of the colonial analogy to contextualize American anti-Blackness is far from unique, particularly given the analogy's prevalence during the height of the Black Power movement. But what *is* unique is Greenlee's insistence on disseminating this message through fiction; after speeches and political posters, cinema, poetry and drama were the far more common mediums used by conscious Black artists and activists.[53] Greenlee's extensive travels and his predilection for fiction writing thus set him apart from his contemporaries, even as he shared some of their political views and ambition for non-compromising social change.

Unlike Greenlee, William Gardner Smith did not travel for government work: in 1951, Smith decided to relocate to Paris, where he took part in the African American expatriate milieu that featured Richard Wright, James Baldwin and Chester Himes, among others. Unlike the protagonist of his novel, *The Stone Face,* who leaves the US to escape relentless racial violence and persecution, Michel Fabre writes that Smith was rather fleeing the "conformity of the black bourgeoisie of which he felt he was a prisoner rather than a need to escape the racial scene" (*From Harlem to Paris* 239). And while Smith's novel is clearly intended to have a wider resonance, Fabre explains that *The Stone Face* was more local in its conception, arising as it did out of Smith's "growing concern with the racial situation in France relative to the Algerian war" (245). Writing *The Stone Face* afforded Smith an opportunity to continue practicing the "sociological novel" in his new setting; as he informed New York *Post* correspondent Joseph Barry: "I'll probably always write about social situations but they'll be where I am" (250). Smith

[53] As Melani McAlister writes, poetry and drama had become so prevalent among Black activists thanks to the efforts of Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones) and the rest of the Black Arts Movement that an incensed Kwame Ture (formerly Stokey Carmichael) felt compelled to remark in a speech that "We have to say 'Don't play jive and start writing poems after Malcolm is shot.' We have to move from the point where the man left off and stop writing poems" ("One Black Allah" 638). I thank Jennifer Mogannam for bringing this to my attention.

was also less itinerant than Greenlee, ultimately never reversing course on his expatriation to France.

Placed in a newfound position of intriguing dialectical import—now somewhat immune to the more immediate assaults of racism, though still firmly expert in its nature and workings—the protagonists of Smith's and Greenlee's novels draw on their past experiences as racialized American subjects to help their newfound Arab companions navigate their own oppression. In a somewhat more generalized extension of the preceding observation, both texts are then, perhaps evidently enough, concerned to some degree with (what they construct to be) some of the more overarching and translatable components of various forms of racism. This second insight is worth dwelling upon at some length. In an intellectual moment where studies of the processes and logics (discursive, ontological, symbolic, and so forth) of racism seem primarily oriented towards capturing its *specificity,* it is compelling to consider the clarifications inherent to two such avowedly comparative explorations of anti-racist struggle. And lest comparison be taken to imply some kind of ethical-political dilution of focus, a sensitive reading of both novels suggests the *opposite* to be the case: far from a juvenile acrobatics of sloganeering analogy, the texts' use of comparison as a methodology for uncovering some of the defining layers of systems and logics of oppression allows for an even *more* sustained and sober attention to the *particularities* of discrete forms of racism. Nowhere is this more evident than in the security poetics and pacification prosaics deployed and critiqued within both works.

I Spy

Both *The Stone Face* and *Baghdad Blues* present complex literary representations of the dynamics informing the overlap between racism and attendant projects of seizure, extraction and dispossession (settler-colonialism and colonially inflected racism in the case of Smith's novel;

imperialism and Orientalism as driving levers for racism for Greenlee's). Nevertheless, both can be said to metonymize the process of racialization vis-à-vis a symbolic constellation of focus upon the eye, as well as the larger process of being un/seen. This assumes particularly brutal potentialities in Smith's work, where being seen can literally portend harrowing violence being visited upon the novel's African American protagonist, Simeon Brown. One flashback within *The Stone Face* depicts Simeon being viciously beaten by two white police officers—a beating whose epidermal *invisibility* would provide the officers with recourse for gratuitous verbal sadism: "You see, boy, hoses don't leave no marks" (42). The encounter is irreversibly set in motion by the officers *seeing* Simeon in a predominantly white (and presumably middle- to upper-middle class) neighborhood and growing suspicious at his mere physical presence. Within this initial encounter, partially quoted above as the premier epigraph of this chapter, it is crucial to note that Simeon's "criminal" and "wanted" status are cinched by the white gaze *prior* to his physical beating by the police. For a white couple "looked at him apprehensively, as though he were a dangerous criminal wanted by the police," only *after* which a cop "cursed and got out of the automobile and strode over to him" (39). The text thus stages a pacification prosaics of the gaze, according to which the moment of being spotted proleptically conscripts the hierarchical violence of The Law[54] in all of its exceptionalizing fury. The security *poetics* of Smith's text thus become defined by a kind of colonial/racial ocuphobia, necessitating the imperative to remain hidden, to stay out of sight and under the radar of the synecdotal panopticon of racial-colonial

[54] Though I mean this phrase in the more general sense of a structuring paradigm that masks hierarchical subordination with positivist "common sense," Kafka's rendition of The Law within the parable couched in his novel *The Trial* might also be a useful referent here. For in Kafka's parable, as in Smith's novel, The Law is an impenetrable arbiter that seems only to prolong deprivation. Rather than what Glissant describes as "the opacities of Myth or Tragedy, whose obscurity was accompanied by exclusion and whose transparency aimed at 'grasping," there is nothing to "grasp" here, no "hands that grab their surroundings and bring them back to themselves" (Glissant 192). If anything, the "hands" reach out, turned upward, barring the supplicant from access. The Law's impenetrability, in the final instance, emerges as one last indignity inflicted upon the victim rather than a cause for resigned trust or relief.

subjugation. In this, *The Stone Face* acts as a literary embodiment of Donna Haraway's notion of the "particularity and embodiment of all vision" as a paradigm that needs to replace the invisibly violent conception of seeing as an "objective" act, one that continually reinforces "splitting of subject and object" ("Situated Knowledges" 582-583). But also crucial to bear in mind is Ruha Benjamin's illustration of the strategic import that invisibility holds for *whiteness*: "Invisibility, with regard to Whiteness, offers immunity. To be unmarked by race allows you to reap the benefits but escape responsibility for your role in an unjust system" (*Race After Technology* 4). When invisibility becomes the sole possession of Whiteness, its obverse, hyper-visibility, becomes an apartheid technology used to render deviant bodies as variously suspect and necessitating heightened scrutiny and surveillance.

The violence of the gaze is also staged via Simeon's racialized blinding at the hands of a sadistic white boy, Chris, who cuts out Simeon's eye with a knife after the latter refuses to utter the racist forms of self-denigration Chris tries to force him to repeat (28). Paradoxically, Simeon's physical blinding is formative to his deepened insight into what his subsequent travels reveal to be some of the more constant components of racism. Here, the primary anchoring motif of the book's message, "the stone face," comes into sharp relief. The phrase is intended to capture the merciless look—and, the reader may surmise, the rigid, willful blinding as to the humanity of the racialized subject—that comes over figures who perpetuate racial violence and deprivation. At first Simeon mistakes the "stone face" for being exclusive to the sadistic white racists he has personally encountered in the states. This false assumption is what initially drives him to beginning a painting of a figure with the stone face after he relocates to France in an attempt to realize some relief from the unrelenting violence and fear of the United States under Jim Crow. But later, Simeon will learn that the cutting, inhuman gaze of the Stone Face is not

unique to the states; that it is, in fact, global in its reach and scope, from the racist French policemen who perpetuate anti-Algerian racism in the French metropole to the collaborationists who took part in Lumumba's assassination—"Those faces! Those *black* faces!" Simeon thinks to himself after seeing a photograph of Lumumba's assassins (172)—wearing the Stone Face is not solely determined by race as much as the willingness and propensity to perpetuate racialized violence and oppression.

But, just as security poetics and pacification prosaics are intertwined and contingent upon one another's movements, so too is the gaze in Smith's novel a means of catalyzing resistance to the disciplinary violence it also heralds. For instance, it is by way of the comparative indexing of the racialized oppression to which Algerians in France are exposed via Simeon's detached observations that the text imparts its insights about the potential overlaps in various forms of racialized deprivation. As Simeon travels to the Algerian quarters in Paris with his newfound Algerian comrades for the first time, he is struck by their geo-spatial echoes of Harlem:

> It was like Harlem, Simeon thought, except that there were fewer cops in Harlem, but maybe that too would come one day. Like Harlem and like all the ghettos of the world. The men he saw through the window of the bus had whiter skins and less frizzy hair, but they were in other ways like the Negroes of the United States. They adopted the same poses: "stashing" on corners, ready for and scared of the ever-possible "trouble," eyes sullen and distrusting, dressed in pegged pants, flashy shirts and narrow pointed shoes. He could almost hear them saying: "Whatchu puttin down, man?" "Jus' playin' it cool, jus' playin' it cool, man, tryin to keep ole Charlie off my back." Ole Charlie paced the street, waving his submachine gun. Simeon watched everything, remembering how it was on South Street and Lombard Street, feeling the old unbearable frustration and anger, the fear and defiance. Who knew anything about all this? What did *Them Folks* know about this or that or about anything? Who was alive except us down here, us here down under, feeling the heat and weight of what life was in the all-too-real present, watching ghostly clowns play frivolous games there above? (87)

In fact, "echoes" may not be the most accurate word here, for while the above-cited passage certainly captures Simeon's uncanny familiarity with the surroundings he is supposedly encountering for the first time, the initial phrase in fact qualifies a slight *distinction* between

Harlem and Paris: "there were fewer cops… but maybe that too would come one day" (ibid). Its initial coherence through a sentiment of familiarity is what allows Simeon's connection to operate simultaneously as a fulcrum for proximity and exception. And it is *through* the sense of relatedness that Simeon comes to understand the implications of what is presently a distinguishing factor.[55] This reading is inspired by Michael Rothberg's nuanced analysis of Smith's novel in *Multidirectional Memory.* Rothberg rejects Paul Gilroy's reading of the end of the novel, in which Simeon's decision to return to the United States to take part in the Civil Rights struggle constitutes a "narrow vision of cultural kinship that Smith's universalizing argument appeared to have transcended," a contradiction, according to Gilroy, born of an "overly hasty way to conclude a narrative" (*Against Race* 323). In an interpretation that emphasizes the

[55] My understanding of the novel's revelation of distinction *through* similarity is also inspired by Tiffany Lethabo King's description of how her encounter with an Anishinaabe woman gave her own understandings of slavery greater insight:

> Something about listening to this Anishinaabe woman's story, with its unfamiliar contours, brought into sharp relief the grooves, dips, depressions, and crevices that I had never paid attention to all of the times I had run my fingertips over the familiar skin of my own narrative of slavery. I thought I knew all of its dry patches, oil slicks, depressions, raised surfaces, grooved fault lines, and loosening jowls. I know the texture of that face. However, when I listened intently to her talk about how she and her people, the Anishinaabeg, and the other Indigenous peoples in this hemisphere have been stalked by the death shadow of genocide daily, then I began to *know something new*. As she spoke, I paid attention to the depth of the grooves, took the time to pursue the strange feeling of each rough cut that had been etched over time. A particular line between my eyebrows took on a new curve and depth. Running my finger over it, I found that I could poke clear through its threshold into new regions of "my slavery." On the face of my Blackness, I could feel a new clammy and terrorizing cavern whose depths swallowed the length of my finger. (*The Black Shoals* ix, emphasis mine).

Despite the obvious differences between this context and that of Smith's novel, King's emphasis on how unfamiliar narratives of Indigenous erasure and genocide in turn served to de-familiarize the narratives of slavery she thought she had known by revealing new dimensions to the stories with which she had previously considered herself intimately acquainted seems related to how Simeon's encounter with the Algerian quarters both "recalled" Harlem for him and caused him to think of Harlem in a new way, no longer simply one place with a particular, defining oppression so much as the outgrowth of increasingly globalizing processes that produce many Harlems with varying degrees of "Harlemization." This new sensibility is what moves Simeon to consider the possibility that perhaps more cops "would come too one day" (87).

novel's staging of the intersections between the universal and particular as modulated by various degrees of privilege and complicity, Rothberg reads Simeon's decision as an ethical outgrowth of, and thus continuous with, his experiences with the Algerians in France: "While once he had translated French social conditions into American terminology, Simeon's political maturity is marked by his final retranslation of American vocabulary into the terms of the French-Algerian war" (261). I do, however, find a moment of convergence with Gilroy's interpretation, *precisely* by way of the very evolved ethical-political "retranslations" Rothberg identifies. While it is not Simeon's decision to return as such that is the issue, Simeon's closing thoughts as he realizes he needs to return to the US insinuate a mode of comparison that seems to approximate dissimulative disjunction more so than a comparative ethics of joint struggle:

> Back to the States—not because he liked it, not because his antipathy to that country and its people had changed, not because he felt any less anger or bitterness or frustration at the mere thought of living there again, but because the Lulubelles were there, America's Algerians were back there, fighting a battle *harder* than that of any guerillas in any burnt mountains. Fighting the stone face. (*The Stone Face* 210, emphasis mine)

The notion of African Americans' struggle being "harder" than that of the Algerian guerilla fighters insinuates an unquantifiable value judgement, an unsubstantiated register of competition that gently diffuses some of the energy that had previously animated Simeon's imperative to fight racism in France just as readily as in the US. In this moment of free indirect discourse, the return comes not, as the guiding logic of the scene seems otherwise to suggest, because racism is truly global and thus inescapable, but because one struggle is "harder" than another. If this logic is pursued to its conclusion, "America's Algerians" might even *divest* the Algerians in France of their authenticity in struggle—because they are the Algerians whose own plight pales against the "harder" one of their American brethren. However, the amount of

comparisons effected throughout the novel, as well as the clear emphasis on Simeon's intellectual-political development, makes it possible to avoid seeking a definitive "stance" on the question of overlapping forms of struggle so much as an artistic treatment of the necessarily ongoing *process* of coming to terms with this question, an interpretation that Rothberg's emphasis on the "multidirectional" movement between the general and the particular in the novel (251) more clearly facilitates.

There are presently *more* cops patrolling Paris and disciplining the Algerians, but the nature and logic of ghettoization and racialized disciplinarity dictate that Harlem may very well follow suit. Far more than a curious observation, this seemingly innocent reflection is fraught with profound sociopolitical insight, suggesting both the genealogical linkages between the institution of policing and the material processes of colonization as well as the recontextualization of ghettoization as not merely an accident of circumstance, but a wider technology of racial stratification and dispossession with global currency. The pained familiarity with which Simeon responds to his current surroundings is cemented by the conclusion of the passage, which veers from journalistic observation to poetic asides and narrational enumeration to free, indirect discourse. The third-person is displaced by the collective first person pronoun, "we," stylistically suggesting and performing a shift from the individual/limited comprehension of particular forms of racism to the more agentive and enabling vantage point of joint struggle.

Greenlee's novel similarly extols a vision of joint struggle. In fact, *Baghdad Blues* does so in a slightly more explicit way than *The Stone Face.* Even before the official start of the narrative, the text signals this intention via Greenlee's dedication of the text to his (blood) brother, "Donald 'Doc' Greenlee" as well as his "Arab brothers, Ali and Jamil" (np). In addition to its clear intention to declare firm solidarity, this dedication is interesting in that it destabilizes

the potential distance between Greenlee the author and the novel's main protagonist, Dave Burrell. Indeed, the story, which revolves around Burrell's (mis)adventures while working for the propagandistic US Information Bureau in Iraq just at the cusp of the 1958 Revolution (which only Burrell seems able to recognize is about to transpire) was based in large part on Greenlee's own experiences.

But there are also important distinctions between both works. The tone of Smith's novel is much more serious and even somber than Greenlee's, which uses humor (usually by way of Dave's satirical internal thoughts) as one of its primary devices for effecting socio-political critique. There are also deviations in the types of security poetics and pacification prosaics found in Greenlee's novel: while Dave, like Simeon, is subjected to paternalizing assumptions based on his race, rather than remaining completely "out of sight" as Simeon does, Dave must instead go "undercover," playing the role that is expected of him by his white coworkers via undetectable dissimulation. Indeed, the second noun of the title of this dissertation emerges from Dave's frank confession to a USIB co-worker that, "it ain't no game with us, baby. We're the only people in the States who, right from the git-go, been undercover. All black people need a 'cover' in order to survive. We can get killed trying to be for-real around some of you" (169).[56] Adeptness at international intrigue is here coupled with a necessary survival strategy for coping with the imminent threats inherent to life in Jim Crow America. In this way, the distinctions between domestic and global racialization are effaced; while its particular manifestation may vary, the need for a "cover" of some kind remains constant.

[56] In the aforementioned interview, Greenlee would describe this adaptation to white patronizing and condescension as a "tactical" form of invisibility. It was Ellison's invisibility, Greenlee conceded, but he also critiqued Ellison for simply wanting "visibility" and failing to understand the strategic benefits of this form of racial underestimation and condescension ("Duality is a survival tool" 43).

Yet despite the greater proximity hypothetically afforded by reliance on the first person, Dave's greatest "cover" may not be the one he constructs to in reaction to his co-workers, but rather, to the *reader.* While the novel is jam-packed with dry humor and (literally) explosive plot twists, Dave as a character remains curiously stagnant. Never is the reader granted any entry-point into his emotional world. Indeed, after Dave makes his first Iraqi friend, a working-class store owner named Ali, the two decided to see a movie together—a Western. "No Freudian bullshit," Dave recalls approvingly, "the cats stole and killed because they dug it" (51). The esteemed absence of "Freudian bullshit" here implies the veneration of a lack of subtext, the desire for actions really to be exactly what they seem on the surface. This is a curious desire—if we can even speak of desire, given the protagonist's affective embargo—to express within a story about racialized subjects whose humanity is effaced by the surface readings of clueless whites. The very temporality of the text is also another means by which Dave effects a distance between himself and the reader. For we have no idea from precisely what moment Dave is narrating; we only know that the events are set in the recent past. Yet by the time the book concludes with Dave's repeated (and somewhat mechanical) query about how much he had "learned about myself" (185), we have achieved no deepened insight about Dave's situation. It is unclear precisely what, if anything, these experiences in Iraq have led to for Dave.

However, it *is* clear that the text is attempting to draw a correlation not only between Orientalism and imperialism abroad and the deprivation and condescension inherent to anti-Black racism in the United States, but also between the means of resistance that are necessitated by these converging processes and logics of hierarchical subordination. And this brings us to another key distinction between *The Stone Face* and *Baghdad Blues*. In *The Stone Face,* while Simeon's sympathies for the Algerian struggle remain consistent, it is the figure of Lulu Belle,

one of the African American children who attends a newly desegregated school and is met with droves of racist, screaming whites as a result, that comes to haunt Simeon with newfound forms of guilt. In particular, Simeon finds it shameful that a small *child* can remain in the states and struggle while he, a grown man, briefly relocates to France as a means of escaping racism rather than meeting it head-on. This development, coupled with the admonishments of Babe, an older, African American fool/trickster style mentor figure for Simeon, quietly suggest that the text leans more towards a Civil Rights framework rather than an internationalist/revolutionary paradigm for Black liberation. "I'ma tellin' you, if we was like the Algerians and was fighting to free *our* country and drive the white folks out—just like in a colony—well, then I wouldn't be here," Babe laments to Simeon at one point in his luxe apartment ever-stocked with good food and wine (146). "I'd be in that fight. But fight for what? For integration? Man, I don't *want* to be integrated! I don't want to be dissolved into that great big messed-up white society there. I feel like the Black Muslims on that score" (ibid). Babe's direct reference to the Algerians as well as his more subtle allusion to the separatist tendencies of the Nation of Islam (an issue the text toys with at various points, in one instance having Simeon think to himself via free indirect discourse "were Negroes such a separate nation within that nation which was America?" (36)) establishes, if not exactly a firm binary, at least some vague distance between Babe's political views and the evidently still developing views of Simeon.[57] Simeon's inexperience and naivete are important to

[57] However, Babe's views ought not to be dismissed outright, particularly given the historical conjuncture at which they are being issued: while 1963 (the date of the novel's publication) is considered prior to the official advent of the Black Power movement in the US, by this point Robert F. Williams, whose work *Negroes with Guns* had been published just one year prior, was in exile in Cuba and continuing to publicly advocate for armed self-defense and discuss the role of armed struggle in national liberation more broadly—with the connection between global and American Black freedom struggles often made explicitly through his publication, *The Crusader*. Robin Kelley notes that Williams' exile should not be taken to reflect a marginal influence on political thought and action in the US, given how his writings were a direct influence on the formation of the Revolutionary Action Movement in the US, the "first black Maoist-influenced organization in history" (*Freedom Dreams* 72). It was also in the early '60s, in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre, that the ANC decided to take up armed struggle as part of the fight against apartheid. It is difficult to be sure precisely how much of this information Smith had direct access to, but the

the socio-political texture of the novel; Simeon walks a fine line between the aged cynicism of Babe and the African American writer James Benson and (what the text presents as) the idealized, youthful bravery of Lulu Belle. This quality of being liminally out of synch allows for the text to construct Simeon as a kind of silent observer, sympathetic, and yet presently not quite certain of how to channel this sympathy into productive energies and channels. Indeed, the attempt to paint "the stone face" may constitute an initial, flawed attempt at precisely such a channeling. Destroying the painting at the end may thus come to signify a rejection of complete contemplation at the total expense of action, an issue which is also intriguing to consider in light of the aesthetic philosophies proffered by some of the characters. When Simeon tells Harold the composer that "There are periods when, as a man, you're bound more to a cause than to art," Harold responds "Then one shouldn't pretend to be an artist. One should go get a gun and fight. But leave art alone" (*The Stone Face* 178).

Dave, by contrast, seems more immediately drawn to radical action. Following the Iraqis' successful toppling of the pro-Western puppet royalist regime, Dave is asked by Yussuf, one of his Iraqi friends, "And you believe you can learn from our struggle; perhaps use it in your own," to which Dave replies in the affirmative (181). While it is unclear precisely how Dave (or Greenlee, for that matter) precisely envisions a revolutionary overthrow being advanced within the context of the American Black freedom struggle (a question for which Greenlee's preceding novel, *The Spook Who Sat by the Door,* offered more direct speculation), the intention is still worth registering.

"Another Refugee:" Cosmopolitanism, or Exile?

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escalating nature of the US Black struggle's comparison to global struggles against colonialism and the role of arms in national liberation suggests at the very least a familiarity with the discourse on the part of the writer. I thank Robin Kelley for bringing this to my attention.

In *The Stone Face,* familiarity cuts across two different axes for Simeon: one is the discriminatory violence to which the Algerians in France are subjected, which Simeon, despite his initial desire to remain inconspicuous enough to enjoy the pleasures of unburdened relocation, tries to avoid seeing in relation to his own experiences of racialized vigilante and police brutality. The second is a growing chumminess and commiseration with various other American expatriates, white and Black, who make up the American colony.

When Babe, a guardian angel figure of sorts, first introduces Simeon to the other expatriates, he says, "Meet Simeon, another refugee" (12). Categorizing Simeon (and by extension, all other African Americans who relocated to France during this period) as a "refugee" opens up an intriguing plurality to the term that invites a broader reassessment of the dynamics and characteristics underlying the phenomenon of refugeehood. The point here is not to deconstruct more politically explicit definitions of "refugee" to irrelevance, but rather to pose the following question: if "refugee" is a coherent label for African Americans fleeing American Jim Crow persecution within the diegetic zone of the text, what new insights can such a construction offer for our understandings of the unbearable forces that propel and restrict movement across (and, at times, in spite of) borders and death waters?[58] How can this more contingent view of "refugee" status help to undo an overly general humanitarian analytic of refugeehood in favor of one that is more sharply attentive to how structural racism and deprivation make nation-states, which often achieve their coherence *through* the legally sanctioned dispensation of violent regulation, *broadly* uninhabitable?

[58] I borrow the phrase "death waters" from Loubna Qutami. See: Loubna Qutami, "Jerusalem in Athens: Refugees, the Youth Left and the Crises of Nation and Capital." *Informed Comment*, 7 Dec. 2018, www.juancole.com/2018/12/jerusalem-refugees-capital.html.

Despite a distance of several decades between both novels and our present moment, travel as a mechanism for gaining deeper insight into processes of racialization and related forms and logics of deprivation and dehumanization is eerily timely—perhaps even "timeless." Denise Ferreria da Silva argues that an insufficient interrogation of the Enlightenment conception of "Man" allows for the instantiation of "the global" as an organizing apparatus for the perpetuation of worldly racial subjugation (*Toward A Global Idea of Race*).[59] Even as it realizes local mutations,[60] then, racism is nevertheless truly global in scope and import. For this reason, travel assumes a compelling conceptual significance in relation to questions of racialization and resistance.

Building upon the work of Walter D. Mignolo, Bruce Robbins and Ross Posnock, Alexa Weik von Mossner argues that an updated take on "cosmopolitanism" is the most effective lens through which to read *The Stone Face.* Mossner coins the neologism "critical cosmopolitanism" to account for a framework for cosmopolitan identity that couples the relative privilege and ease of travel with a heightened awareness of the various power differentials that stratify contemporary social existence ("Confronting the Stone Face" 169). However, while such a gesture may seem intellectually enriched, its practical outcome seems merely to reinforce the

[59] I thank Mehra Gharibian for bringing this source to my attention.

[60] In fact, it is according to these mutations, the texts seem to suggest, that different forms of racism are able to continue. "But that is *different*" is the phrase Simeon and his ideologically sympathetic allies are met with time and time again when attempting to compare the Algerian and American Black liberation struggles. Dave likewise connects the infantilizing condescension with which he is treated as a Black man by tone-deaf liberal whites to the arrogance with which his co-workers in the USIB dismiss the possibility of the Iraqis rebelling, believing Arabs to be too mentally underdeveloped for such a show of independence. Of course, no instance of oppression is wholly interchangeable with another, but comparison does not suggest this to be the case: here it might be useful to recall Michael Rothberg's illuminating investigation of how it was the connections drawn between the victims of colonization and the Holocaust that provided the first substantial attempt to diagnose the causes and forces driving either atrocity. The "competitive model" of the Holocaust that today situates it at the very top of a hierarchy of the worst incidents in human history is, Rothberg shows, relatively new, and deepened insight into the symptoms that birth processes of mass oppression such as the Holocaust owes a great deal to the attempts of various resistors and victims to compare their struggles across boundaries of geographical and cultural space and time in the immediate aftermath of their cessation.

very issues it was meant to counter: a covering-up of disparities in power and privilege that often break down along classed, gendered and/or racial lines, an avoidance of what Doreen Massey insightfully terms the "power geometry" determining (and restricting) movement.[61] Indeed, such a gesture seems only a marginal improvement to Bruce Robbins' question of why we don't think of migrant workers as "cosmopolitan" in "Comparative Cosmopolitanism" (1998). Again, while such rhetorical sleights of hand may help appease liberal-critical sensibilities, there is no compelling reason for simply maintaining the "cosmopolitan" as the exclusive category of relocation when such a diverse array of struggles defined around differing modalities of movement (not to mention stasis) persist to this day. There is also an insufficient genealogy underpinning "cosmopolitanism," as insightfully explored by Reid Miller's criticism of how the "universal" sense of ethics that allows for a globally-aspiring consensus of "moral spectatorship" is predicated upon a discounting of the historical and present-day legacies of slavery, resulting in "a postmodern dissemination—not conclusion—of racialized thought" (726).[62]

I seriously doubt "cosmopolitanism," for all of the eagerness of its devotees, has much purchase in the hold of the ship or landscapes obliterated by bombs and mines. And it seems particularly strange if not actively detrimental to insist upon the ongoing relevance of cosmopolitanism when we contend with settler-colonialism as an ongoing, active force—the privileged movements of the settler seem less noteworthy than the resistance of the Indigene, as well as all driven to settler-spaces through various technologies and processes of imperial and colonial violence, death and deprivation.

[61] See: Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place" in *Space, Place and Gender*: University of Minnesota Press, 1994. (148). I thank my former student, Yuling Wang, for bringing this source to my attention.

[62] See: Miller, Reid. "A Lesson in Moral Spectatorship." *Critical Inquiry,* 34 (Summer 2008).

While it is not a comprehensive corrective, I nevertheless feel that a return to "exile" as an analytic, particularly as it is explored via Edward Said in "Reflections on Exile," is more useful in considering the constellation of movement and racialization that define both Smith's and Greenlee's texts. In this essay, Said begins by poetically reflecting upon the pain inflicted by the fact of exile, "an unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted" (173). But Said eventually moves towards speaking of exile "not as a privilege, but as an *alternative* to the mass institutions that dominate modern life" (184). The exile "must cultivate a scrupulous (not indulgent or sulky) subjectivity" (ibid), a subjectivity with vast socio-political import. For

> The exile knows that in a secular and contingent world, homes are always provisional. Borders and barriers, which enclose us within the safety of familiar territory, can also become prisons, and are often defended beyond reason or necessity. Exiles cross borders, break barriers of thought and experience. (185)

While the "cosmopolitan" (however "critical") can make home anywhere, the exile is driven *from* home and, through a critical awakening, becomes ethically incapable of establishing a home that is solely defined by filiative bonds (the nation, the family, and so forth). It is this progressive coupling of material underprivileging resulting in the violence of relocation alongside a newfound critical consciousness that is of such vital importance here; "cosmopolitanism" assumes the latter without the sequence initiated by the former.

It is true that Simeon and Dave's means of and purposes for relocation differ, with Dave traveling to Iraq in order to work for a Cold War US propaganda outfit as a means of escaping Jim Crow America, while Simeon flees to France to attempt to live a quiet life as an American expatriate in France. Furthermore, their individual struggles differ: Dave's personal issues seem to result from the push-and-pull of trying to "play the game" and give in to the paternalistic racism of his white coworkers enough to advance, an attempt often undermined by his knack for

sarcasm and his simmering indignation at the imperial arrogance with which the Iraqis are treated. Dave, on the other hand, feels ethically pained at the prospect of enjoying a newfound release from his own racist persecution that comes at the expense of contending with the eerily familiar French brutalization of Algerians. Even with these differences in mind, I believe both characters remain symbolic *exiles* rather than blissfully unaffected "cosmopolitans" because they have learned that relocation is no antidote to racism in a world structured by racial deprivation. The answer is not to leave or return to "home" so much as to make the entire *world* a home unbounded by the strictures of subjugation and oppression. Between the "cosmopolitan" and the "exile," it is the exile who understands the need for existential independence precisely because of the material suffering prefigured into reflexive associations. For this reason, it is the exile, rather than the cosmopolitan, who retains the potential to rehabilitate the global order, to instantiate a truly ethical dimension within the "worldly."

Chapter Three: "you stare at the cops just as long as they stare at you:" Law and Disorder in the Novels of John A. Williams

"There was nothing quite like success, American Negro writer Harry Ames, nothing quite like it. It means that you stare at the cops just as long as they stare at you and a host of other things, right, Harry?"
-John A. Williams, *The Man Who Cried I Am*

"This was the way it had to be for those kids in the streets, who once they got on them became prey for every white fascist, in uniform or not, who spent his days and nights waiting for open season to begin on Negroes. This was the way it had to be to protect those who had managed by some black magic to own their homes or stores, which were often destroyed along with *Chuck's* stores in the frenzies. This was the way it had to be to keep the state legislatures and the Congress from doing what they did after every rebellion—draw the noose tighter and tighter with dangerous new laws as though they were seeking the final excuse to begin the exterminations. No, silence. No words, confidences or threats, which in the final analysis are put forth in a vain attempt to obtain legal redress. No, nothing but the deed."
-John A. Williams, *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light*

Introduction: Twilight Fame and Cherry Pie

In a 2015 memorial article written for the *New York Times,* William Grimes writes that African American novelist John A. Williams' "manifest gifts… earned him at best a twilight kind of fame—a reputation for being chronically underrated" ("John A. Williams, 89, Dies; Underrated Novelist Wrote About Black Identity"). Williams' "twilight" fame is most likely attributable to his unique position within the "canon" of African American authors: younger than Wright and Baldwin, but older than the succeeding generation of authors, Williams never quite "fit" into a larger scene in the sense that others did, or could at least be claimed to. Here, however, it is important to recall that Williams was critical of the "tendency to group black writers together," which he considered "a way to ensure that only one at a time could be successful" (ibid). Entire dissertations could easily be written on this critical tendency and its role in perpetuating writerly marginalization even as it purports to accomplish the very opposite. While this is not my purpose, I *do* want to linger for a few moments on Williams' critical

insights before moving to an analysis of the security poetics and prosaics inherent to his fictional craft. For it seems to me that part of Williams' obscurity could also be attributable to his outspokenness, even—especially—as it concerned trenchant and even controversial views.

I have in mind here Williams' views on Martin Luther King. Grimes, no doubt putting it milder than Williams himself, writes that for Williams,

> Dr. King, suffering from hubris, was essentially a dupe, bought off with small concessions by the white power structure and blocked from effecting meaningful change.
>
> "He did not understand that it had armed him with feather dusters," Mr. Williams wrote. "He was a black man and therefore always was and always would be naked of power, for he was slow, indeed unable, to perceive the manipulation of white power, and in the end white power killed him" (ibid).

This might seem tangential to an investigation of the ways in which "security" is framed, understood and contested within two of Williams' novels. However, I find Williams' insights here not only generally prescient, but rife with particular import for our current topic of investigation. In point of fact, even if he is somewhat distinguished for his acerbic prose, Williams is far from the only critic to argue for a reappraisal of King's legacy. Nikhil Pal Singh's landmark *Black Is a Country* (2004) begins with a careful unraveling of the liberal nationalist teleology that posthumously conscripts King as a benign symbol of the inevitability of progress, an inevitability actuated by the inherent goodness of the American nation. Indeed, Singh writes that

> King has become a symbol of the universalizing force of American norms and institutions… As a new founding father, the mythic King allowed Americans not only to celebrate their progress into a more inclusive and tolerant people, but also to tell themselves that is who they always were. (4)

The "always were" of Singh's concluding phrase neatly cinches how King's memory can be mobilized for ostensibly paradoxical purposes, on the one hand as symbolic "evidence" of American racial uplift as well as the ultimate counterweight to the need for immediate resistance in the procurement of this larger goal. For according to the liberal,[63] quasi-Hegelian conceit among whose pantheon a woefully misread King has been placed, progress inevitably lumbers forward—slouching towards Bethlehem, as it were. Relatedly, Charles E. Cobb's *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (2014) is a critical reassessment of the nature of the "nonviolent" character of the Civil Rights movement, arguing that it was armed self-protection that allowed for the movement to make the inroads that it achieved even as the optics of nonviolent resistance remained a core strategy.[64] As Cobb importantly observes,

> The dichotomy between violence and non-violence so often imposed by historians and other analysts is not very helpful for understanding either the use of guns in local black communities or contemporaneous movement discussion and debate about self-defense. The use of guns for self-defense was not the

[63] Astute readers will not fail to notice that I am partaking in that navel-gazing habit endemic to certain academics on various parts of the Left to castigate anything "liberal" as though it were a coherent, statically singular construct. The fact that I choose to do so for analytical expedience does not mitigate this distortion of convenience, though I hope to explore the tendency in future pieces of writing more directly dedicated to this topic. For now, I find it relevant to note that my ideas on the issue have been healthfully challenged by W.B. Gallie's brilliant investigation of and intervention in the critical common-sense notions of "art" within British aesthetic philosophy. Gallie deftly shows how both the meta-critical notion of "art" as indefinable as well as the alternative view that posits an "over-all theory of art" (104) need to be taken *in their plurality* rather than individually accepted or challenged. The tie that binds such a multiform critical consciousness will be a "properly sympathetic historical account of how the concept of art *came to be*" (107). Art is "*essentially complex,* and, chiefly for this reason, *essentially contested"* (ibid). See: W.B. Gallie, "Art as An Essentially Contested Concept," 1956. I think Kirstie McClure for bringing this to my attention.

[64] Akinyele Omowale Umoja also made this assertion in *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement*, which predates the publication of Cobb's volume by one year (2013):

> without armed resistance, primarily organized by local people, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) activists would not have been able to organize in Mississippi. After organizing by SNCC and CORE, armed resistance served as a complement to self-proclaimed nonviolent organizers and organizations from 1961 through 1964. (2)

> opposite of nonviolence, as is commonly thought. Something more complicated but absolutely normal was at play. (10)

The title of Cobb's study is lifted from a direct admonishment of King by Hartman Turnbow, an African American Mississippi farmer who told King in 1964 "This nonviolent stuff ain't no good. It'll get ya killed" (7). And Glenn Smiley, one of King's advisers on nonviolent praxis, apparently referred to King's home as "'an arsenal'" (ibid) due to the number of guns kept inside for protection. (Cobb also observes a darkly humorous incident in which Bayard Rustin had to frantically urge a journalist not to sit on an armchair stacked with two pistols: "You don't want to shoot yourself" (ibid)).

The point here is not so much King as an individual, but rather the political symbolism of a meaninglessly generalized concept of "nonviolence" around which King has been nucleated as part of a wider cultural technology meant to preemptively stifle dissent to a racialized status quo. Is violence really as "American as cherry pie," as H. Rap Brown once famously observed? If so, both violence and so-called "nonviolence" need to be subjected to a far more scrupulous scrutiny than the common sense of liberal historical teleology usually permits.

Violence Work

Franz Fanon's "On Violence" chapter from *The Wretched of the Earth* remains one of the most seminal philosophical assessments of the nature and scope of violence. Within the inverted world of colonization, Fanon writes, violence loses its spectacular character, instead assuming a *quotidian* function. The colonial world is separated, sustained and disciplined by various fault lines of violence, which in turn inspire the violence of the colonized (both in terms of resistance—more on this in a moment—as well as "muscular tension:" release of the violence they are unable to inflict upon the colonizer upon their own communities) (53). Fanon's analysis also reveals how analytically complementing the colonial world to the differentially oppressed

societies of the West can reveal how violence is also a regulating component of these societies; what separates the colonial world from the colonizing metropoles is merely a question of the *scale* of normative violence (though even here Fanon is more acute than this schematization would otherwise suggest; after all, he writes of the armed stance of the Black Panther Party as virtually inevitable).

A reassessment of the scale and scope of violence thus becomes an integral component to defining what it is—and, perhaps even more importantly, isn't. In *The American Way of Violence,* Alphonso Pinkney observes how American media is far more likely to consider property destruction during urban uprisings as "violence" *rather than the conditions that prompt such uprisings in the first place.*[65] Whether or not one agrees with Pinkney's assessment that

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[65] I am cautious in making this assessment, however, because I am wary of replicating the error identified by Ranjit Guha in "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency;" namely, implying that the subaltern—and here I believe we can use this term somewhat generally—rebels *reflexively* rather than out of some degree of premeditation, however explicit. For, as Guha explains, during moments of uprising, the subaltern is not only rejecting the physical authority of the colonial administrators; the subaltern is rejecting the *very symbolic ordering of the world, as well as his/her/their own place within it.* Such a rejection, then, is charged with existential uncertainty and therefore *cannot* be the result of circumstantial triggers alone, even as these may help to accelerate various moments of resistance. It is also important to note that, for Guha, this error is not dictated by ideology—both colonial apologists and otherwise leftist historians have fallen prey to the disciplinary conceit of the subaltern lacking any capacity for agency in resistance.

I believe a more contemporary relevant example of this tendency can be found in Eli Meyerhoff's *Beyond Education: Radical Studying for Another World* (2019). In the introduction to this work, Meyerhoff extols various incidents in which individuals "snapped" at the university (1), an act he seems to suggest is a fundamental component of creating a radical, Undercommons-esque alternative to the neoliberal academic status quo. I do not question Meyerhoff's goals here—indeed, Moten and Harney elaborate something quite similar in their landmark essay (and later book) "The University and the Undercommons: Seven Theses." What I *do* take slight issue with is the value that "snapping" really holds to these goals, or rather, its accuracy. For one of Meyerhoff's prime examples of the role of "snapping" is Corey Menafee, the African American service worker at Yale who smashed a stained-glass window depicting positive images of slavery with a broomstick in 2016. For while "snapping" may provide an analytic for Menafee's actions that seems simple enough at the surface, it is also important to recall how Menafee described the act in an interview. Most pointedly, he references Edgar Allan Poe's "Tell-Tale Heart" in attempting to capture just how intensely the sight of the window during his work shifts gnawed at him (7). But Poe's narrative describes the psychological torment faced by the narrator *after* he commits a premeditated act of murder. Indeed, some of the most suspenseful descriptions in the story are of the narrator's anxiously protracted attempts to kill the old man with the strange eye. This is not to suggest that Menafee enacted a complex strategy in shattering the window, but it *is* to say that "snapping" flattens the accumulated chronology that his very own reference invokes. And, no matter how spontaneous or immediate the act felt in the moment, it is rather difficult to believe that Menafee acted with absolutely *no* regard for the implications such an action would have for his career.

If, as Hegel explains in *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, ostensible gestures of immediacy are in fact not unmediated, then hagiographic monumentalization of ostensible instances of immediacy, however refreshing it

only a "materialist" society would consider property and money as somehow more sacrosanct than human life, the question of just what prompts the ease of this association is important to consider. Why is it, Pinkney asks, that it is far more common to hear property destruction considered a form of "violence," while ghettoization, poverty, and starvation, as well as the startling likelihood with which "young black men" are likely to be the victims of police brutality and even killings, are not? Why is only one "violence" while the other is accepted as "normal?"

Micol Siegel provides a partial explanation to such questions in her crucial, recent study of policing, *Violence Work: State Power and the Limits of Police* (2018). While "The violence meted out by police is sometimes hard to see, and many people understand it as exceptional" (9), Siegel argues that it is anything but, as policing is in effect *defined* by the enactment and possibility of dispensing various forms of violence (ibid). This is not really such a radical claim to make. For if, as William Maxwell reminds us in his overview of Monsterrat Guibernau's thought, states are distinguished via the enactment of authorized violence (*F.B. Eyes* 181), and police are, according to Siegel, "the human-scale expression of the state" (9), then it becomes abundantly clear that violence, both spectacular and ordinary, is inextricable from policing. It is for this reason that Siegel argues for a reconceptualization of police as "violence workers" (12). I agree with Siegel's neologism, though I would also supplement it with an appraisal of police as "anti-social" workers, a phrase I am cautiously employing despite its evocation of liberal institutional sensibility. By "anti-social" work/ers, I am referring to the police's imperative to fracture various forms of resistance and insurgency in the service of a truly egalitarian status quo, of a society and world actualized through what Ivan Illich terms "conviviality" (*Tools for*

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might feel for radical sensibilities, is not necessarily always "radical," or, more accurately termed, antithetical to the status quo. I thank Tamara Levitz for bringing this to my attention.

Conviviality 4).[66] These concepts lay the conceptual groundwork for a consideration of the security poetics and pacification prosaics found within Williams' two novels.

Law and Disorder

By coupling "law" and "disorder," I intend to capture several points in one—firstly, the general concern evinced in Williams' second novel with the dialectic of urban insurrection and brutal police repression. However, more conceptually, I am also attempting to allude to the ways Williams' texts construct The Law as a *type* of disorder, by which I mean a paradigm for institutionalizing the preemptive, normative disarticulation of collective resistance. This is undoubtedly the sentiment that informs the instinctive panic, dread and resentment with which Williams' African American characters often regard the police.

Early on in *The Man Who Cried I Am,* the protagonist, Max Reddick, an African American writer, goes to interview Moses Lincoln Boatwright, an incarcerated African American cannibal, for a feature in a Harlem column. In a bizarre allusion to the iniquities of socio-political convention, when Max's editor asks what he has in the way of an angle for the interview, Max responds "Just the Negro angle. I mean, was there something in his being black that made him do this? He may give us something he hasn't given the white boys downtown" (53). While Boatwright the cannibal doesn't seem to give Max much more than he did "the white boys downtown," there is something deeply compelling about the potential symbolism of cannibalism in this instance. It is as though the figurative and epistemological depredations of legally facilitated racial deprivation have been refracted, internalized, and redeployed outwards. The literal act of consumption becomes a wry critique of its consistent (and invisibilized)

[66] Illich's concept posits responsible limits in industrial advancement with scrupulous ethical forthrightness. For only the "multidimensional balance of human life" can truly ensure a more just world defined by well-being in place of thoughtless over-industrialization and profit (ibid). I believe that Illich's notion of "conviviality," particularly with its emphasis on technological restraint, can also be useful for considering the anti-surveillance ethos found in several texts analyzed within this dissertation.

metaphorical equivalent. Here, the significance of Boatwright having eaten a *white* man cannot be overemphasized—especially not for Boatwright himself: "Why was it a white man, not a black man I ate, don't you see?" (57). But the overlap between the motif of cannibalism and racialization extends beyond this subversion: Jerry Phillips argues that the ascription of the charge of "cannibalism" to Indigenous and African peoples, which worked in tandem with projects of settler-colonial conquest and enslavement, can be explained as a deflection of the inherently violent and exploitational nature of "primitive accumulation;" outside of the respectable sphere of bourgeois society within the "Other-spaces" of hitherto uncharted territories, the extraction of resources "goes naked" (Marx qtd. in Phillips 186), and the colonized and enslaved, the true subjects of violence, death, and various forms of consumption, must themselves be rendered "savages" and "cannibals" for the righteous pretexts of sanctioned violence to maintain its epistemological coherence (Phillips 193). Boatwright thus literalizes this historical-ontological phenomenon as a modern-day cannibal belonging to a violently racialized demographic.

But the text destabilizes the integrity of this actualization by way of Boatwright's sexuality. (In fact, sexuality seems to provide an avenue for explorations of socio-political tension and critique in both novels; this is not exclusive to its effects on Williams' male characters, but the fact that it operates as a site of tension and crisis as well as opportunity for the male protagonists in key ways suggests a differential quality to its impact as a narrative function). In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), Sigmund Freud argues that modern civilization is the result of structuring prohibitions placed around some of the most primordial, anti-social human urges. Freud notes the three primary forms of these "instinctual wishes" are "incest, cannibalism, and lust for killing" (10), with only cannibalism apparently having been completely

overcome due to the relative weakness of preemptive dissuasion required in the present day—that is, "according to the non-psycho-analytic view" (11). The aside is crucial, for as Freud goes on to explain, these wishes are only surmounted in their most literal forms; otherwise, sexual fantasy, less extreme variants of anti-social behavior, and various forms of art all offer mechanisms for substituting and diluting the intensity of these wishes in their initial iterations (12, 14). Civilization thus proceeds by way of prohibition and repression, with alternative means of expression providing more sanctioned spaces for the channeling of coercive inaugural impulses.

Yet societally imposed prohibitions upon the fulfillment of desires is not accomplished in an egalitarian manner. For societies retain elites and, as Freud writes, "suppressed classes" who see in "their masters" some aspects of their own idealizations (13). Only the tempering of the "justifiable hostility" of these "human masses" with some forms of idealization can account for how it is that many societies have extended for such a long period of time without being toppled by the indignant energy of the exploited. Yet even idealization is not wholly preventative; if exploitation becomes too brutish to nullify idealization's pacifying force field, uprisings will surely follow. It is due to this aspect of Freud's work that Terry Eagleton hints at the socio-political import of psychoanalysis (in an observation that concludes with a direct quotation from *The Future of an Illusion)*:

> One reason why we need to enquire into the dynamics of pleasure and unpleasure is because we need to know how much repression and deferred fulfillment a society is likely to tolerate; how it is that desire can be switched from ends that we would value to ends which trivialize and degrade it; how it comes about that men and women are sometimes prepared to suffer oppression and indignity, and at what points such submission is likely to fail. We can learn from psychoanalytical theory more about why most people prefer John Keats to Leigh Hunt; we can also learn more about the nature of "a civilization which leaves so large a number of its participants unsatisfied and drives them into revolt, […] neither has nor deserves the prospect of a lasting existence." (*What is Literature?* 167-8)

But according to Freud's psycho-genealogy, cannibalism in particular ought no longer to realize *literal* manifestations, having been completely eclipsed within physical practice by assorted mechanisms of fantasy, projection and escapism.[67] Boatwright's character directly flouts this timeline, as it becomes clear that the narration of his killings is part of an extended practice of auto-gratification (59). Robert E. Fleming writes that even as *The Man Who Cried I Am* has gone on to achieve renown for its masterful ability to confuse fiction with truth, with many readers believing that the American government's "King Alfred" plan for the extermination of African Americans was based on reality, Williams still deserves credit for the ways in which he is able to move *beyond* the veneer of realism and naturalism inherent to earlier African American protest novels; for Fleming, the "gothic" and "nightmare" aspects of the novel are what allow Williams to make just such a move (186), and the encounter with Boatwright epitomizes "one of the symbolic meanings of the novel: that in America blackness is equated with perversion" (188). As alluded to earlier, Boatwright himself is "in on" the joke, providing an impeccable performance, or "cover" of a cannibal by which "he counterattacks the white world with a theatrical gesture of defiance" (ibid). Thus, "Boatwright's act seems to be ironic rather than straightforward" (189).

Also worth noting are Reddick's descriptions of the jail which, similar to the discussions of *The Stone Face* in the previous chapter, couple detached observation with an inevitable, practically fatalistic, assumption of encountering the violence of the racialized security state at some indeterminate point:

> Max entered the jail, leaving a listless Indian summer day flooding the streets; he walked slowly. It was after all ridiculous for a man to be anywhere near a jail

[67] Freud would offer an earlier version of this argument via literary analysis in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), opining that the "whole difference in the mental life" separating civilization in Sophocles' time from that of Shakespeare is evidenced by how the Oedipus complex goes from being staged directly in Greek drama to (what he reads as) its more subtle manifestations in *Hamlet.* That is, in Hamlet we witness "the secular advance of repression in the emotional life of mankind" (282).

> if he was not consigned to be in it. And he thought of all the people who had been placed in jail because they were poor and knew no one to help them, of the falsely arrested, the interminable democratic process which frequently placed a man inside with a minimum of effort, but took forever to get him out. This is the place, he thought, walking down the corridors behind a guard, where they locked up black asses and threw away the key. Where they locked up white asses and threw away the key, but not as far. He felt a stab of fear, just as he did whenever he saw a policeman and the cop put that extra something into his casual stare. Perhaps it was that the look carried a threat, a menace. Black boy, I could have you whenever I wanted to, it said, that look. It was not as though Max had not been inside jails and precinct houses before. Maybe it wasn't even the fear of jails and cops as such, but the knowledge that under the existing system they were his natural enemies… When it was all said and done, the only clean job a cop could enjoy perhaps was the one where the enemy had but a single perversion—color. (53-4)

The fear Max feels in encountering the jail, compared to that which is inspired by the gaze of a cop—the fear of forced, undesired familiarity, even of intimate violence, is one of the defining mechanisms of Williams' security poetics and pacification prosaics. The practically naturalistic inflection whereby positivist framings of the workings of The Law are upended in favor of a starker symbolic chain threaded through by predatory violence (the speaking look, with its own cannibalistic undertones: "…I could *have* you whenever I wanted to," the reference to "natural enemies") that catalyzes the urgency with which the characters of Williams' novels react to the iniquitous status quo that defines (and often ruptures) precarious lives.

These are the sentiments that similarly inform the bitter reflections of the protagonist in Williams' other novel, *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light,* Eugene Browning, who is reacting to the news of a Black boy having been killed at the hands of a white police officer:

> They all went free or did their little bit of time, for that was the exchange rate still. *Maybe* a little time in exchange for a dead nigger; when the scales balanced things would be different, and white people appeared to have no intention of balancing any scale any time. Browning wanted people to know that if they were wiling to take black lives the way they had been, then they also ought to know that they had to forfeit their own. Once everyone understood that, things would improve.
>
> It would always be open season on blacks until blacks opened the season on whites. But how to begin again? (23)[68]

[68] This is similar to the provocation June Jordan effects via rhetorical questioning in her "Poem About Police Violence:"

Browning eventually decides to "open the season" by hiring a hit-man. This resolution is even more staggering in light of the fact that he is a college professor currently employed within a leading civil rights organization famed for its celebration of "non-violence." While the provocative intensity of Williams' plot might lead some to overlook the political subtlety with which the novel staggers its characters and intrigues in favor of an overly-generalized focus on "violence" as a larger thematic, Browning's position is worth commenting upon. For while Browning opts for a kind of militant action in response to the police murder of the young Black victim, he in fact takes pains to *distinguish* himself from other militant characters within the text: "The militants were like people who could not stand stitches, and so ripped them out, to their own detriment and everyone else's" (72). Indeed, it is not only the events that Browning sets into motion with his plan that is so intriguing about the text, but how *particular* he is about his self-image in regards to the political force field of the text: "Secrecy, apparent noninvolvement, selected acts. That was the answer, the only answer, a wee bit of Mao" (22). Browning's "wee bit of Mao" helps clarify the logic of Williams' security poetics in this text, acting in opposition to the pacification *prosaics* of racialized hyper-policing and normatively preemptive "violence work." It is also important to note how Browning's act is intended to correlate with his bona fides as a history professor. In an interview with Leigh Crutchley, Williams explains how he chose to explore the limits of nonviolent resistance in response to the violent persecution of the

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Tell me something
what you think would happen if
everytime they kill a black boy
then we kill a cop
everytime they kill a black man
then we kill a cop
You think the accident rate would lower subsequently?

state within this novel because he is "a student of history," suggesting that Browning's own credentials are intended to confer a particular authority to his plans that another profession would not have been able to capture (*Conversations with John A. Williams* 3). While not interchangeable with the ensemble of tactics defining the act of going "undercover" explored in the first chapter, there is certainly a convergence; the deadly "surface reading" of "violence workers" ever-primed to viciously reinforce a racialized status quo necessitates a cunning dissimulation, a strategy of resistance that refuses to show its hand until the decisive moment of victory.

Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light and the Pull of Genre

I find it intriguing that *The Man Who Cried I Am* was published in 1967, the year of the so-called "Six Day War" that marked Israel's preemptive offensive and consequent initiation of the military occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories.[69] Indeed, Williams' textual fascination with Zionism might very well warrant a study of its own. The very title of *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light*—published in 1969, though set in 1973[70]—is taken from a reference in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which appropriately establishes an apocalyptic timbre to the progression of

[69] 1967 further marks the rise of SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics units) within the LAPD. And to observe that the year preceding the publication of *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light* was tumultuous would be an understatement: 1968 witnessed the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as the publication of the Kerner-Commission report, presidentially-requested to get to the root of urban uprisings. The report found that "White society.. is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it" ("The 1968 Kerner Commission Got it Right, But Nobody Listened"). As if all of this wasn't enough, 1968 was also the year upon which the House Un-American Activities Committee published *Guerilla Warfare Advocates in the United States,* which stated

> the kind of guerrilla warfare advocated by Mao in China and Giap in Vietnam was also found at home: in the struggle of communists and black liberation movements (the concept of "black terrorism" [sustained all the way through to the FBI's current "Black Identity Extremist" label] dates to the period from 1967). (*Anti-Security* 51)

[70] The year that ended up being the date of the so-called "Yom Kippur war"

events.[71] In some ways, the text's fascination with Zionism helps to cover up the seams of generic form that drive the novel.

In his introduction to a re-released edition of the novel, Richard Yarborough notes that Williams was in some way dissatisfied with *Sons of Darkness,* which he was driven to write after the far more critically-acclaimed *Man Who Cried I Am* failed to yield substantial profits:

> I sat down and wrote it comparatively quickly compared to the other books. This was a reaction to my continued poverty after *The Man Who Cried I Am* came along. It looked as if finally, I'd be able to make a little money and help both the boys [his two sons] who were in college at the time. The critical acclaim was good, but I was just as poor as I had always been… So, I sat down and wrote this book. (xi)

Yarborough further notes that Williams "has on several occasions expressed some displeasure with *Sons,* describing it as a 'potboiler' in [another] interview" (ibid). My interest in Williams' castigation of his novel is not so much rooted in questions of artistic merit as those of genre and form. As Tzvetan Todorov importantly notes in his essay "The Typology of Detective Fiction," novels that are defined by genre succeed precisely by following the rules of their own genre as effectively as possible. They are thus paradoxically distinguished by being as generically *inconspicuous* as possible:

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[71] The epigraph reads,

> After they have withdrawn from the slain towards the encampment, they shall all together sing the hymn of return. In the morning they shall launder their garments, wash themselves of the blood of the guilty cadavers, and return to the place where they had stood, where they had arrayed the line before the falling of the enemy's slain.

It is attributed to "COLUMN XIV SECTION XXI: *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness."* The allusion is rife with symbolism; among several possible interpretations, it seems clear that a metaphysical pun is intended given the text's foray into the possibility of race war at its conclusion. I am heartened in making this observation by Robert E. Fleming's observations on the comical significance of Boatwright the cannibal's name. Fleming writes in a footnote that

> Boatwright's name suggests his importance as an ironic exemplary figure for black America: Moses, suggesting the leader who shows the way to the promised land; Lincoln, the emancipator; and Boatwright (Noah), the rescuer who saves mankind. ("The Nightmare Level of 'The Man Who Cried I Am'" 187).

Verbal punning and allusions with multiple levels of signification are clearly a strategy of Williams' craft.

> the literary masterpiece does not enter any genre save perhaps its own; but the masterpiece of popular literature is precisely the book which best fits its genre. Detective fiction has its norms; to "develop" them is also to disappoint them: to "improve upon" detective fiction is to write "literature," not detective fiction… If we had properly described the genres of popular literature, there would no longer be an occasion to speak of its masterpieces. They are one and the same thing; the best novel will be the one about which there is nothing to say. (43)

While not a "detective novel," Williams criticizes his succeeding novel for being a "potboiler," meaning a work carried out for money first and foremost. These are often works that rely on predictability rather than innovation of plot ("It was one of those novels that I don't like very much, that I call a 'straight ahead' novel. You start at A and wind up at Z and then you get off the train," Williams notes in the same introduction (xi)). The idea is to carry the narrative *forward,* often through mechanisms that *facilitate* rather than inhibit its ease of progression. However, this is not to suggest that Williams does not innovate in any way: in *Sons of Darkness,* the warmth and depth of characterization comes to compensate for what would otherwise be an overly predictable plot progression. Indeed, a mob narrative would have even been clichéd in Williams' day, but Williams strength at characterization ensures that the text never devolves into stereotype; one is likely to forget how outlandish the plot feels, given the complexity of the characters that carry it forward.[72] In point of fact, for all of his self-deprecation, Williams was not only an authority on narrative genres due to his dual position as a writer and college instructor; he was also very clearly aware of the potential to inscribe important socio-political messages and critiques within ostensibly formulaic literary genres such as the spy novel (*Conversations with John A. Williams* 144).

And this returns us to the question of Zionism. For the hitman tasked with taking out Carrigan, the racist white police officer who murders the Black boy, is Itzhak Hod. Hod is a

[72] I thank my former student, Chris Chervet, for bringing this to my attention.

survivor of anti-Semitic pogroms and, later, the fascist violence of the Holocaust who eventually joins the Irgun militia and participates in the ethnic cleansing of the *nakba* in Mandate Era Palestine. Eventually, he foments a bitter sense of betrayal against the British, whom he felt did not live up to their promise to support the formation of a Zionist state. It would be erroneous to assert that Williams is wholly critical of Israel or Zionism, though the text certainly expresses some reservations about what it constructs to be the exceptional violence of Zionist state-formation ("The Haganah operated with the consent of the whole people, the Irgun and Sterns did not" (105), an Israeli consulate official responds to Hod after the latter complains about his criminal status according to the Israeli government). Indeed, even *The Man Who Cried I Am* contains a section where Max Reddick ruminates upon the exceptional character of the Holocaust within the wider context of Historical progression:

> Moses, if you had known (you Harvard genius) that the Germans and Turks between them had done in four million Armenians in War I [sic], would you have done what you did? You know, man, the fat was already in the fire, the horror commonplace and no lesson was learned. Naturally with nine million dead (the Jews rarely talked about the three million gypsies and political prisoners) everyone jumped screaming and weeping to their feet. Nine million, n-i-n-e- *mill*ion. Ah, the world got what it deserved. The lessons had been written on the board in big letters thousands of years ago and repeated several times every century since… (He remembered standing in the Tomb of Destruction in Jerusalem, in the City of David, sandbagged at the top, with Jordanians and Israelis peeking out, with a yarmulke on his head looking at the soap. Yellow it was and big and awkward, like the Octagon soap his mother had used when he was a child; and he looked at the glass jar with the blue Zyklon B crystals gleaming dully, like wax. Behind him sat the rabbinical students at a little table. They prayed or chanted throughout the days and nights in memory.) (67-8)

But what fascinates me is not so much the question of whether or not Williams' novel is sympathetic to Zionism. Indeed, some degree of sympathy is confirmed by Williams himself in response to a 1969 interview question regarding this element of the novel:

> **LC:** In *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light,* you use a kind of Jewish parallel, don't you, with the colored situation?

> **JW:** Yes. I'm taking black situations in America in the 1960s and perhaps continuing in to the '70s and relating that situation to the Jews in Palestine in 1948 at the end of World War II. And the reasons I think are fairly obvious. That the Jews gained Palestine, what is now known as Israel, through the employment of selective acts of violence against the British government and army and succeeded in getting the partitioning of Palestine. Now twenty some odd years have passed. I think the parallel is still to some degree valid between their situation and ours. (*Conversations with John A. Williams* 4-5)

Evident in Williams' response is the acceptance of the equation between Zionist militancy and Black radicalism, specifically nationalism. Such ideas reflect, and are embedded in, a particular socio-political progression of comparison as a means of contextualization. Indeed, as Robin Kelley notes, the establishment of Israel in 1948 was a cause for celebration among Black leaders and activists engaged in various campaigns for uplift "because they recognized European Jewry as an oppressed and homeless people determined to build a nation of their own" ("Yes, I Said National Liberation"). Additionally, Kelley notes, the Zionist cause was understood at the time as representing "a nationalist movement, forged in the cauldron of racist/ethnic/religious oppression, resisting the post-Ottoman colonial domination of the region by Britain and France, and poised to bring modernization to a so-called backward Arab world" (ibid). This last point also encapsulates how Zionism was understood to be not just a struggle against oppression, but an *anti-colonial* movement. While there were crucial exceptions to Black political acceptance of the Zionist cause as an analogue for the US Black freedom struggle—most notably among George Schuyler, whom Kelley notes immediately denounced the demonization of Arabs that tended to accompany Zionist laudation as interchangeable in characteristics to racist state propaganda—and even as Malcolm X would critique Zionism in 1964, it was not until the aftermath of the 1967 war that Black radical perspectives shifted to accommodate the *Palestinians* as the colonized population (ibid).

Rather, my interest is in what I discern to be the cracks and fissures within the novel's construction of Zionism, the wobbling *instability* of its support that seems almost to occur outside of authorial and/or narrational intent. For instance, while Hod's past is clearly intended to inculcate a sense of sympathy within the reader, Hod himself remains almost ambiguously cynical throughout the narrative (with the exception of his reactions to past traumas). Indeed, it is his American Jewish girlfriend, Mickey, who is consistently critical of anti-Black police violence, whereas Hod initially takes the hit for money. Mickey in a sense becomes his ethnical compass, gradually reasoning him over to the political import of his actions (though she never knows of his role in assassinating Carrigan; their exchanges are conducted as hypothetical conversations alone). Furthermore, Hod's own views of Israel, Palestine, Arabs and African Americans are far less stable than a one-dimensionally sympathetic portrayal seems to suggest. At one point, the text has Hod think the following thought, effected via free indirect discourse: "To consider Israel fairly, you had to consider the Arabs and if you considered *them* fairly, would you then have an Israel?" (204). While this could be read as a simple exoneration of normative Zionist state violence through the notion that "all states" engage in questionable political practices, it is curious to note how Hod's disillusionment and cynicism in some ways short-circuit the ethical purity that his past experiences might otherwise be mobilized to edify. Indeed, the necessity for Israel to behave "unfairly" in order to preserve its very existence in its current form is a sobering insight—issued from the mind of a Zionist, no less.

Furthermore, while the life-stories of each of the diverse cast of characters naturally goad the reader into making larger comparisons across struggles, Hod is one of two characters (the other being the Don) who make their comparisons explicit. And yet, this explicitness does not offset the politically elliptical nature of some of Hod's asides, particularly his rhetorical question

(to himself) about how to analogize the struggle of African Americans: "(but weren't they the American Arabs?)" (205). The curt length of this parenthetical phrase is belied by its staggering implications—Hod, an *Israeli* who has repeatedly expressed no issue with killing Arabs (Palestinians), is now experiencing a nagging doubt as to whether or not African Americans are the Arabs of the US. The fact that he is currently killing on their behalf by unwittingly carrying out Browning's hit does little to offset this query's destabilizing charge.

The point of all of this, again, is not to argue that Williams or his novels are critical of Zionism. Actually, these moments are interesting precisely *because* of Williams' demonstrated support for Zionism (even if it is not an untroubled support). For my argument is not about how Williams either does or does not support Zionism as much as it is that Hod's ambiguous construction *diegetically performs the political movement away from Zionism* as an adequate analogue for the American Black freedom struggle. Critics such as Vaughn Rasberry, Robin Kelley and Keith Feldman[73] have demonstrated how the aftermath of 1967 resulted in various Black power and nationalist formations coming to realize that it was the Palestinians rather than Israelis/Zionists who were waging a rightful anti-colonial struggle. While support for Palestinian liberation was by no means a consensus opinion among Black activists, the differences of opinion regarding this issue increasingly began to break down along political/partisan lines; as Michael Fischbach argues, the internationalist/Black power perspective increasingly upheld the

[73]See: Rasberry, Vaughn. *Race and the Totalitarian Century: Geopolitics in the Black Literary Imagination*. Harvard University Press, 2016.

Feldman, Keith P. A *Shadow Over Palestine: The Imperial Life of Race in America*. University Of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Kelley, Robin D. G. *Freedom Dreams: the Black Radical Imagination*. Beacon Press, 2002.

Palestinian liberation struggle, while the domestic/Civil Rights framework tended to be more supportive of Israel and Zionism. As Fischbach writes,

> Civil Rights activists not only believed that their own approaches and leadership styles were being threatened by black militants' attacks on Israel; they also thought that their own efforts to maintain forward movement on civil rights were put in jeopardy as a result. Many mainstream black leaders therefore felt a tremendous need to reassure whites in the face of militant black assaults on mainstream sensitivities. Traditional African American leaders were particularly anxious in 1967 to assure Jewish allies of their commitment to reciprocating the Jewish support they had received in their struggle by taking up a cause near and dear to the hearts of many Jewish Americans—Israel. (*Black Power and Palestine* 53)

Exceptions abounded, of course, with the socialist W.E.B. DuBois being a key case in point. Added to this is the relative difficulty of drawing a clean boundary when we recall that activists might move back and forth between a Civil Rights/internationalist approach for various reasons, including practicality. Binaries are always neater on paper than in lived actuality.

What also prompted an increasing movement away from Zionism as a sufficient frame for the Black freedom struggle was the increasing discovery of Israel's role in supporting the South African Apartheid government. Fischbach quotes Kwame Turé (then Stokey Carmichael) as having remarked,

> I have to say, discovering that the government of Israel was maintaining such a long, cozy and warm relationship with the worst enemy of black people came as a real shock. A kind of betrayal. And hey, we weren't supposed to even *talk* about this? C'mon. (*Black Power and Palestine* 19)

With the increasing drift away from activist establishment support for Israel, it is small wonder that such a consensus would be reflected among myriad mediums. Novels, while perhaps more mediated than radical newsletters or poems, are nevertheless an important instrument for demonstrating the notable shifts affecting the structures of feeling of a given moment and cause (Williams 131).

Chapter Four: "New World Disorder:" Chronopolitics and the Literary Disfiguring of the Perpetual Present[74]

"Just one pigment on the jumbled canvas that is the new world disorder…"

-Ismail Khalidi, *Truth Serum Blues* (2005)

"The radio talk show is about the new secret-evidence laws, where the government doesn't even have to tell you the case against you."

-Mohja Kahf, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* (2006)

"See down here, them cells magically open, crowd comes through and *poof.* Next thing, find the prisoners curled up in a ditch. And don't nobody remember who took em out the jail, neither. Guards, deputies, all got amnesia when it suits them. And when they wanna pin a crime on us, well shit, they suddenly got the best memory and eyesight you ever seen, extra special hearin', too."

-Ismail Khalidi, *Dead Are My People* (2018)

Introduction: What We Talk About When We Talk About Chronopolitics

Judith Butler's notion of derealization may very well have become one of the premier analytics for considering the epistemological ravages performed by the so-called "War on 'Terror'" upon countless racialized bodies and collectives (this is, of course, contemporaneous to the physical ravages of bombs, bullets, metal cages and attendant tortures). Butler qualifies the status afforded the Muslim "Other," the enemy of the interminable "War on 'Terror," as a kind of ontological limbo, one fully admitted neither to life nor death:

> If violence is done against those who are unreal, then, from the perspective of violence, it fails to injure or negate those lives since those lives are already negated. But they have a strange way of remaining animated and so must be

[74] I thank W.G. Ellis for invaluable input on this chapter.

> negated again (and again). They cannot be mourned because they are always already lost or, rather, never "were," and they must be killed, since they seem to live on, stubbornly, in this state of deadness… The derealization of the "Other" means that it is neither alive nor dead, but interminably spectral. (*Precarious Life* 33-4)

Michael Malek Najjar's gloss of Butler's concept cleanly emphasizes how the notion of "spectrality" ensures the endlessness of both the paranoia of and against the Arab subject as well as the interminability of the so-called "war" waged against the "terror" with which they are both suddenly and transcendentally coupled (152). In fact, this "war" is not only interminable; Najjar's resuscitation of Butler's 2004 framework also implies that, in a very real sense, the beginning of this "war" *in earnest* is inevitably deferred, for: "the derealization of the Other' means that it is neither alive nor dead, but interminably spectral" (Butler 33-4), an insight of Butler's that Najjar expands to surmise that "Interminable spectrality is a state where subjects are forced into a liminal position where they are not allowed to live freely and instead become victims of an infinite paranoia… they are left in a state where they cannot be freed until the so-called "war on terror" is *realized*" (ibid, emphasis mine).

This understanding of the "war on 'terror'" as a state offensive that is simultaneously endless and also only ever *about to begin* couples a framework for racial and epistemological precarity with paradoxical temporal inflections. That this split temporality is rife with strategic benefit is patently obvious via the similarly contradictory ensemble of legal neologisms its perpetuation has generated (e.g., enemy combatant, a construct endemic to the timeless time of the "war on 'terror'" that simultaneously marshals the full, exceptional weight of the Law against an implicated subject that is inoculated against any of its typical precautions). With no fixed end—or beginning—locatable, the "war on 'terror's'" pacification prosaics enact their violence

through a chronological assault that exceeds the presumed finality of notions such as Fukuyama's "end of history"[75] and Jameson's cultural "schizophrenia."[76]

The players in this killing farce, then, are not only geopolitics, nor racial politics, and not even these combined with epistemological politics alone. For the stage is also haunted by a politics of *time,* a *chronopolitics* that constellates the workings of each of these components with fatal precision and nimble contingency.[77] I argue that, just as the pacification prosaics endemic to the "war on 'terror'" are effectuated via a politics of time, so too do security poetics likewise utilize their own textual politics of time as a means of staging their dissent. But there is a crucial distinction: while the "war on 'terror's" pacification prosaics are assembled around tropes of a single Time, a mono-Time, resistant security poetics upend this para-Time via a temporal pluralization that is irreducible in its complexity. What follows will therefore be an attempt to illuminate the nature and significance of the chronopolitics found within three particular texts: two plays by Ismail Khalidi—*Truth Serum Blues* (2005) and *Dead Are My People* (2018, and still in process) and a novel by Mohja Kahf, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* (2006). I find it important to note that the choice of texts is simultaneously intentional and arbitrary, by which I mean that any number of texts with similar topical concerns might have worked for the purposes of this analysis. And yet, analytical intentionality is cohered through the texts' temporal orientations (by which I refer to the date of publication for Kahf's novel and Khalidi's earlier

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[75] Fukuyama, Francis. "The End of History?" *The National Interest*, no. 16, 1989, pp. 3–18. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24027184. Accessed 24 Jan. 2020.

[76] Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 1991. Print.

[77] In pairing a consideration of chronopolitics with attendant processes of racialization, I am influenced by M. Shadee Malaklou's dissertation, *Chronopolitical Assemblages: Race/ism, Desire, and Identification in Iranian Contexts* (2016), though my interest in this conjuncture differs somewhat from Malaklou's own in that my analysis does not take up the ways in which Orientalized subjects subscribe to Enlightenment notions of chronology as a means of insinuating themselves as "modern" subjects to the Western gaze, incorporable with if not directly analogous to the quintessential figure of modernity, the White European male (xii-xiii).

play, and the historical *setting* of Khalidi's most recent theatrical work). On this point, I find it both conceptually humorous and intellectually perfect that Khalidi slightly attempted to dissuade me from using *Truth Serum Blues,* his first play, within my dissertation because, as he wrote in an email, "it is nearly fifteen years old." After all, what is a decade or more when hegemonic registers continue to police and restrict collective access to time and history?

Here (or now, if you will), it is necessary to sketch out some important distinctions between time and history, though the two are certainly interrelated. Along with "events," time is conventionally understood as a unit of history, with the latter accommodating various strategies of explicit *reflexivity* regarding the passage of time and the transpiring—and subsequent schematization—of variously significant occurrences. Hayden White grasped as much when he argued that historiography is perceived as approaching the quality of "reality" the more it reveals the trait of "narrativity,"[78] that history is considered history proper only insofar as it reveals the sequential ordering of events over a given period into the form of a story. The implications of this argument are, of course, a blow to the "objective" character of history. If history is a story, or series of stories *in form* rather than *in essence,* other stories—or "Other" stories—can be told over, above, in between, and in *place* of hegemonic (hi)stories.

Of course, history entails more of a sense of entanglement than time. It is for this reason, as Eagleton notes, that it is by no means incidental that Heidegger titled his study *Being and* Time rather than *Being and* History:

> My own personal history is authentically meaningful when I accept responsibility for my own existence, seize my own future possibilities and live in enduring awareness of my own future death. This may or may not be true, but it does not seem to have any immediate relevance to how I live 'historically' in the sense of being bound up with particular individuals, actual social relations and concrete institutions… 'True' history for Heidegger is an inward, 'authentic' or 'existential' history—a mastering of dread and nothingness, a resoluteness towards death, a 'gathering

[78] White, Hayden. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1980, pp. 5–27. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/1343174. Accessed 24 Jan. 2020.

in' of my powers—which operates in effect as a substitute for history in its more common and practical senses. As… Georg Lukács put it, Heidegger's famous 'historicity' is not really distinguishable from *a*historicity. (57)

Yet even as history implies more of a sense of interrelatedness and complicity to others, its narrativation can retain a hegemonic, exclusionary function. C. Riley Snorton describes the implications that race and racialization have for these conversations in building upon the insights of Tavia Nyong'o:

> [O]ne might also consider that race is a history of theory that functions to express what is un/thinkable across complex temporalities… history becomes less a program for examining change over time and more an examination in disruptions in linear time. Race, then, becomes a way of thinking history doubly, or of thinking about the history of historicity. (*Black on Both Sides* 8)

The security poetics employed by writers under analysis in this chapter, then, are under a double-bind: on the one hand, they must challenge the presentist exceptionalism of the "war on 'terror's'" pacification prosaics. But in doing so, they must also be careful not to reinscribe hegemonic historical narritivations that evade "disruptions in linear time." Rather, their challenges must simultaneously dismantle artificial temporal exceptions *and* overly-exclusive conceptions of temporality and history.

Disfiguring a Perpetual Present

The preceding comments suggest how the "war on 'terror'" insinuates a perpetual present vis-à-vis derealization. Perhaps naturally enough, if a perpetual present is what is at issue, the solution might seem to be a *historicization* of this perpetual present. Yet a few further comments on the chronopolitics of both the "war on 'terror'" as well as dissenting literatures will help clarify why this would be an ultimately misguided endeavor, according to the terms of this analysis.

The "war on 'terror'" edifies its perpetual present via several temporal technologies, the first of which I am presently terming "terrorist exceptionalization." Simply put, this refers to the phenomenon by which the currently racialized figure of the "terrorist" is imbued with a

transhistorical omniscience, conscripted as an "enemy combatant" of fearsome existential proportions and the subsequent ability to upend not only individual (white, "freedom loving"/"dutiful citizen") life, but also to rend the very fabric of hegemonic Western democratic "enlightened" civilization beyond repair. A symptomatic reading of the current terms of presentist racial-imperial anxiety make these dimensions evident enough. But equally as important as the current adumbrations of terrorist exceptionalization is a consideration of the forms it has taken in the *past.* For example, though the so-called "Islamic fundamentalist" is inextricable from the category of "terrorist" today, 19th century American racial anxieties told a far different story, one of Eastern Europeans with dynamite ever-ready to obliterate key sites of capitalist production. For this reason, Jeffory Clymer argues, racialized anxieties about "terrorism" are indissociable from paranoid vigilance surrounding the integrity of the capitalist system (*America's Culture of Terrorism* 13). Furthermore, even following intense government scrutiny of Arab- and Arab American activism and uprising during the Cold War era, Sarah Gualtieri importantly reminds us that Arab American activists such as the members of the Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG) were accused of being "godless communists" for their championing of the Palestinian freedom struggle, while today they would be far more likely to be condemned as "Muslim terrorists" (*Between Arab and White* 173). The "terrorist," then, is not and never has been transhistorically coherent, but rather contingently overdetermined by capitalist, geopolitical and racial fixations and anxieties.

Related to terrorist exceptionalization is another cultural technology of the "war on 'terror'" that I refer to as "Muslim Exceptionalization." Here I refer to the "war on 'terror's'" current occlusion of Muslim identity that historically preceded post WWII Arab immigration, spanning all the way back to Antebellum Muslim slave identity as well as the activism of

organizations such as the Nation of Islam during the Black Power movement. The negative idealization of the "terrorist" as ultimately Arab, even while it does not exculpate Black bodies from ongoing interpellation into the framework of "terrorism,"[79] nevertheless symbolically levels important histories of resistance, thereby fracturing the capacity for dissenting collectivities to more naturally gravitate towards mutual uplift and joint struggle.[80]

The final cultural technology of relevance for this investigation is what I am terming "securitization's disciplinary tautology." This concept is intended to capture the more individualized leveling of past and present that occurs when the charge of "terrorism" is deployed against a suspect. By way of a strategic, syntactical inversion, the objectified subject of such a charge is suddenly deprived of any narrational or temporal recourse for exculpation. Any and all responses to the charge merely confirm its elastic accuracy. For, according to this disciplinary tautology: *one already always-was a "terrorist" because one is accused. One is accused because one already always-was a "terrorist."*

I opt for the term disfiguring in place of historicizing to refer to these text's resistance to the "war on 'terror's" chronopolitics because to claim these texts "historicize" would be to imply one single, coherent notion of time and history, a construct these texts in fact elude and destabilize as part of their imaginative insurgency. Disfiguring simultaneously both the possibility of "disfigurement"—of scarring the illusionary veneer of the perpetual present to

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[79] For a recent example, see asha bandele's and Patrisse Khan-Cullors' *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* (2017).

[80] The convergences are also not solely discursive: dogs were used to track fugitive slaves and, more recently, during the Ferguson uprisings as well as a means of torture on imprisoned captives in Guantanamo Bay. See: Spruill, Larry H. "Slave Patrols, 'Pack of Negro Dogs,' and Policing Black Communities," *Phylon (1960-),* Vol. 53, No. 1 (Summer 2016), pp. 42-66 and Jamail, Dahr. "Guantanamo: A Legacy of Shame." *Al Jazeera*, 22 Nov. 2012, https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/11/20121122815168339 17.html.

I thank W.G. Ellis for bringing this to my attention.

reveal glimpses of the time-worlds surging beneath—as well as "figuring," meaning a textual re-presentation of the "war on 'terror's" temporal assaults.

Imagine That!

By now it should be abundantly clear why time retains such centrality for all three texts, and how innovations in textual temporality are imbued with socio-political import and meta-commentary. The nature of such innovations is often deceptively simple. For instance, every chapter of Kahf's 441 page novel begins with an epigraph. At times, the epigraph directly correlates with the developments of the narrative proper, but just as if not far more frequently, these quotes stand alone, offering insights and asides that hover somewhat external to the main action of the text in question. The relatively discrete time-space of these epigraphs, I argue, can be read as a textual performance of the dialectical temporality inherent to Islamic narrative theology. Here I am thinking of what Norman O. Brown refers to as the "Apocalypse of Islam." With this provocative phrase, Brown attempts to capture the temporality inherent to the Quran's narrative structure. Islam, Brown argues, is "apocalyptic" in the sense that each Quranic episode is self-contained *and* continuous, whole and part. This, naturally enough, would be wholly alien to Christian exegesis, and it is precisely for this reason (as Brown surmises) that so many attenuated mischaracterizations of the Quran and Islam more broadly endure to this day. The inability to grapple with an *alternative* temporal schema vis-à-vis Islam led Western Christian modernity to castigate a mutated mischaracterization that had been held to the standards of its own temporal particularity. The mere *possibility* of an alternative temporal schema could not even be countenanced.

Brown's arguments in this respect obliquely converge with some of Edward Said's more subtle (or perhaps, less recalled) arguments in *Orientalism.* For while, as Aamir Mufti notes,

"attention to Orientalism seems to have reverted more or less exclusively to the form of cataloguing representations of this or that social collective in this or that body of Western literature" (*Forget English!* 23), Said's text also includes a crucial portion in which he historicizes the character of contemporary Islamophobia as having stemmed from a misidentification of Mohammad as an analogue for Christ (hence, the origin of the derogative English term "Mohammadan"). Attempts to discredit the Prophet Mohammad as a "pedophile," a "false prophet" and more stem from the larger impulse to discredit an individual who challenged Christ's import and legacy—something Mohammad never did, and which Islam also never purported to suggest. Thus, from the Crusades and onward, Western anxieties about Islam remain configured around a false assumption of Mohammad and Islam as insidious dopplegangers of Christianity. Small wonder, then, that alternative worldviews and timescapes were inconceivable.

Aside from the epigraphs, the choice of a female Syrian American protagonist to whom the text attends from a span of childhood to early adulthood is another strategy by which the text challenges the "war on 'terror's" temporally inflected pacification prosaics. Lila Abu Lughood once famously asked why, in the wake of 9/11,

> knowing about the 'culture' of the region, and particularly its religious beliefs and treatment of women, was more urgent than exploring the history of the development of repressive regimes in the region and the U.S. role in this history. ("Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?" (784)

Faux-cultural "fascination" and imperialist attention to the alleged "well-being" of Muslim women globally alternatingly become smokescreens for and outright enablers of ongoing American occupation and military aggression. It is for these reasons Amira Jarmakani notes that "contemporary discourses of terrorism tend to obscure more than they reveal," and that a key strategy of this obfuscation is the conceit of understanding a two-dimensional caricature of

Islam "through the lives, practices, and bodies of women perceived to be victims of this purportedly violent and monolithic Islam" ("On Not Rescuing Arab and Muslim Women" 246).

A small yet significant manner in which the text attends to this gendered manipulation of the "war on 'terror's" pacification prosaics early on is by having a youthful Khadra and her friends ask their "Sunday school" teacher, Uncle Taher (35), a series of questions including *How come Muslim men can marry non-Muslim women but Muslim women can't marry non-Muslim men?* (37). A child's question-and-answer, of course, is a standard form for interrogating theological convention, but in this case the racialized (White American) hetero-patriarchal hyper-vigilance regarding Muslim women's bodies overshadows the ostensible innocence of the query. The question is never explicitly answered within the text, but Khadra's continued devotion to the Dawah center and the frequent provision of Quranic explication by various guidance figures at other points in the narrative suggests that some sort of resolution was provided, at least at this moment. The implication of a resolution of this query gestures towards a more comprehensive conception of Islam that can accommodate various issues pertaining to manifold forms of inequality, including gender discrimination. Azizah Y. Al-Hibri argues that many of the seemingly "patriarchal" aspects of Islam are in fact remnants of pre-Islamic societies, implemented because of Islam's unique willingness to incorporate local customs so long as they were not found to be in contradiction with Islamic law (56). Regarding non-Muslim marriage, Al-Hibri states that the condition was initially put into place because of the fact that *all* societies were patriarchal, and thus women were more at risk for being forced to renounce their religion through marriage, a fate which would not befall Muslim men (68). The stipulation was thus originally intended for the protection of women, but as with the incorporation of local customs, the issue, according to Al-Hibri, is that there has been no re-evaluation of many of these customs

that served a contingent purpose at a particular point in history, despite the fact that Islam itself *necessitates* such reevaluation to ensure that its customs remain adapted to contemporary social reality. Al-Hibri further proposes that patriarchy is fundamentally anti-Islamic:

> [A]t the same time that the Qur'an points out empirical differences among humans, such as those of gender, race, and ethnicity, it asserts their natural equality. It bases ranking among them on their individual moral choices. Consequently, from the perspective of the Qur'an, no man is superior to a woman by virtue of his gender alone. ("An Introduction to Muslim Women's Rights" 52)

Kahf's novel allows for a similarly complex reading of Islam vis-á-vis Khadra's experiences and queries, diffusing the "war on 'terror's'" two-dimensional caricature of Islam justifying endless warfare and racialized-gendered ontological violence seeking to forcefully relocate the body of the Muslim woman into a colonialist-modern time-scape.

While Khadra Shamy is born in America, her family is of Syrian descent, and travel back and forth between America, Syria (as well as Saudi Arabia) is a key motif of the narrative. In negotiating these different spaces and the encounters Khadra has in each, the text engages with the pluralism and contradiction inherent to lived reality, even insofar as this results in difficult realizations for Khadra about her own, and others' shortcomings. Steven Salaita recognizes how this aspect of Kahf's narrativizing also has important implications for its explorations of differing forms of racism:

> In the novel, racism does not exist simply against Muslims by whites. The Muslims are multiethnic, and these multiple ethnic groups are not themselves in complete unity. In particular, Kahf illuminates Arab and South Asian Muslims' racism toward American-born black Muslims. This issue is not often discussed in public forums, so Kahf's thematic placement of it in *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* is a courageous adherence to realism despite the fact that it casts some Muslims in a negative light. This racism toward African Americans does not resemble traditional racism. There is no formal or de facto segregation, no use of racial epithets, and no theories of biological inferiority. In fact, as devout Muslims, the Shamys and other immigrants believe strongly in the fundamental equality of all humans and reject any notion that one group is superior in the eyes of God. (*Modern Arab American Fiction: A Reader's Guide*)

Despite themselves being victims of various forms of identity-based persecution, the Shamys are complex, contradictory, and fallible, and capable of explicitly adhering to an *ideological* vision of universal equality while still discriminating against other Muslims. This is an issue explored and returned to in varying degrees of gravity from Khadra's early questioning of whether Khadija al-Deen's marriage to Jamal was "when she became a real Muslim" as opposed to "that Elijah thing. The fake Muslims where it's only for black people?" (23) to her later, heated argument with her childhood friend, Hakim [Khadija and Jamal's son] in which Hakim objects to Khadra's denial of Muslim community racism by retorting, "how many Dawah Center officers are black? How many immigrants do you know who've married African American?" (137). And shortly thereafter, Khadra's brother, Eyad, asks for his parents' permission to marry Maha Abdul-Kadir, a Sundanese Muslim American, to which his father blurts back in response, "but for heaven's sake, she's black as coal!" (139).

Salaita notes that the latter scene demonstrates a difficult irony: Eyad is initially concerned that Maha's parents will reject his proposal for his class status, "a factor over which he has no control," when in fact it is *his* parents who end up discounting the idea based on Maha's skin color (*Modern Arab American Fiction*). While Khadija responds to Khadra's early inquiry by asking what it means for someone to be a "real Muslim" and patiently challenging her assumptions, these moments are not always met with easy solutions. Sometimes, however, even in the absence of a direct challenge, the text presents the unease, discomfort or even silent acknowledgement of error of its principal characters as a form of rejection. Eyad's parents eventually cover up their initial reason by pretending they oppose the marriage on age-related grounds: "She's only older by a few months," Eyad said weakly (139). And while she does not vocally respond to Hakim's question, Khadra "bit her lip, knowing [Hakim] was right. Syrian

Arabs like her parents sure didn't think black was beautiful" (137). Though not wholly satisfactory, these moments are important for demonstrating the unexpected and difficult manifestations of racism, as well as rejecting a stereotypical sanctification of populations based on oppression alone. And ultimately, they diffuse the possibility for Khadra and Hakim's eventual union towards the end of the novel to be constructed as a two-dimensional affirmation that "love conquers all." Friendships, mutual social spaces, and romantic relationships are not magical panaceas for internalized racism, which can manifest in conjunction to external persecution. Scrupulous attention and necessary self-criticism thus become additionally significant in maintaining an ultimate commitment to challenge racism in its myriad forms. Finally, the layered recurrence of this topic (just one of many issues explored over time throughout the course of the novel) is another testament to the power and efficacy of Kahf's utilization of the *bildungsroman* format to tell a story that is simultaneously an individual and collective (in the sense of personal and familial) coming of age. Gradual maturation heralds the increasing complexity with which socio-political and psychic struggles alike are presented, accessed and confronted.

Through Khadra's experiences and personal dilemmas, the text refuses to yield "one" unequivocal "consensus" of Islam, instead presenting it as an irreducible plurality, or meeting of pluaralities, recognizing that "the opaque is not the obscure… It is that which cannot be reduced, which is the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence" (*Poetics of Relation* 191). Khadra's individual identity, that of her family and the various Muslims she meets and shares relationships with throughout her life are not static. They are not atemporal, or ahistorical. They are *poly*-temporal, *poly*-historical, and the texts stages the constant collisions of personal and cultural histories and epochs as a larger celebration of the irreducibility of life. Equally crucial is

the text's refusal to substitute personal narratives for socio-political realities, as characters discuss, argue about and struggle with issues frequently covered up in American news such as the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Kahf's novel further disfigures the "war on 'terror's" perpetual present by way of excavating narratives of joint struggle. Through the range of Muslims that attend the Dawah center that anchors the early childhood and adolescence of Kahf's protagonist, Khadra Shamy, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* encapsulates Muslim identity as simultaneously rooted in Arab immigration and American slave history. Frequently, the pluralization of the possibilities of Muslim identity is often established via the direct contradiction of Khadra's assumptions. This suggests a religious-pedagogical import to the narrative that also necessarily implicates the reader. For the more that Khadra learns about the range of personas and possibilities that flesh out Islam, the more in turn the reader is irreversibly exposed to a kaleidoscope of potentiality that forever inhibit the possibility of two-dimensional caricature.

Khalidi's two plays likewise excavate narratives of joint struggle, positing Arab American and African American alliances as necessary to the procurement of a comprehensively just society. The obverse of this vision is the jointly implicating oppression of both groups. *Truth Serum Blues* erodes any and all possibility of temporal specificity and continuity by way of an interminable interrogation scenario set in Guantanamo Bay (Khaled's torturous ordeal tragically performs the motions of securitization's disciplinary tautology). During his ordeal, the protagonist, Khaled, at times tries to make sense of his oppression by recalling the suffering of Black comrades, narrating Palestinian dispossession with African American Vernacular English, and situating America's imperial and colonial character by way of the slave trade: "this country was founded on the backs of slaves" (23) Khaled observes in a drug induced aside couched in

criticisms of American settler-colonial genocide and various presidential political abuses from Nixon onward. This enumeration of oppressions that the text constructs as interlocked as well as Kareem's Palestinian American identity makes *Truth Serum Blues* relevant to more recent conversations of "Black-Palestinian solidarity" that have assumed increasing scholarly and journalistic prominence from 2014 onwards. As Greg Burris notes, as long as proponents of this solidarity limit themselves to anecdotal indexing in place of a more theoretically comprehensive rationale, they will be

> unable to respond to the claims of certain skeptics who dismiss Black-Palestinian activism as nothing more than an excuse for anti-Black appropriation. Thus, as important as it may be to document new instances of solidarity—another rap song, another YouTube video, another protest spectacle—we must also seek to take our analysis underground and to ask how the traditions of Black radicalism and Palestinian liberation can speak to each other at the level of theory, philosophy and epistemology. ("Birth of a (Zionist) Nation" 124)

Burris draws heavily from Cedric Robinson in taking issue with certain forms of such critique that "inadvertently complete a process in theory that the white supremacist overseers were unable to accomplish in reality" by not contending with how the attempt to turn Africans into docile, abject slaves "ultimately failed" because, as Robinson demonstrates, "no system of thought—no social science, no economic model, no governing ideology—is ever as hegemonic or dominant as we pretend it is" (126-7). Relatedly, the very violence of Zionist colonialism is a demonstration of how it continues to fail to ultimately quell Palestinian resistance (128). African American and Palestinian histories and presents of oppression and resistance can speak to each other through these realities of steadfastness and indomitability. And so,

> While the leftist critics of Black-Palestinian solidarity are technically correct that the Black situation vis-à-vis US white supremacy is not the same as the Palestinian experience vis-à-vis Zionist settler-colonialism, they are nevertheless making a great mistake. Demonstrations of solidarity and political belonging between the two struggles are rarely meant to be scientific comparisons, and Black-Palestinian solidarity does not hinge on absolute sameness any more than

> did the ties forged in North American maroon communities between self-liberated Africans, Native Americans, and European servants. Those who participate in the imagining of Black-Palestinian ties are not simply describing the world as it already exists; they are creating something new, giving flesh to a potential that had previously been hidden. Their activities are… a testament to the radical ways of thinking, being and imagining which preceded them and continue to inspire social struggle and resistance. (130)

But the political genealogy underlying present-day Black Palestinian solidarity is informed by political party efforts in addition to individual attitudes, alternative media and collective statements. As Michael Fischbach notes, more than any other Black Power group, the Black Panther Party was the most influential in determining the extent to which the Palestinian struggle would be seen as relevant to the American Black freedom struggle, despite the fact that their support for Palestinians and denunciation of Israeli colonial violence was uneven and inconsistent (*Black Power and Palestine* 111). This relevance was manifested in several ways, according to Fischbach; the first was the growing international focus upon "armed Palestinian guerillas from groups like al-Fateh and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in the years after 1967" (112). The Panthers could "more easily relate to Palestinians as Arabs and Muslims than to Asian freedom fighters such as those in the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) in Vietnam," and this, coupled with Fanon's

> many references to "Negroes and Arabs" and description of the Algerian war of independence—along with the film *The Battler of Algiers* and the travel to Algeria and elsewhere in North Africa and the Middle East carried out by a number of Black Americans—helped further the bonds of revolutionary and cultural solidarity between American black and Arab Muslims like those in Algeria and Palestine. Images of Palestinian fida'iyyin (Arabic: those who sacrifice themselves, i.e., guerillas) carrying their AK-47 assault rifles fit in well with the gun-toting Black Panthers. (113)

Perhaps the two central figures within the Party who were emblematic of this dynamic were Newton, the Party's official theoretician, and Eldridge Cleaver, Minister of Information. While in 1970 the Party newspaper would be issuing communiqués condemning "The Zionist fascist state of Israel… a puppet and lackey of the imperialists [that] must be smashed," articles

about Al-Fateh and statements by Yasser Arafat (119), the attacks the Party received for these positions eventually necessitated a response from Newton. That same year saw him gradually moving away from antagonism towards Zionism as a racist imperialist ideology in step with the Party's initial political messaging to endorsement of a two-state solution, and Arab Jewish "harmony" (122). Meanwhile, Cleaver, who was in exile in Algeria, was making speeches with the rest of the Black Panther Party's international entourage in Algeria in support of the Palestinian struggle. But the two would eventually experience an irreconcilable political falling out that featured Palestine in crucial ways even as it cannot be reduced to it. Fischbach observes that the tensions between Newton and Cleaver were essentially tied to the extent to which the Party remained a formation dedicated to "Revolution" versus prioritizing social services for the African American community. Newton favored the latter, and Cleaver the former. As the lines were drawn, the visions of Palestine most ideally suited to either vision of socio-political effort would grow more deeply entrenched (123). However, Newton's (at least partial) capitulation to Zionism is intriguing given that it does not stem from what Vaughn Rasberry describes as the "African American genealogy of orientalist discourse on Palestine/Israel" that believed in the overlaps between Zionism and pan-Africanism/nationalism prior to 1967 (*Race and the Totalitarian Century* 281-282). It is, rather, a partial swing *back* to Zionist accommodation *following* subsequent pursuance of anti-Zionism as anti-colonialism. As elaborated by Fischbach, Newton's rationale for this about-face seems more rooted in rhetorics of "humanism" and "pragmatism" ("Newton believed the BPP needed to change its position because what happened in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War was a *fait accompli*… Life, like revolution… looked forward, not backward") (127). Fischbach observes that these alternative positions of Newton's were emblematic of a larger political tension between him and a cadre of supporters, on the one hand,

and others within the Party who found themselves in disagreement, an insight that Assata Shakur confirms:

> Politically, i was not at all happy with the direction of the Party. Huey went on a nationwide tour of advocating his new theory of intercommunality. The essence of the theory was that imperialism had reached such a degree and sovereign borders were no longer recognized and that oppressed nations no longer existed, only oppressed communities within and outside the u.s. The problem was that someone had forgotten to tell these oppressed communities that they were no longer nations. Even worse, no one understood Huey's long speeches explaining intercommunalism. (*Assata* 226)

However, Shakur opines that most, if not all of the Party differences might have been resolved had it not been for the "divide and conquer" tactics of COINTELPRO, which included such subterfuge as sending Cleaver a "phony letter" in Algiers signed by the New York Panther 21 [Black Panthers who had been accused of conspiring to blow up "the flowers in the Botanical Garden" (204)] or sending Newton's brother a letter claiming that the 21 were conspiring to assassinate Huey (232).

On a final note, it seems prudent to consider Fischbach's insight about the peculiarity of Al-Fateh's popularity with the Black Panther Party, given that Al-Fateh was "basically a conservative nationalist movement that eschewed the kind of socioeconomic revolutionary talk emanating from the BPP" (*Black Power and Palestine* 122). Ideologically, the PFLP would have been far more in line with the Black Panthers, especially during the early days of the Party.[81] But Al-Fateh, "the best funded of the Palestinian groups, had a good public relations apparatus both in the Middle East and in the United States" (ibid). Its representatives also published and communicated in English, which made their materials and viewpoints much more accessible to

[81] However, explicit rhetoric alone may not be a sufficient means for considering the disparities between al Fatah and the PFLP; even as al Fatah's commitment to revolution was not expressed along the same ideological grounds as the PFLP, it was arguably al Fatah, rather than the PFLP, who was the party for establishing the global iconography of the guerilla fighter as the symbol of Palestinian anti-colonial resistance *par excellence.* See: Loubna Qutami, "Reborn as *Fedayee:* The Palestinian Revolution and the Legacy of 1968." Forthcoming: *International Journal of Communications.* Fall 2020.

Party members. This suggests that at least some of the Party's attention to the Palestinian struggle, which played an important role in cultivating an anti-colonial Black Power consensus on Palestine, was derived more from particular indexes of affinity than ideological commensurability. Nevertheless, although the PFLP did not share the same relationship with the Black Panther Party as Al-Fateh, when she was asked what she would say to members of the Black Panther Party if she were speaking to them right at that very moment by Welsh journalist Colin Edwards in 1970, Leila Khaled responded:

> I'm with those people because they are defending their rights as human beings and the worst thing you or anyone can face is when you are not treated like a human being. And I'm with them in their revolution against what is called a democratic government in the US. It's not at all a democratic government. So those people, I *hope* they can have their rights and they can't have their rights except by force. That is the motto of this century because force is the only way they can be heard. (139, emphasis in original)

Additionally, Ahmad Sa'adat, General Secretary of the PFLP, expressed the following thoughts[82] as part of a longer statement issued from Ramon prison in 2017 [Sa'adat was first imprisoned from 2002 to 2006 by the Palestinian Authority, who have worked to police and incarcerate fellow Palestinians in the Occupied Territories as part of the Oslo Accords agreements, and then by Israeli forces in 2006 as part of a thirty year sentence]:

> Prisons exist for a reason, for the needs and interests of those with power. And when there are prisons to lock up the people, when there is occupation, colonialism, oppression; where there is occupation and colonization, there will be prisons and all of the laws and legal frameworks erected to legitimize exploitation, oppression and injustice and criminalize resistance and liberation. From the Fugitive Slave Acts of the 1800s to the "terrorist lists" that seek to criminalize and isolate the resistance movements of the peoples of the world, these are reflections of a war on the people. We salute sister Assata Shakur, still struggling and free in Cuba, while facing renewed threats and "terrorist" labeling to justify hunting down this global symbol of freedom.
> …Every political prisoner, whether they are currently in prison or not in prison, carries with them the dream and reality of liberation and what it can and must mean in practice. Today, when we look at the Black liberation movement or the

[82] In 2018, Sa'adat's speech was translated into French and included as a new introduction to a French edition of *Revolutionary Suicide.*

> Indigenous and Native struggle in the United States in Canada, we are talking about the same camp of enemy that we confront in occupied Palestine. The bullets that assassinated Malcolm X or Fred Hampton could have been used to kill Ghassan Kanafani or or Khaled Nazzal or Mahmoud Hamshari, and today we see the same tear gas and bullets shipped around the world for use against the people.
> …Why do we still consider and read and reprint the writings of Huey Newton today? Fundamentally, because his analysis and that of the Black Panther Party was right and continues to be right, valid and essential. Today, when we see the ravages of US imperialism, the threats of Trump against the world and the shooting down of Black people on US streets by cops, then the fundamental correctness and necessity of the Black Panthers' work is underlined. Today, when popular movements are under attack and liberation struggle labelled as "terrorist" and criminalized, we see a massive coercive attack on our peoples. Prisons are only one form of coercion in the hands of the occupier, colonizer, capitalist, and imperialist; stripping the knowledge of the people and imposing new forms of isolation are yet more forms of coercion. ("Ahmad Sa'adat: Prisons, the Black Liberation Movement, and the Struggle for Palestine")

The attention to the overlap between material and ideological mechanisms and spaces of discipline and regulation in fracturing liberation struggles is important to consider as a larger overlap that has long influenced the trajectory of African American and Arab American resistance. For instance, Carole Boyce Davies describes the trial, imprisonment and eventual deportation from American soil of the radical black feminist socialist Claudia Jones under the anti-communist Smith and McCarran Walter-Acts as "the deporting of the radical black female subject from U.S. political consciousness" (*Left of Karl Marx* 2). Significantly, the McCarran-Walter Act was the same piece of Cold War legislation used in the initial incarceration, trial and attempted deportation of the LA 8, seven Palestinians and one Kenyan woman who distributed material in support of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) while in the US on student visas in 1987 (the PFLP was not designated as a terrorist organization until 1997; the initial justification provided for the seizure of these individuals at the time was communism).[83]

[83] As David Cole, a defense attorney for Khader Hamide, one of the LA 8, writes:

> The initial charges were not for terrorism, but for communist affiliation under the McCarran-Walter Act. When the case began, Ronald Reagan was president, the Berlin Wall was still standing, and we were arming Osama bin Laden in his

> battle against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Shortly after the LA 8 were arrested, William Webster, then head of the FBI, admitted in Congressional testimony that the men had committed no crimes and that if they were US citizens there would be no basis for their arrest. But at the FBI's behest, immigration authorities charged them with distributing PFLP magazines, hosting annual community dinners that celebrated the PFLP, and raising money for humanitarian aid organizations in Palestine.
>
> Because the PFLP had a Marxist-Leninist ideology, the eight were charged as communists. They were the last persons sought to be deported from the United States for alleged communist affiliations. (*The Arab-American Handbook* 151)

Nadine Naber argues that the LA 8 case was a crucial moment in the construction of the figure of the Arab "terrorist" within governmental and media discourse as well as that Zionist advocacy organizations played (and continue to play) an important role in stoking such accusations and associations:

> The LA 8 case epitomizes the government's deliberate unconstitutional targeting of Arab-American activists and the process by which the social construction of "the Arab" as a potential terrorist has legitimized U.S. imperial ambitions in the Arab world and violations of Arab and Arab American rights in the United States… During the L.A. 8 court proceedings, a Justice Department contingency plan was revealed that provided a blueprint for the mass arrest of ten thousand alien terrorists and undesirable Arabs within the United States… In this case, the ADL [Anti-Defamation League] admitted that it provided the names of the defendants to the FBI early in 1985, stating that they were distributing "Arab propaganda." According to the ADL, anyone speaking out in support of Palestinians is a terrorist and should be arrested by the FBI and deported by the INS. ("Introduction: Arab-Americans and U.S. Racial Formations" 35-6)

Mark Van Der Hout of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) and one of the other accused's defense attorneys from the outset of their arrest discusses the progressive evolution of the charges from alleged communist affiliation to so-called "material support" for "terrorism:"

> The government, from day one, tried to use this case to establish its right to go after immigrants in this country who have done nothing illegal. William Webster, the head of the FBI, admitted when he was being confirmed for the CIA that the government had done a three-year undercover operation — surveillance of Michel, Khader and the others — and had come up with nothing they had done illegal, no crimes committed.
>
> They turned it over to immigration and said, "Can you figure out some way to deport these people? Why? Because we don't like their views. We don't like what they're doing, about their supporting the rights to a Palestinian homeland and their organizing efforts in the Los Angeles community."
>
> So the government went after them. As you mentioned, the first statute, the McCarran-Walter Act, was declared unconstitutional. Then Congress passed a law saying we can deport people for providing material support for terrorist organizations, and it said in furtherance of their terrorist activity. We thought, "Great! Case over."
>
> They had never been accused of furthering terrorist activity. But the government used that to say, we're going to try to deport people and establish the right to deport people if they raise money for humanitarian causes, distribute literature of an organization that also has a military component to it. And that's what this case has been about since day one. ("The Case of the L.A. 8: U.S.

Nouri Gana has written of how the LA 8 case should be read as part of a larger, racist continuum of repression that includes Japanese internment as well as describing how the initial arrest of the LA 8 was intended to serve as the launching of a massive internment program for Arabs and Muslims in the US.[84] Nevertheless, the LA 8 case tends to be cited as a relatively disconnected, chilling anecdote of the stakes of repression of Palestine activism, often to counter the so-called exceptionality of the official institution of Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism as government policy following 9/11. I argue that the LA 8 case needs to be put into conversation with incidents such as Jones' persecution by the US government, and that such connections can reveal the dire permeability between political, racial, and gendered anxieties informing American disciplinary paradigms and projects.[85]

> Drops 20 Year Effort to Deport Arab Americans for Supporting Palestinian National Rights," interview: *Democracy Now!*).

Van Der Hout's observations are crucial to understanding the (strategic, I would argue, even if not always readily coherent) procedural slippage between non-hegemonic worldviews, precarious citizenship and/or non-normative identities, as well as the increasing elasticity of the charge of "material support" in regards to legal activities and alternative ideologies (this conjuncture would re-emerge during the egregious *Holy Land Five* trial of 2005). Though its form continues to mutate in response to key moments of hegemonic national "crisis," this slippage would characterize state and government-level policing, repression and surveillance work from the outset. Per Agamben:

> The state of exception is neither internal nor external to the juridical order, and the problem of defining it concerns precisely a threshold, or a zone of indifference, where inside and outside do not exclude each other, but rather blur with one another. (27)

[84] See: Nouri Gana, "Introduction: Race, Islam, and the Task of Muslim and Arab American Writing." *PMLA* 123.5 (2008): 1573. Web.

[85] Furthermore, while state recourse to internment is usually countered in relation to specific instances of application, less known is the long history of governmental consideration of such a measure as an appropriate response to various "subversive" activities over the decades. As Athan G. Theoharis writes:

> During the late 1930s,… Congress also sought to curb "un-American" activities by creating a special House Committee on Un-American Activities (which conduced highly publicized hearings intended to publicize threats to the nation's internal security) and by proscribing radical conduct and associations… Congress's actions, however, were not the catalyst to the FBI's surveillance of "subversive" activities; rather, this expansion resulted from secret presidential

> directives of 1936, 1939, and 1940. Executive directives proved crucial in other respects. For example, although Congress banned wiretapping in 1934 and resisted the Roosevelt administration's lobbying efforts of 1941 to amend that act to authorize "national defense" wiretaps, FBI wiretapping continued, its authority deriving from a secret executive directive of May 1940. In addition, FBI officials instituted a secret Custodial Detention Program in 1939 to identify and list aliens and citizens for possible detention in the event that the United States went to war, a secret program whose sole authority derived from attorney general, Robert Jackson.
>
> …The covert assistance provided to McCarthy, SISS [Senate Internal Security Subcommittee], and HUAC highlights an aspect of the FBI-congressional relationship: Congress could serve as a forum for the FBI to promote an "education campaign" to influence public opinion as to the seriousness of the communist threat and the effectiveness of the FBI in protecting the nation's security. This shared anticommunist purpose led Congress, in 1950, to enact the Internal Security (or McCarran) Act. This act included a provision authorizing a program to detain individuals whose presence at large could endanger the nation's security. At the time, the FBI already had underway the Security Index Program, a more stringent program authorized under a secret directive issued by Attorney General Tom Clark in August 1948. When establishing the Security Index Program, Clark had intentionally not sought legislative authorization—fearing that such a request would provoke an acrimonious public debate. He decided, instead, to wait for an auspicious moment and then ex post facto authorization—thus, a presidential proclamation and a resolution were prepared to be issued following the anticipated outbreak of war, at which time permission likely would be granted quickly. When Congress, on its own (and wholly unaware of this Security Index program), enacted the McCarran Act in September 1950, FBI and Justice Department officials decided to ignore the act's congressionally mandated standards for a preventive detention program. Moreover, when Congress repealed the McCarran Act's preventive detention title in 1971 (responding to public concerns of the Vietnam War period that a prospective "concentration camp" program could lead to the detention of critics of the president's foreign policy), Attorney General John Mitchell approved FBI Director Hoover's recommendation that the FBI continue investigating individuals "who pose a threat to the internal security of the country" for inclusion on an "administrative" index for anticipated future detention. The failure to do so, Mitchell and Hoover conclude, could embolden radical activists, since "they no doubt [will] feel safer now to conspire in destruction of the country." Furthermore, they reasoned, the crisis atmosphere following the outbreak of war, if it occurred, could then be exploited to obtain ex post facto congressional authorization for this ongoing effort, now renamed the Administrative Index program. (*The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide* 156-8).

I quote this information in full (despite its off-putting length) because its contents reveal the recurrence of detention and internment as potential strategies by multiple government authorities (who at times even operated in relative ignorance of one another's efforts).

Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher define the FBI's Security Index as

> a list of people to be closely monitored by the Bureau and literally, rounded up in case of a national emergency—a kind of preventative detention *cum* concentration-camp construct, that was a mainstay of the Bureau in the Hoover years (*Heavy Radicals: The FBI's Secret War on America's Maoists* 20).

Khalidi's other play, *Dead Are My People,* again invokes Arab American and African American joint struggle, but this time by way of the past. Admittedly influenced by Sarah Gualtieri's seminal study *Between Arab and White,* Khalidi set about writing a play about early Arab American immigrants within the context of gradual Arab incorporation into whiteness at the price of validating US anti-Blackness. Khalidi thus literally sets an ethical-political crossroads within the context of dramatic historical fiction, in a context that has implications far beyond its immediate cast of characters. It is as though Khalidi is asking: can present coalitions be a way of correcting the past? Can the past be healed so as to more fully accommodate the resistance of the present? How can we, as jointly racialized subjects, follow Benjamin's imperative to "brush history against the grain?" In fact, there may be no more poignant means of speaking to the present than setting this play in the past, given the current flagrancy of Arabs' incorporation into whiteness as a means of denying benefits to hyper-racialized subjects as well as the tools for accounting for their singular, seemingly exceptionalist racialization.

It's Settled

While *Truth Serum Blues* at least invokes settler-colonialism, however fleetingly, both *Dead Are My People* and *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* are curiously bereft of references to Indigenous genocide and resistance. The omission is more glaring in the case of Kahf's novel, given its length and generally punctilious attention to matters of social justice. In fact, Kahf's novel is curiously bookended by Khadra's encounter with a statue commemorating American settlement, the so-called "Madonna of the Trail" (one of a series of identical monuments commissioned by the Daughters of the American Revolution in the 1920s to commemorate a

maternal pioneer identity.)[86] The "Madonna" motif opens the narrative and returns towards its end, and seems calibrated to vindicate the validity of Khadra's "American" identity—because, the text seems to suggest, ethnically purified white enclaves are far rarer than the plurality brought to the nation via immigration and exchanging of cultural mores and codes, America may very well mean, simply, a buzzing synthesis of various identities and cultures cohabitating. This is not necessarily a wholly negative view, but again, the absence of any Indigenous reference or presence within the entire novel, coupled with this seeming ethics of national habitation, seems to cinch a diegetic validation of Indigenous erasure, however inadvertently. The absence becomes even more puzzling when the Shamys encounter Mount Rushmore on one of the Dawah Center trips across the US dedicated to "developing Islamic awareness" (99). Khadra and her brother Eyad "prayed duhr at Mount Rushmore with the giant faces of the presidents gazing down upon them ('Carved by a Klansman,' Wajdy said)" (100).

Interestingly, while the text initiates a confrontation with the unsavory history behind the monument's origin, it stops short at this sole fact. The use of parantheses here could reflect not only a hesitance to engage with this enumerated point more directly, but with the rest of its related background that remains buried. Given that the novel does not shy away from discussions of other forms of oppression, it is strange that this opportunity to clarify the linkages between a Klansman architect, direct seizure of the Black Hills from the Lakota people in order to craft the oversized sculpture, as well as each depicted president's role in slavery and settler-colonial genocide is avoided outright.

[86] "Inside The Inland Empire What to Do and Where to Go When You're in the Inland Empire." *The History of the Madonna of the Trail Monument in Upland; | Inside The Inland Empire*, 26 Nov. 2007, www.insidetheie.com/the-history-of-the-madonna-of-th.

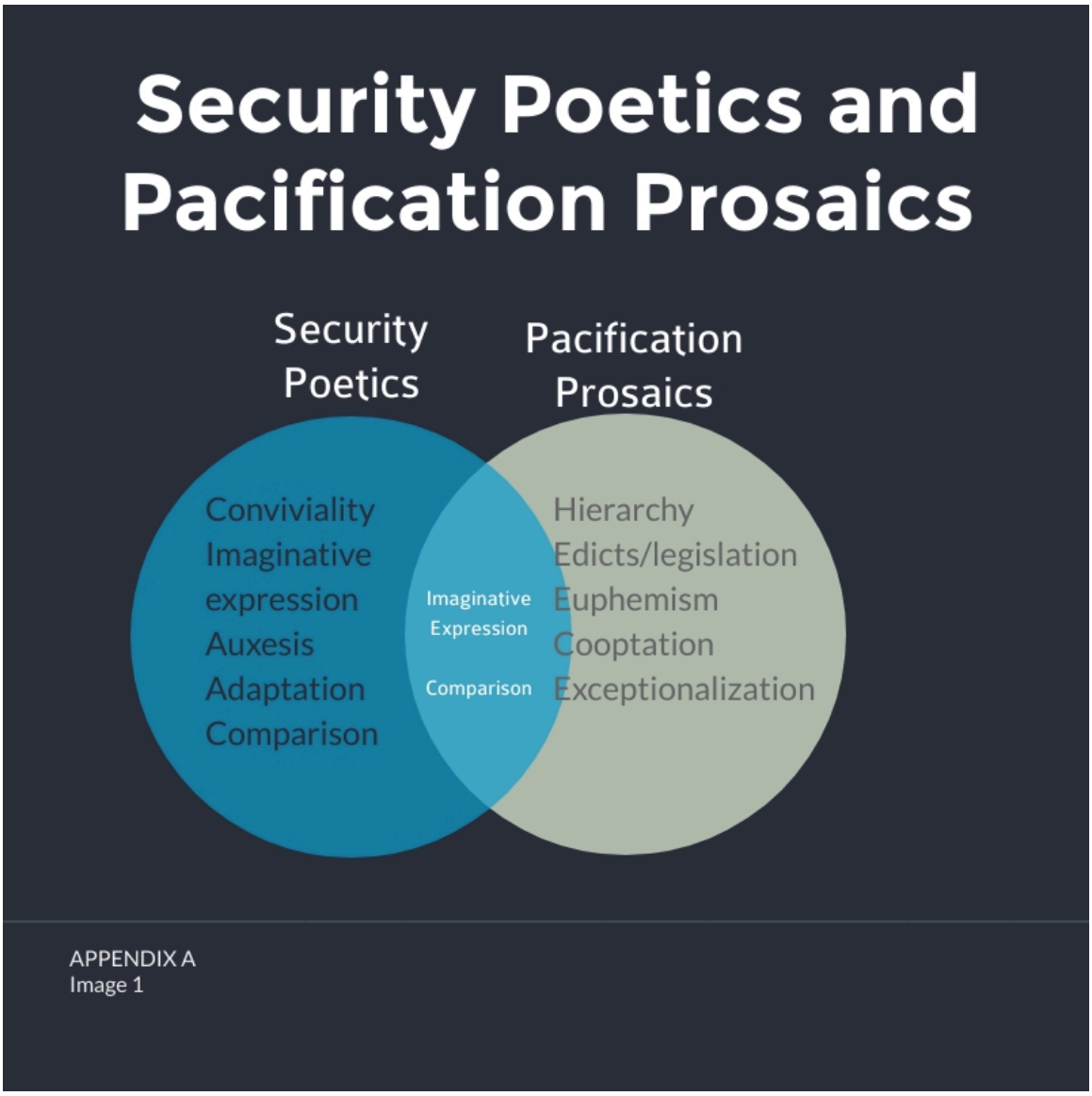
Yet as Mark Rifkin notes, even the "making of Indians into ghostly remainders enacts… 'colonial time'" (*Beyond Settler Time* 5). That is, even the attempted absenting of Indigenous presence from an American narrative entails a chronopolitical position taken on the subject of Indigenous land-claims. Rifkin proposes a re-conceptualization of time as a *plurality* of temporalities, rather than a singular, homogenous construct that conscripts all subjects, however unwittingly. To my mind, then, an ethical-coalitional literary culture of resistance would reflect a construction of time closer to Delueze and Guattari's "rhizome," one that paradoxically accommodates lines of settled character as well as "flight" (3-4). While the texts in question may not comprehensively accommodate this vision, they nevertheless point the way towards a literature of joint struggle that upends the "war on 'terror's" perpetual present. Hopefully, more literature to follow will enhance the necessary plurality of time(s) in opposition to this violent and flattening racializing paradigm.

Conclusion

What I have laid out so far regarding security poetics and pacification prosaics is merely the start of (what I hope to be) an extended investment in artistic representations of and challenges to state logics of pacification under the euphemism of securitization. There remains so much more to be written, by myself and, hopefully, by others who see fit to take up, expand upon and productively critique the frameworks I have advanced for re-conceptualizing these phenomena. I believe that, as it stands, the current project allows for a provocative entry-point to understanding how creative strategies of resistance can appropriate and rehabilitate formerly hegemonic rationales and strategies of "security" in the service of autonomous collectivity and well-being of racialized communities, exposing their complicity in projects of "pacification" in the process. To this end, I believe *Undercover and Hyper-Visible* initiates an important analysis of how state hegemony is parasitic upon creative insurgency, and the latter will continuously seek creative means of infiltrating, sabotaging and appropriating the mechanisms of the former. In this regard, as I have written earlier, a complete transcendence of pacification prosaics may very well be impossible so long as the state remains intact in its current form—paradoxically the very form that foments the possibilities for security poetics' articulation.

Nevertheless, this is barely the beginning. Future trajectories for analysis include, but are not limited to, additional forms of security poetics undertaken by communities whose resistance was not the focus of this particular dissertation, exploring the structural limits of security poetics in creative work (including the extra-literary), and more fully laying bare how pacification prosaics may similarly be embedded within creative works. These are undertakings I look

forward to attending to in subsequent publications, and I hope (if it is not too much to hope) that any and all who find themselves stimulated by the ideas presented herein will consider advancing their own interventions.



APPENDIX A
Image 1

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